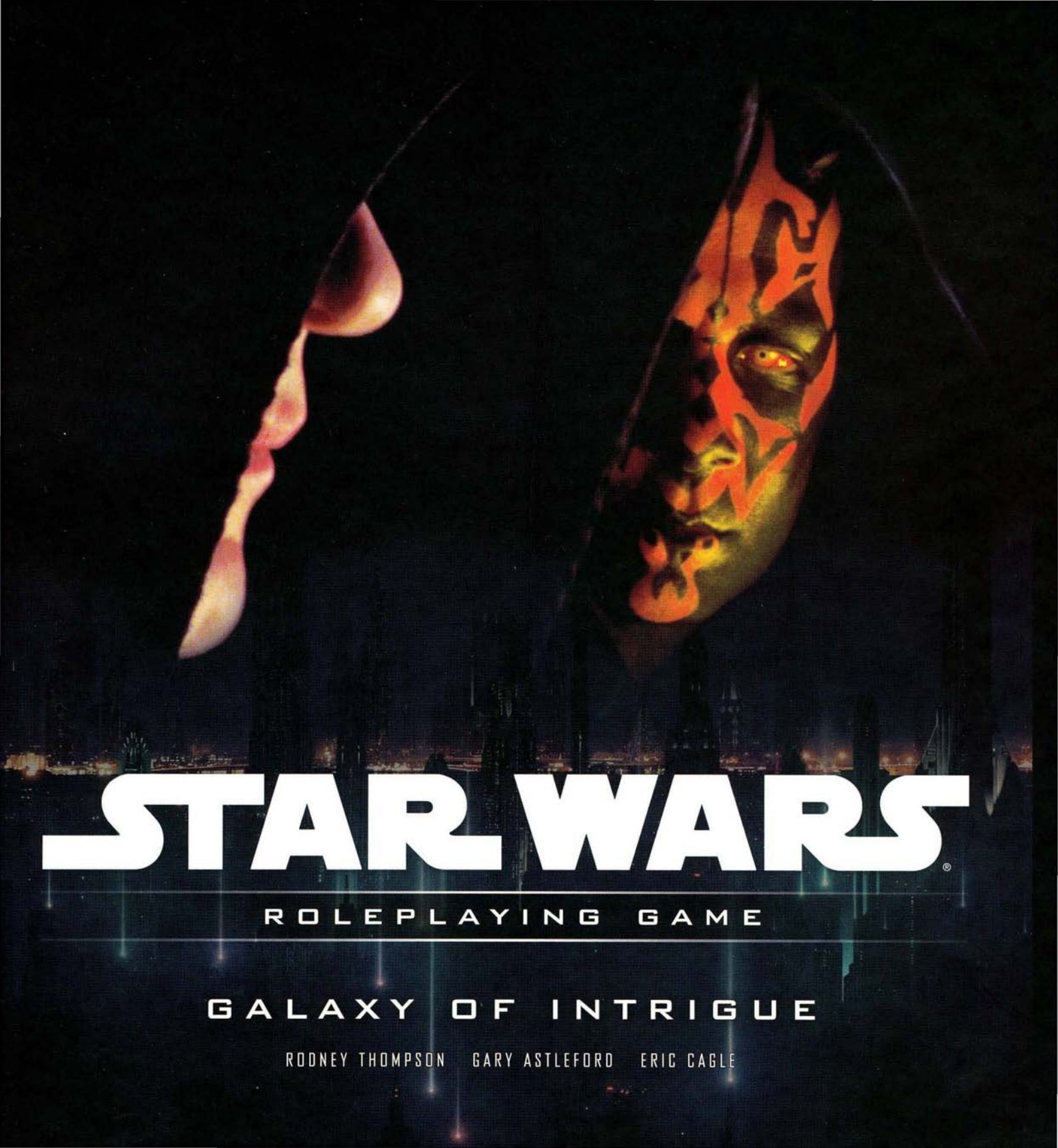


The background of the cover features a large, close-up of a Mandalorian helmet, likely belonging to Darth Maul, with its distinctive orange and black patterns and glowing red eyes. The helmet is set against a dark, starry space background. Below the helmet, a cityscape with illuminated buildings and structures is visible, suggesting a galactic city like Coruscant. The overall color palette is dark, with highlights from the helmet's lights and the city below.

STAR WARS®

ROLEPLAYING GAME

GALAXY OF INTRIGUE

RODNEY THOMPSON GARY ASTLEFORD ERIC CABLE

STAR WARS®

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GALAXY OF INTRIGUE

RODNEY THOMPSON, GARY ASTLEFORD, ERIC CAGLE



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . 4
Using This Book 6
CHAPTER I: HEROES OF INTRIGUE . . . 8
Species 10
New Talents for Heroic Classes 19
New Talents for Prestige Classes 24
Feats 25
CHAPTER II: SKILL CHALLENGES . . 30
Running Skill Challenges 32
Example of Play 36
Skill Challenge: Escape From Kessel 36
Designing Skill Challenges 40
Challenge Effects 43
Antagonist 44
Catastrophic Failure 44
Changing Objectives 44
Close Call 44
Containment 45
Degenerating 45
Degrees of Failure 45
Degrees of Success 45
Extreme Success 46
Individual Effort 46
Initiative 46
Opposed DC 46
Recovery 46
Restricted Skills 47
Second Effort 47
Timed Challenge 47
Success and Failure 48
Skill Challenge Tips 49
Sample Skill Challenges 51
Breaching the Bunker 51
The Podrace 52
Asteroid Field Escape 53
Covert Infiltration 54

Interrogation 55
Investigation 55
Negotiation 56
Overland Travel 57
Searching the Debris Field 57
Slicing the HoloNet 58
Smuggling Contraband 58
Speeder Bike Chase 59
Tactical Leadership 59
Traversing the Minefield 60
Sabotage Mission 60
CHAPTER III: EQUIPMENT . 52
Equipment and Weapons 64
Equipment 66
Vehicles 68
Droids 72
CHAPTER IV: CAMPAIGNS 76
A Gathering of Heroes 78
Campaign Elements 80
Building an Intrigue Campaign 83
Intrigue Campaign Arcs 84
The Secret Revolution 85
Hostile Takeover 86
Invasion from the Unknown Regions 86
Creating Villains of Intrigue 87
Fighting the Powers That Be 89
Designing an Intrigue Adventure 90
The Art of Indirection 93
CHAPTER V: FACTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS 96
Core World Nobles 98
Droid Equality Foundation 100
The Firebird Society 102
The Galactic Alliance Guard 104
The Hapans 106
House Korden 108
Imperial Intelligence 110

Kashyyyk Resistance 112
Naboo Resistance Movement 114
New Republic Intelligence 116
Praetorite Vong 118
The Tagge Company 120
Tapani Nobles 123
CHAPTER VI: NYRIAAN, WORLD OF INTRIGUE 124
Ten Aspects of Nyriaan 126
Shrouded in Secrecy 127
Atmosphere and Weather 128
Geography 128
Surface Conditions 128
Settlements 129
Madilon Mines 133
Landing on Nyriaan 137
Gondolas 137
Laser Transport Arrays 137
Shielding Stations 138
Ecology 140
Common Animal Species 140
Common Plant Species 142
Government Authority 143
The Factions of Nyriaan 143
CHAPTER VII: INTRIGUE ENCOUNTERS. 154
Using Mini-Adventures 155
Adventure #1: Shooting Trouble 156
Encounter: The Trouble Shooting 158
Adventure #2 :Arms Dealers Beware 160
Encounter: Raiding the Warehouse 162
Adventure #3: Betrayal at Cloud City 164
Encounter: Chase through the Clouds 166

Adventure #4: Eye on the Prize 168
Encounter: Unexpected Visitor 170
Adventure #5: My Enemy's Enemy 172
Encounter: Hunt for the Assassin 174
Adventure #6: Opportunity Knocks 176
Encounter: Assassination Ambush 178
Adventure #7: Double Down 180
Encounter: Deal Gone Bad 182
Adventure #8: Extracting Aleece 184
Encounter: Dine and Dash 186
CHAPTER VIII: THE PERFECT STORM 188
Opening Crawl 189
Adventure Summary 190
Part 1: Before the Storm 191
Part 2: Down In It 194
Part 3: The Coming Flood 201
Part 4: Aftermath 205
Encounter 1: Main Street Firefight 206
Encounter 2: Klikeri's Apartment 208
Encounter 3: Crimson and Chlovi 210
Encounter 4: Native Hospitality 212
Encounter 5: Children of the Tempest 214
Encounter 6: Sixteen Tons 216
Encounter 7: The End of the World 218
Encounter 8: Corporate Wrath 220
INDEX 222

INTRODUCTION





The civilizations of the *Star Wars* galaxy are bound together in an intricate web of intrigue. Except for the most reclusive, every sentient being in the galaxy is involved in a conspiracy or plot, whether he or she knows it or not. A plot might be as benign as a corporation's ad campaign or as insidious as a scheme to overthrow the Republic. Heroes are pushed and pulled by powerful forces, such as planetary governments, the Jedi Council, or the military. A hero might owe a favor or have an obligation to someone and in turn wield control over others. Because of this web of intrigue, a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign can quickly move from the immediate to the vast, depending on how involved and wide-ranging the Gamemaster wants to make the adventure.

Galaxy of Intrigue is designed for any era of the *Star Wars* timeline. Whether during the Old Republic, Clone Wars, Rebellion, or Legacy eras, life in the galaxy is complicated, as planets wage war with each other, ideologies clash, and rulers fight for dominion and to achieve the destinies that lie within their reach. Even the relative peace preceding the Clone Wars is riddled with intrigue as groups and individuals take advantage of a distracted and apathetic populace to forward their own agendas.

With this book, Gamemasters can plunge heroes into a campaign of conspiracy. Although the heroes might be caught up in the plots of others, they can take an active role in solving mysteries or using their influence to help shape the galaxy, pulling the strings of intrigue themselves. *Galaxy of Intrigue* presents rules and suggestions for including noncombat elements into a campaign, allowing players with a flair for personal interaction, dialogue, and skill use to stand out. Characters from the noble class, with the most skills and talents for solving problems with dialogue or quick thinking, benefit most from the ideas presented in *Galaxy of Intrigue*. However, this book offers plenty for every class, even the most martial soldiers. The rules and ideas presented here should give the heroes of your campaign a new sense of purpose, helping them develop into multidimensional characters.

USING THIS BOOK

This book is the basis for a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, capturing the feel of political events, clandestine adventures, and layers of subterfuge, double-cross, and hidden plans found throughout *Star Wars*. Chapters 1 and 3 are for players, and the remaining chapters are for Gamemasters.

Chapter 1: Heroes of Intrigue covers new species, especially ones known for political machinations or skill in intrigue. In addition, this chapter includes an array of new tools and options for character creation—such as talents, talent trees, and feats—for players who want their characters to shine in situations where skills, insight, and quick thinking are more important than going in with blasters blazing. However, opportunities for violence still abound.

Chapter 2: Skill Challenges introduces an optional mechanic that utilizes multiple skill checks to get all the heroes of an adventuring group involved in overcoming obstacles.

Chapter 3: Equipment contains new gear, weapons, vehicles, and droids suitable for use in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign.

Chapter 4: Campaigns provides examples and advice for creating an intrigue campaign, in which subterfuge, deceit, and politics are important aspects of the heroes' adventures. Additionally, the chapter helps Gamemasters design villains that are both plausible and memorable.

Chapter 5: Factions and Organizations provides numerous examples of groups deeply immersed in politics, intelligence gathering, and clandestine operations. Each faction or organization entry includes goals, methods, and notable personnel, as well as ways to use the group as an antagonist or an ally for the heroes.

Chapter 6: Nyriaan presents a new planet that the Gamemaster can use for adventures rich in intrigue and conspiracy. This planet can serve as a base of operations or as an adventure setting.

Chapter 7: Intrigue Encounters includes eight mini-encounters that Gamemasters can weave into preexisting campaigns or use as new adventures. The mini-encounters cover a broad range of Challenge Levels and include the new skill challenge system from Chapter 2.

Chapter 8: The Perfect Storm is an adventure designed for four starting heroes of any background. The adventure takes place on the mining world of Nyriaan, and it can be set during any era of the *Star Wars* galaxy.

WHAT IS A GALAXY OF INTRIGUE CAMPAIGN?

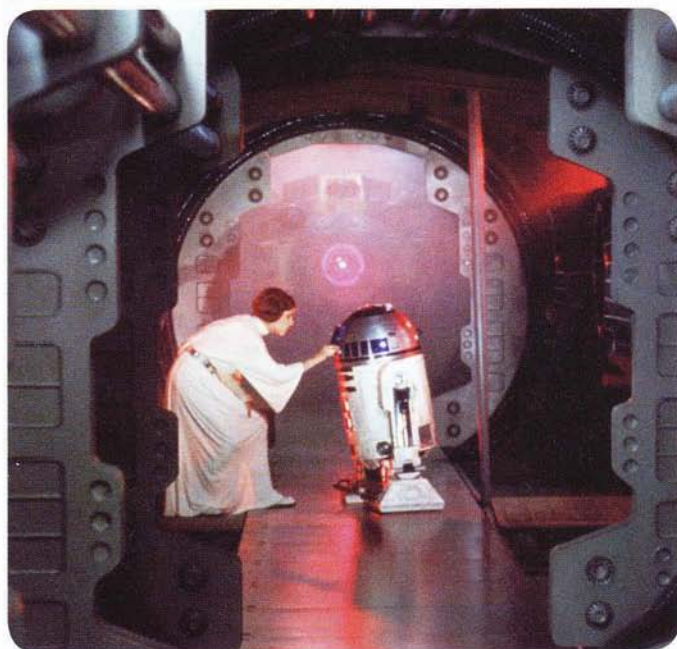
Just as *Scum and Villainy* looked at the seedier side of the *Star Wars* setting, where the heroes walked in the gray area between legality and illicit behavior, a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign enters the halls of power, where politicians shape the destiny of untold billions, corporations perform questionable deeds in pursuit of profit, and rebels plot to overthrow rulers. An intrigue campaign focuses on layers of deception, clandestine missions, and secret deals. Although heroes might be swept up in events and plans beyond their control, they are not mere pawns. They can use the same tactics against their enemies or the groups that oppose them. The heroes' activities might have a profound impact on the destinies of those around them, all through the techniques of cloak and vibrodagger.

Nothing Is What It Seems

In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, deception and lies are vital. As the heroes progress through encounters, each conclusion brings with it a number of additional questions to be answered, providing motivation for even more encounters. Heroes peel back the veneer that surrounds the forces of galactic society, revealing hidden secrets, old rivalries, and insidious plots that threaten to shift power in massive and dangerous ways. In turn, the heroes' goals should influence the galaxy around them. Over time, the heroes might begin to question the truth of the facade presented before them. Allies might turn out to be opponents and vice versa. The motives of even the most altruistic group or individual can become misguided, while the actions of the enemy might, in fact, hold a noble purpose.

Beyond the political arena, a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign also focuses heavily on the action of spies. Agents infiltrate military organizations to steal classified plans. Moles hide within the halls of power to relay information back to their controllers. Turncoats and saboteurs wreak havoc in factories and laboratories. Each character involved in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign has his or her own motivations, adding additional layers of complication and conflict to a scenario and making a great adventure.

LEIA HIDES THE DEATH STAR PLANS INSIDE OF R2-D2



Politics Is Personal

Politics plays a major part in *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaigns, with politicians using the power of a legislature, a royal court, or even a tribal council to shape policy and influence the will of the people. Corporations use their influence and their lobbyists to ease restrictions on trade. Interest groups of all kinds use the political arena to make their voices heard and draw attention to their messages. Politics touches every aspect of life in the galaxy, even in the most far-flung, backwater planets.

As a case in point, the conflict in *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace* begins innocuously enough as a trade dispute. Over the course of that and the subsequent movies, however, the galaxy is rocked as the dispute quickly progresses through a blockade, an armed conflict, the removal of the Supreme Chancellor, the rise of Senator Palpatine, and eventually the full-scale war of the Clone Wars in *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith*.

Tension Between Light and Dark

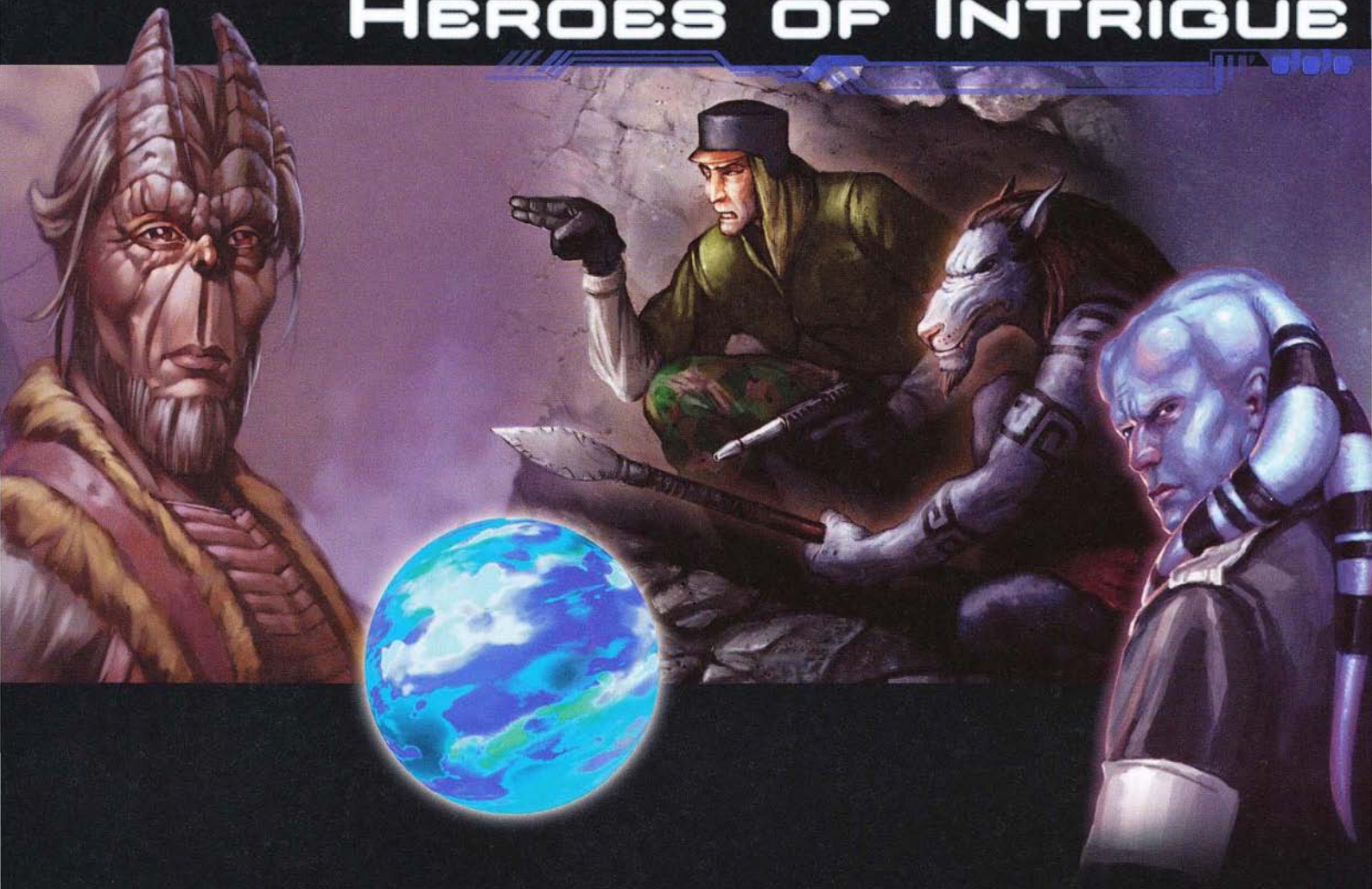
A *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign can also incorporate the conflict between the light and dark sides of the Force. Practitioners of the Force might be major figures in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign or mere players in the background, providing a bit of flavor. The Jedi maintain peace and harmony within the galaxy, working as negotiators and mediating disputes. However, Jedi often become immersed in plots and intrigue, and they must walk a careful path to maintain neutrality while seeking to solve problems. The machinations of intrigue sometimes push a Jedi too far, causing him or her to fall from the light side and into the dark.

The Sith serve the dark side and seek to subvert the balance of power in their favor, preferably at a very greedy, personal level. Yet not every practitioner of the dark side seeks wholesale genocide—many appear to be upstanding citizens, beloved by the galactic public. But while one hand spreads wealth, favors, and solutions to problems, the other is hidden from view, sowing the seeds of discontent and manipulating the lives of others. Gamemasters can use the tension between the light and dark sides of the Force, playing on the preconceived notions of the players and using the conflict as a canvas upon which to create entertaining and memorable adventures.

"I'M TAKING AN
AWFUL RISK, VADER.
THIS HAD BETTER
WORK."

—GRAND MOFF TARKIN

CHAPTER I HEROES OF INTRIGUE





Although the *Star Wars* universe is replete with scenes of breathtaking action, dramatic lightsaber duels, sweeping ship battles, and hair-raising escapes, it is also deeply immersed in intrigue. The galaxy is an enormous place with a huge variety of species, ideologies, corporations, and other groups jockeying to gain power and to carve their own destinies. A dense, if delicate, web of negotiations, treaties, alliances, and obligations weaves disparate groups together to stop the civilizations of the galaxy from descending into chaos. Sometimes this web keeps the peace, but often stability is threatened or overturned as masterminds scheme for more control. For the heroes, adventure is around every corner and, more often than not, comes looking for them instead of the other way around.

A *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign has plenty of room for every type of character, although creating heroes for an intrigue campaign requires a bit more thought than it might in other settings. Campaigns that focus on intrigue are less about kicking down doors and tossing in thermal detonators (although there is a time and place for that, as well) than about the gradual, but steady, discovery of information and secrets as the heroes unravel plots. This chapter provides more species, new feats, new talents, and a new twist on skill use to help your characters fit into a world of back room deals, clandestine meetings, blackmail, infiltration, and political maneuvering.

At first glance, the noble class seems to be the wisest choice in an intrigue campaign. To be sure, with its tremendous amount of skills and its intrigue-inspired talent trees, the noble class is well suited for this type of campaign, but the other classes have just as much to offer. Scoundrels use their silver tongues or dastardly tricks for their own personal gain. Scouts, as masters of infiltration, use their resources to break into Imperial facilities or corporate offices to retrieve valuable information. Soldiers need not be brutish thugs and can include military intelligence officers or bodyguards for the rich and powerful, picking up vital secrets as they go about their duties. Jedi, known for their role as peacekeepers and negotiators, find themselves wrapped up in densely woven plots and shifting agendas on a daily basis. In short, every class has its place in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, as long as the characters realize that not every situation can be solved with combat. The heroes must rely on their powers of observation and deduction to move the story along, as well.

SPECIES

Given the multitude of beings and cultures that inhabit the galaxy, many species rely on manipulation and diplomacy to advance their causes and do the best for their people. Certain species use intrigue and social engineering for noble pursuits, such as to maintain pacifist societies. Some, however, excel at pulling the strings of others for the sake of financial or political gain, or merely for the enjoyment of being in control.

SPECIES CHARACTERISTICS

Your character's species determines some of his or her qualities.

Ability Adjustments

Find your character's species on Table 1-1: Species Ability Adjustments, and apply the adjustments listed there to your character's ability scores. Use Tables 1-2 and 1-3 to help determine your character's age, height, and weight.

TABLE 1-1: SPECIES ABILITY ADJUSTMENTS

SPECIES	ABILITY ADJUSTMENTS
Bith	-2 Con, +2 Int, +2 Cha
Defel	-2 Str, +2 Int
Fosh	+2 Dex, -2 Con, +2 Cha
Givin	-2 Str, +2 Int,
Gotal	None
Herglic	+4 Str, -4 Dex
Mrlssi	-2 Str, +2 Int, +2 Cha
Neimoidian	-2 Str, +2 Cha
Umbaran	-2 Con, +2 Dex, +2 Wis

TABLE 1-2: AGE BY SPECIES

SPECIES	YOUNG		MIDDLE		OLD	VENERABLE
	CHILD	ADULT	ADULT	AGE		
Bith	1-11	12-15	16-50	51-70	71-84	85+
Defel	1-6	7-10	11-49	50-74	75-89	90+
Fosh	1-11	12-17	18-55	56-70	71-84	85+
Givin	1-10	11-14	15-48	49-64	65-79	80+
Gotal	1-9	10-12	13-40	41-60	61-75	76+
Herglic	1-15	16-19	20-55	56-79	80-95	96+
Mrlssi	1-4	5-8	9-35	36-69	70-89	90+
Neimoidian	1-11	12-16	17-40	41-57	58-79	80+
Umbaran	1-10	11-15	16-44	45-69	70-89	90+

TABLE 1-3: AVERAGE HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

SPECIES	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
Bith	1.7 m	75 kg
Defel	1.4 m	45 kg
Fosh	1.3 m	40 kg
Givin	1.8 m	70 kg
Gotal	2.0 m	85 kg
Herglic	2.2 m	110 kg
Mrlssi	1.2 m	40 kg
Neimoidian	1.9 m	70 kg
Umbaran	1.7 m	60 kg

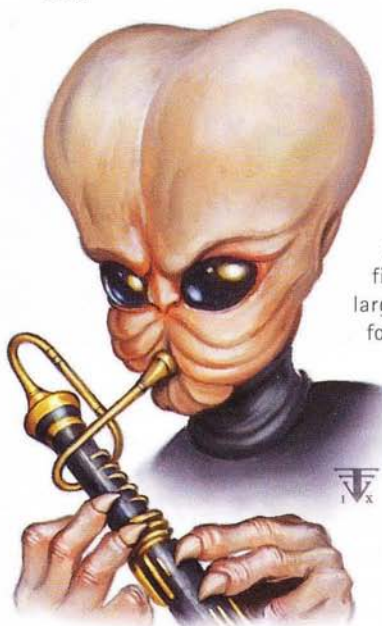
BITH

Bith have been part of the Galactic Republic for thousands of years. Intellectually advanced humanoids, Bith have oversized brains evolved to handle abstract skills such as language, mathematics, music, and scientific analysis. This fundamental shift to the intellect has caused brain functions related to instinct and biological drives to diminish. Their greater brainpower also means that Bith need to spend only four hours in a meditative trance to regain the energy that most species require eight hours to recover.

As a culture, Bith find the concept of warfare abhorrent, and most are pacifists. During the time of the Republic, the Bith are one of the loudest proponents for finding diplomatic solutions and for banning weapons and the industries of war. This pacifistic streak has roots in the Bith's past, when competition between two major corporations got out of hand, resulting in the release of a biological weapon that turned the surface of Clak'dor VII into an ecological wasteland. The survivors consequently sealed their cities in immense domes, while many ambitious Bith left their homeworld to travel the galaxy. During the time of the Clone Wars, the Bith hole up in their domed cities, remaining neutral and trying to ride out the worst of the fighting. Their wholesale return to galactic society does not occur until well into the time of the New Republic.

Bith are highly sought after in a wide variety of fields, including engineering, programming, education, commercial art, and, most importantly, ship design. Music is a vital and revered pursuit in Bith society. Bith musicians are relatively common (and welcome) and can be found playing in extravagant opera houses, seedy cantinas, and everything in between.

Personality: Bith are calm and rational, with a natural talent for technical and intellectual pursuits. Despite (or as a result of) its violent past, Bith culture is pacifistic. Individual Bith, however, run the range of demeanors, but most Bith lean toward using nonaggression to overcome difficulties. All Bith are stimulated by intellectual problems and artistic endeavors.



Physical Description: Bith are humanoid in shape; their most notable features are their bulbous heads and huge black eyes. Their skin is often somewhere between gray and pink, although some Bith have skin tints of yellow or green. They lack an external nose but have a finely tuned sense of smell. Their large eyes give them incredibly focused vision, allowing them to see into the microscopic scale, but in turn, they have poor long-range vision.

Homeworld: Bith originate from Clak'dor VII, a small planet in the Outer Rim that suffered heavily from the effects of biological warfare during a brief civil conflict. The inhabitants now reside in domed cities and rarely venture out of them onto the surface of the planet.

Languages: Bith speak and read Bith. Those who leave the confines of their cities learn Basic as well.

Example Names: Doikk, Figrin, Jinkins, Lirin, Nalan, Tech, Tedn, Thal.

Adventurers: Given their predilection for intellectual and peaceful pursuits, most Bith heroes are nobles. Force-users are uncommon, but some Bith have served with distinction in the Jedi Order over the millennia.

Bith Species Traits

Bith share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma. Bith bodily processes are not very efficient, but members of the species are bright and personable.

Size: Bith are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Bith base speed is 6 squares.

Meditative Trance: Bith can enter into a trance that lasts for four consecutive hours. At the end of the trance, they gain the benefits of having rested for eight consecutive hours.

Scent: Bith have an extremely strong sense of smell. At close range (within 10 squares), Bith ignore concealment and cover for the purpose of Perception checks, and they take no penalty for poor visibility when tracking (see Survival on page 73 of the Saga Edition core rulebook).

Evolved Intellect: Whenever a Bith spends a Force Point for any reason, the Bith gains a temporary Force Point that must be spent to add to an Intelligence-based skill check. If the temporary Force Point has not been used by the end of the encounter, it is lost.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Bith.

DEFEL

Defel come from the high-gravity world of Af'El, which orbits the supergiant Ka'Dedus. The planet is unusual in that the atmosphere absorbs all light except that in the ultraviolet spectrum. The Defel, along with every other animal on the planet, have evolved to see perfectly well in ultraviolet, but they are completely blind when exposed to other wavelengths of light. Defel that leave their homeworld must wear special visors that allow them to see. This evolution also had an interesting effect on Defel fur, making the creatures effectively invisible in the normal light in which most other species operate. This near-invisibility has earned the Defel the nickname "wraiths" because in visible light, they appear as nothing more than vague shadows.

Due to the crushing gravity and harsh seasons of their homeworld, Defel bind together into close-knit communities to survive. However, they also possess a strong streak of independence in personal matters. They are tough, resilient creatures with a deep and complex sense of honor, especially toward their families and patrons. Their cities are built underground, and Defel are accomplished miners and metallurgists—one of the reasons that outsiders contacted them in the first place. Af'El is one of the few planets blessed with large quantities of meleenium, a primary component in the manufacturing of durasteel.

Most Defel are content to remain in the safety of their underground cities, and the planet's tortuous gravity and harsh conditions mean that it has few visitors. Defel that leave Af'El are drawn toward professions that take advantage of their natural stealth and invisibility, such as thief, assassin, scout, and bodyguard. Most of the galaxy's inhabitants believe that the Defel are only characters from stories—invisible demons that lurk in the shadows.



DEFEL

Personality: Defel love independence and freedom. They are a proud people with a strong sense of self, almost to the point of stubbornness. Defel are loyal to friends, family, and employers, but they are not always trustworthy in the conventional sense. They like to work in secrecy and rely on conniving and manipulation to get their way with other species.

Physical Description: Defel are a short, mammalian species with canine like faces and sharp white teeth. Their arms and legs are relatively long for their frames and end in sharp talons that are used for digging and scratching rather than combat. Most importantly, their special fur renders them nearly invisible in normal light, making a Defel appear to be little more than a patch of shadow. In ultraviolet light, however, Defel appear in bright, vibrant colors ranging from golden to a brilliant azure. Defel are effectively blind in normal light and must wear special visors to see when away from their planet.

Homeworld: Defel come from the planet Af'El, which orbits the supergiant Ka'Dedus in the Outer Rim. The world receives few visitors because of its high gravity and its unusual atmosphere that blocks all but ultraviolet light.

Languages: Defel speak and read Defel. Adventurous Defel that leave the homeworld learn Basic.

Example Names: Arleil, Klaar, Morr, Defeen, Thar'quan, Vox.

Adventurers: The few Defel that leave the gravity well of their home planet take advantage of their stealthy and elusive nature, and most become scoundrels or scouts. Their keen intellect also means that some Defel become nobles. Defel Jedi are almost unheard-of.

Defel Species Traits

Defel share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Strength, +2 Intelligence. Defel have slight builds but keen, probing minds.

Size: Defel are of Small size and gain a +1 size bonus to Reflex Defense and a +5 size bonus to Stealth checks. However, their lifting and carrying limits are three-quarters of those of characters of Medium size.

Speed: Defel base speed is 6 squares.

Partial Invisibility: The fur of a Defel helps bend all but ultraviolet light, rendering him or her nearly invisible. A Defel in shadowy illumination or darker conditions is treated as having total concealment. Defel are fully visible and gain no concealment against opponents with darkvision.

Special Equipment: The eyes of Defel have evolved in such a way that they can see only in the ultraviolet spectrum. Defel that leave Af'El must wear special ultraviolet visors to see in normal light. Without such a visor, a Defel is considered blind (see "Blindness" on page 254 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). An ultraviolet visor costs 2,000 credits. A Defel character begins play with this item at no cost.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Defel.

FOSH

Almost completely unknown by the rest of the galaxy, Fosh are an avianlike species that hail from an unknown planet. Outwardly quiet, reserved, and thoughtful, in truth Fosh are contemptuous of other species and consider all non-Fosh to be inferior. Fosh keep this condescension and bigotry to themselves, however. They are remarkably manipulative and are masters of intrigue, deal making, and deception. Only Bothans are more skilled at pulling the strings of others. Because the Fosh are close-mouthed and few in number, even the name and location of their homeworld is shrouded in mystery.

Fosh are short and slender with hollow bones. Their faces end in sharp beaks with openings that turn up at the back to give Fosh permanent, sardonic smiles. Their arms end in delicate hands that each have four taloned fingers. Their sturdy legs end in twin splayed talons that allow them to perch on incredibly narrow spaces, such as pipes or large branches. Soft whiskers radiate from the front ridges of their heads, much as hair does on a Human, along with two antennae, which do not seem to serve any purpose—at least, not one that scholars can identify. Feathers on a Fosh's head turn different colors, depending on the Fosh's mood. Because of their delicate nature and fragile makeup, most Fosh stay away from violence and rely on their manipulation skills to defuse difficult situations.

Personality: Fosh are quiet and private. They speak obliquely with other species, sowing confusion with cryptic phrases and riddles. Fosh rarely confess their true motivations for anything and focus on the long term, setting up elaborate plans and schemes to realize their interests. Most Fosh look down on other species, a fact they keep to themselves.

Physical Description: Fosh are short, slender, and graceful birdlike humanoids. Their heads are capped with two antennae and a plumage of feathers that change color based on each Fosh's mood. Their faces end in short beaks, and their eyes, which have a gemlike quality, are commonly colored ruby red, bright citrine, or deep azure. Special glands connected to their tear ducts allow Fosh to release a unique chemical that can be used to create powerful medicine. Using this ability takes a toll on a Fosh, who must rest to regain strength afterward.

Homeworld: Unknown.

Languages: Basic and Fosh.

Example Names: Larerre, Ootorr, Kourere, Vergere, Villatee.



FOSH

Adventurers: Regal and charismatic, most Fosh heroes are nobles or scoundrels. Force-users are relatively common, but only a tiny fraction of Fosh have become Jedi. Few Fosh have the fortitude and propensity for violence necessary to become soldiers.

Fosh Species Traits

Fosh share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Charisma. Fosh are nimble and persuasive, but they possess frail and delicate bones.

Size: As creatures of Small size, Fosh gain a +1 size bonus to Reflex Defense and a +5 size bonus to Stealth checks. However, their lifting and carrying limits are three-quarters of those of characters of Medium size.

Speed: Fosh base speed is 6 squares.

Deceptive: A Fosh can reroll any Deception check, but must keep the second result, even if it is worse.

Healing Glands: Fosh can exude a powerful fluid from their tear ducts that can aid in the healing process for most species. A Fosh is always considered to have a medpac or medical kit for the purposes of making Treat Injury checks, and can perform Trained Only applications of the Treat Injury skill even when untrained.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Fosh.

GIVIN

Even with the diversity of species in the galaxy, the Givin often manage to shock or at least cause unease in most humanoids, since they greatly resemble walking skeletons. However, Givin are universally sought after as starship builders and engineers, both for their mathematically inclined minds and for their unique physiology that allows them to survive in complete vacuum.

Mathematics permeates every aspect of Givin society, so much so that even their language is infused with such concepts. Givin children start training early, preparing their minds to handle incredibly complex equations. Rigorous competitions determine the best and the brightest students, who are sent to monasteries where they spend their lives in deep contemplation, attempting to unravel the mysteries of life through formulae and mathematics.

The shipyards that circle Yag'Duhl, the Givin homeworld, produce sturdy and elegant starships and compete on a level matched only by the Duros and Verpine, the only species that receive grudging respect from the Givin. However, Givin designers do not equip their ships with navicomputers, since most Givin can calculate hyperspace jumps in their heads, and they often overlook life-support systems. Members of other species that purchase Givin-built ships must add these components.

Personality: Givin are so analytical and logical that they think and converse in mathematical terminology. They typically keep to themselves, leading other species to consider them withdrawn and somber. Givin approach most events with only vague interest. However, when presented with a mathematical puzzle, they become animated and verbose, especially

GIVIN



with anyone that can keep up with their explanations. Givin informally refer to members of other species as "soft" and regard most of them with a mix of pity and contempt because of their inability to survive in a vacuum unaided.

Physical Description: Givin are gaunt and skeletal, with exteriors covered in sealed carapaces. These exoskeletons act as organic vacuum suits, allowing the Givin to survive in a complete lack of atmosphere and making them immune to the effects of inhalants. Their faces are best described as forlorn, with frowning mouths and dark, triangular eyes.

Homeworld: Givin are from the planet Yag'Duhl, located in the Inner Rim. Massive tidal forces constantly tug at the water and atmosphere of the planet, exposing areas to hard vacuum. The Givin reside inside sealed cities that are able to withstand the massive crush of tidal energy.

Languages: The Givin language is thick with mathematical terms, and the written language conveys information using hundreds of mathematical symbols. Individuals without a grounding in advanced mathematics find the species' language almost incomprehensible.

Example Names: Elis Helrot, Lersia Narth, Na-Soth Larr, Nisil Alarin, Sladru Nalas.

Adventurers: Givin that leave their homeworld are likely to become nobles or scouts. Givin scoundrels are also relatively common and have a propensity for gambling, a pursuit in which their mathematical skills give them an edge. Givin soldiers are tough and make excellent troops in hard vacuum encounters. Givin Force-users are rare.

Givin Species Traits

Givin share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Strength, +2 Intelligence. Givin lack physical strength, but they are extremely analytical.

Size: Givin are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Givin base speed is 6 squares.

Exoskeleton: The hard shells of Givin grant them DR 2 and a +2 species bonus to Fortitude Defense.

Deductive Reasoning: Givin constantly evaluate data, discarding inconclusive results. A Givin can reroll any Knowledge check, but the result of the reroll must be accepted, even if it is worse.

Unique Physiology: Givin have sealed exoskeletons and do not breathe in a conventional sense. They are immune to the effects of vacuum and to the effects of inhaled chemicals and poisons.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Givin.

GOTAL

Gotals are tall beings covered in thick fur that come from the moon Antar 4, one of several that orbit the gas giant Antar in the Prindaar System. The moon has a highly unusual cycle of light and dark, sometimes illuminated brightly and other times shrouded in complete darkness. To compensate for these uncertain conditions, Gotals evolved special cones atop their heads that sense subtle shifts in the electromagnetic field, allowing them to operate in light or dark without hindrance. The cones are sensitive enough to sense not only the presence of living creatures nearby but also a creature's mood or intent.

Emotions are an important part of Gotal culture. Young Gotals live in a constant state of confusion as they are bombarded by the emotions of others. Learning to handle this input is what pushes a Gotal toward adulthood and maturity. Adult Gotals are calm, almost serene beings, but despite their outward appearance, they feel the full breadth of emotions. Because they are so sensitive to emotions, Gotals quickly form meaningful relationships with one another. Gotals prefer to be around their own kind and dislike droids, mainly because the electromagnetic fields produced by droids cause an irritating buzz perceptible to the Gotals's heightened senses.

Gotals learned long ago to keep their opinions to themselves, and thus they make excellent negotiators and diplomats. Some individuals, however, use their natural abilities for nefarious purposes and become assassins or bounty hunters, tracking their prey by the emotional trail it broadcasts. Most species appreciate the self-discipline that Gotals exhibit, but some are hesitant to associate with members of the species for fear of having their private passions and motivations revealed.

Personality: Because they can read the emotions of other beings, Gotals have learned to be extremely polite and discreet with the information that they glean. They keep their own emotions to themselves and speak to others in neutral terms to maintain civility. Indeed, Gotals are incapable of expressing emotions in words, relying on their cones to communicate their feelings to other Gotals. As a result, Gotals speak only in abstract terms, leading most other sentients to think they are emotionless beings.

Physical Description: Gotals are tall creatures with flat, elongated faces. Thick, wiry hair covers most of their bodies. A Gotal's most notable feature is a pair of short cones that rises from his or her forehead. These

GOTAL



cones pick up subtle variations in the electromagnetic fields of other beings, providing the Gotal with the locations and emotional states of the other creatures.

Homeworld: Gotals come from the moon Antar 4, located in orbit around Antar in the Inner Rim.

Languages: Gotals speak Basic and Gotal. However, the form of Basic they speak is devoid of emotional context. The Gotal language is impossible for other species to learn, because so much of it relies on feedback relayed through their head cones.

Example Names: Abav Ghart, Glott, Kith Kark, Lishma, Mnor Nha, Pari Not-

goth, Tolokai, To-yel.

Adventurers: Because Gotals can sense emotions, most adventuring members of the species become nobles, but some take advantage of their abilities and become scoundrels. When Gotals become scouts, they usually do so to escape the constant electromagnetic buzzing they experience when in close company with other species. Force-users are relatively common, and many Gotals become Jedi, combining their natural empathy with the Force to great effect.

Gotal Species Traits

Gotals share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: Gotals have no ability score adjustments.

Size: Gotals are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Gotal base speed is 6 squares.

Energy Reading: Gotals can read the emotions of any sentient being within 6 squares. As a standard action, a Gotal can make a Perception check against a target's Will Defense. A successful check reveals the target's emotional state (such as happy, sad, nervous, or scared).

Low-Light Vision: Gotals ignore concealment (but not total concealment) from darkness.

Sensor Cones: A Gotal can use the Sense Force and Sense Surroundings applications of the Use the Force skill untrained.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Gotal.

HERGLIC

Herglics are hulking bipeds that evolved from water-dwelling mammals on the planet Giju. Their ancestors' fins and flukes have been replaced by arms and legs, although Herglics still breathe through blowholes on the tops of their heads.

As a whole, Herglics are great believers in fairness and honesty. They are renowned for always being upright traders and for honoring any deal or bargain they make. They assume that others behave in a similar fashion, and few things anger a Herglic more than deceit and cheating.

Herglics are risk-takers, both by nature and by ancient cultural tradition. They love meeting new beings and experiencing the sights and sounds of new places. They develop space travel independently of other species, and it is Herglic exploration that helps the Old Republic spread through the stars as quickly as it does. Giju is among the first worlds in the Old Republic, and the Herglics often establish trading posts in colonies just for the excitement of visiting exotic locales.

Herglic mercantile networks are a vital part of the galactic economy for thousands of years, and these networks stand loyally with the Old Republic during its greatest challenges because the Herglics support the fairness and justice they see in the galactic government. However, Herglics become increasingly marginalized as decadence, corruption, and greed take hold of the galactic government at virtually every level.

Many consider the Herglics to be cowards and traitors to the people of the galaxy, and they are viewed with contempt in many quarters even a century after the fall of Emperor Palpatine. But the Herglics are happy to be in a position to help devastated worlds rebuild by supplying them with high quality goods at fair prices.

Personality: Herglics are so easy-going and gregarious that they drive more high-strung beings, such as the Ubese, to distraction. Herglics love interacting and socializing with others, and they are often very generous when it comes to sharing wealth and good fortune. Anyone in need usually finds his or her Herglic friends among the first to offer assistance. Their helpful nature causes many Herglics to fall victim to petty con artists, but professional criminals know that when a Herglic feels betrayed, he or she will go to great lengths to take revenge. More than one small-time swindler has been stalked by top bounty hunters after taking advantage of the wrong Herglic.

Members of the species also crave excitement—in fact, many Herglics become addicted to thrill seeking. This often manifests as a tendency to gamble to excess; only a strong-willed Herglic can pass up a game of chance. Once they start to gamble, they do not stop unless forced to quit, and a Herglic can easily lose everything—including the clothes off his or her back—in a short time by betting in the wrong casinos. For this reason, all forms of gambling are outlawed or heavily regulated on worlds with large Herglic populations.

HERGLIC



Physical Description:

Adult Herglics stand between 1.7 and 2.2 meters in height, and their heavily muscled bodies are very wide for their height. In fact, Herglics are so large that they cannot fit through doorways or corridors built with less massive beings in mind. Virtually all ships piloted by Herglics are either specially constructed or extensively modified at yards operated by their species.

Herglic bodies are hairless, and their skin ranges from a deep blue-gray to a black that is darker than the depths of space. Some Herglics have white bellies or white stripes that run up the sides of their bodies and terminate at their large, heavily lidded eyes. Herglic eyes are nearly universally black in color, although some rare individuals might have blue or red eyes.

Homeworld: Herglics originate on the Colonies Region world of Giju, a planet known for its deep oceans and lush islands.

Languages: All Herglics know Basic and Herglic. Widely traveled Herglics often learn up to a dozen different languages.

Example Names: Stavros K'Hor, Udo Broxin, Fahjani Tohvar, Elbor Cruhn.

Adventurers: Adventuring Herglics tend to be merchants who deal with speculative cargo and ply out-of-the-way ports on obscure trade routes, or they are explorers who scout little-visited systems. Wealthy Herglics have been known to travel space looking for new experiences by becoming involved with unusual people or places. Some even work as spies or information brokers, using their massive bulk to hide in plain sight—surely no one that memorable could have been the source of the information that leaked from the ball hosted by the Moff last month. Common classes for adventuring Herglics are noble, scoundrel, and scout. During the ancient times of conflict against the Sith Empire, a few Herglics become Jedi, although their numbers fall as the Jedi withdraw socially from the peoples around them.

Species Traits

Herglics share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: +4 Strength, -4 Dexterity. Herglics are large and strong, but they lack grace and manual dexterity.

Size: As creatures of Large size, Herglics take a -1 size penalty to Reflex Defense and a -5 size penalty to Stealth checks, and they gain a +5 size bonus to damage threshold. Their lifting and carrying limits are double those of characters of Medium size.

Speed: Herglic base movement is 6 squares.

Sturdy: Herglics are solidly built and literally have tough skin. This trait lets them ignore punishment that might knock other beings flat. Whenever a Herglic catches a second wind, he or she regains a number of additional hit points equal to 5 + one-half its level.

Conditional Bonus Feat: Herglics are gregarious creatures with a gift for inducing others to open up. A Herglic with Gather Information as a trained skill receives Skill Focus (Gather Information) as a bonus feat.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Herglic.

MRLSSI

The diminutive Mrlssi hail from the Colonies Region world of Mrlsst, and they are the only sentient species native to their star system. They evolved from flightless avians, and their faces are dominated by large black eyes and hooked beaks.

Mrlssi are typically peaceful and scholarly. Their homeworld has long been home to some of the galaxy's most prestigious universities and research centers, including one of the leading institutions for applied sciences—the Mrlsst Trade and Science Academy. Out of Mrlssi schools grow a host of findings that ease the shipping of food and livestock between worlds, along with innovations that later become standard construction techniques for structures and vessels on planets and in space.

Despite their place of honor among the galaxy's scientists and engineers, Mrlssi are not commonly encountered off their homeworld. They rarely leave their home system, and when they do, they travel for specific purposes and to specific destinations. When their task is done, they return home. The exception is an enclave of Mrlssi that grew up on the world of Byblos, where Mrlssi professors have been fixtures at the engineering and applied astromechanics colleges of the University of Byblos for generations.

The Mrlssi stay out of the wars that mark the rise and fall of the Galactic Empire, so Mrlsst is spared most of the devastation experienced by other worlds. The reputations of the planet's schools suffer due to Imperial propaganda that demeans anything not dominated by Humans, but Mrlsst does not come under military attack until five years after Emperor Palpatine's demise on the second Death Star. As part of his campaign against the New Republic, Imperial Grand Admiral Thrawn besieges and bombards Mrlsst, laying waste to many of the world's ancient and beautiful campuses.

Proving that intellectual power endures, the Mrlssi quickly rebuild more modest campuses and soon are again at the forefront of learning and scientific development in the galaxy. Even the threat of the Yuuzhan Vong merely brightens the glow of knowledge around Mrlsst, as research scien-

tists and students at the schools race to find ways to counteract the alien biotechnology.

Personality: Mrlssi are quick-witted and detail-oriented beings who value knowledge over physical possessions. Even the richest Mrlssi live modestly, although they often have huge libraries consisting of rare and obscure texts. Mrlssi are seldom impressed by shows of wealth or power, but they always have great respect for talented intellectuals and scientists.

Mrlssi are natural problem-solvers, and they love mysteries and puzzles. This quality, coupled with keen analytical abilities, is what makes their engineers so good at improving upon existing designs. They can spot a design weakness and work at it until they have found the key to fixing the limitation.

Mrlssi enjoy intelligent conversations and tinkering with gadgets, and they love nothing more than friendly debates over the relative strengths of various starships or speeders. They also delight in jokes and wordplay, considering themselves among the galaxy's foremost humorists. However, Mrlssi humor is often so dry or based on convoluted premises that members of other species can have a difficult time knowing when a Mrlssi is joking.

Physical Description: Mrlssi are a blue-skinned, diminutive species. The average adult stands between 0.7 and 1.3 meters tall. Their bodies are covered in feathers, but their arms, legs, and faces are scaly. Young Mrlssi have brown or gray feathers, but as they age, they develop brightly colored plumage. Mrlssi have three clawed digits on each of their hands and feet.

Mrlssi speak in high, piping voices. When they communicate in their native language, the sound of their vocalizations is generally considered to be beautiful, but when they speak Basic, their voices are grating to some species.

Homeworld: The Mrlssi originate on Mrlsst, a Colonies Region world noted for its lush jungles and institutions of higher learning.

Languages: Mrlssi know their native language (Mrlsstese) and Basic. Many also master the Durese and Arkanian languages so they can study classic scientific texts in their original forms.



Example Names: Kepor Dagwa, Virssl Jasst, Crlisst Herssek, Krssibel Waray.

Adventurers: Adventuring Mrissi are extremely rare, but the few that exist tend to be explorers or spies. The former are usually scholars with an interest in lost civilizations, and they can be found just about anywhere in the galaxy, leading archeological expeditions chartered by top universities and wealthy patrons. The latter might not be scholars, but they take advantage of their species' bookish, harmless reputation to engage in industrial espionage (or worse). Mrissi agents are among some of the favorite outside operatives employed by Bothan agencies, and they are key to a number of successful Alliance operations during the Galactic Civil War.

Species Traits

Mrissi share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Strength, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma. Mrissi are small creatures, but they are quick-witted and very charismatic.

Size: As creatures of Small size, Mrissi gain a +1 size bonus to Reflex Defense and a +5 size bonus to Stealth checks. However, their lifting and carrying limits are three-quarters of those of characters of Medium size.

Speed: Mrissi base speed is 4 squares.

Skills: Mrissi have a natural inclination for working with mechanical devices. Mechanics is always a class skill for Mrissi.

Scholarly Inclination: At 1st level, a Mrissi gains any one trained Knowledge skill as a bonus skill.

Conditional Bonus Feat: Mrissi love intellectual discussions. A Mrissi with Persuasion as a trained skill gains Skill Focus (Persuasion) as a bonus feat.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Mrisstese.

NEIMOIDIAN

Neimoidians descend from a group of Duros colonists that, during the earliest period of their species' exploration of space, venture far beyond the edge of regions considered possible to settle. These colonists exist in isolation for thousands of years, in the small cluster of stars from which they draw their name. When contact is reestablished by the Twelfth Alderaanian Expedition, the expedition discovers a unique civilization that has spread to a dozen planets and is based around trade and conspicuous consumption.

The Neimoidians quickly find a place in galactic civilization, excited by the prospect of markets beyond their own worlds. For several centuries, they are among the leading forces behind the construction of new starports and the upgrade of existing ones. They trade with everyone—Republic or Sith, Hutt or Herglic—because to the Neimoidians, all that matters is a market for their goods. They help found the Trade Federation, a cartel of mercantile interests that, driven by Neimoidian greed, becomes so powerful that it threatens the very interstellar commerce it exists to protect. When the organization attempts to become the sole conduit for trade in certain parts of space,

the Senate and the Jedi intervene. The Trade Federation is shattered, and Neimoidians see the wealth and galactic authority they accumulated over centuries evaporate within a few short years.

Neimoidian leaders then make the decision to ally with the Separatist movement led by renegade Jedi Count Dooku, which results in the complete dismantling of everything they had built beyond their home systems. For the entire period of the Galactic Empire, Neimoidian starports are under heavy Imperial control, and any efforts they make to reestablish their once-mighty trade networks are undermined at every turn.

As a result, Neimoidian society turns inward in a self-imposed isolation that is as total as any they experienced during the millennia they spent as a "lost Duros colony." The Neimoidians remain isolationists through the Legacy era, and the few Neimoidians that wander beyond their home space are usually on the run from enemies at home and passing themselves off as Duros.

Personality: Neimoidians are greedy and cowardly, always striving to acquire just one more credit but trying to make sure that someone else takes whatever risks are associated with getting it. Any agreements or promises they make are always full of loopholes and caveats, since Neimoidians never want to suffer the embarrassment of a bad deal or risk being unable to predict every eventuality. Neimoidians want to appear cunning and as if they are the intellectual masters of every situation they encounter, but they typically are just conniving and devious.

Neimoidians hate manual labor and physical activity, viewing such actions as tasks for underlings. They are very fond of mechanical equipment that does work for them and they are enthralled by labor-saving devices of all kinds. Droids are especially popular among Neimoidians.

Physical Description: Neimoidians are slight of build and stand between 1.6 and 2 meters in height. They are hairless, with large red eyes and wide, lipless mouths. Their skin is usually bluish gray, but it can range in tone from very pale to almost black. Neimoidians favor expensive clothing



NEIMOIDIAN

and are always seen in public wearing whatever symbols of office or rank they possess.

Homeworld: Neimoidians hail from a cluster of planets in the far reaches of the Colonies Region; the humid world of Neimoidia is their main home.

Languages: Basic, Durese, and Neimoidian.

Example Names: Rune Haako, Hath Monchar, Daultay Dofine, Tey How.

Adventurers: Prior to the rise of the Empire, Neimoidian adventurers tend to be political leaders or merchants who have fallen on hard times and struggle to regain their former status by working as blackmailers or informants. In later eras, Neimoidian adventurers are dedicated professionals who work in a range of occupations requiring the underhanded double-dealings at which they excel, such as trade negotiator, diplomat, debt collector, private investigator, and corporate spy. Regardless of occupation, Neimoidian adventurers are usually nobles or scoundrels.

Species Traits

Neimoidians share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Strength, +2 Charisma. Neimoidians avoid physical activity and confrontation, preferring instead to rely on the power of their personalities to achieve success.

Size: Neimoidians are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Neimoidian base movement is 6 squares.

Conditional Bonus Feats: Neimoidians strive to slant deals in their favor, and they make agreements that they can break easily if they feel so inclined. A Neimoidian with Deception as a trained feat gains Skill Focus (Deception) as a bonus feat. A Neimoidian trained in Persuasion gains Skill Focus (Persuasion) as a bonus feat.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Neimoidian.

UMBARAN

The Umbarans hail from a hard-to-reach world deep within the Outer Rim's Ghost Nebula. Although they have been part of galactic civilization for millennia, very few Umbarans have left their home system, and even fewer have risen to positions of power and fame in the galaxy. Umbarans are interested in alien cultures and civilizations, but they prefer to observe from a distance rather than take an active role in events.

During the rise of the Empire, the Umbarans spend a few decades moving through the halls of supreme political power. An Umbaran named Sly Moore serves as Palpatine's chief aide during his later years as Chancellor of the Republic and the earliest period of his reign as Emperor. Moore's prominence in galactic politics causes her to be so admired on her homeworld that she inspires other Umbarans to venture out into the rest of the galaxy. Many of them join Moore on Coruscant, and soon Umbarans are a common sight on that world.

As Palpatine's New Order becomes increasingly biased toward Humans, Moore vanishes from the Emperor's side and moves into more shadowy roles within his government. From deep within the intelligence apparatus, she and other Umbarans lead efforts to root out anyone who is not unquestionably loyal to Emperor Palpatine, and they answer only to the Emperor. They are so effective that even Emperor Palpatine's most dedicated followers grow to fear them, something that strengthens the antialien sentiment among many of the Emperor's closest advisors. The Umbarans are particularly disliked by officers of Imperial Intelligence, who

resent the fact that they are subject to Umbaran scrutiny—a resentment that grows every time the Umbarans unmask a Rebel double agent in their ranks.

After the death of Emperor Palpatine and the collapse of his government, the Umbarans find themselves under threat from the Rebels they had hunted and the New Order supporters they had intimidated. When former head of Imperial Intelligence Ysanne Isard forges a powerful coalition on Coruscant dedicated to reestablishing a strong Galactic Empire, the remaining Umbarans flee the planet, knowing that Isard will seek brutal revenge for the embarrassments they caused her organization when she was rising through the ranks of Imperial Intelligence.

Even before the fall of the Empire, however, Umbarans already begin to retreat from the galaxy. As the full scope of Emperor Palpatine's evil becomes more evident and knowledge of the atrocities committed in his name more widespread, the Umbarans grow embarrassed over Moore's association with the Emperor, and they resume their reclusive ways. In fact, they withdraw even more fully than before, fearing retribution from the many species surrounding them.

As memories of the Empire start to fade in the minds of the galaxy's beings, Umbarans begin to filter back out into the galaxy in the low numbers typical of their off-world presence during the Old Republic.

UMBARAN



Personality: Umbarans seem aloof, distant, and cold to all but their closest friends and family members, and it is a rare observer who has the patience to wait for an Umbaran to let his or her guard down. As such, the few Umbarans active beyond their homeworld tend to be regarded by other beings as ciphers.

Because of this emotional distance, many non-Umbarans mistakenly assume that Umbarans are indifferent to those around them. Nothing could be further from the truth. Although Umbarans keep their own affairs private, they constantly and quietly try to learn as much as they can about the affairs of others. The Umbaran knack for uncovering secrets has led to rumors that all members of the species are telepaths, but the truth is that they move about unnoticed simply because of their outsider status, listening and observing all the while.

Physical Description: Umbarans are thinly built humanoids with sunken eyes and pallid skin tones that range from snowy white to pale blue. Male Umbarans stand between 1.7 and 2 meters tall; females tend to be shorter and slighter of build.

Homeworld: Umbarans originate from the isolated, dark world of Umbara on the Outer Rim.

Languages: Basic and Umbarese.

Example Names: Sly Moore, Hant Tuff, Zan Palton.

Adventurers: Most Umbaran adventurers are hard-bitten loners who come off as antisocial in their interactions with others. They often work as bounty hunters, explorers, or administrators of remote facilities that are mostly automated. A few Umbarans have been known to work for intelligence organizations and corporations as spies, usually as "deniable assets." Umbaran adventurers can be of any class, although scoundrels and scouts dominate. Nobles tend to be the coldest and most unfriendly of Umbaran adventurers, since they typically harbor dark secrets that caused them to leave their homeworld under less-than-reputable circumstances.

Species Traits

Umbarans share the following traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Constitution, +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom. Umbarans are not as sturdy as many species, but they are naturally stealthy and observant.

Size: Umbarans are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Umbaran base movement is 6 squares.

Darkvision: Umbarans ignore concealment (including total concealment) from darkness. However, they cannot perceive colors in total darkness.

Stealthy: An Umbaran can reroll any Stealth check but must keep the second result, even if it is worse.

Conditional Bonus Feat: Umbarans are born observers, and they enjoy watching events from hidden vantage points. An Umbaran with Gather Information as a trained skill gains Skill Focus (Gather Information) as a bonus feat.

Automatic Languages: Basic and Umbarese.

NEW TALENTS FOR HEROIC CLASSES

The galaxy is rife with intrigue. Every species, corporation, planet, fiefdom, and other group has its own agendas and methods for getting its way. With so many interests jockeying for power, for good or for ill, nearly every individual can be considered to be involved in some form of conspiracy, if only as part of a demographic to be catered to or exploited. Even the hinterlands of the Outer Rim are home to plots for riches or power, meaning that only the most isolated creatures can truly pursue their destinies without influence. Heroes, however, are not such beings. They find themselves more enmeshed in the games of intrigue with every passing moment. This section explores how heroes who embrace those schemes and maneuvers can rise to become more than mere pawns—they can be vital parts of the board and, in some cases, the players who move the pieces in the first place.

NOBLE

Nobles are the movers and shakers of the galaxy, shaping policy, setting examples, and dictating the courses of countless lives. Nobles live and breathe intrigue, from the local level all the way up to the Republic Senate and everything in between. They are masters of brokering deals, shifting attitudes, and shaping mobs to suit a political purpose.

Outside the safety of the palace, corporate boardroom, or Senate, nobles use their presence and oratorical skills to motivate and their actions to inspire. Most nobles find violence distasteful, but when a situation turns sour, they are often the first to pick up a blaster to engage in "extreme negotiations," using power to turn the tables. They also know that utter eradication of the enemy is rarely the best solution to a problem. The wisest nobles use their abilities to persuade their allies as often as they try to win over their opponents.

Nobles realize that the fates of many beings, whether members of their immediate clans or the population of an entire sector, rest on their shoulders. Some nobles carry this weight with confidence, sacrificing their own best interests for the sake of the people they support. Others see their status and clout as a way to improve their station through graft, corruption, and the general abuse of power. Truly adroit nobles blur the line between their outward actions and their actual motives. Some act as rakes while attempting to use covert methods to push through important legislation. Others (such as Senator Palpatine) pose as apparently selfless public servants who quietly use their positions to further sinister plots.

In a campaign of intrigue, nobles are an obvious choice for a heroic class. They help soothe frayed feelings and negotiate to gain benefits for their group. They broker deals and diffuse tense situations before blasters are drawn. And nobles are frequently travelers, using their wealth and influence to dabble in all the limitless experiences of the galaxy, trying new things until they become bored or find something else to draw their attention.

MASTER OF INTRIGUE TALENT TREE

You are a skilled manipulator and have mastered the art of working behind the scenes to accomplish your goals. Flash and spectacle are inferior tools, only suitable for those without your unique talents.

Advanced Planning: When you roll Initiative for combat, choose one willing ally within your line of sight. You and that ally swap Initiative results.

Blend In: You know how to blend into a variety of cultures and groups with ease. As a swift action, you gain total concealment when adjacent to at least two other creatures. This benefit does not apply to attacks from adjacent creatures.

Done It All: When you select this talent, choose two talents (from any nonprestige class) that you do not possess but for which you meet the prerequisites. Once per turn on your turn, you can spend a Force Point as a free action to gain the benefits of one of those talents until the end of your next turn.

Get into Position: Once per encounter, at the start of your first turn, choose two allies within 12 squares and in your line of sight. Each ally can immediately move up to his or her speed as a reaction.

Master Manipulator: You are a master of making things happen the way you want them to. You can use each of the following actions once per encounter as a swift action on your turn:

Demand Recovery: Select one ally within 5 squares and in your line of sight. That ally moves +5 steps on the condition track and gains a +2 morale bonus to attack rolls and skill checks until the end of your next turn.

Exceptional Control: Roll a d20 and note the result. Once before the end of the encounter, as a reaction you can replace the result of any enemy's or ally's d20 roll with the result you rolled for this ability. The enemy or ally must be within your line of sight.

Word of Warning: Select one ally within 5 squares and in your line of sight. Once before the end of the encounter, as a reaction to that ally having any defense score targeted by a skill check or an attack, you can replace that ally's defense score with your same defense score until the attack or skill check is resolved.

Prerequisite: Advanced Planning, Get into Position.

Retaliation: Whenever you move down the condition track as a result of taking damage that equals or exceeds your damage threshold, the next time you hit and damage a creature or a droid with a melee or a ranged attack before the end of your next turn, you automatically move the target -1 step on the condition track.

Prerequisite: Advanced Planning.



SKILL CHALLENGE TALENT TREE

You excel at complex tasks and are always called upon when your allies need something done quickly and done right.

Guaranteed Boon: Whenever you spend a Force Point to add to a skill roll in a skill challenge and accrue a failure for that skill check, you regain that Force Point.

Leading Skill: Whenever you earn a success in a skill challenge, you gain a +2 insight bonus to your next skill check made with a different skill in the same skill challenge.

Learn from Mistakes: Whenever you accrue a failure in a skill challenge, you grant the next ally to take an action in the skill challenge a +2 insight bonus to a skill check, provided that ally takes a different action (and uses a different skill) than you did.

Try Your Luck: Whenever you accrue a failure in a skill challenge, choose one ally. The next time that ally uses the same skill that you used to accrue a failure before the end of the skill challenge, that ally rolls two dice on the skill check and keeps the better result.

SUPERIOR SKILLS TALENT TREE

You're not just good at what you do, you're the best. Failure is but a stumbling block, and great success always follows.

Assured Skill: When you select this talent, choose one skill. Whenever you roll a skill check with that skill, you can choose to lose any competence bonuses to that skill check and instead roll 2 dice, keeping either result.

You can select this talent multiple times. Each time you do so, you must choose a different skill to gain the benefits of this talent.

Critical Skill Success: Whenever you roll a natural 20 on a skill check, choose one other skill. Once before the end of your next turn, you can choose to gain a +5 competence bonus to a check with that skill as a free action.

Exceptional Skill: When you select this talent, choose one skill. Whenever you roll a skill check with that skill, a result of 2–7 on the die is always treated as though you had rolled an 8.

You can select this talent multiple times. Each time you do so, you must choose a different skill to gain the benefits of this talent.

Prerequisite: Trained in the chosen skill.

Reliable Boon: Whenever you spend a Force Point to add to a skill check, you always reroll a result of 1 on any of your Force Point dice, and continue to reroll until you get a result of 2 or higher.

Skill Boon: When you select this talent, choose one skill. Whenever you spend a Force Point to add to that skill, increase the die type of your Force Point by one step (i.e. from d6 to d8, d8 to d10, or d10 to d12), to a maximum of d12.

You can select this talent multiple times. Each time you do so, you must choose a different skill to gain the benefits of this talent.

Prerequisite: Trained in the chosen skill.

Skill Confidence: When you select this talent, choose one skill. Whenever you roll a natural 19 or a natural 20 on a skill check with that skill, you gain the benefits of the Critical Skill Success talent and also gain bonus hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.

You can select this talent multiple times. Each time you do so, you must choose a different skill to gain the benefits of this talent.

Prerequisite: Critical Skill Success, trained in the chosen skill.

Skillful Recovery: When you select this talent, choose one skill. Whenever you fail a skill check with that skill, you gain one temporary Force Point. That Force Point can only be spent to add to a skill check with the skill you chose for this talent. If the Force Point is not spent by the end of the encounter, it is lost. For the purposes of this talent, failing a skill check means failing to get the minimum possible result from the skill check.

You can select this talent multiple times. Each time you do so, you must choose a different skill to gain the benefits of this talent.

Prerequisite: Trained in the chosen skill.

SCOUNDREL

Like nobles, scoundrels thrive in the maze of obligations, corruption, and deals that runs throughout so much of the galaxy. Perhaps better than most, they understand how intrigue is part of the fabric of society and view it as a resource to be exploited rather than reviled. Successful scoundrels can use the web of pacts, lies, and compromises to their advantage, pitting opposing groups against each other or finding holes in the system that they can exploit for political, personal, or financial gain.

Although the general impression of scoundrels is that they live and work in the margins of society, just as many cruise the upper echelons of the galaxy, wheeling and dealing with Senators, HoloNet stars, prominent business people, and other elite individuals. This arena of intrigue is ripe with opportunity for scoundrels to run con jobs and commit outright theft. However, those who dare to rise to this level of society are playing a dangerous game—beings of privilege and influence usually play for keeps, and it takes just one wrong word or deal gone bad for them to crush the offender. Sometimes this retribution comes through legal channels, but more often than not, the elite dispatch private bodyguards or bounty hunters to exact revenge for lost revenue, fouled business agreements, or failed political ventures.

Of course, just as some nobles fail to live up to their name, some scoundrels fail to live down to theirs. More than a few revolutions are led by charismatic, talented scoundrels who use clandestine activities or guerilla tactics to win freedom from oppression. For these scoundrels, the system is broken, and they consider it futile to attempt routine diplomacy or work through the courts. They know that only grand gestures—in the form of bombs, hacked HoloNet feeds, or kidnappings of prominent individuals—will grab the attention of uncaring leaders and the docile masses.

REVOLUTIONARY TALENT TREE

You seek to overthrow the system and are adept at being a monkey wrench in the cogs of society, but often at the cost of others' rights, freedoms, and lives.

Bomb Thrower: You are skilled in making and handling impromptu explosives. You gain a +5 bonus to Mechanics checks for the purposes of handling explosives. In addition, you can spend a full-round action to craft the equivalent of a frag grenade from spare parts you have on hand. You must have access to the appropriate supplies, such as an old blaster, a toolkit, or materials found inside a hangar bay.

Prerequisite: Trained in the Mechanics skill.

For the Cause: Whenever you or an ally within 6 squares of you takes damage that exceeds that character's damage threshold, you and all allies within 6 squares of you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls until the end of your next turn.

Prerequisite: Make an Example.

A KEL DOR REVOLUTIONARY
LEADING TROOPS



Make an Example: Whenever you hit with an attack and deal enough damage to exceed a target's damage threshold, that target takes a -5 penalty to attack rolls against you until the end of your next turn. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Revolutionary Rhetoric: As a standard action, you can do or say something that causes an enemy to doubt its motives. Choose one enemy within 12 squares and in your line of sight, and make a Persuasion check against the target's Will Defense. If you succeed, the target can take only move actions and swift actions until the end of your next turn. This effect ends if you attack the target. This is a mind-affecting effect.

SCOUT

Intelligence gathering is vital for any sort of clandestine activity, legal or otherwise. Scouts serve as forward observers, reconnaissance experts, advanced deployment personnel, and explorers for all manner of organizations. Although scouts might believe that their travels to the far-flung regions of the galaxy keep them free from the entanglements of intrigue, most would be alarmed to find that they still are used as cogs in the machine of conspiracy.

Not all scouts are silent stalkers; some are scientists and researchers who prefer doing their experiments in the field for immediate results. In this pursuit, they might become embroiled in the politics of their university, corporation, or patron. New discoveries might be fast-tracked before they are ready to be revealed or quietly hushed up to avoid disrupting markets or upsetting the status quo. The discovery of an ancient Sith ruin or an unknown cache of prized ore is precious knowledge—knowledge that can be exploited by the right group. Scouts who reveal this information to the public for the good of all might find themselves the targets of greedy or angry forces that want such secrets for their own reasons.

Scouts also serve the vital role of exploring unknown regions, mapping new areas of space and being the first to encounter unfamiliar species and civilizations. In any first-contact scenario, scouts serve as impromptu ambassadors, deciding what information to share with (and conceal from) new acquaintances. Although most of these scouts are not as skilled at diplomacy as are nobles, they must try to reach friendly accords with the newly discovered people—if only to escape with their skins intact. On occasion, primitive species might mistake scouts for gods or demons and petition them to answer questions or resolve disputes. Unscrupulous scouts take advantage of this confusion to enrich themselves or carve out their own small fiefdoms to exploit.

ESPIONAGE TALENT TREE

You use your knowledge of stealth and survival to make yourself a master of espionage and a valuable resource for those who wish to keep their hands clean in dirty situations.

Fade Out: You know how to make yourself scarce when dealing with suspicious or hostile beings. You can use your Stealth skill, not Deception, to create a diversion to hide (see page 73 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). If you are trained in the Deception skill, you gain a +5 bonus to your skill check for the purposes of creating a diversion.

Prerequisite: Trained in Stealth.

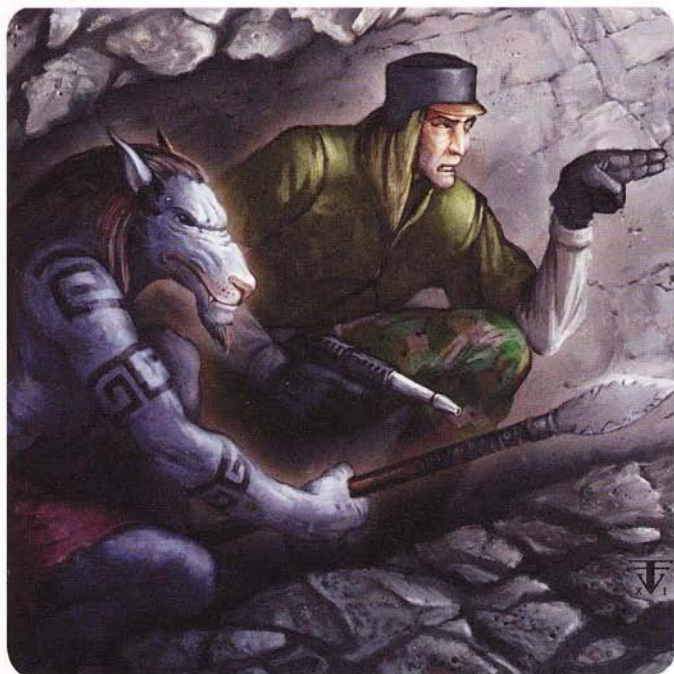
Keep Together: Whenever you are hit or missed by a melee or a ranged attack, you can move up to your speed as a reaction, provided that you end your movement adjacent to an ally. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Prudent Escape: Whenever you reduce a target to 0 hit points or otherwise render a creature unconscious, you can choose two allies within 6 squares of you and within your line of sight. You and the allies you chose can immediately move up to your speeds as a reaction. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Reactive Stealth: When you are missed by a ranged attack and have concealment or cover from the attacker, you can move up to half your speed as a reaction and make a Stealth check to become hidden from your attacker, provided you still have concealment or cover at the end of your movement.

Prerequisite: Trained in Stealth.

A SCOUT AND HIS NELVAANIAN ALLY PREPARE FOR A FIRST ENCOUNTER.



Sizing Up: Once per encounter, you can make a Perception check against the Will Defense of a single target that is within 6 squares of you and within your line of sight. If you succeed, you gain a +2 insight bonus to all skill checks and attack rolls against the target until the end of the encounter.

SOLDIER

Soldiers serve as pawns in the intricate plots of various organizations in the galaxy. When negotiations break down or when force seems to be the most logical way to further an agenda, soldiers serve on the front lines, using their might to advance the edicts of a distant individual or group that sits safely behind durasteel walls and powerful shields. For soldiers, the circumstances do not matter—they receive their orders (or promises of pay) and do their duty to the best of their ability.

Although many soldiers relish the relatively simple life of combat, their job is to serve the interests of others. Thus, even the most combat-oriented soldiers can find themselves part of elaborate plans, bureaucratic entanglements, or the like. Some soldiers begin to question the motives or rationale behind a particular engagement or the faction they serve. A few turn traitor or reinterpret their orders to their own liking, often at the risk of reprisal. Soldiers with an entrepreneurial spirit might follow their orders to the letter but dabble in their own projects on the side, using the chaos of war to ben-

efit themselves in some way. Although no professional army admits it, graft and corruption are always present, and war profiteering lines the pockets of those willing to seize the initiative. Company quartermasters sell "lost or destroyed" equipment, intelligence officers purchase bonds or strike deals based on their secret findings, and so on.

In times of conflict, soldiers might be the only ones willing and able to deal with the locals and, as a result, could be dragged into all manner of schemes and obligations, some of which might seem beyond their capabilities. For example, soldiers might be asked to help rebuild villages or negotiate peace between opposing groups; while doing so brings the soldiers short-term benefits, the long-term consequences could embroil them in intrigue and politics outside the scope of their field manual's guidelines.

The following new talents are intended for use with the soldier class.

NEW BRAWLER TALENTS

The following new talents belong to the Brawler talent tree (see page 52 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), which is available to members of the soldier class. Any character who can choose talents from the Brawler talent tree can choose these talents as well.

Crowd Control: You can grab two adjacent creatures at a time.

Prerequisite: Entangler.

Disarm and Engage: When you successfully disarm an opponent, you can make an immediate free attack with the disarmed weapon at a –5 penalty. If you are not proficient with the weapon, you take the penalty for nonproficiency as well.

Entangler: When grabbing a target, you take a –2 penalty to your attack roll (instead of the normal –5 penalty). Until the target breaks the grab, it takes a –5 penalty to attack rolls, including those made with natural and light weapons (instead of the normal –2 penalty).

Reverse Strength: You know how to use an opponent's strength against it. Whenever you successfully grapple an opponent, you deal damage equal to the opponent's Strength modifier (minimum 1 point).

NEW COMMANDO TALENTS

The following new talents belong to the Commando talent tree (see page 52 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), which is available to members of the soldier class. Any character who can choose talents from the Commando talent tree can choose these talents as well.

Coordinated Effort: When you use the aid another action to grant a bonus on attack rolls, if you are aiding the target of your Dedicated Protector talent that ally also gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls on the attack you aided.

Prerequisite: Dedicated Protector.

Dedicated Guardian: You can use each of the following actions once per encounter:

Blast Shield: Spend a swift action. Until the end of your next turn, the ally who is under the effects of your Dedicated Protector talent is treated as having the Evasion talent for the purposes of determining damage from an area attack. If the ally already has Evasion, the damage from a successful area attack is reduced by 1 die.

Take the Pain: Whenever your Dedicated Protector target would move down the condition track, you can, as a reaction, choose to move the same number of steps down the condition track instead (preventing the ally from moving down the track).

Team Effort: Spend a swift action. Until the end of your next turn, while you are adjacent to your Dedicated Protector target, any enemy that is adjacent to you and to that ally is considered flanked.

Prerequisites: Dedicated Protector, Harm's Way.

Dedicated Protector: Once per encounter, you can designate one ally within 6 squares of you. Until the end of the encounter, that ally gains a +1 morale bonus to Reflex Defense as long as it remains adjacent to you. Any individual can only be the target of this talent once per encounter.

Prerequisite: Harm's Way.



A HEROLIC BODYGUARD

NEW TALENTS FOR PRESTIGE CLASSES

The following talents expand the talent trees available to the prestige classes in the Saga Edition core rulebook.

ACE PILOT TALENTS

Nobles, Senators, captains of industry, and other VIPs rely on ace pilots to operate their luxurious starships and vehicles and to deliver them to their destinations in one piece. These talented pilots are experts at using defensive flying maneuvers to keep their ships, and the riders within, safe from harm.

NEW EXPERT PILOT TALENTS

The following new talents belong to the Expert Pilot talent tree (see page 207 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), which is available to members of the ace pilot prestige class. Any character who can choose talents from the Expert Pilot talent tree can choose these talents as well.

Clip: When you use the ram action, you reduce the size of your ship by two categories for the purposes of taking collision damage. The rammed ship takes damage appropriate to the actual size of your ship.

Master Defender: When you fight defensively, either your vehicle gains a +5 dodge bonus to Reflex Defense if you and your gunners take a –2 penalty to attack rolls, or it gains a +10 dodge bonus if you and your gunners take a –5 penalty to attack rolls.

Shunt Damage: Once per encounter, if your ship takes damage, make a Pilot check and compare the result to the Reflex Defense of one adjacent allied ship. If your check result is higher, the allied ship takes the damage instead.

BOUNTY HUNTER TALENTS

Bounty hunters are an integral part of any intrigue campaign, sent by the elite to track down dangerous individuals or missing persons or to spy on a target and report his or her activities back to the client. Bounty hunters are adept at locating beings that do not want to be found.

NEW BOUNTY HUNTER TALENTS

The following new talents belong to the Bounty Hunter talent tree (see page 208 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), which is available to members of the bounty hunter prestige class. Any character who can choose talents from the Bounty Hunter talent tree can choose these talents as well.

Detective: You are skilled in locating individuals and using research and surveillance to learn some of their most intimate secrets. When you make a Gather Information check to locate an individual, the DC is reduced by 10, and the time and bribery cost are reduced by half.

Electronic Trail: Once you have located a target using Gather Information, you can track its electronic presence. Once per day, you receive a catalog of the target's electronic trail, which includes the amount and location of credits spent, the routes of any public transportation taken, and the sites

viewed on the HoloNet while the target was logged in using its primary identity. To receive this information, you must have access to a computer or datapad plus access to a network or the HoloNet. The electronic trail does not reveal bank balances or other secret information, which requires a separate Gather Information check.

Prerequisites: Nowhere to Hide, trained in the Use Computer skill.

Revealing Secrets: Your investigations reveal information that your target thought was secret. When you make a Gather Information check to learn secret information, the DC is reduced by 10 and the bribery cost is reduced to one-fifth the original cost.

Prerequisite: Detective.

CRIME LORD TALENTS

By definition, crime lords are masters of intrigue. They have their fingers in untold pies, skimming profits off the top and constantly searching for new ventures to bring in capital, favors, and bargaining chips for later use. Crime lords are notorious for employing minions and thugs to do their bidding.

NEW MASTERMIND TALENTS

The following new talents belong to the Mastermind talent tree (see page 210 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), which is available to members of the crime lord prestige class. Any character who can choose talents from the Mastermind talent tree can choose these talents as well.

Attract Superior Minion: You attract a particularly skilled and powerful minion. The minion is a nonheroic character with a class level equal to your character level. This talent otherwise functions as the Attract Minion talent.

Prerequisites: Attract Minion, Impel Ally I, Impel Ally II.

Contingency Plan: Once per encounter, if you fail an attack roll, a skill check, or the use of a talent that requires an opposed check, you can move your speed as a reaction.

GUNSLINGER

Masters of the pistol, gunslingers are surprisingly common among the higher echelons of society, where they are experts in the ancient art of pistol dueling. Some gunslingers who follow this custom do so to repair their damaged honor or resolve disputes that are so grievous that death is the only solution. Other gunslingers simply enjoy pistol dueling and use it to prove their skill and for fun.

NEW GUNSLINGER TALENTS

The following new talents belong to the Gunslinger talent tree (see page 216 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), which is available to members of the gunslinger prestige class. Any character who can choose talents from the Gunslinger talent tree can choose these talents as well.

Damaging Disarm: If you successfully disarm an opponent using a ranged attack, the target also takes half damage from the attack.

Prerequisite: Ranged Disarm.

Pistol Duelist: You are a master of the elegant, if archaic, custom of dueling with pistols. You can use each of the following actions once per encounter as a standard action:

End Game: You make a single ranged attack with a pistol against an opponent within range. The opponent's damage threshold is halved (round down) for the purposes of this attack.

Snap Aiming: You make a single ranged attack with the benefits of aiming.

Stand Steady: You gain a +4 bonus to your Reflex Defense until the end of your next turn and make a single ranged attack.

FEATS

The feats presented here supplement those found in the Saga Edition core rulebook and are suitable for any era of play. These feats are designed with intrigue-oriented characters in mind, although any character who qualifies can select these feats.

ADAPTABLE TALENT

You're a multit talented being, capable of pulling all kinds of tricks out of your sleeve.

Benefit: Choose one talent that you meet the prerequisites for, from a class you possess. Once per day, after at least 6 hours of rest, you can choose to swap out one of your current talents for the talent you chose for this feat. The talent you swap out cannot be the prerequisite for any other talent you have. You can swap back to your original talent after at least 6 hours of rest.

BONE CRUSHER

You are skilled at dealing lasting damage to grappled opponents.

Prerequisites: Crush, Pin.

Benefit: When you deal damage to a grappled opponent, the opponent also moves –1 step on the condition track.

BRILLIANT DEFENSE

You think quickly enough on your feet to stay alive in dangerous situations.

Prerequisite: Intelligence 13.

Benefit: Once per encounter, you can add your Intelligence bonus to your Reflex Defense as a reaction; this benefit lasts until the start of your next turn.

CHANNEL RAGE

You have learned to turn your rage into pure will and determination.

Prerequisite: Rage species trait.

Benefit: Once per day, instead of entering into a rage, you gain a +5 bonus to Will Defense until the end of the encounter. This bonus counts as using your rage ability for that day.

TABLE 1-4: FEATS

FEAT NAME	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Adaptable Talent	—	Gain access to an additional talent.
Bone Crusher	Crush, Pin	Move damaged grappled opponent –1 step on the condition track.
Brilliant Defense	Int 13	Add your Intelligence bonus to your Reflex Defense as a reaction.
Channel Rage	Rage species trait	Instead of raging, gain +5 to Will Defense.
Cut the Red Tape	Trained in Knowledge (bureaucracy)	Use Knowledge (bureaucracy) in place of Gather Information.
Demoralizing Strike	Cha 13	Make an intimidation check when you deal damage with an attack of opportunity.
Disturbing Presence	Trained in Deception	Make a Deception check to move through threatened area without provoking attack of opportunity.
Expert Briber	Cha 13	Reduce the time and cost of bribery attempts.
Flèche	Base attack bonus +1	When charging, turn any natural attack roll of 17+ into a critical hit.
Forceful Recovery	Force Sensitivity, Force Training	Regain one Force power when you catch a second wind.
Grazing Shot	Point Blank Shot	Strike two targets in direct line of sight, dealing half damage to each.
Hobbling Strike	Sneak Attack, Rapid Shot, or Rapid Strike	Reduce the target's speed instead of dealing extra damage.
Improved Opportunistic Trickery	Combat Reflexes, Opportunistic Trickery	Sacrifice attack of opportunity to reduce target's Reflex Defense by 5.
Indomitable Personality	Cha 13	Add your Charisma bonus to your Will Defense as a reaction.
Master of Disguise	Trained in Deception, Cha 13	Gain +5 to creating a deceptive appearance or a forged document and reduce the penalty for rushing.
Meat Shield	Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, base attack bonus +4	Gain cover bonus equal to opponent's cover bonus.
Opportunistic Trickery	Combat Reflexes, Sneak Attack	Sacrifice attack of opportunity to reduce target's Reflex Defense by 2.
Recurring Success	—	Gain extra use of a 1/encounter talent or feat.
Resolute Stance	Base attack bonus +1	Gain +2 or +5 to Will Defense when you fight defensively.
Sadistic Strike	—	Move opponents –1 step on the condition track when you deliver a coup de grace.
Silver Tongue	Trained in Persuasion	Intimidate a creature or change its attitude as a standard action.
Skill Challenge: Catastrophic Avoidance*	—	Catastrophic failures in a skill challenge occur less frequently and with milder results.
Skill Challenge: Last Resort*	—	Reroll a third failed skill check during a skill challenge and take the better result.
Skill Challenge: Recovery*	—	Treat a skill challenge as if it had the recovery effect.
Stand Tall	—	When you take damage, nearby allies attack your attacker.
Wookiee Grip	Str 13	Wield two-handed weapons in a single hand.

* This feat is allowed only in campaigns that use the skill challenge rules described in Chapter 2.

CUT THE RED TAPE

You know how to work the bureaucratic system to get information you need.

Prerequisite: Trained in the Knowledge (bureaucracy) skill.

Benefit: You can use your Knowledge (bureaucracy) modifier instead of your Gather Information modifier when making Gather Information checks. If you are entitled to a Gather Information check reroll, you can reroll your Knowledge (bureaucracy) check instead (subject to the same circumstances and limitations). You are considered trained in the Gather Information skill for the purposes of this check.

DEMORALIZING STRIKE

You know how to dishearten your opponents when they least expect it.

Prerequisite: Charisma 13.

Benefit: When you successfully deal damage to an opponent with an attack of opportunity, you can immediately make a Persuasion check to intimidate the opponent as a free action.

DISTURBING PRESENCE

Your presence is such that enemies let you move past them freely.

Prerequisite: Trained in the Deception skill.

Benefit: If you succeed on a DC 15 Deception check, you can move through the threatened area or fighting space of an enemy as part of your move action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Each threatened square or occupied square that you move through in this manner counts as 2 squares of movement.

Normal: You can tumble through an occupied enemy square only by using the Acrobatics skill.

EXPERT BRIBER

You are adept at greasing the palms of contacts to minimize the amount of the bribe normally required.

Prerequisite: Charisma 13.

Benefit: When using the Haggle application of the Persuasion skill (see page 71 of the Saga Edition core rulebook), you reduce the DC reduce the price of the item haggled over by 10.

FLÈCHE

You throw yourself at your opponent to make a single precise strike.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: Once per encounter, when you charge, you can turn any natural attack roll of 17+ into a critical hit.

FORCEFUL RECOVERY

The Force is strong with you, and it gives you focus and vitality.

Prerequisite: Force Sensitivity, Force Training.

Benefit: Whenever you catch a second wind, choose one expended Force power and return that power to your Force suite.

GRAZING SHOT

Using precise aim, you can hit two targets with a single shot.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: When you successfully make a ranged attack against a single target, you can make a second attack roll against an additional target that is in direct line of sight and no farther than 6 squares from the original target. If the second attack roll succeeds, make a single damage roll, and divide the damage equally between the two targets. If the second attack roll fails, you deal no damage to either target.



SOMETIMES, A GRAZING SHOT IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED.

SKILL CHALLENGE FEATS

Some of the feats in this chapter interact with the mechanics used for skill challenges that are described in Chapter 2. If the Gamemaster does not use skill challenges in the campaign, players should not choose any skill challenge feats for their heroes. If the GM later decides to introduce skill challenges into an ongoing campaign, players should have the option of replacing one or more of their current feats with skill challenge feats when appropriate.

HOBBLING STRIKE

You know where to hit your enemy to slow it down.

Prerequisite: Sneak Attack, Rapid Shot, or Rapid Strike.

Benefit: Whenever you would deal extra damage by using Sneak Attack, Rapid Shot, or Rapid Strike, you reduce the target's speed by 1 square until the end of the encounter instead of dealing the extra damage.

IMPROVED OPPORTUNISTIC TRICKERY

When your opponent lets down its guard, you open it up to additional attacks.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Opportunistic Trickery.

Benefit: Whenever an opponent provokes an attack of opportunity from you, once per turn you can sacrifice the attack to reduce the target's Reflex Defense by 5 until the end of the target's next turn.

INDOMITABLE PERSONALITY

Your powerful personality helps you cope with attacks that assault your will.

Prerequisite: Charisma 13.

Benefit: Once per encounter, you can add your Charisma bonus to your Will Defense as a reaction; this benefit lasts until the end of your next turn.

MASTER OF DISGUISE

You are adept at creating convincing disguises in remarkably short periods of time.

Prerequisites: Trained in the Deception skill, Charisma 13.

Benefit: You gain a +5 insight bonus to your Deception check when creating a deceptive appearance or a forged document. In addition, you can rush the process by taking a penalty of -2 to the Deception check.

Normal: When you rush the creation of a deceptive appearance or forged document, you take a -10 penalty to your Deception check.

MEAT SHIELD

You are adept at using an opponent's defense to your own advantage.

Prerequisites: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: Whenever an opponent attacks you while in cover provided by another character, creature, or droid, you are treated as being in cover from attacks by that opponent.

OPPORTUNISTIC TRICKERY

When your opponent lets down its guard, you know how to set it off balance for several moments.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Sneak Attack.

Benefit: Whenever an opponent provokes an attack of opportunity from you, once per turn you can sacrifice that attack to reduce the target's Reflex Defense by 2 for the following round.

RECURRING SUCCESS

You know how to make your enemies fall for the same trick twice.

Benefit: When you select this feat, choose one talent or feat that can normally be used only once per encounter. You can use that talent or feat one additional time per encounter.

You can select this feat multiple times. Each time you do so, you must choose a different skill to gain the benefits of this talent.

RESOLUTE STANCE

By standing your ground, you focus your mind to repel any assault.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When you fight defensively, you gain a +2 morale bonus to your Will Defense. If you make no attacks until your next turn, you gain a +5 morale bonus to your Will Defense until the start of your next turn.

Normal: When you fight defensively, you gain a +2 dodge bonus to your Reflex Defense. If you make no attacks until your next turn, you gain a +5 dodge bonus to your Reflex Defense until the start of your next turn.

SADISTIC STRIKE

By dispatching a helpless creature, you terrify opponents around you.

Benefit: When you deliver a coup de grace to a helpless creature, all opponents within line of sight move -1 step on the condition track until the end of the encounter.

BONUS FEATS

Some of the feats in this chapter can be selected as bonus feats by certain classes. Each class can add the following feats to their relevant bonus feat list.

CLASS	BONUS FEATS
Jedi	Brilliant Defense, Resolute Stance, Stand Tall
Noble	Brilliant Defense, Cut the Red Tape, Demoralizing Strike, Disturbing Presence, Expert Briber, Flèche, Indomitable Personality, Master of Disguise, Sadistic Strike, Silver Tongue, Stand Tall
Scoundrel	Disturbing Presence, Expert Briber, Hobbling Strike, Improved Opportunistic Trickery, Indomitable Personality, Master of Disguise, Opportunistic Trickery, Sadistic Strike, Silver Tongue, Stand Tall
Scout	Grazing Shot, Hobbling Strike, Meat Shield, Stand Tall
Soldier	Bone Crusher, Flèche, Grazing Shot, Hobbling Strike, Meat Shield, Resolute Stance, Sadistic Strike, Wookiee Grip

SILVER TONGUE

You are adept at quickly changing a creature's attitude toward you.

Prerequisite: Trained in the Persuasion skill.

Benefit: You can intimidate a creature or change its attitude as a standard action.

Normal: Intimidating a creature or changing its attitude requires a full-round action.

SKILL CHALLENGE: CATASTROPHIC AVOIDANCE

Your luck is such that catastrophe occurs less frequently for you when you are engaged in stressful situations.

Benefit: Once per skill challenge that has a chance of catastrophic failure, this failure occurs only if you fail a skill check by 15 or more. In addition, when a catastrophic failure occurs, you accrue one failure in the skill challenge, not two.

Special: This feat is allowed only in campaigns that use the skill challenge rules described in Chapter 2.

SKILL CHALLENGE: LAST RESORT

When failure threatens, you throw everything you have at the skill challenge to prevent disaster.

Benefit: Once per skill challenge, when you or an ally accrues a third failure (which would normally end the skill challenge), you or the ally can reroll the attempt, keeping the better result.

Special: This feat is allowed only in campaigns that use the skill challenge rules described in Chapter 2.

SKILL CHALLENGE: RECOVERY

You can snatch victory from the jaws of defeat when involved in a skill challenge.

Benefit: Once per skill challenge, you treat the challenge as if it had the recovery effect, even if it does not have that effect.

Special: This feat is allowed only in campaigns that use the skill challenge rules described in Chapter 2.

STAND TALL

Your courage under fire inspires those around you to acts of bravery.

Benefit: Once per encounter when you take damage, all allies who are within 6 squares of you and within your line of sight can, as a reaction, make a single attack on the target that damaged you.

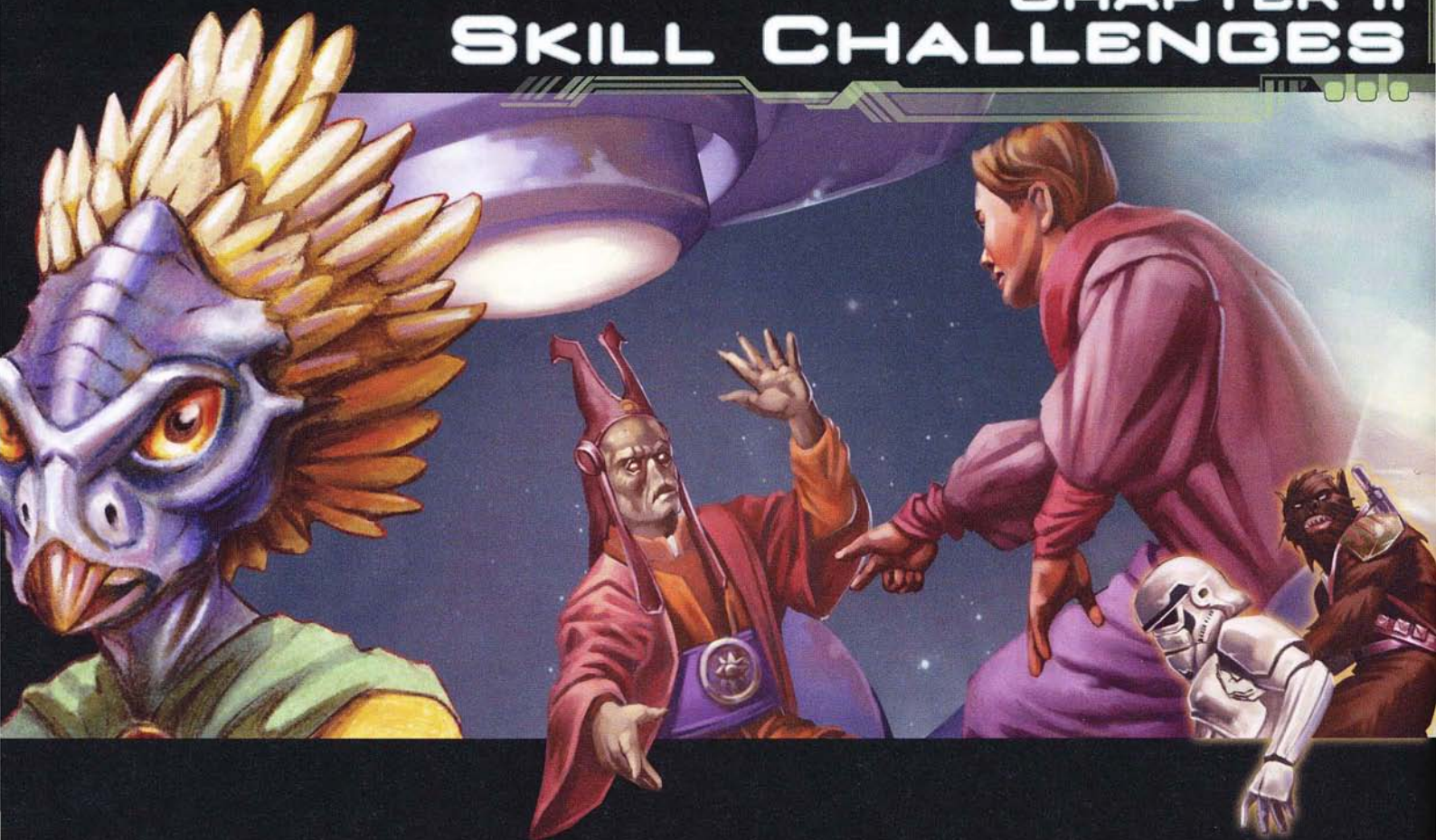
WOOKEE GRIP

Your strength is such that you need only one hand to use weapons that normally require two hands.

Prerequisite: Strength 13.

Benefit: When using a weapon in which you are proficient and that normally requires two hands, you can wield that weapon with a single hand. You take a -2 penalty to attack rolls with the weapon when it is used in this manner.

CHAPTER II SKILL CHALLENGES





The *Star Wars* saga is full of examples of heroes doing amazing things. Such remarkable exploits often take place during shootouts, lightsaber duels, and dogfights between X-wings and TIE fighters. But not every exciting scene in the films is about combat; many of them focus more on skills and talents that do not relate directly to fighting prowess. Chase sequences, stealthy investigations, tense negotiations, and other such scenes reflect the heroes' abilities to use their cunning, their creativity, and their well-honed skills to achieve their goals.

This chapter introduces the concept of skill challenges to the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game. A skill challenge is a mechanical framework that Gamemasters can use to create exciting and interesting scenes in which the heroes use their skills, not their combat abilities, to accomplish a particular goal. In a skill challenge, the heroes make a series of related skill checks that combine to determine whether they face victory or defeat. A skill challenge can take the place of a combat encounter in an adventure or can augment a combat encounter by adding a skill-based element.

Many scenes from the *Star Wars* films could be represented in a roleplaying game as skill challenges. The asteroid chase in *The Empire Strikes Back*, the negotiation between Luke Skywalker and Jabba the Hutt in *Return of the Jedi*, the Podrace in *The Phantom Menace*, Obi-Wan's investigation of the Jango Fett mystery in *Attack of the Clones*—all of these are examples of sequences in which heroes use multiple skills as part of a concerted effort to accomplish a task. Typically, a skill challenge represents a scene or a group of scenes that moves the plot forward through skill use rather than combat.

This chapter teaches Gamemasters how to create their own skill challenges and run them in adventures. Players might want to familiarize themselves with the Playing Skill Challenges section (page 32), which provides tips on interacting with skill challenges and using them to create exciting, cinematic scenes.

RUNNING SKILL CHALLENGES

In many ways, a skill challenge is like any other encounter. It has opportunities for success and penalties for failure. It requires multiple heroes to participate and often has both obstacles and antagonists. However, whereas combat encounters require the heroes to use weapons or special attacks to achieve victory, a skill challenge requires them to use their skills and creativity to succeed.

A NOTE TO PLAYERS: PLAYING SKILL CHALLENGES

For players, skill challenges represent a chance not only to use your skills in a meaningful way but also to have your heroes contribute to an exciting scene. Skill challenges are great for fleshing out your characters, letting their personalities come to life in the actions they take outside of combat encounters. A skill challenge offers an opportunity to roleplay your characters' strengths, and perhaps even weaknesses, in a dynamic way.

As a player, your responsibility in the skill challenge is to come up with creative actions that can help your allies achieve the goal of the challenge. When it is your turn, think of an action that is appropriate for your hero in that situation. If possible, the action should play to your hero's strengths and give you a chance to show off your character's areas of expertise. Describe the action to your Gamemaster, and, if the GM approves of the idea, make a skill check (or another check that the GM calls for) to determine the result. Once each of your allies has had a chance to act, it will be your turn again, provided that the skill challenge has not ended.

Over the course of the skill challenge, the situation might evolve. You might receive new information, the backdrop could change, or the goals could shift as the challenge progresses. Be sure to think about how your hero would react to the changing circumstances of the skill challenge, and come up with new and interesting things to do. Below are some tips to help you choose actions that will contribute to an exciting, dynamic scene.

THINK CINEMATICALY

Skill challenges represent interesting and thrilling scenes in the *Star Wars* milieu, and you should take actions that fit that aspect of the saga. Heroes in *Star Wars* take risks and engage in reckless stunts, yet they often succeed despite overwhelming odds. So too should your hero take risks. Think about the valiant actions depicted in the films—the heroes jump out of windows and grab onto flying droids high in the sky lanes

of Coruscant, and they leap onto the backs of speeder bikes to recklessly pursue scout troopers on Endor. When trying to decide what to do during a skill challenge, think not only about what your character would do based on his or her personality, but also about what your character could do that would be cinematically daring.

USE YOUR STRENGTHS

During a skill challenge, you should use your strengths to achieve the most success. Think beyond your skill modifiers; consider what your character is good at, and use that knowledge to inform the types of actions you take. For example, if you are a Rebel saboteur, you are much more than a collection of Mechanics and Use Computer checks. You probably have talents, feats, equipment, and perhaps prestige class features that contribute to your overall capability as a saboteur. Try using abilities that add to the cinematic drama of the scene, even if they do not necessarily grant bonuses to your skill checks. For instance, your hero could simply make a Mechanics check in an attempt to cause a bridge collapse, or your character could set up a turret to fire lasers at the support struts for the bridge. Although the former solution is serviceable, the latter option makes use not only of your skill but also, potentially, of your talents and equipment, and it results in a more vivid scene.

EMBRACE VERSATILITY

Sometimes it might seem as if the best option in a skill challenge is to do the same thing over and over again. However, this repetition will grow boring quickly, and it could end up making the skill challenge harder for you and your allies. If the Gamemaster restricts the number of times a skill can be used in the challenge, taking the same action multiple times will run up the count, closing the door on that option for your fellow heroes. For this reason, during a skill challenge you should embrace versatility, use different skills, and take advantage of your character's talents, feats, and other assets. In this way, you will create a more exciting and interesting scene, and you will not deny your allies a chance to use the same skills.

The basic skill challenge mechanics are relatively simple. Over the course of the challenge, the heroes take actions that either succeed or fail. If the heroes accrue a set number of successes before a set number of failures, they succeed in the challenge. If they accrue too many failures, they fail the challenge.

Of course, that description is a very simplified version of the mechanics; the rest of this section provides a step-by-step breakdown of the process used when a Gamemaster runs a skill challenge. Throughout this breakdown, examples walk you through a sample skill challenge based on the Endor speeder bike chase in *Return of the Jedi*. The examples do not detail the entire sequence, but instead they highlight how elements of the skill challenge combine to create an exciting and iconic scene from *Star Wars* lore. The premise of this skill challenge is that the heroes have arrived on Endor and encountered a scout trooper patrol. Their goal is to make sure the scouts do not report back to their superiors and alert the Empire to the Rebel presence on Endor.

DETERMINING PARTICIPANTS

The first step when running a skill challenge is to determine who the participants are—typically, all heroes who are present when the challenge begins participate in a skill challenge. If the heroes have been separated somehow, only a few might participate initially, but you can add more participants later if the scene evolves to allow for a logical place to include them. Likewise, depending on how the skill challenge progresses, you might rule that some heroes can no longer participate because they have moved too far away from the action, been knocked unconscious, or otherwise been prevented from interacting with the challenge.

When determining who the participants in a particular skill challenge are, keep in mind that a participant in a skill challenge must take actions that contribute to the challenge. A hero who is present but who does not contribute to the challenge is not really a participant. As a general rule, once a participant in a skill challenge takes an action, he or she cannot take another action until all other participants have taken actions. The participants do not necessarily need to keep acting in the same order, but one or two heroes should not contribute to the success of the challenge while three others stand idly by.

Participation is as important in a skill challenge as it is in a combat encounter. In combat, enemies present a challenge to the entire party. If several heroes take no actions, they and their allies will be wiped out; the balance of combat depends on all heroes making progress toward defeating their enemies. Similarly, a skill challenge requires all heroes to contribute toward reaching their goal.

For example, the heroes present during the Endor sequence are Han Solo, Chewbacca, Luke Skywalker, and Princess Leia. The Gamemaster determines that these four heroes can participate in the skill challenge when they come across the scout troopers.

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR ROLEPLAYING

Skill challenges are not intended to be a substitute for the standard roleplaying and noncombat scenes that probably already exist in your campaign. Rather, skill challenges are frameworks that let you track successes, failures, and consequences over a series of multiple skill checks. Skill challenges give you an idea of how many experience points to award for a particular scene, and they help you create encounters that involve more than simply making a few skill checks, but they should not replace the dialogue and interactions that you already have. While participating in a skill challenge, players should describe their actions and get into their roles just as they would at any other time.

SETTING THE SCENE

Once the participants in the challenge have been determined, you must set the scene for the heroes. This important step gives the players an idea of what actions they can take to contribute to the skill challenge. In a combat encounter, you provide basic descriptions of the terrain, the enemies, and other bystanders and objects so that your players are informed about the situation. In a skill challenge, you set the scene in such a way as to help the players recognize options for various actions. They need to have a clear picture of what is going on so they can take actions that are appropriate to the scene.

For example, the Gamemaster might describe the scout troopers on Endor as being somewhat distracted, standing idly in the forest. Parked speeder bikes sit nearby, indicating that the scout troopers have traveled ahead of some larger force. The terrain is thick and obscures the area surrounding the clearing, giving the heroes ample places to hide, and the ambient noise of the forest covers their whispered conversation. The Gamemaster's description presents several options to the heroes—sneaking up on the scout troopers, stealing the speeder bikes, and so on—that will be part of the challenge once the heroes begin taking actions.

STARTING THE CHALLENGE

After determining the participants and setting the scene, it is time to start the challenge. The players take turns describing their actions, making skill checks or using other abilities, and the Gamemaster adjudicates the results. You can choose the order in which the players will act, or you can let them decide if the order does not matter to the mechanics of the challenge. The players can act in the same order each time or in a different order. The main rule is that each participant must take an action before any given participant can take his or her next action. Thus, after hero 1 takes an action, all other heroes must take actions before hero 1 can act again. As the participants take actions, be sure to track how many successes and failures they accrue.

USING SKILLS

During a skill challenge, most of the heroes' actions involve using skills. When a hero takes an action, the player describes what action is being taken and how that action is intended to help the party achieve success in the challenge. If the Gamemaster determines that the action would indeed contribute to the challenge, the hero makes the relevant skill check. The Gamemaster compares the skill check result to predetermined skill DCs, which are set during the creation of the skill challenge. This comparison determines whether the action succeeds or fails, contributing to the total number of successes or failures for the overall challenge. Finally, the Gamemaster describes the results of the action and how the scene has changed, if at all.

Most skill challenges have varying difficulties for different actions. Actions that are more likely to be successful or that make more sense in the current situation have lower DCs than do actions that seem to be more of a stretch. When a player describes the action that his or her hero takes, you must determine whether it seems like a plausible way to contribute to the challenge's progress. If the action seems unlikely to work, you should give it a harder DC than you would give to an action that is a better match for the challenge. Of course, allowing the players to be creative with their actions is more likely to result in an exciting and cinematic scene, but in some cases, even creative actions have little chance of succeeding.



HAN SOLO SNEAKING INTO THE BUNKER ON ENDOR

Typically, a player should describe a specific action, then associate the action with a particular skill. For example, a player might say, "I try to convince the bounty hunter that we're not his quarry, and that the bounty is actually for another group of heroes who look like us. To do that, I make a Deception check." On the other hand, a player who simply says, "I make a Deception check" is not choosing an action—merely picking a skill. Having the players describe their actions not only lets them contribute to the skill challenge narrative but also encourages them to think creatively about how their heroes behave.

Returning to the Endor example, Han Solo decides to sneak up on one of the scout troopers. Han's player describes the action as creeping up behind the scout trooper in an attempt to subdue him quietly. However, when Han rolls his skill check, he rolls too low, accruing a failure. The Gamemaster describes the results of the action (Han steps on a twig and alerts the scout troopers), and the challenge continues. Throughout the chase sequence, we see Leia using the Pilot skill to maneuver a speeder, Luke using Jump to leap to an adjacent speeder bike, and Leia using Deception to trick a scout trooper into believing that she crashed.

Aid Another

The aid another action is typically used to grant bonuses to allies who make skill checks or attack rolls. In a skill challenge, the aid another action can be a powerful tool, especially when combined with talents such as Coordinate or Skilled Advisor, which can drastically increase the bonuses provided. Since a skill challenge puts a large emphasis on making skill checks, it might seem that an easy way to earn successes would be to let the hero with the highest skill modifier make the check while the other heroes use aid another. However, the aid another action works differently during skill challenges.

Only characters trained in a skill can aid another with that skill. Unlike normal skill checks, a hero must be trained in a skill to use the aid another action with that skill. This rule helps to encourage skilled characters to make their own checks, while preventing everyone from taking the aid another action on every skill check.

For a given skill, the maximum bonus a character can receive from aid another is +10. A hero can gain only so much benefit from his or her allies during a skill challenge. In addition, if the heroes use talents to increase the bonuses, the group will reach the cap of +10 more quickly, which means other heroes will be free to take their own actions.

Choosing to aid another rather than take an action has consequences. When one hero aids another in combat, the first hero gives up the chance to take down an enemy in exchange for helping an ally succeed. Similarly, in a skill challenge, choosing to aid another should be a choice, not the default. If a hero decides to aid another rather than take his or her own action to contribute to the challenge, the situation might grow more dire. Perhaps it will become slightly tougher or change in some way that further hinders the heroes. Do not punish a hero for choosing to aid another, but do make the consequences clear.

NONCONTRIBUTING SKILL CHECKS

Sometimes a player wants to make a skill check that does not necessarily contribute to the success or failure of a skill challenge, such as a Knowledge check to see what his or her hero knows. Gamemasters can allow such checks without worrying about accruing successes or failures. For example, while Luke and Leia are speeding through the forest on Endor, Luke might make an Intelligence check to see what he knows about the speeder bike they are piloting. The Gamemaster reveals that its communication systems can be used to jam transmissions, and Luke relays that information to Leia. Luke's check did not contribute to the overall success or failure of the skill challenge, but it allowed Leia to make a Use Computer check to jam the scout troopers' transmissions on her next action.

A good rule of thumb is that if a skill check would not directly cause positive or negative results in the challenge, it should not accrue successes or failures.

USING ABILITY CHECKS

Sometimes an action is not covered by a specific skill, and you need to find another way to adjudicate that action. Ability checks are one way of resolving this kind of action; simply choose the ability (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma) that most closely relates to the action in question. The player rolls a d20 and adds his or her relevant ability score modifier to determine the result. Keep in mind that, in many cases, an ability check will be far lower than a skill check, whether trained or untrained, because the heroes do not gain the half-level bonus that applies to skill checks. Try to call for ability checks sparingly, and cast actions as untrained skill checks whenever possible.

USING TALENTS, FEATS, OR EQUIPMENT

For players, skill challenges present exciting opportunities to show off what they can do. Sometimes the most appropriate or most cinematic action that a hero can take involves not just a skill but a talent, feat, piece of equipment, or class feature. When a player wants to use one of these different options, it is almost certainly in your best interest to allow it, provided that the action is plausible and makes sense for the character. This alternative allows the player to make use of the character resources in which he or she invested, and it opens up options that a raw skill check does not.

When a hero uses a talent, a feat, a piece of equipment, or another special ability, you can still call for a skill check as part of that action, although you do not have to—sometimes, you can simply grant an automatic success for a clever application of a nonskill resource. Typically, when a player makes creative use of such resources, you should set the skill DC one step easier

than normal. Consider it a reward for the player's good selection of handy talents, feats, or equipment. However, if the use of that particular nonskill resource becomes habitual, feel free to treat it like any other skill check. For example, Vor'en the soldier is participating in a skill challenge in which he must escort a droid carrying sensitive information across a battlefield in the middle of a large-scale ground conflict. Vor'en has the Harm's Way talent, which allows him to take damage instead of an adjacent ally. Vor'en wants to use this talent to physically shield the droid from incoming attacks, which the Gamemaster determines is a sufficiently creative use of a talent to warrant a success. Since Harm's Way requires no skill check normally, the Gamemaster awards Vor'en an automatic success in the skill challenge.

USING COMBAT ACTIONS

Combat actions can sometimes be used to accrue successes in a skill challenge, although they should occur infrequently. Typically, combat actions have the same DCs as skill checks, based on whether the action is likely to contribute positively to the challenge. Sometimes, taking a combat action (such as shooting a blaster, setting off an explosive, or making a Bantha Rush against an enemy) can contribute just as well as any skill. For example, a sniper might shoot out a lamp near the entrance to an abandoned warehouse, making it easier for the scoundrel to sneak inside. However, Gamemasters should be aware that, if too many combat actions are allowed, the skill challenge might turn into a combat encounter. That's okay—in fact, combat



CHEWBACCA READIES A SHOT.

encounters and skill challenges might flow seamlessly together—but if too many combat actions are taken, you should be ready to create a combat encounter on the fly.

For example, at the beginning of the Endor chase sequence, Chewbacca sees that scout troopers on speeder bikes are about to get away. Knowing that he cannot reach the speeder bikes in time, he takes a shot with his bowcaster, hoping to destroy one of the speeders before it can escape. He makes an attack roll and succeeds, which not only contributes a success in the skill challenge but also affects the shape of the challenge as the chase begins. Later, Luke uses his lightsaber to cause a speeder to crash into a tree, earning the final success necessary to end the challenge.

USING FORCE POWERS

As with combat actions, sometimes Force powers (or other Force-related abilities) can contribute to a skill challenge. When a hero uses the Force as his or her action during a challenge, you can adjudicate the action in several ways. First, keep in mind that no matter what form the action takes, you can use the same DCs that are used in other parts of the challenge as the minimum for success. When the hero describes the action, determine whether it is similar enough to an existing power, talent, or application of the Use the Force skill to adjudicate the action with those rules. For example, if a hero wants to use the Force to convince a warehouse guard to wander off, that is similar to the *mind trick* Force power. To perform that action, the hero must expend that Force power and follow its normal rules. Generally, using the power successfully is enough to warrant a success in the skill challenge.

For other Force-related exploits that do not fall clearly under the domain of a particular Force power or talent, you can simply have the hero make a Use the Force check, just as he or she would make any other skill check in the challenge. For example, if the character wants to use the Force to hold open a closing door, he or she would have to succeed on a Use the Force check (with a DC equal to a relevant DC for that skill challenge) to earn a success. As with any other action, failing to meet the DC accrues a failure and has its own consequences.

CONCLUDING THE CHALLENGE

The skill challenge ends when one of three events takes place. First, the challenge ends if the heroes achieve the required number of successes before accruing a set number of failures, earning success in the challenge overall. Second, the challenge ends if the heroes accrue a certain number of failures (usually three) before gaining the required successes, meaning they fail the challenge overall. Third, the challenge can end prematurely as a result of the heroes' actions; for example, they might decide to break off the challenge and begin a combat encounter instead. When the challenge ends, the heroes still must deal with the consequences of their actions.

R2-D2 ACCRUES A FAILURE IN A SKILL CHALLENGE AT THE BUNKER.



EXAMPLE OF PLAY

The following example of play is designed to demonstrate how a Gamemaster runs a skill challenge and how players might act and react during the challenge. As with the example of play from the Saga Edition core rulebook, Michele is the Gamemaster during the session and runs the skill challenge. Chris is playing Sia-Lan, a female Human Jedi Knight, and Mike plays Ror-worr, a Wookiee scout and gunslinger. Penny is playing a blue-skinned elite trooper named Vor'en, and Brian's character is Deel Surool, a canny Twi'lek scoundrel. Elements of the sample skill challenge will be explained in more detail in Designing Skill Challenges, starting on page 40.

SKILL CHALLENGE: ESCAPE FROM KESSEL

In this skill challenge, the heroes are trapped in the spice mines of Kessel and must escape to freedom. The spice mines are currently under the control of the Colicoids, an insectoid species responsible for the design of the Droideka. The heroes have a chance to escape while being herded back to their barracks, and their goal is to make their way out of the mines, through the detention facility, and out to a landing pad where a spice-hauling vessel is refueling for take-off. During the breakout, 10 other prisoners also decide to fight their way to freedom, helping the heroes escape.

CL 8

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Perception [DC 18]: The heroes can keep their eyes and ears open for the signs of approaching Colicoid guards. Alternatively, the heroes can search for side tunnels and passages that are rarely used.

Persuasion [DC 23]: The heroes can convince some of their fellow prisoners to keep watch or fan out to distract the guards and prevent them from catching the main group.

Stealth [DC 18]: The heroes can attempt to sneak by Colicoid patrols and to ensure that none of the other prisoners makes too much noise.

Survival [DC 28]: The heroes can search for signs of Colicoid tracks in the tunnels they are following, using that knowledge to determine which passages the insectoids are least likely to search.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested effects for this skill challenge:

Close Call: The heroes accrue failures only on skill checks that fail by 5 or more.

Degrees of Failure: Any failures accrued by the heroes reduce the number of nonheroic prisoners that reach the ship and escape.

Success: If the heroes succeed, they make their way to the Lantillian short hauler sitting on the landing pad. They successfully steal the ship and jump into hyperspace.

Failure: If the heroes fail the skill challenge, they are cornered by Colicoid guards and must engage in a difficult combat encounter to finally gain their freedom. If the heroes succeed but accrued one failure during the challenge, only five of the other prisoners make it to freedom with them. If the heroes succeed but accrued two failures during the challenge, none of the other prisoners reach the short hauler—all 10 are recaptured by the Colicoids.

Michele (GM): *After several hours of plotting, the time finally comes for you to make your escape. As the Colicoid guards herd you toward the spice mines, you see an opening when the guards are distracted, and you run into an empty tunnel. About 10 other prisoners make a run for it with you.*

One of those prisoners tells you that a spice freighter is sitting on a landing pad on Kessel's surface, and that you probably could steal it and escape from the planet. First, though, you've got to get away from the Colicoids and reach the ship. As you make your way through near-total darkness in the mines, you hear the sounds of pursuit not far behind. The air is thick with the smell of spice, and you know that you have only minutes in which to make your escape.

This is a skill challenge, so each of you must contribute to the escape. What do you do?

SKILL CHALLENGE TRANSPARENCY

How much should you tell your players during a skill challenge? In a combat encounter, the players know that they are engaged in combat and that they will act in a certain order, and they have a good idea of what they must do to succeed. A skill challenge, however, can be a bit more ambiguous. As a Gamemaster, it is up to you to decide how much to tell players about the challenge. Additionally, the right choice for one skill challenge might not be right for another, so do not be afraid to experiment with how much you reveal. There are three general categories of skill challenge transparency.

Total Disclosure: You hide nothing from your players. You tell them when they are in a skill challenge, what skills are their best choices, how many successes they need, and any special rules that apply to the skill challenge. You might even reveal the DCs of the skill checks they must make. Because of the focus on game mechanics, this kind of transparency works best for skill challenges that have little dramatic tension, such as those without direct antagonists. For example, a skill challenge in which the heroes must work together to rebuild a broken-down starship is not a particularly dramatic scene, so the mechanics would not disrupt the flow of the game.

Partial Disclosure: You tell your players a few things, but keep other things secret. You reveal that they are in a skill challenge and perhaps explain any special rules for the challenge. Otherwise, it is up to the players to feel out the situation, using roleplaying and their own insight to determine what skills will help them achieve success. This kind of transparency works best for skill challenges that have some dramatic tension but that still require the players to focus on a specific goal. For example, a chase sequence through city streets provides an interesting narrative, but you should make the scene's game mechanics obvious so the players realize that their actions have immediate consequences.

Secret Challenge: You hide everything from the players, including the fact that they are in a skill challenge. You keep track of the challenge behind the scenes as a means of directing the flow of the game or providing experience points for a noncombat encounter. This kind of transparency works best for scenes that rely heavily on roleplaying and dialogue (such as negotiations) so that the game mechanics do not interfere with the drama. This degree of transparency also works for skill challenges that take place over long periods of time, since it allows the plot to develop naturally without the players worrying about the skill challenge.

Consider how Michele set the scene, providing the basics of the surroundings and some description of the sights and sounds. She also provided a clear goal for the heroes: escape. Because she has decided to have at least some transparency, Michele informs the players that they are now in a skill challenge.

Brian (Deel): *Don't worry, everyone—I've been in tougher spots than this before. Just do what I tell you, and everything will be okay. I'd like to make a Persuasion check to try to convince some of the other prisoners that escaped with us to help us find the fastest route to the surface.*

Brian rolls a d20 and adds his Persuasion modifier, getting a result of 26. Michele compares this to the DC that she set for the skill and determines that Brian's check was successful, making a note that the heroes have earned their first success in the challenge.

Michele (GM): *The other prisoners seem to be on board with your leadership, and a Sullustan captive pushes his way forward and offers to take the lead in scouting ahead. It looks like you've managed to get the other prisoners' full assistance, which should prove beneficial in making your escape. Who's next?*

Penny (Vor'en): *As the Sullustan scouts ahead, I follow close behind him in case he needs someone to watch his back. I don't want our new friend getting grabbed by a Colicoid patrol. I'd like to make a Perception check to watch for the guards and make sure the Sullustan can find a path without being captured.*

Penny rolls a d20 and adds her Perception modifier, getting a result of 19. Fortunately, Perception is one of the easier skills to use in this challenge, and Michele records the success.

Michele (GM): *It's a good thing you did that. Just as the Sullustan seems to find a route to the surface, you hear the sound of a Colicoid patrol rounding the corner. You manage to grab the Sullustan and yank him back just in time to avoid being noticed by the guards. Once they're gone, the rest of the prisoners come forward, and you can start making your way toward the surface. What now?*

The last two skill checks are good examples of what happens when players use expected skills. Each player described his or her character's actions, then made a skill check. After the result was determined, Michele described the ramifications of each action, improvising the presence of the helpful Sullustan prisoner and the near miss when Vor'en kept him from being spotted. That approach brings more excitement to the game than simply saying, "Your skill check succeeds."

Chris (Sia-Lan): *When Vor'en tells us how narrowly our Sullustan friend avoided being spotted, I decide to clear my mind and trust in the Force to guide us around any potential patrols. I'd like to make a Use the Force check to calm my mind and try to sense the presence of any Colicoids along our path.*

Since Use the Force is not one of the skills suggested for this challenge, Michele has to decide whether to allow this action. The idea seems to be

reasonable given the circumstances, and it fits Sia-Lan's character, so Michele decides to allow it. She determines that, thanks to the disorienting environment and the unfamiliar minds of the Colicoids, the skill check should have a moderate difficulty—in this case, DC 28. Chris rolls a d20 and adds his Use the Force modifier, getting a result of 22. Michele notes this as a failure, since it is more than 5 below the DC she set (the threshold defined in the "Close Call" effect).

Michele (GM): *As you extend your senses along the path, you determine that there is a cluster of Colicoid minds almost directly ahead, probably some kind of security checkpoint. However, as you focus on the path ahead, you cease to pay attention to your pursuers. Cries of fear sound from the prisoners behind you—a security patrol has caught up to your group! As some of the prisoners behind you are caught, you realize that you still have a chance to escape, but about half the prisoners who fled with you have been recaptured. Rorworr, it's your turn. What do you do?*

The above is a good example of allowing players to improvise their skill use, which Michele deals with by assigning a DC based on the circumstances. Likewise, the failed skill check has tangible consequences—five of the prisoners were recaptured (as described in the Failure section of the skill challenge).

Mike (Rorworr): *As much as it pains me to leave them behind, it's now or never for our escape. I let out a mournful hoot and begin to move forward. I'd like to see if I can sneak us all past that security checkpoint. I'm going to make a Stealth check to move us all quickly and quietly past the Colicoids ahead, making sure that everyone remains silent as we creep by.*

Mike rolls a d20 and adds his Stealth modifier, getting a result of 22. This is good enough to beat the DC that Michele set, so she marks it as a success—the third of the challenge so far.

Michele (GM): *Thanks to your years of evading predators on Kashyyyk, you're able to guide your allies like a hunting party right past the Colicoid security post. As you do so, you notice that the rough-hewn tunnels give way to metal floors and walls, signaling your entrance into the artificial facilities built into the surface. Within moments, you leave the darkness and enter the stark, sterile interior of the Colicoid administrative facility. The sounds of alarm klaxons blare within, so you believe that you're probably still in danger of pursuit by the guards. Now that everyone has taken an action, it's up to you guys who determine who goes next.*

At this point, Michele has changed the scene significantly, taking the chase out of the mines and into a service tunnel within an administrative facility. This not only provides a new backdrop for the scene but also opens up more technology-oriented skill uses. By changing the scene, Michele keeps things fresh and helps give players new ideas for actions to try.

Penny (Vor'en): *The corridor that we're moving down—does it look like a fairly modern facility?*

Michele (GM): *Yes. In fact, it looks as though this wing of the building was renovated fairly recently.*

Penny (Vor'en): *Okay, I'm going to try to find a computer panel and see if I can pull up a schematic of the facility so we can find our way to the landing pad.*

Michele (GM): *Finding a computer is no problem. Would you like to make a Use Computer check to try to bring up the schematic? The system's on lockdown, but you might be able to get through the security.*

Penny (Vor'en): *Sure.*

Michele determines that this is probably a hard challenge, given that the heroes are in a prison facility in lockdown mode, so she sets the DC at 32. Penny rolls a d20 and adds her Use Computer modifier. Knowing that the skill check will be difficult, Penny decides to spend a Force Point to augment her result. The final result is 32 exactly, which Michele marks as a success.

Michele (GM): *Success! Not only do you bring up the schematics, but you also find a good path through the facility that seems to take you directly to the landing pad. It's a bit of a distance to travel, and you've still got five other prisoners in tow, but you think you can make it there if you hustle. Who's next?*

Chris (Sia-Lan): *Since we're inside the facility and away from the mines, there are probably security devices tracking our movements. I'd like to use the Force to pull down any security cameras or sensors that I see, blinding the building's security forces to our activities.*

Michele determines that this action is reasonable and much easier than trying to detect the Colicoids (since the security devices cannot really resist the Jedi's efforts), so she assigns the check a medium DC of 23. Chris rolls a d20, adding his Use the Force modifier for a total of 27. Michele marks this as a success—the fifth accrued in the challenge so far.

Michele (GM): *Great work! As you follow the directions that Vor'en continues to issue, you start using the Force to wrench free any security devices you see. The shouts of pursuit come from elsewhere. You think you've temporarily confused the guards because it takes them a moment to figure out which direction you're going. What now?*

Mike (Rorworr): *Does it look like we're getting close to the landing pad?*

Michele (GM): *So far, you've basically come up through hallways that are used to access the mines. However, thanks to your Sullustan friend, you entered through an area that's some kind of heavy machinery entrance, so you haven't run into many Colicoids. You're approaching the more heavily trafficked areas now. Although you guess that you're not far from the landing pad, more caution might be called for.*

Mike (Rorworr): *Right. Good to know. Given that, I'd like to see how much I know about Colicoid biology. Do I think they are hindered by darkness?*

Michele (GM): *You can make a Knowledge (life sciences) check to see.*

Mike (Rorworr): *Okay, I rolled a 16.*

Michele (GM): *You don't think they have the ability to see in the dark. Since that wasn't something directly contributing to your escape, you can still take an action.*

The above is a good example of improvising skills (Use the Force) and using skills that do not directly contribute to the skill challenge (Knowledge [life sciences]).

Mike (Rorworr): *I'd like to see if I can find a power conduit nearby to disrupt some of the lights between here and the landing pad. We should have a better chance of escaping under cover of darkness.*

Michele (GM): *There are power conduits throughout the walls of this service passageway. You'd need to make a Mechanics check to disable the lights down the corridor.*

Since the facility is of fairly recent construction, Michele sets a medium DC of 23 for this skill check. Mike rolls a d20, adds his Mechanics modifier, and gets a result of 24. Michele notes it as a success. The heroes have now accrued six successes and one failure.

Michele (GM): *As the lights flicker and go out, you hear Rorworr offer a triumphant growl in the darkness. Unfortunately, it's pretty dark for you, too, but the landing pad seems to be near the end of this service tunnel. As you make your way down the passage, a loud clatter and the harsh sounds of an alien language warn you that Colicoid guards are stumbling around blindly through the tunnels. After a few moments, they move on, not having found you.*

You travel a few more minutes and enter a passageway that still has some emergency lighting and leads to the landing pad. As promised, the Lantillian short hauler sits on the pad beneath a magnetic field that keeps out the vacuum outside. You dash up the open ramp, herding the five remaining prisoners up with you, and not a moment too soon—Colicoid guards and droidekas begin spilling out of the passageway you just left. Once inside the ship, you close the hatch, but upon arriving in the cockpit, you find that the ship's design—meant for Colicoids—is completely alien. Even the computer displays information in an unfamiliar language. Deel, you're next.

Michele has once again changed the scene, moving the action into the short hauler that the heroes will use to escape. They need only two more successes to finish the skill challenge, and the confines of the ship should offer at least a few new opportunities for the heroes to use their skills.

Brian (Deel): *I'm no good piloting an alien ship, especially if I can't read the controls. I'd like to make a Use Computer check to see if I can have the computer automatically translate everything into Basic.*

Michele determines that such translation is probably a common function for most ship computers and gives the check an easy DC of 18. Brian rolls a d20 and adds his Use Computer modifier for a total result of 18—a lucky thing that making the changeover was so easy. Michele notes the success.

Michele (GM): *Deel spends a few moments tinkering with the computers, then familiar Aurebesh letters suddenly scroll across the screen. Meanwhile, the ring of laser fire striking the ship grows more frequent, and it looks like the enemy is within seconds of reaching the vessel. Everyone has taken a second action, so anyone can act next. What do you do?*

Brian (Deel): *Time to blast off. Everyone strap in; this could be a bumpy ride. I drop into the pilot's chair, fire up the engines, and punch it! I'll make a Pilot check to get us out of here.*

Michele determines that because the heroes are inside the ship, blasting off is a pretty easy way to get to freedom, so she sets an easy DC of 18. Brian rolls a d20, adds his Pilot modifier, and gets a result of 25. Because the heroes have earned eight successes before accruing three failures, they succeed on the skill challenge.

Michele (GM): *As the engines roar to life, the ship blasts away from the landing pad. Red blaster bolts streak up from below, flashing past the cockpit window, but within moments, you're well out of range. However, your sensor board begins to light up. It looks like the Colicoids have scrambled some starfighters to intercept your escape...*

DESIGNING SKILL CHALLENGES

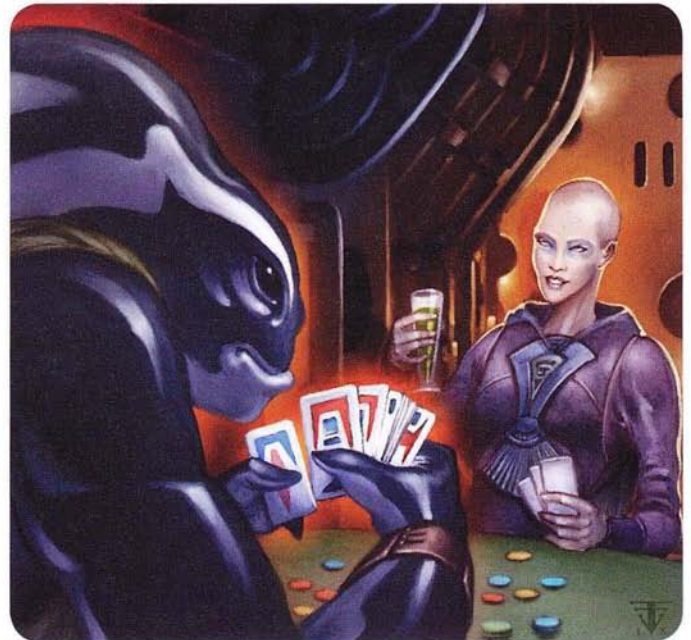
Designing a skill challenge is much like designing a combat encounter. As the Gamemaster, you determine the location of the skill challenge, the obstacles and antagonists that might play into the scene, several options for providing the heroes with variety, and the consequences of success or failure. Conceptually, skill challenges and combat encounters are similar, although they differ in execution.

This section walks you through the creation of a skill challenge, from the initial concept to challenge effects that can be added to spice things up. By following these steps, you can create skill challenges that contribute to exciting scenes in the *Star Wars* tradition.

CHOOSE THE CONCEPT

The first step in creating a skill challenge is coming up with a compelling idea. Typically, when forming the basic concept, you want to focus on three primary areas: creating a cinematic scene, involving all the heroes and giving them meaningful ways to contribute, and producing a satisfactory resolution to their actions and to the skill challenge as a whole.

First, create a cinematic scene. Think of the many scenes in the *Star Wars* films. The ones that best translate into skill challenges are those in which skills are more useful than combat prowess in resolving the situation, characters take risks to achieve rewards, and the heroes' actions have a sense of tension that encourages them to take risks. For example, breaking into the bunker during the Battle of Endor meets these criteria. Although combat is taking place around them, the heroes (specifically Princess Leia, Han Solo, R2-D2, and Chewbacca) don't try to blast their way into the bunker, but instead use



their skills to get inside. They take risks, such as attempting to hot-wire the controls, earning both successes and failures (such as when R2 is blasted away from the control panel). The scene is filled with tension because the heroes know that if they do not disable the deflector shield, the Rebel fleet attacking the second Death Star will be crushed. When coming up with a basic concept for a skill challenge, consider these questions:

- How does the scene encourage or require skill use?
- What kinds of risks can the heroes take to achieve success?
- What provides the sense of tension for the scene?

With these questions answered, you can start building more specific concepts for the challenge.

Second, involve all the heroes and give them meaningful ways to contribute. You do not have to tailor every element of the skill challenge to specific characters, but do find ways to include elements and actions that interact well with the party's talents. For example, if the heroes have plenty of technical skills and enjoy using gadgets and computers, you might want to design skill challenges that let them call on those resources. Of course, not all heroes in a group have the same skills, so a challenge such as this one should also provide opportunities for the nontechnical characters. For example, if the party includes a slicer, an outlaw tech, and a starship pilot, you might create a skill challenge that focuses on using those heroes' talents

to steal a starship from a top-secret facility. However, the party probably also includes a soldier, a noble, or a scout who might have different skills. Perhaps they could subdue the guards at the facility, talk their way past security checkpoints, or sneak into the control room to plant a malicious program the slicer cooked up. Your concept of the skill challenge should be broad enough to suit multiple heroes.

Lastly, think about the different directions in which the skill challenge can evolve. Although you can never fully predict the actions the heroes might attempt, you can probably foresee some of the skills they might employ and sketch out a few ways in which the skill challenge can develop. Consider how the basic situation might change—both for the better and for the worse—as the heroes take actions, and how the challenge might reach a satisfactory resolution. Remember that the heroes' actions should have repercussions.

NOT A SKILL CHALLENGE

This chapter explains what a skill challenge is, but you should also understand what is not—or should not be—a skill challenge. Just because the heroes make skill checks to solve a problem, that does not necessarily mean they are participating in a skill challenge. Examples of when you should not use the skill challenge system include:

- Any time a situation can be resolved with a single skill check
- Any situation that does not give multiple heroes something to do during the challenge
- Any situation that has no risk of failure
- Any series of events that lacks tension or cinematic flair
- Any situation that does not evolve as the heroes take actions

CONSIDER THE DURATION

After coming up with a good concept for your skill challenge, decide how long it should take, in terms of real time and game time experienced by the heroes. Since a skill challenge is somewhat more abstract than a combat encounter, it can unfold over the course of a gaming session or even an entire adventure. Similarly, a skill challenge might represent an individual scene in the lives of the heroes, or it might span multiple scenes and be broken up by other events and encounters. When designing a skill challenge, you do not necessarily need to set strict guidelines for its duration, but do consider how it should unfold and at what pace.

Some skill challenges are meant to be resolved in a relatively short amount of game time. In such cases, present situations that lend themselves to being finished without interruption. For example, a skill challenge based on surviving travel through an asteroid field is unlikely to be interrupted by other scenes and should be run straight through from beginning to end. These types of skill challenges take less time at the gaming table and often reach resolution in one scene (or in very few scenes) as the story unfolds.

Other skill challenges that play out over a long sequence of game time might have interruptions. For example, consider a skill challenge that revolves around hunting down a crime lord that has gone into hiding. You can design a series of consecutive scenes that relate directly to the skill challenge, but you can also break up the action with combat encounters (perhaps the heroes jump some of the crime lord's thugs and attempt to subdue them) or interesting roleplaying scenes (perhaps the heroes talk to a bartender in a cantina frequented by the crime lord). The skill challenge might even be interrupted by another, shorter skill challenge—for example, the heroes flush the crime lord out of hiding but then must engage in a speeder chase to finally run him down.

DETERMINE CL AND COMPLEXITY

Now that you have a basic concept for the skill challenge and a general idea of how long it should take, you can determine the two most important factors: the challenge level (CL) and the complexity. Setting the CL of a skill challenge is just like setting the CL of a combat encounter. To produce a balanced challenge and a tense scene, set the CL at or near the average level of the heroes. Setting the CL higher or lower makes the challenge more or less difficult, respectively.

The complexity of a skill challenge determines how many separate skill checks must be made to succeed in the challenge overall (see Table 2-1). A complexity 1 challenge requires the heroes to earn five successes to succeed in the challenge; a complexity 2 challenge requires eight successes; and a complexity 3 challenge requires 11 successes. Regardless of complexity, if the heroes fail three separate skill checks, they fail the challenge overall.

The combination of CL and complexity also determines the experience value of the skill challenge. A complexity 1 skill challenge awards experience points equal to that of one opponent of a CL equal to the skill challenge's CL; likewise, a complexity 2 challenge awards experience points equal to that of two such opponents, and a complexity 3 challenge awards points equal to that of three such opponents. Thus, a complexity 2 skill challenge at CL 7 is worth the same amount of experience points as defeating two CL 7 opponents.

When designing a combat encounter that includes a skill challenge, take the challenge into account when calculating the difficulty of the encounter—just count the challenge as a number of opponents. For example, when determining the difficulty of a combat encounter that includes a complexity 2 skill challenge at CL 5, simply count the challenge as two CL 5 opponents.

Many times, you can include a low-complexity skill challenge of a lower CL in a combat encounter to give the heroes opportunities to take actions other than fighting. Much in the same way that you might include storm-troopers that are well below the heroes' level to soak up their attacks, a low-complexity, low-CL skill challenge can take up the heroes' actions during combat without making the encounter much more difficult.

SET SKILL DCs

The CL of the challenge determines the target DCs of skills used in the challenge. Table 2-1 lists the skill DCs for challenge CLs under five general categories: easy, medium, moderate, hard, and heroic. When you create a skill challenge, these DCs determine success or failure for various skill uses. As the Gamemaster, you must determine whether each hero's action has a higher or lower likelihood of success, then assign a general difficulty (and thus a specific DC) to that skill check. The more plausible the hero's action in the situation, the lower the general difficulty category (and thus the DC) should be.

Easy skill checks should be used for actions that have an extremely high likelihood of success, even if the heroes don't end up with a very high check result. Examples include using Persuasion to convince a friendly shopkeeper to help or using Mechanics to perform enough repairs to get a lightly damaged speeder up and running. You should assign an easy DC whenever you think that the hero's action is easy to achieve and represents a good solution to that part of the challenge.

Medium skill checks should be used for actions that have a good chance of success but might become failures if the heroes bungle the check. Examples include slicing into a relatively light security system or climbing over a security wall in a lightly defended compound. You should assign a medium DC when you think the hero's action should succeed, but there is still some risk of failure due to a rare mistake.



SEARCHING FOR LUKE ON HOTH IS A SKILL CHALLENGE WITH HIGH SKILL DCs.

HARDER CHECKS AT HIGHER LEVELS

The method described for assigning skill check DCs might give the impression that performing the same task is more difficult for heroes of higher levels, since the DCs are based on character level. However, the expected DCs are really just abstractions that represent many factors, with the assumption that challenges grow more difficult as heroes gain levels. Thus, a 10th-level hero making a Stealth check might need to beat a higher DC than he or she did when at 4th level because the circumstances surrounding the Stealth check are more difficult. At 10th level, the skill challenge faced by the hero might have more vigilant guards, better security protocols, more precise sensors, or any number of other factors that make it harder to succeed on a Stealth check.

This system allows you to design level-appropriate challenges without having to figure out the statistics for every guard, officer, and computer system the heroes might encounter. That said, you are free to assign skill check DCs based on other factors. For example, you can assign DCs based on the defense scores or skill modifiers of opponents, or on the statistics for hazards, vehicles, or objects. Similarly, you can mix and match within a skill challenge, assigning some DCs based on abstractions and others on an enemy's Will Defense or Perception bonus. Just remember that the result of a skill check against a defense score or a skill modifier should still count as a success or a failure.

Moderate skill checks should be used for actions that have some chance of success but also a strong chance of failure. Examples include bribing an Imperial official to look the other way or flying a starship between buildings in a planetary metropolis. You should assign a moderate DC when the hero's action is risky but still a plausible solution to that part of the challenge. You can also assign a moderate DC when the hero's action uses a skill that is not optimal for the situation but that could produce results.

Hard skill checks should be used for actions where the odds are stacked against the hero and the chance of failure is high. Examples include hiding from security guards in an open hangar or making an Acrobatics check to drop through a laser security grid. You should assign a hard DC when the hero's action probably should fail, but when luck or exceptional skill could pull off a miracle. You can also assign a hard DC when the skill the hero wants to use is unlikely to produce results during that particular skill challenge.

TABLE 2-1: SKILL CHALLENGE DCs BY CL

CHALLENGE CL	EASY DC	MEDIUM DC	MODERATE DC	HARD DC	HEROIC DC
1	13	18	23	26	31
2-3	14	19	24	27	32
4-5	16	21	26	29	34
6-7	17	22	27	30	35
8-9	18	23	28	32	37
10-11	19	24	29	33	38
12-13	21	26	31	35	40
14	22	27	32	36	41
15	22	27	32	37	42
16-17	23	28	33	38	43
18-19	24	29	34	39	44
20	26	31	36	41	46

Heroic skill checks should be used for actions where success seems almost impossible. Examples include convincing a stormtrooper to betray the Empire or using the Force to plant suggestions in the mind of a Dark Jedi. You should assign a heroic DC when the hero's action has almost no chance of success or when it is implausible to expect any results from the chosen skill.

CHOOSE PRIMARY SKILLS

Although this step is not strictly necessary, it is a good idea to assign DCs to a small number of skills that the heroes are likely to use in the challenge. You will almost certainly need to improvise some DCs during the challenge, but you can probably predict some of the more obvious skill uses in advance and assign those DCs ahead of time. You should also note a few plausible uses of those skills in case you need to provide suggested actions to heroes who are stumped or need pointers.

Of course, a set of primary skills is merely a handy starting point and does not limit the skill challenge in any way—the heroes still can attempt any actions they want. In fact, you should encourage your players to think creatively and reward them for doing so by allowing them a chance at success, no matter how small. Even if a skill is not considered a primary skill for the challenge, if a player suggests something that seems at least remotely plausible, give him or her the chance to try.

CREATE OPTIONS

When designing and running skill challenges, one of your biggest goals is to provide interesting options for the players. You should create opportunities for using a variety of skills, effectively setting up various "targets" for the heroes. The characters should be aware of the different elements placed

before them and realize the potential for interactions. They don't negotiate only with a Hutt—his majordomo and protocol droid are also present. They don't simply evade a squad of stormtroopers—they can choose to hide in the slums or sneak through the elite section of town. They don't merely navigate an asteroid field—they can plunge into a dust cloud, zoom close to one of the biggest rocks, or try to reach a less dense area that has more room to maneuver. Such opportunities will present themselves in the way you describe the scene, so keep in mind that presenting multiple characters, locations, or objects makes it easier for the players to come up with interesting actions.

ADD CHALLENGE EFFECTS

The final step in designing a skill challenge is to add one or more challenge effects (described in the next section) that modify the basic rules of the challenge. These extra effects are not required, but they can help give each skill challenge its own feel, just as adding special terrain features to a combat encounter can make it seem unique. If you want to use such effects, choose them in advance (not on the fly), based on the nature of the skill challenge in question. You also might want to make your players aware of the effects in case their presence alters the way the heroes would behave in that situation.

CHALLENGE EFFECTS

The effects described below provide small alterations to the game mechanics of a skill challenge, changing the way it plays out. Each effect has a unique rule associated with it, and some of the effects might be incompatible with one another—or at least require some adjudication from the Gamemaster. The description of each effect includes examples of how it can be used and suggestions for when it might be included in a skill challenge.

ANTAGONIST

The antagonist effect represents an opponent that actively works against the heroes as they perform the skill challenge. Rather than failing due to their own mistakes, the heroes face the threat of failure because of the efforts of the antagonist. In a skill challenge with the antagonist effect, the heroes do not accrue failures when they fail a skill check. Instead, the antagonist takes its own actions and makes its own skill checks (against the same DCs faced by the heroes), and each success the antagonist accrues counts as one failure for the heroes. The antagonist takes an action each time all the heroes have taken actions, ensuring that failures are accrued only after the heroes have had a chance to earn successes.

For example, you might use this effect when the heroes are being pursued by a bounty hunter or when an enemy slicer is attempting to break into the heroes' computer system.

Use the antagonist effect when:

- an opponent or entity is actively working against the heroes.
- you want to encourage the heroes to act without fear of making the situation worse.
- the actions of the heroes would not directly contribute to failure.

CATASTROPHIC FAILURE

The catastrophic failure effect represents the fact that the heroes' plight is so delicate that a significant failure causes the situation to worsen rapidly. When a hero attempts an action and fails by a large margin, that failure moves the characters much closer to ultimate defeat. In a skill challenge with the catastrophic failure effect, if a participant fails a skill check by 10 or more, the heroes accrue two failures instead of one.



LUKE SKYWALKER REACTS AFTER A CATASTROPHIC FAILURE IN A NEGOTIATION SKILL CHALLENGE.

For example, you might use this effect when the heroes are navigating an extremely dangerous asteroid field or trying to maintain a low profile in the seat of their enemy's power.

Use the catastrophic failure effect when:

- dire failure has a chance of producing dire consequences.
- you want to increase tension in challenges with lower CLs.
- you want to encourage heroes to aid the skill checks of their allies instead of making their own checks.

CHANGING OBJECTIVES

The changing objectives effect represents a more significant shift in the heroes' situation than usual. As the heroes accrue successes and failures, the objectives of the skill challenge change, and the relevant skills and actions available to the heroes change as well.

For example, you might use this effect when the heroes learn that the quarry they have been chasing actually needs their protection, or when the crime lord they have been negotiating with decides to turn them over to the authorities, forcing the characters to flee.

Use the changing objectives effect when:

- you want to combine two scenes into a single skill challenge.
- you have heroes with wildly different skill sets.
- the pace of the skill challenge slows and needs to be invigorated.

CLOSE CALL

The close call effect represents situations in which the heroes can fail to make progress toward their goal without making overall conditions worse. With this effect, the heroes accrue a failure only if they fail a skill check by 5 or more.

For example, you might use this effect when the heroes are trying to track down an informant who has no allies on the planet, or when traveling overland across a world with few natural hazards.

Use the close call effect when:

- the actions of the heroes must fail dramatically to make their situation worse.
- you want to make success in the skill challenge easier without lowering skill DCs.
- you want to allow heroes to fail without obligating them to spend Force Points to earn a success.

CONTAINMENT

The containment effect represents situations in which the actions of the heroes can bring only success, not failure. Conditions grow worse only when no one contributes to the completion of the challenge. With this effect, the heroes do not accrue failures for failed skill checks. Instead, they accrue a failure only if no hero earns a success during an increment of time predetermined by the Gamemaster. This increment can be as short as a single combat round, or could encompass a longer period of time such as a minute, hour, or day. Each hero need not contribute to this skill challenge.

For example, you might use this effect when the heroes are trying to stop a fire from spreading, or during a foot chase through empty streets.

Use the containment effect when:

- the actions of the heroes cannot make things worse.
- you want to allow one hero to manage the skill challenge while the other heroes take other actions.
- failure in the skill challenge depends on outside or natural forces.

DEGENERATING

The degenerating effect represents situations in which failures can make the situation worse without ending the skill challenge. In a degenerating skill challenge, the heroes' actions have repercussions, and failures cause conditions to grow more dire, but the challenge does not end when the heroes accrue three failures. Instead, the general difficulty category for skill checks increases by one step for each failure accrued. For example, on the first failure, easy checks become medium checks, medium checks become moderate checks, and so on. Similarly, each success decreases the difficulty category by one step. The skill challenge ends when there are no possible skill DCs below a certain general category (as determined by the GM). For instance, the GM could determine that the skill challenge will be over when all of the skill checks have become hard.

For example, you could use this effect when the heroes are trying to avoid capture by the Empire while on Coruscant or trying to navigate a starship through a dangerous cluster of black holes.

Use the degenerating effect when:

- you want to reinforce the cost of failure in the situation.
- you want the challenge to grow more difficult as it progresses.
- you want to allow the heroes a chance to recover from their mistakes in a noticeable way.

ANAKIN LOSES ALLIES DURING A SPACE TRAVEL SKILL CHALLENGE
IN AN EXAMPLE OF DEGREES OF FAILURE.



DEGREES OF FAILURE

Similar to a degenerating skill challenge, a skill challenge with the degrees of failure effect grows more dangerous as the heroes accrue more failures. The challenge itself does not become more difficult, but the heroes face other consequences, which might not become evident until after the challenge is over. The skill challenge ends when three failures are accrued, as normal, but even if the heroes succeed, they must deal with consequences based on the number of failures accrued during the challenge.

For example, you might subtract a number of credits from the heroes' reward for each failure, or the heroes might face a combat encounter with an encounter CL set by the number of failures accrued.

Use the degrees of failure effect when:

- you want distinct consequences for failure that last beyond the scope of the skill challenge.
- you want to reinforce the need for perfect success in a challenge.
- you want to reward heroes for completing a skill challenge without accruing failures.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS

Similar to a degrees of failure skill challenge, a skill challenge with the degrees of success effect rewards the heroes for accruing successes, even in the face of ultimate failure. Each time the heroes earn a certain number of successes, they gain some type of benefit, regardless of the number of failures they have accrued. The number of successes needed to gain a benefit can vary depending on the skill challenge. In a complexity 1 skill challenge, each success could grant a benefit, whereas in a complexity 3 skill challenge, the heroes might need three successes to earn a benefit.

For example, you might determine that successes with certain skills alter the circumstances of the challenge, granting the heroes bonuses to other skill checks. Alternatively, the heroes could earn credits, pieces of information, experience points, or story rewards for their successes.

Use the degrees of success effect when:

- you want distinct benefits for success that last beyond the scope of the skill challenge.
- you want to reward the heroes for successes in a difficult skill challenge that they are likely to fail.
- you want each success to contribute to the collective knowledge possessed by the heroes.

EXTREME SUCCESS

The extreme success effect allows heroes to bring a skill challenge to its conclusion more quickly by pulling off exceptional actions. With this effect, if a hero earns a success with a check result that is 10 or more points higher than the target DC, the hero earns two successes for the party instead of one.

For example, you might use this effect when running a skill challenge for characters who are particularly suited to the task, or a challenge in which exceptional success puts the forces working against the heroes at a significant disadvantage.

Use the extreme success effect when:

- the heroes are well suited to the skill challenge's demands.
- you want to allow the heroes to end the skill challenge more quickly than normal.
- you want to reward high skill rolls in a challenge with a low CL relative to the party.

INDIVIDUAL EFFORT

A skill challenge with the individual effort effect focuses not only on the heroes' ability to work together but also on their separate contributions to the challenge. When a skill challenge has this effect, each hero must earn a number of individual successes equal to the challenge's complexity before the party accrues enough failures as a whole to fail the challenge.

For example, you can use this effect to reflect the need for everyone to contribute, such as when all the heroes are flying their own starfighters through a dangerous section of space, or when each hero must endure Imperial interrogation separately.

Use the individual effort effect when:

- you want to require each hero to attempt actions during the skill challenge.
- you want to increase the overall difficulty of the challenge without increasing skill check DCs.
- each hero's contributions must be relatively equal to ensure success.

INITIATIVE

A skill challenge with the initiative effect has a predetermined order in which the heroes can act. Each hero makes an Initiative check and acts in that order, just as in a normal combat encounter.

You can use this effect for skill challenges that take place during a combat encounter, or for those that occur in a very short amount of time (a matter of seconds or minutes).

Use the initiative effect when:

- running a skill challenge in combat.
- the heroes' ability to act in the challenge is based on their reaction times.
- you want to have a fixed order in which the heroes act.

OPPOSED DC

A skill challenge with the opposed DC effect represents a situation in which someone or something is actively working to deter the heroes' efforts. Like the antagonist effect, this pits the heroes directly against an opposing force that determines the difficulty of success. A skill challenge with the opposed DC effect does not use the skill check DCs from Table 2–2, above. Instead, the DC is set by the skill check or defense score of an opponent. The Gamemaster must know the skill checks and defense scores of the relevant opponents to determine successes and failures.

For example, you can use this effect for skill challenges in which the heroes try to outmaneuver an enemy antislicer droid, or when they engage in a battle of wits with an enemy commander.

Use the opposed DC effect when:

- the skill challenge has a specific opponent or set of opponents.
- the heroes are taking actions directly against an individual.
- you don't want to base the skill check DCs on the situation.

RECOVERY

A skill challenge with the recovery effect represents a situation in which the heroes can make amends for mistakes they made earlier in the challenge. When a hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, that hero can choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

You might use this effect when your heroes are negotiating with a noble who is as easily flattered as offended, or during a skill challenge in which the heroes are working to evade a pursuing bounty hunter.

Use the recovery effect when:

- the situation allows the heroes to make up for their mistakes.
- you want to encourage skilled heroes to compensate for the lower skills of other heroes.
- you want to reward heroes for significant successes without bringing the challenge to a premature end.

RESTRICTED SKILLS

A skill challenge with the restricted skills effect represents a situation in which the same trick will not work more than a few times, if at all. This should be true in most skill challenges—you should not allow a hero to complete a challenge by using the same skill over and over again—but this effect imposes more strict limitations. You can implement this effect in three ways. First, you can forbid certain skills from being used in the challenge. Second, you can limit the number of times that certain skills can be used, either by an individual hero or by the party overall. Third, you can rule that when a hero accrues a failure with a certain skill, that skill can no longer be used to earn successes in the challenge.

For example, you could use this effect in a challenge with a Hutt crime lord as he judges the heroes' worthiness to work for him, or when the characters are trying to sneak into a secret research facility where failure triggers alarms.

Use the restricted skills effect when:

- you want to encourage heroes to vary the skills they use.
- the situation warrants that you bar a particular skill from being used.
- you want to encourage less obvious solutions to the problems of the skill challenge.

SECOND EFFORT

A skill challenge with the second effort effect represents a situation in which, despite a lack of skill or composure, the heroes manage to succeed through pure grit and determination. With this effect, any hero who accrues a failure can make a sacrifice to turn that failure into a success. The exact nature of the sacrifice is up to the GM, but examples include moving down the condition track, taking damage, or losing a Force Point.

You can use this effect in skill challenges that reward determination, such as pushing through a driving storm on Dorin despite failing to find shelter, or blasting through a blockade with no regard for the final state of the ship.

Use the second effort effect when:

- you want to give the heroes the chance to sacrifice resources for success.
- the skill challenge has a higher CL and you want to reduce the odds of outright failure.
- the heroes' determination can overcome their lack of ideas or competence with skills.

TIMED CHALLENGE

The timed challenge effect represents a situation in which the heroes must worry more about the passage of time than about their individual failures. This effect creates tension and keeps the heroes' eyes on their chronometers as the skill challenge progresses. With this effect, the heroes do not accrue failures for failing skill checks, but instead must earn the required number of successes before a certain amount of time passes (either in rounds or in a more general sense).

For example, you might use this effect in skill challenges in which the heroes must destroy a communications satellite before an enemy fleet arrives, or in which the heroes have to trek through the wilderness before a wounded prisoner dies.

Use the timed challenge effect when:

- you want to introduce a sense of apprehension.
- you want to encourage all the heroes to participate without worrying about accruing failures.
- you want to give the heroes more flexibility in choosing who acts and in what order.



REBEL PILOTS FACE A TIMED CHALLENGE WHILE MAKING A TRENCH RUN.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

With the skill challenge designed, the last step is to determine the consequences of success and failure. Typically, success is self-evident—the heroes achieve the goal that they set out to achieve, such as finding the information they need or escaping from the Empire.

However, determining the results of failure can be a bit more tricky. As in a combat encounter, failure should have some kind of effect on the heroes' resources. It should not prevent the story from advancing or bring the adventure to a halt, but failure should lead to negative consequences for the heroes. For example, if they are engaged in a skill challenge that requires them to chase a quarry with a bounty on his or her head, failing the skill challenge does not necessarily mean that the target gets away. Instead, it could mean that the quarry makes it to a safe house, and the heroes must fight their way in. Alternatively, the target could escape but leave behind a trail that the heroes have to follow into a more dangerous environment. The failure of a skill challenge should still lead the story forward, but it can create new complications and twists for the characters. In most cases, even if the heroes fail the skill challenge, they still earn experience points for it, just as they would for a combat encounter.

You should know ahead of time what the consequences of failing a skill challenge will be for the heroes. Below are several suggestions for failure conditions that you can use when designing skill challenges.



BEING CAPTURED BY ENEMIES IS ONE POSSIBLE RESULT OF FAILING A SKILL CHALLENGE.

FAILURE CONDITION: COMBAT ENCOUNTER

If the heroes fail the skill challenge, they are led to a combat encounter, usually one with the same CL as the challenge. Thus, if the heroes fail a CL 8 skill challenge, they should have a combat encounter appropriate for 8th-level heroes. In this case, the heroes earn no experience from the skill challenge; instead, their XP reward is based on the combat encounter.

FAILURE CONDITION: LOSS OF ALLIES

For a more story-related failure condition, failing a skill challenge could result in the death, capture, or forced abandonment of allies or other relevant characters. For example, in a skill challenge in which the heroes fly a squadron of starfighters through a dangerous area of space, failure could mean that none of the heroes' fellow pilots survive the trip. Alternatively, failure could mean that certain allies—whether present or distant—are captured by the enemy, opening new avenues for adventure.

FAILURE CONDITION: LOSS OF EQUIPMENT

Similar to the previous failure condition, failing a skill challenge could cause the heroes' equipment (including droids and vehicles) to become lost or damaged. For example, in a skill challenge in which the heroes infiltrate an Imperial facility to destroy a shield generator, failure could mean that the explosives they brought are damaged, forcing them to find another way to blow up the building.

FAILURE CONDITION: LOSS OF FORCE POINT

If you want to use a failure condition based on the metagame, failing a skill challenge could result in the loss of a Force Point for each hero who participated in the challenge. This type of failure condition could be used when the heroes have failed in a matter of importance to the adventure, representing that the Force is not with them as strongly as it normally is.

FAILURE CONDITION: LOSS OF SECOND WIND

Failing a skill challenge could result in the loss of a second wind for each hero who participated in the challenge—a good choice for challenges that involve physical endurance. This failure condition represents physical exhaustion, and it could mean that heroes who have only one second wind per day cannot recover quickly from their wounds. For example, in a skill challenge in which the heroes must trek through the Felucian jungle, failure could represent the heroes reaching their destination but being exhausted by the effort.

SKILL CHALLENGE TIPS

Now that you know how a skill challenge works, this section offers tips on creating more exciting challenges. Although each challenge is different, certain aspects of their creation and execution can make them more memorable. As the Gamemaster, it is your job to use the rules—and these suggestions—to create scenes that excite your players, tell an interesting story, and fit into the *Star Wars* saga.

ENCOURAGE CINEMATIC PLAY

Part of your responsibility as a Gamemaster is to promote cinematic play. In *Star Wars*, taking risks is part of the fun and can lead to great thrills, and in a skill challenge, goals that otherwise would be incredibly difficult might be within the heroes' grasp. To encourage the players to take cinematic actions, present situations in which there are many opportunities to do so. Part of this is simply a function of choosing interesting terrain and locales for the skill challenge, but as the challenge evolves, you might need to present new situations in which the heroes can take audacious chances and still flourish. You can be a bit more lenient when the players want to take risks, especially if it will produce a more exciting scene. If a hero wants to attempt a daring action that has potential to make the scene more stirring, feel free to assign a skill check DC that is lower than might normally be expected.

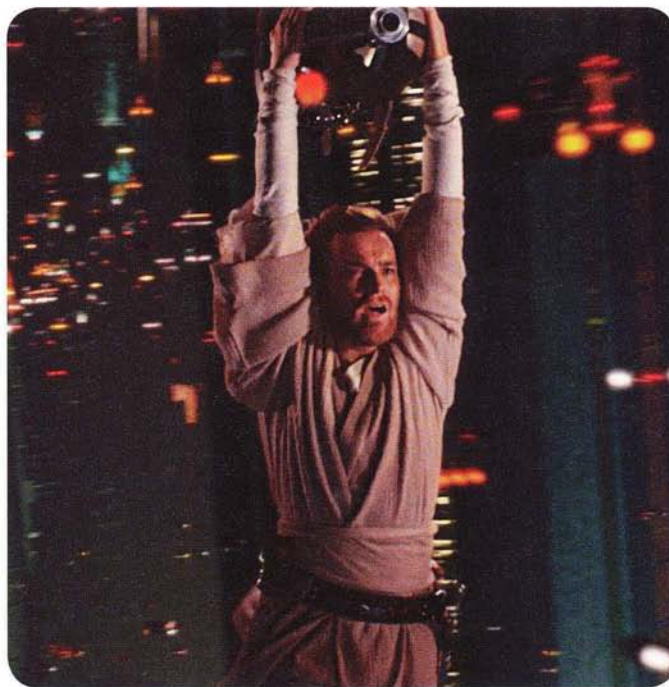
OFFER SUGGESTIONS

As with combat encounters, sometimes a skill challenge can bog down. The players might have a hard time deciding on their next actions, or they might be paralyzed by the fear of doing something wrong. Sometimes, the players' interest might wane, or a failure can make the situation seem hopeless. In these cases, it is up to you as the Gamemaster to offer gentle nudges to keep the challenge moving. When the action slows down too much, feel free to suggest good skill uses that the heroes can try, especially if you know that the tasks would be relatively easy for them to perform. Some players might feel lost because they did not follow your description of the situation, and giving them suggestions of what to try can help clarify the needs of the challenge and fire their imaginations.

CREATE EVOLVING SITUATIONS

A skill challenge is supposed to be a dynamic, evolving scene. As the heroes gain successes and failures, the situation should change accordingly. The heroes' actions should have an impact on the scenario, and the characters should feel that they are making progress, not just taking futile actions. Even better, altering the situation as a result of the heroes' actions opens up fresh creative opportunities, especially if the new circumstances lend themselves to other skills. For example, during a negotiation, the heroes should see some

OBI-WAN HANDS ONTO A DROID IN A DANGEROUS,
BUT CINEMATIC, CHALLENGE.



indication that their arguments are having an effect on the Hapan noble whom they are entreating for aid. After accruing a few successes, perhaps they convince the noble to help them, only to discover that they must also convince the other members of her house to assist, meaning that the heroes now must deal with a whole council. On the other hand, accruing a failure might cause the noble to become offended and summon her guards to take the heroes away; the characters then must convince the guards to wait long enough for them to make a second plea.

Evolving situations create more interesting opportunities and more engaging scenes. If a scenario develops beyond the place where it started, it is more likely to be seen as progress in the plot of the campaign. When a situation evolves, something about it should change—the locale, the person with whom the heroes must interact, the tone or sense of urgency, and so on. The new conditions should open up more possibilities for heroic actions and give players something new to do rather than repeat the same actions from their previous turns.

IMPOSE CONSEQUENCES

As you create evolving situations, remember that the choices the players make should have consequences. They likely will use the skills and abilities that grant them the best chances of success. However, keep in mind that using the same resources over and over again might have negative consequences, and encourage the heroes to choose from a variety of actions that are appropriate for each situation. For example, if you have a Jedi hero whose best skill is Use the Force, he or she might try to use that skill to solve every problem in the skill challenge. If that occurs, from time to time you should impose repercussions for relying on that skill too much. In the Rebellion era, for instance, someone who uses the Force repeatedly could draw the attention of the Empire, so the Jedi's recklessness could cause the heroes to be hounded by Imperials.

Additionally, each time a hero earns a success or a failure in a skill challenge, allow a larger consequence to alter the situation or come back into play down the line. Keep the challenge dynamic by having it reflect the heroes' actions. For example, in the Endor chase sequence, Luke makes a Jump check to knock a scout trooper off a speeder bike, and he succeeds. As a consequence of his action, Luke gains control of a speeder bike and can act independently from Leia (whereas before, his options were more limited).

ADD SKILL CHALLENGES TO COMBAT

Sometimes, a skill challenge can be used during combat to represent complex tasks. When you run a skill challenge as a part of a combat encounter, your players will almost certainly act on initiative order, and you should not require all heroes to contribute to the success of the challenge. The challenge should have enough transparency for the players to make informed decisions about what their heroes do.

Skill challenges that occur during a combat encounter usually require the heroes to work together on a complex task while engaging in combat with enemies. Returning to the Endor example, think of the scene outside the entrance to the bunker, in which the heroes try to break in while fighting the forces of the Empire. As the combat progresses, the heroes (in this case, Han Solo and R2-D2) attempt a variety of skill checks to gain entry to the bunker, occasionally stopping (in Han's case) to make attack rolls.

As discussed at Determine CL and Complexity on page 41, when you use a skill challenge in combat, consider it part of the encounter's design when determining encounter difficulty. Typically, given the peril of combat, you should include only complexity 1 skill challenges in combat encounters. Additionally, when designing encounters, you can include a complexity 1 skill challenge without adding the skill challenge's CL to the encounter's total CL. In essence, complexity 1 skill challenges are "free" when included in a combat encounter and do not affect the calculations you make to determine the difficulty of the skill challenge.

BREAK UP THE CHALLENGE

You need not run all parts of a skill challenge consecutively. After a round of skill checks, you can put the challenge on hold and engage the players in another scene before returning to the next round of checks. This is a great way to play out skill challenges that take place over a longer period of time. For example, if the heroes are members of New Republic Intelligence sent to root out Imperial agents who are inciting sedition among a planet's populace, the skill challenge goal might be to uncover the identities of the provocateurs. Finding the Imperials could be a complex skill challenge that unfolds over several days. After the heroes accrue a few successes and failures, the Gamemaster can put the skill challenge on hold so the characters can deal with other events (such as a riot) that require their attention. Breaking up a skill challenge is also a good way to reinforce the dynamic nature of the scene. After the first failure in a skill challenge, you might put it aside to run a short combat encounter, then return to the challenge after the encounter is resolved. When you pick the challenge back up again, the scene has changed, and the parameters of the challenge might have changed as well.

IMPROVISE

Any Gamemaster running a skill challenge must be prepared to improvise. Thinking on your feet is key to creating an interesting challenge, and you should be ready to engage in both active improvisation and reactive improvisation.

Active improvisation comes into play when you need to spice up the skill challenge for one reason or another. Perhaps your players have hit a dead end, run out of ideas, or simply lost interest in the challenge. Alternatively, you might run out of sensible responses to the heroes' actions before the skill challenge has been resolved. If this happens, you should improvise new situations, new locales, or new parameters for the challenge. For example, during a skill challenge that involves negotiation with a Hutt crime lord, the players might tire of the constant back-and-forth with the gangster and lose interest. Improvising, you decide that the Hutt has likewise grown bored with the heroes and throws a switch that opens a trap door, dropping the characters into a system of caverns filled with predatory beasts. The skill challenge changes from a negotiation to an escape sequence, requiring the heroes to make their way out of the caverns before being eaten by whatever creatures lurk in the dark.

Reactive improvisation comes into play as a result of the heroes' actions. Sometimes, the players will take actions that you did not anticipate, or they will find loopholes in the scene that cause them to do something unexpected. That's okay—in fact, it can be a lot of fun for both you and the players if you let them be clever and creative. Rather than reject the actions because you did not prepare for them, improvise ways that the actions can succeed, and in turn transform the skill challenge. For example, the heroes are participating in an investigative skill challenge to find a fugitive. One of the characters, in a surprising turn, puts up a large sum of credits as a bounty on

the target rather than continuing the investigation. Improvising, you allow the action, and some days later, a bounty hunter shows up with the quarry in tow. However, the skill challenge continues; the heroes must negotiate with the bounty hunter, then escape the bodyguards that the quarry summoned when taken into custody.

SAMPLE SKILL CHALLENGES

The rest of this chapter presents sample skill challenges that were designed with the rules described in the previous part of the chapter. They show how to design skill challenges to fit a variety of situations, and each skill challenge can be used in your game as is.

The first two examples demonstrate how the complexity of a skill challenge can vary based on your needs. They also illustrate extremes of skill challenge design. The first example is a simple, straightforward challenge that was formed quickly to produce a short scene, whereas the second uses many elements to create a more complex scene that changes as the skill challenge evolves.

Following the first two examples are a variety of sample skill challenges, including some intended for use during combat encounters, that you can use as models for building your own.

SIMPLE SKILL CHALLENGE: BREACHING THE BUNKER

In this skill challenge, the heroes must breach the front entrance to an Imperial bunker and retrieve the Empire's battle plans for an upcoming conflict. This challenge is intended for use during a combat encounter; the heroes must choose between working toward the skill challenge and firing back at the enemies that are trying to stop them. When the challenge begins, the blast doors to the bunker are sealed, and the heroes must get inside to retrieve the data they need.

CL 2

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (technology) [DC 14]: The heroes can attempt to recognize familiar pieces of technology, which can help identify the method for opening the blast doors or extracting information from the bunker's computers.

Mechanics [DC 19]: The heroes can try to activate the blast doors' opening mechanism, allowing them to enter the bunker.

Persuasion [DC 24]: The heroes can attempt to convince an Imperial officer at their mercy to grant them entrance into the bunker or to call up the information needed from its computers.

HAN HOTWIRES THE ENDOR BUNKER.



Use Computer [DC 19]: The heroes can try to slice into the blast doors' locking mechanism to open them or retrieve the needed information from the bunker's computers.

Challenge Effect: The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:

Timed Challenge: The heroes have 10 combat rounds to complete the challenge. After that point, they automatically fail the challenge.

Success: After two successes, the blast doors open, allowing the heroes to enter the bunker and work on retrieving the data. If the heroes succeed on the skill challenge overall, they obtain the needed information and have a chance to escape before reinforcements arrive.

Failure: If the heroes fail the skill challenge, reinforcements arrive in the form of six CL 1 stormtroopers. The heroes still have a chance to retrieve the data, but the fight becomes more difficult.

COMPLEX SKILL CHALLENGE: THE PODRACE

In this skill challenge, the heroes are sponsoring a Podracer in the Ando Overland event, which features 12 racers. Two of the heroes operate a two-seater racing pod, and the other members of the party act as pit crew, spotters, and crew chiefs. The heroes' goal is to secure victory in the three-lap Podrace. This skill challenge is broken into three phases that describe what happens as the race progresses.

CL 6

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Podrace Phase 1

The first lap of the race is relatively straightforward.

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this phase of the skill challenge:

Initiative [DC 22]: The pilot can attempt to use quick reflexes to get off to a quick start, while other heroes can try to look ahead in the race to anticipate trouble.

Knowledge (tactics) [DC 17]: The copilot or crew chief can make a Knowledge (tactics) check to analyze enemy flight patterns and advise the pilot on the best path to grab the lead.

Perception [DC 22]: The spotter, copilot, or any other character with a clear view of the track can look for danger on the track ahead or identify which racers are reckless and which ones are likely to allow the heroes' Podracer to draft behind them.

Pilot [DC 17]: The pilot of the Podracer can make a Pilot check to attempt some fancy flying, dancing the vehicle around opponents or across safer ground.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this phase of the skill challenge:

Degrees of Failure: The outcome of this skill challenge depends on the number of failures the heroes accrue. The fewer failures the heroes have at the end of the first lap, the better their finishing position.

Extreme Success: Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 10 or more earns two successes instead of one.

Recovery: Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more can forfeit that success in exchange for removing one failure.

Success: When the heroes have earned four successes, move on to phase 2 of the race.

Failure: If the heroes accrue no failures during the first lap, their racer is in the lead at the end of the lap. If they accrue one or two failures, their racer is in the middle of the pack at the end of the lap. If they accrue three failures, their racer crashes, but no one is harmed.

THE PODRACE ON TATOOINE



Podrace Phase 2

When phase 2 begins, so does the second lap of the race. As the competition nears its midpoint, the heroes' Podracer has a chance to make a short pit stop. At this point, the heroes notice that a rival pit crew is acting suspiciously—one of its members sneaks into a covered parts shed while dragging a droid.

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this phase of the skill challenge:

Mechanics [DC 22]: The Podracer makes a pit stop that is quick and efficient, allowing the heroes to make fast repairs without losing too much ground.

Pilot [DC 17]: The pilot of the Podracer continues to try to outmaneuver his or her opponents. Additionally, the pilot might try to engage in aggressive tactics, running other racers off the course.

Stealth [DC 27]: Any hero on the pit crew can try to sneak into the parts shed where the rival crew member dragged the droid.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this phase of the skill challenge:

Degrees of Failure: The outcome of this skill challenge depends on the number of failures the heroes accrue. The fewer failures the heroes have at the end of the second lap, the better their finishing position.

Extreme Success: Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 10 or more earns two successes instead of one.

Recovery: Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more can forfeit that success in exchange for removing one failure.

Success: When the heroes have earned a total of seven successes, move on to phase 3 of the race.

Failure: If the heroes accrue no failures during the second lap, their racer is in the lead at the end of the lap. If they accrue one or two failures, their racer is in the middle of the pack at the end of the lap. If they accrue three failures, their racer crashes, but no one is harmed.

Podrace Phase 3

When phase 3 begins, so does the final lap. With the race nearing completion, the rival crew's plans are revealed. The crew is strapping ion bombs onto droids and intends to release them onto the track to take out the front-runners before they can reach the finish line. Several droids are released onto the track at the start of this phase, and they collide with a Podracer that lags behind the others. As the ion bomb explodes, communications throughout the arena are disrupted, and the target racer crashes.

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this phase of the skill challenge:

Acrobatics [DC 27]: One of the heroes on the pit crew can attempt to dash onto the track, grab one of the ion bomb droids, and drag it away, all the while narrowly avoiding the Podracers that rush by. If a hero managed to sneak into the parts shed during phase 2, that hero can react more quickly to stop the droids and must make a DC 22 (rather than 27) Acrobatics check.

Deception [DC 22]: The pilot of the Podracer can attempt to fool opponents into following a more dangerous path or to otherwise fake out the competitors with tricky maneuvers.

Pilot [DC 27]: Due to the disrupted communications, performing risky stunts is much harder because the heroes in the pit crew cannot warn the pilot and copilot of upcoming danger. If at least one hero succeeds on a Use Computer check to reestablish communications, the DC of the Pilot check drops to 17.

Use Computer [DC 17]: The heroes can try to recalibrate their communications devices, reestablishing contact between the pit crew and the Podracer.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this phase of the skill challenge:

Degrees of Failure: The outcome of this skill challenge depends on the number of failures the heroes accrue. The fewer failures the heroes have at the end of the final lap, the better their finishing position.

Degrees of Success: Certain skills in this phase of the challenge are easier if the heroes have already earned success with other skills.

Second Effort: Late in the race, the heroes have a chance to push themselves and their racer to the limit. Whenever the pilot or copilot would normally accrue a failure in this phase of the skill challenge, that hero can move the Podracer -1 step on the condition track to convert that failure into a success. Condition track penalties of the Podracer are also applied to the skill checks of the pilot and copilot.

Success: When the heroes have earned a total of 11 successes, the race ends. Their position in the race depends on the total number of failures they accrued.

Failure: If the heroes have no failures when the skill challenge ends, their Podracer comes in first place. If they have one failure, their racer comes in second place. If they have two failures, their racer comes in third place. If they accrue their third failure during phase 3, they finish the race in seventh place (out of a possible 12).

SKILL CHALLENGE: ASTEROID FIELD ESCAPE

This skill challenge represents a chase sequence through an asteroid field. The heroes, aboard their ship, are attempting to escape from pursuing enemy starfighters. This challenge is intended for use during a combat encounter, giving the crew of the ship something to work toward while the gunners fend off the enemy starships.



ESCAPING THROUGH AN ASTEROID FIELD

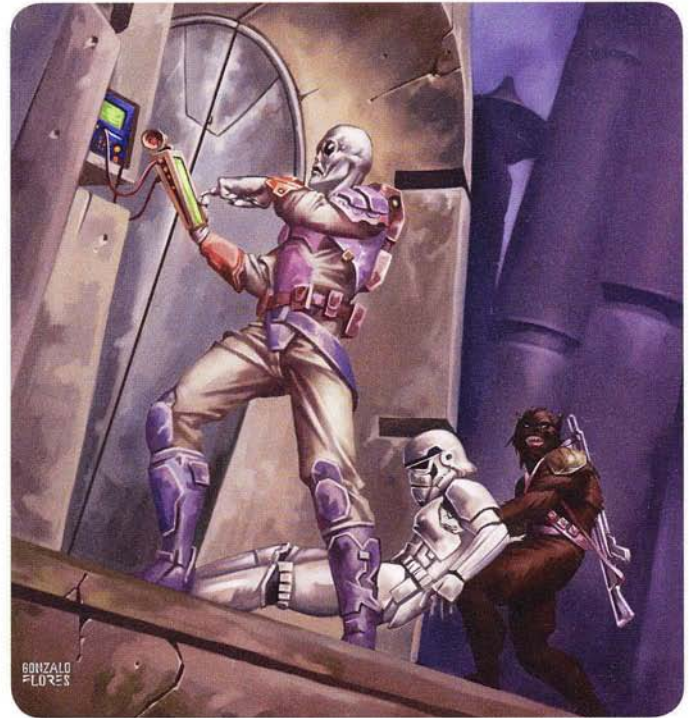
CL 9

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)**Suggested Skills:** The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:*Fire Starship Weapons [Reflex Defense 23]:* A gunner aboard the heroes' ship can fire a weapon (which must deal at least 2d10×2 points of damage) to clear a path through the asteroid field.*Knowledge (physical sciences) [DC 18]:* The heroes can attempt to use their knowledge of asteroid field physics to determine the safest route through the field.*Mechanics [DC 23]:* The systems operator aboard the ship can make a Mechanics check to boost the strength of the ship's shields against an incoming asteroid collision, blunting or negating the impact.*Pilot [DC 28]:* The pilot of the ship can make a Pilot check to keep the pursuing starfighters at bay and make it safely through the asteroid field.**Challenge Effects:** The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:*Catastrophic Failure:* Any hero making a Pilot check to control the ship who fails the check by 10 or more earns two failures instead of one.*Degrees of Success:* The heroes' progress through the asteroid field makes it harder for the pursuing starfighters to avoid the ship's gunners. Each time the heroes earn a success, one of the ship's gunners gains a +2 circumstance bonus to his or her next attack roll made before the end of his or her next turn.*Initiative:* The heroes must act in order of initiative during the skill challenge.**Success:** The heroes evade the pursuing starfighters and make it safely through the asteroid field.**Failure:** The heroes' ship is shot down or damaged by asteroids, crash-landing on one of the largest asteroids in the field.

SKILL CHALLENGE: COVERT INFILTRATION

In this skill challenge, the heroes must covertly infiltrate an extremely secure facility, such as the headquarters of Imperial Intelligence or the Corporate Sector Authority. The heroes have located the facility, which is well guarded and has excellent security measures, and they need to get inside and reach a particular chamber.

CL 12

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)**Suggested Skills:** The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:*Acrobatics [DC 21]:* The heroes can attempt to climb into ventilation ducts or wriggle through maintenance crawlspaces to avoid more attuned sensors.*Deception [DC 26]:* The heroes can try to convince the guards on duty that they belong in the facility, despite not having proper identification.*Stealth [DC 26]:* The heroes can attempt to slip by security patrols without being noticed and to pass under security cameras outside their range of vision.*Use Computer [DC 21]:* The heroes can try to slice into the facility's central computer to deactivate security devices along their route.**Challenge Effect:** The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:*Recovery:* Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more can forfeit that success in exchange for removing one failure.**Success:** The heroes reach the location they seek without being captured or triggering an alarm.**Failure:** The heroes reach their destination but are confronted by guards, and alarms sound throughout the facility.

SKILL CHALLENGE: INTERROGATION

This skill challenge represents the interrogation of a prisoner. The heroes have captured an enemy soldier, droid, or bureaucrat and are attempting to learn what they can from the detainee. The characters must get the information they seek from the target to further their own goals.

CL 3

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [DC 19]: The heroes can attempt to trick the prisoner into revealing the information they seek, pursuing a certain line of questioning in the hopes of deceiving the captive into letting something slip.

Persuasion [DC 24]: The heroes can try to convince the prisoner, either sincerely or through intimidation, that revealing the information is in his or her best interests.

Use the Force [DC 24]: The heroes can attempt to use the Force to extract the information from the prisoner—the target is betrayed by his or her thoughts.

Challenge Effect: The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:

Containment: The heroes do not accrue failures for failed skill checks. Instead, they accrue a failure only if everyone takes an action but no one earns a success.

Success: The heroes learn the information they seek.

Failure: The prisoner's will proves too strong, no matter how intense the interrogation, and it becomes clear that the heroes will learn nothing more from their captive.

SKILL CHALLENGE: INVESTIGATION

In this skill challenge, the heroes are trying to uncover information about a particular person, object, or organization. For the purposes of this challenge, the heroes are covertly investigating their target in an urban environment, and they must discover what they need without attracting the notice of the enemy.

CL 5

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [DC 26]: The heroes can attempt to trick someone who has knowledge about their target—such as a close friend or a person working on a relevant project—into revealing the information that they seek.

Gather Information [DC 16]: The heroes can gather rumors in local cantinas in an attempt to piece together the information they need.

Knowledge (galactic lore) [DC 16]: The heroes can try to recall bits of related information that they learned in the past, applying it to the current situation to assemble a more complete picture of their target.

Use Computer [DC 21]: The heroes can attempt to slice into planetary networks to retrieve secret information, learning what they can from the databanks of secure computers.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Close Call: The heroes accrue failures only on skill checks that fail by 5 or more.

Degrees of Success: For every two successes the heroes earn, they learn a new piece of information about their target.

Success: The heroes learn everything they need to know about their target.

Failure: The heroes fail to learn everything they need. Worse, their enemies become aware that the heroes are present and seeking information.



Obi-Wan participates in an investigation skill challenge on Kamino.

SKILL CHALLENGE: NEGOTIATION

In this skill challenge, the heroes have earned enough of a reputation to convince an Imperial Senator to meet with them. They want to persuade him to betray the Empire and start working for the Rebel Alliance. During their audience, the heroes must convince the Senator that it is in his best interests to begin acting as an Alliance spy in the Senate and on Coruscant.

CL 12

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [Opposed DC]: The heroes can fabricate evidence that the Empire is a threat to the Senator, or they might invent an Imperial atrocity that hits close to home for the Senator (even though it is not true).

Knowledge [galactic lore] [DC 26]: The heroes can recall information about the Senator, such as his military service record from the Clone Wars or his participation in anticorruption rallies as a youth, and use it as leverage against him.

Knowledge [social sciences] [DC 31]: The heroes can put forth a point of philosophy, well known on the Senator's homeworld, that engages him and makes a good case for joining their cause.

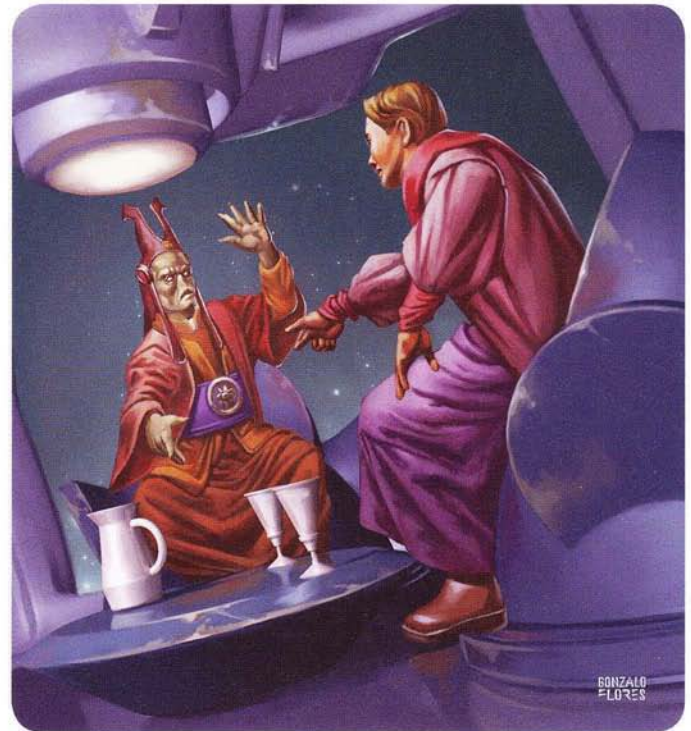
Persuasion [Opposed DC]: The heroes can make an impassioned plea for the Senator to join the Rebel Alliance, using smooth and winning words to convince him that they are in the right.

Use the Force [Opposed DC]: The heroes can attempt to read the mood or surface thoughts of the Senator, using that knowledge to better influence him and to avoid offending him.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Antagonist: Although the Senator shows signs of being sympathetic to the Rebellion, the Empire has placed an adjutant in the Senator's office who makes counterarguments and begs the Senator to report the heroes to the Imperial Security Bureau. The adjutant is the foil to the heroes' arguments, and she attempts to stymie their efforts with Imperial propaganda. The heroes do not accrue failures when they fail skill checks. Instead, each time all the heroes have taken an action, the adjutant makes a skill check (determined by the GM) against the Senator's Will Defense; if she succeeds, the heroes accrue one failure.

Opposed DC: Skills used against the Senator directly, including Deception, Persuasion, and Use the Force, target the Senator's Will Defense. Alternatively, if the heroes try to attack the adjutant's arguments directly, she sets the DC with the result of her Persuasion check.



GONZALO
FLORES

Recovery: Since the Senator has heard of the heroes and is amenable to their cause, he is willing to listen to them despite the arguments of the adjutant. Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more can forfeit that success in exchange for removing one failure.

Success: The heroes convince the Senator to help the Rebel Alliance. He agrees to act as their spy in the Senate and on Coruscant. To ensure that the Imperial adjutant does not cause trouble for the heroes, the Senator has her subdued by guards and shipped off to the spice mines of Kessel.

Failure: The adjutant's arguments convince the Senator that treason is too dangerous. He calls for the heroes to be arrested, and the adjutant alerts the ISB of their actions. The heroes might have a chance to repair their relationship with the Senator in the future, or he might become an antagonist that works against the Alliance on Coruscant.

SKILL CHALLENGE: OVERLAND TRAVEL

This skill challenge represents traveling across a dangerous expanse of wilderness. It can be used in a variety of environments, including the deserts of Tatooine and the jungles of Felucia. Higher-level versions of this skill challenge could work in environments that are even more hazardous, such as the toxic surface of Dorin or the volcanic wastes of Mustafar.

CL 4

Complexity: 3 (3 successes per hero before there are no skill DCs below DC 34)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Endurance [DC 16]: The heroes can attempt to push on even when fatigued, using less water and fewer supplies and shortening their trip by setting a more brisk pace.

Knowledge (life sciences) or Knowledge (physical sciences) [DC 16]: The heroes can identify hazards and dangerous wildlife, avoiding potential threats to their safety.



AN OVERLAND TRAVEL SKILL CHALLENGE ON FELUCIA

Perception [DC 21]: The heroes can try to plot a course by identifying major landmarks and using those sights to make sure that they remain on the correct path.

Survival [DC 16]: The heroes can attempt to find safe trails and scavenge for more supplies to ease the burden on their resources.

Treat Injury [DC 21]: The heroes can try to treat each others' fatigue and injuries, ensuring that they continue on at a good pace across the dangerous land.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Degenerating: Each failure increases the difficulty of all skill uses by one step (from DC 16 to DC 21, from DC 21 to DC 26, from DC 26 to DC 29, and from DC 29 to DC 34). Each success reduces the difficulty of all skill uses by one step, but no further than the original DC of each skill.

Extreme Success: A hero who succeeds on a skill check by 10 or more earns two successes instead of one.

Individual Effort: Each hero must earn three successes to complete the skill challenge.

Success: The heroes reach their destination safely.

Failure: If the heroes accrue enough failures to shift all skill DCs to 34, they fail the challenge and become lost in the wilderness. Each hero also loses one second wind and gains a persistent condition that can be removed only by eight hours of rest in a civilized area. As long as the persistent condition remains, the heroes lose one second wind each day.

SKILL CHALLENGE: SEARCHING THE DEBRIS FIELD

In this skill challenge, the heroes are aboard their starship investigating a debris field left behind after a major space battle. They are searching for something—perhaps survivors of the clash or rare cargo that was aboard one of the ships—but to find it, they must navigate through the debris field without destroying their own vessel.

CL 8

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Mechanics [DC 23]: The heroes can attempt to boost power to their sensors, increasing the chance that they will find what they are hunting.

Perception [DC 23]: The heroes can try to use visual scanning out the cockpit windows or gun turrets to spot anything the sensors miss.

Pilot [DC 23]: The ship's pilot or copilot can attempt to plot a safe grid pattern to search the debris field without taking too much damage.

Use Computer [DC 18]: The sensor operator can try to calibrate the sensors to more closely match the profile of the object that the heroes are looking for.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Degrees of Failure: For each failure earned, the heroes' ship collides with a chunk of space debris that is of Colossal size, taking 8d6+10 points of damage.

Extreme Success: A hero who succeeds on a skill check by 10 or more earns two successes instead of one.

Success: The heroes find the object they seek and load it safely onto their ship.

Failure: In addition to any damage sustained from collisions with debris, the heroes fail to locate the object in time. It might have been salvaged by rivals or destroyed in a collision.

SKILL CHALLENGE: SLICING THE HOLONET

This skill challenge represents an attempt to slice into the HoloNet, which the Empire has declared to be for military use only. The communications network is under tight Imperial control, and security is high. This challenge can be used in a combat encounter or separately as part of a short sequence in an adventure.

CL 11

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [DC 24]: The heroes can attempt to falsify credentials that would earn them access to the HoloNet.

Knowledge (bureaucracy) [DC 19]: The heroes can try to use their knowledge of Imperial bureaucracy to cut through the restrictions placed on the HoloNet with a few correctly placed requests.

Use Computer [Opposed DC]: The heroes can attempt to bypass Imperial security measures, working against antislicer droids to gain access to the HoloNet.

Challenge Effect: The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:

Opposed DC: An antislicer droid creates the opposed DC for the heroes' Use Computer checks to slice into the HoloNet. The droid has a Use Computer modifier of +18.

Success: The heroes gain access to the HoloNet and can send and receive transmissions.

Failure: Not only do the heroes fail to gain access to the HoloNet, but the authorities are alerted to their attempt, and the Empire begins hunting for the slicers responsible.

SKILL CHALLENGE: SMUGGLING CONTRABAND

This skill challenge represents smuggling goods past government officials. The goal is to move the contraband, which is currently in the hold of the heroes' ship, to the intended buyer without being caught by the authorities. This skill challenge can start when the heroes arrive in the star system where the goods are to be delivered and continue through the process of landing on the planet and unloading the contraband into the buyer's waiting speeder.

CL 4

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [DC 21]: The heroes can attempt to bluff their way past the authorities, convincing the customs inspectors that their ship holds nothing of interest.

Perception [DC 21]: The heroes can watch out for customs patrols that might appear when the cargo is being off-loaded.

Persuasion [DC 26]: The heroes can try to convince the customs officials to turn a blind eye to the contraband.

Pilot [DC 16]: A hero piloting the ship can try to avoid coming within sensor range of other vessels in orbit that might scan the heroes' ship and detect the contraband.

Stealth [DC 16]: The heroes can attempt to hide the contraband on their ship, perhaps in smuggling compartments or among other, more legitimate cargo.

Use Computer [DC 16]: A sensor operator on the ship can try to use the ship's sensors to jam the sensors of other vessels scanning for contraband.

Challenge Effect: The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:

Close Call: The heroes accrue failures only on skill checks that fail by 5 or more.

Success: The heroes off-load the contraband from their ship and deliver it to the buyer without being caught.

Failure: The authorities discover the presence of the contraband and attempt to seize it—by force, if necessary.

SPEEDER BIKE CHASES MAKE EXCITING SKILL CHALLENGES.



SKILL CHALLENGE: SPEEDER BIKE CHASE

In this skill challenge, the heroes must ride speeder bikes through a busy urban area to pursue a criminal fleeing in a landspeeder. During the chase, the heroes travel through different parts of town and herd their quarry into a place where he or she can run no more. As the heroes accrue failures, the target threatens to slip further away, potentially shaking pursuit altogether.

CL 8

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (galactic lore) [DC 28 or 23]: The heroes can try to remember what they have heard about the city to find shortcuts and secret routes. This DC could be reduced to 23 for heroes who are familiar with the city.

Perception [DC 23]: The heroes can attempt to find the best path to keep pace with their quarry or look for indicators as to where the target is headed next.

Pilot [DC 18 or Opposed DC]: The heroes can pilot their speeder bikes along the fastest routes, avoid debris and obstacles, and find other ways to close the gap with their quarry. If the heroes get too close, the target becomes able to make Pilot checks to set the DC for the heroes' checks.

Stealth [Opposed DC]: The heroes can try to sneak through the city using alternate routes, cutting their quarry off as long as they remain unnoticed. This check is opposed by the target's Perception check.

Use Computer [DC 32]: The heroes can use their speeder bikes' primitive onboard computers to track the target's landspeeder or intercept its communications. This check is difficult due to the limited nature of the speeder bikes' computers.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Containment: The heroes do not accrue failures for failed skill checks. Instead, they accrue a failure only if everyone takes an action but no one earns a success, since to maintain pursuit, they need to keep the target in sight of only one character.

Opposed DC: Certain skills in this challenge can be opposed by the criminal being pursued.

Restricted Skills: The following skills cannot be used in this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, Swim, or Treat Injury.

Success: The heroes catch the criminal.

Failure: The criminal gets away.

SKILL CHALLENGE: TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

This skill challenge, intended for use during combat encounters, represents the clash of tactical minds on opposite sides of a conflict. The heroes attempt to outwit the enemy commander, using tactical prowess to outmaneuver their opponents. This skill challenge works well during space combat involving capital ships (allowing heroes to participate as the commanders of a fleet in a massive naval battle) or during mass combat encounters.



ACKBAR AND OTHER REBEL COMMANDERS ENGAGE
IN A TACTICAL LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE.

CL 14

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [DC 27]: The heroes can attempt feints, false retreats, and other bluffs to lure the enemy into a disadvantageous position.

Knowledge (tactics) [Opposed DC]: The heroes can try to outwit the enemy commander with tactical maneuvers designed to break through enemy formations.

Perception [DC 22]: The heroes can attempt to identify flaws in the enemy's strategy, allowing them to take advantage of those weaknesses.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Antagonist: During this skill challenge, the heroes face off against the tactical prowess of the enemy commander. The heroes do not accrue failures for failed skill checks. Instead, the enemy commander makes skill checks as though participating in the skill challenge, and each time the commander earns a success, the heroes accrue a failure.

Opposed DC: All Knowledge (tactics) checks are opposed. When the heroes make a Knowledge (tactics) check, the enemy commander makes a similar check to set the DC. Likewise, when the commander makes a Knowledge (tactics) check, one of the heroes makes a similar check to set the DC.

Success: The heroes outwit the enemy commander and give their allies a significant advantage in the battle. All of the heroes' allies participating in the battle gain a +2 circumstance bonus to attack rolls and all defenses until the end of the battle.

Failure: The heroes are outwitted by the enemy commander and left in a disadvantageous position. All of the heroes' enemies participating in the battle gain a +2 circumstance bonus to attack rolls and all defenses until the end of the battle.

SKILL CHALLENGE: TRAVERSING THE MINEFIELD

This skill challenge is intended for use in a combat encounter in which the ground has been seeded with a variety of antipersonnel mines. The heroes must find a way to traverse the minefield while defeating their opponents. Failure can trigger explosions, and success helps other members of the party identify locations where the mines have been placed.

CL 10

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (technology) [DC 19]: The heroes can attempt to recall knowledge about the nature of antipersonnel mines, gaining clues that could indicate what different types of buried mines look like.

Perception [DC 19]: The heroes can try to notice signs of upturned soil or other indicators of the placement of mines.

Use the Force [DC 24]: The heroes can attempt to use the Force to sense spots where great danger awaits them, likely indicating the presence of mines.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Degrees of Failure: Each time the heroes fail a skill check while in the minefield, they trigger an antipersonnel mine in an adjacent space.

Degrees of Success: Each time the heroes earn a success while in the minefield, they learn the locations of at least three active antipersonnel mines.

Initiative: The heroes must act in order of initiative during the skill challenge.

Success: The heroes learn the location of every antipersonnel mine in the field and can see all mines on the battle map.

Failure: The heroes fail to identify any more mines and must risk triggering undetected mines as they cross the field.

SKILL CHALLENGE: SABOTAGE MISSION

In this skill challenge, the heroes must perform a mission to sabotage (and, ultimately, destroy) a capital ship hovering above a blockaded planet. The heroes are capable of taking care of the mission themselves, but it will be dangerous, and there will almost certainly be opposition within the vessel. Fortunately, the ship is mostly manned by droids, so they can use some of their tricks to fool automated systems without having to worry about alerting an enemy that thinks creatively to their presence.

CL 6

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Mission Phase 1

The first phase of the mission requires the heroes to make their way through the ship to its main reactor, then sabotage it. The heroes should have come up with their own plan for the infiltration, but they begin outside of the capital ship and must find their way onto it. Once onboard, they need to locate the main reactor, and then make their way there without arousing any suspicion. After they have sabotaged the reactor core, the ship is doomed, and their mission is a success.

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [DC 22]: The heroes might use Deception to steal a cargo ship with the authorization to board the target vessel, or disguise themselves and fool the witless droids piloting a shuttlecraft bound for the target ship.

Knowledge (technology) [DC 17]: While onboard the capital ship, the heroes can attempt to recall any knowledge they might possess about the design of the ship's interior, making it easier to move throughout the ship without being spotted.

Stealth [DC 22]: The heroes might sneak aboard and stow away on one of the target ship's shuttles in order to gain access to the ship. Onboard the capital ship, the heroes can use Stealth to move throughout the ship without being spotted.

Use Computer [DC 22]: The heroes can use the Use Computer skill in order to gain access to the capital ship's computers, download schematics, reroute security patrols, and blind the ship's sensors to their presence.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Changing Objectives: Once the heroes have accrued a certain number of successes (4), the objective of the skill challenge changes to escaping from the capital ship.

Close Call: The heroes only accrue failures when they fail skill checks by 5 or more.

Success: After four successes, the heroes reach the chamber that houses the ship's main reactor. There, they can set up the explosives that destroy the main reactor. Since the reactor is volatile, they probably want to be long gone by the time the explosives go off. This moves the mission into Phase 2, described below.

Failure: Each time the heroes accrue a failure, enemy forces discover their attempts and move to stop them. The heroes must deal with a combat encounter appropriate for 6th-level characters. Since the ship is manned by droids, the heroes likely encounter a droid patrol (a typical patrol might consist of 2 droidekas, 4 B1-Series battle droids, and an IG-100 Series MagnaGuard). If the heroes accrue their third failure during this segment,

they fail in their mission and are faced with an overwhelmingly difficult enemy force (three to four times as many enemies as is found in a typical patrol), whose intent is to capture the heroes (not kill them).

Mission Phase 2

Once the heroes have set the explosives on the reactor, they now need to get far away to safety. Getting off of the ship is just as dangerous as the task of getting onto it,

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Mechanics [DC 22]: As the heroes make their escape, they can use the Mechanics skills to jam doors, retract bridges, and otherwise create impediments that would slow down any pursuers trying to follow them as they escape.

Perception [DC 22]: The heroes can use Perception to watch out for enemies, find the fastest path back to the hangar, or eavesdrop on droid patrols to find out where to go.

Pilot [DC 17]: If the heroes secure a getaway vessel, one hero can make a Pilot check to blast their way out of the ship's hangar before their explosives go off.

Use the Force [DC 27]: Force-sensitive heroes can use the Use the Force skill to sense danger ahead and warn their allies when they might be walking into a trap.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Catastrophic Failure: If a hero fails a skill check by 10 or more, the heroes accrue two failures instead of one.

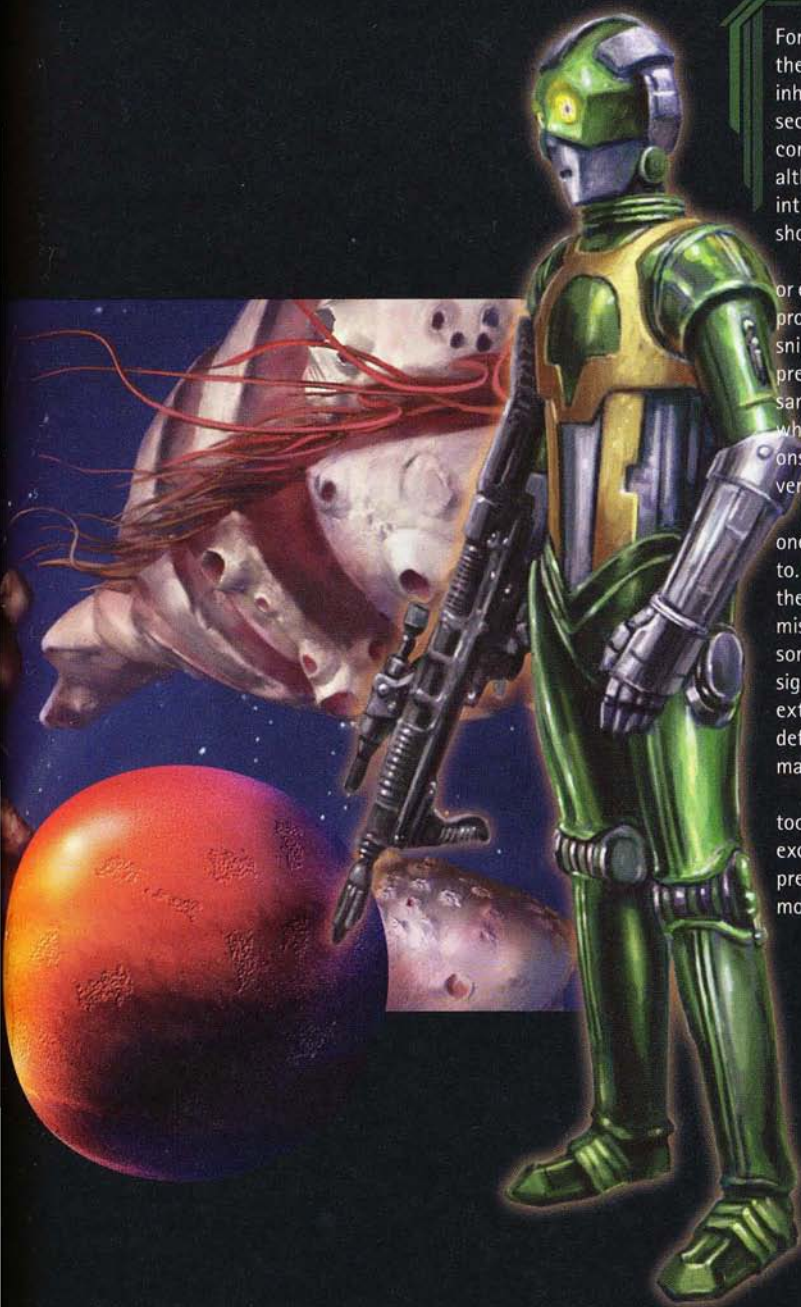
Restricted Skills: Each skill can only be used once in Phase 2. Additionally, Pilot checks can only be attempted once the heroes have access to a ship.

Success: When the heroes have achieved their eighth success in the skill challenge, they no longer need to fear for their safety, at least for the time being. They successfully escape from the sabotaged ship, which explodes and then falls in chunks into the planet's atmosphere.

Failure: Each time the heroes accrue a failure, the heroes run afoul of the droid defenders of the ship that have begun scrambling to make it to the hangar bays in time to be loaded onto troop transports. The heroes must deal with a combat encounter appropriate for 6th-level characters. Since the ship is manned by droids, the heroes likely encounter a droid patrol (a typical patrol might consist of 2 droidekas, 4 B1-Series battle droids, and an IG-100 Series MagnaGuard). If the heroes accrue their third failure during this phase, they become trapped on the ship as it breaks apart and begins plunging into the atmosphere.

CHAPTER III EQUIPMENT





For most of the intrigue-savvy people of the galaxy, wits and secrecy are the two most valuable weapons in their arsenals. However, sometimes inherent ability and learned skills are only part of what it takes to maintain secrecy or manipulate one's enemies. From time to time, even the wisest conspirators must make use of the technology that the galaxy has to offer, although they often use those things in deceptive ways. For the master of intrigue, equipment and weapons are merely a means to an end, but one should always make sure to have the right tools for the job.

Most equipment used by masters of intrigue is designed to either create or enhance deception, keep secrets a secret, reveal someone else's secrets, or protect the keeper of a secret from harm. For example, the Xerrol nightstinger sniper rifle, which produces an invisible blaster bolt, creates deception by preventing observers from seeing where the shot comes from. Likewise, the same weapon can be used to keep a secret a secret by taking out someone who is doing too much snooping around. Most of the equipment and weapons in this chapter perform one of those four functions, but they do so in very different ways.

Droids are always something of a risk in an intrigue-based campaign. On one hand, droids are immune to many tricks that living beings are susceptible to. They often cannot be bribed, smooth talked, or deceived into revealing the information within their databanks. They are often more focused on their missions than are living beings, and they are incapable of actively betraying someone thanks to their rigid programming. However, droids also present a significant risk, in that someone with the right computer slicing skills can extract information from them. Moreover, droids are often less capable of defending themselves and thinking creatively than their living counterparts, making it more likely that they will fall into enemy hands.

Most of the vehicles presented in this chapter are designed to put more tools in the hands of the intrigue-minded player or villain. Scout ships with excellent sensor cloaks can make spying on the enemy easier, and many spies prefer vessels with low profiles over those that, while more defensible, are more likely to attract notice.

EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

Equipment and weapons are not the main focus of a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, but they do have their place. The powerbrokers and masterminds who create the intricate plots and conspiracies that drive this style of campaign know that equipment is just another tool to be used. Still, the elite have access to equipment and weapons that are experimental, highly illegal, or otherwise too expensive for most individuals to employ.

RANGED WEAPONS

In *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaigns, assassins use of a variety of ranged weapons to deliver a lethal message, and some VIPs prefer ranged weapons that are small, easily hidden, but still powerful. The weapons in Table 3-1: Ranged Weapons are described below.

Blaster, Wrist Pistol

For those needing the ultimate in discretion, a wrist blaster provides protection without drawing attention. It is popular with assassins, diplomats working in hostile territories, and other VIPs who hate being completely unarmed. The wrist blaster is worn as a bracelet and looks like an ordinary piece of jewelry. The bulk of the wrist blaster contains the power cell, which is powerful enough to deliver the same damage as a blaster, but contains enough energy for only a single shot.

A wrist blaster is meant for use in close quarters. Special alloys mask the wrist blaster from sensor scans for weapons. Detecting a wrist blaster with a sensor scan requires a DC 25 Use Computer check.

Darter Simple Weapon

A darter is a large pistol that launches a dart by use of a compressed air canister. Although the range is limited and the damage minor, the darts can deliver poison or a surveillance tagger (see page 67). Poachers, game wardens, security personnel, assassins, and even medical personnel use darters in their duties.

A darter's maximum range is the Short range increment. A dart carrying poison delivers the toxin if the darter successfully deals damage.

Snare Pistol Pistol

The smaller cousin of the snare rifle described in *Scum and Villainy*, the snare pistol carries the same capabilities, but in a smaller weapon and with a considerably shorter range. A snare pistol fires a length of weighted synthcord that wraps around the target, allowing the weapon's wielder to initiate a grab or grapple against an enemy at up to Short range. An enemy that is grabbed or grappled can attempt to escape the snare with a DC 15 Acrobatics check or to break it with a DC 20 Strength check. You can use the Pin and Trip feats with a snare pistol, but you cannot use the Crush, Throw, or Bone Crusher (see page 26) feats.

A snare pistol uses a specialized cartridge that holds 2 shots. Replacement cartridges weigh 1 kg and cost 25 credits each.

Xerrol Nightstinger Rifle

Used by assassins, the Xerrol nightstinger is a sporting blaster rifle designed for sniping at long range. Instead of using an energy cell for ammunition, the nightstinger utilizes special canisters of exotic gasses that produce powerful shots that are invisible to the eye, so a sniper can fire the weapon without revealing his or her position. Imperial snipers make use of an unusual tactic, firing at special redirection crystals to create confusion and divert attention to another location (see page 67).

Each gas canister contains enough charges for five shots and costs 1,000 credits.



A XERROL NIGHTSTINGER DOESN'T GIVE AWAY A SNIPER'S LOCATION.

TABLE 3-1: RANGED WEAPONS

EXOTIC WEAPONS	COST	DAMAGE	STUN DMG	RATE OF FIRE	WEIGHT	TYPE	AVAILABILITY
Medium							
Xerrol nightstinger	1,500	3d6	—	S	4.5 kg	Energy	Illegal
PISTOLS							
Tiny							
Blaster, wrist ¹	800	3d4	—	S	0.5 kg	Energy	Illegal
Medium							
Snare pistol ¹	600	—	1d4	S	2 kg	Bludgeoning	Licensed
SIMPLE WEAPONS							
Medium							
Darter	150	1	—	S	3 kg	Piercing	Licensed

¹ Inaccurate weapon. This weapon cannot fire at targets at medium or long range.

POISONS AND TOXINS

Poison has long been a favored tool of assassins, and death by poison is a common feature of any intrigue campaign. Described here are several additional poisons, toxins, and dangerous chemicals that might find their way into an adventure. For more information, see "Poison" on page 255 of the Saga Edition core rulebook.

Bundar Root (CL 1): Bundar root causes short-term memory loss and affects a victim's ability to reason. When a creature ingests bundar root, make an attack roll (1d20+5) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack is successful, the target suffers a –5 penalty to all skill checks that round. The poison attacks each round until cured with a successful DC 15 Treat Injury check.

Chuba Poison (CL 8): Potentially causing a stroke in a creature that ingests it, chuba is derived from glands of the gorg, a small amphibious creature found on swampy planets. When a creature ingests chuba poison, make an attack roll (1d20+10) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target moves –1 step on the condition track. If the attack beats the target's Fortitude Defense by 10 or more, the target remains at that position on the condition track until three separate and successful DC 20 Treat Injury checks are made. If the attack fails, the target suffers no ill effects.

Devaronian Blood-Poison (CL 4): Devaronian blood-poison is a rare crystalline gem which is poisonous on contact. Each round that a creature is in contact with Devaronian blood-poison, make an attack roll (1d10+5) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target is wracked with pain, can move only at half speed, and moves –1 step on the condition track. If the target moves to a point on the condition track that would normally reduce it to half speed, the target is immobilized instead. The poison attacks each round until cured with a successful DC 20 Treat Injury check.

Irksh Poison (CL 13): Irksh poison is a deadly substance created by the Yuuzhan Vong for their undercover agents to use on themselves in case they are captured. When a creature ingests irksh poison, make an attack roll (1d20+10) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target takes 8d6 points of damage and moves –1 step on the condition track. If the attack fails, the target takes half damage and does not move on the condition track. The poison attacks each round until cured with a successful DC 28 Treat Injury check.

Quongoosh Essence (CL 3): When a creature ingests quongoosh essence, make an attack roll (1d20+5) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target moves –1 step on the condition track. A target moved to the "Helpless" step on the condition track by the poison becomes blind but not unconscious or otherwise helpless as a result of this poison (see page 254 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). All targets have concealment from the blind creature. The poison attacks each round until cured with a successful DC 15 Treat Injury check.

Trihexalon (CL 15): Also known as Dragon's Breath or Hex, this potent biological agent comes in a powder form and causes massive breakdown in organic material. Each round that a creature is in contact with trihexalon, make an attack roll (1d20+20) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target takes 10d6 points of damage and moves –2 steps on the condition track. If the attack fails, the target takes half damage, but still moves –1 step on the condition track. The poison attacks each round until cured with a successful DC 30 Treat Injury check. Because trihexalon causes disintegration of biological matter, a creature that takes full damage from trihexalon loses any limb in contact with the poison (roll randomly if the contact is not otherwise determined).

EQUIPMENT

The following new equipment is suitable for use by heroes in any *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign. Table 3-2: Equipment lists the prices and weight of these items. Refer to the descriptions below for other pertinent information.

Antitoxin Patch

This adhesive patch is applied near the stomach (or similar organ, depending on the species). It emits a low dose of antitoxin, giving the wearer a +10 equipment bonus to Fortitude Defense against ingested poisons and a +5 equipment bonus to Fortitude Defense against inhaled poisons. An antitoxin patch lasts for 24 hours. For each consecutive day that an antitoxin patch is worn, the target moves –1 step on the condition track.

Comlink, Earbud

The earbud comlink is a tiny comlink fitted for the wearer's ear, allowing unobtrusive private communication for anyone needing to be discreet—ambassadors, card cheats, and spies, for example. The earbud comlink's size, shape, and color give the wearer a +5 equipment bonus to Deception checks for the purpose of hiding its presence. The earbud comlink can be programmed to initiate or receive a transmission when the wearer touches his or her ear or even clicks or grinds his or her teeth. Because of its minute size, the earbud has the same range as a short-range comlink—50 kilometers or low orbit.

Flash Suppressor/Silencer

The Merr-Sonn Nonsonic is a typical example of a flash suppressor/silencer. Fitting over the muzzle of any Small or larger slugthrower, this device reduces both the sound and the muzzle flash when the weapon is fired. A flash suppressor/silencer imposes a –10 penalty to Perception checks to discern the sound or spot the flash of an equipped slugthrower. It reduces the maximum range of the weapon by two range increments.

Holo Converter

This small, blocky device is attached to a holoprojector and uses powerful algorithms to alter the outgoing signal, modifying the images and sounds received on the other end so that the user's appearance and voice are disguised. The holo converter can even disguise the user's gender and species. Preset with up to 10 different personae, complete with rotating wardrobe, the holo converter grants a +5 equipment bonus to Deception checks for the purposes of making the receiver believe that the user is another person.

Panic Ring

Despite the name, this device is available in a variety of shapes and sizes, the most common being a large, ornamental ring. Diplomats, wealthy CEOs, and anyone who fears kidnapping or ambush wear panic rings. A secret catch (DC 25 Perception check) reveals a small button that, when pressed, releases an encrypted emergency signal. This signal has a range of 100 kilometers and continually broadcasts a preset signal—usually "wearer in danger"—to local law enforcement, personal security, or any other group designated by the wearer. Changing this signal requires a DC 25 Mechanics check, and failure by 5 or more activates the panic ring.

TABLE 3-2: EQUIPMENT

COMMUNICATION DEVICES	COST	WEIGHT
Comlink, earbud	200	—
Panic ring	300	—
Holo converter	3,000	2 kg
DETECTION AND SURVEILLANCE DEVICES	COST	WEIGHT
Surveillance detector	450	0.5 kg
Surveillance tagger	450	0.5 kg
Veridicator	4,000	0.1 kg
Vid-vox scrambler	3,400	0.5 kg
MEDICAL GEAR	COST	WEIGHT
Antitoxin patch	25	—
Toxin detector	700	0.5 kg
TOOLS	COST	WEIGHT
Redirection crystal	500	—
Shield cage	10,000	20 kg
WEAPON ACCESSORIES	COST	WEIGHT
Flash suppressor/silencer	400	0.2 kg

Redirection Crystal

A redirection crystal is filled with Tibanna gas and has a small blasting tube. Snipers and assassins use them to seemingly bank blaster shots, allowing the shooter to hide in one location while making a shot appear to come from another position. When struck by blaster fire, the gas inside the crystal explodes, directing the shot through the blast tube at the established angle. Only skilled snipers and assassins use redirection crystals because of the sheer difficulty in making a successful strike. Redirection crystals are sometimes used in conjunction with the Xerrol nightstinger (see page 64), taking advantage of the weapon's invisible blaster shot to confuse the enemy.

A redirection crystal is Fine size, giving it Reflex Defense 15, plus penalties for distance. If an attack with a blaster weapon successfully hits the redirection crystal, make a second attack roll against the intended target, with a -10 penalty and additional range-increment penalties. The redirection crystal is destroyed, leaving only minuscule fragments, requiring a DC 30 Perception check to notice and a DC 30 Knowledge (technology) check to identify.

Shield Cage

A shield cage is a portable shield generator used to trap a target rather than protect it from harm. Wealthy bounty hunters, criminal masterminds, and other VIPs use shield cages to trap targets, sometimes setting the cages beneath chairs or inside doorways. A shield cage is a large flat disk, 2 meters in diameter. It must be connected to a power supply to operate and drains portable power generators after 2 hours of continuous use.

A shield cage produces a shield bubble that fills a single square. Multiple shield cages can be linked together, each expanding the shielded area by one additional square. Targets are trapped inside and cannot move until the power is turned off. The shield is air permeable, allowing the target to breathe and communicate verbally, but nothing else can pass through the shield except damage that exceeds the shield's rating (SR 15).

Surveillance Detector

A surveillance detector is a small, handheld device that scans an area for eavesdropping devices and surveillance taggers (see below). When activated, the surveillance detector grants a +10 equipment bonus to Perception checks for locating active or passive surveillance devices within 6 squares of the detector. It can be set to either display the presence of eavesdropping or to emit an alarm when such attempts are detected.

Surveillance Tagger

The surveillance tagger is a tiny, unassuming tube containing a Fine sized dart and a compressed air canister. When fired, the dart attaches itself to the target with a combination of adhesives and magnetism and activates a homing beacon. The homing beacon has a range of 1 kilometer and enough power to transmit for 40 hours.

To use the surveillance tagger, the user must succeed on a ranged attack against a target within 6 squares of the user. The size of the dart imposes a -20 penalty to Perception checks to notice it. An activated signal tagger allows the user to track the movements of the dart with a DC 10 Use Computer check and a datapad or an appropriate sensor package.

Toxin Detector

Assassination by poison is one of the dangers faced by nobles, politicians and other notable figures. This tiny handheld device scans food and drink to determine if it is spoiled or contains poison. Using the device requires a standard action. It has a range of one square and contains data for up to 100 different species. The toxin detector can be set to blink a light (green for safe food and red for dangerous) or to vibrate slightly when a toxin is detected. For an additional 100 credits, the toxin detector can be disguised as a bracelet or other piece of jewelry for maximum discretion.

Veridicator

Worn as an inconspicuous bracelet, the veridicator uses sophisticated sensors to monitor a target's heart rate, pupil dilation, perspiration, and other involuntary stress responses. It compares this information to its internal database, determining the emotional state of the target and indicating if he or she is lying. The veridicator then relays this information to the wearer as a series of pulses, temperature variations, or vibrations.

Once activated, the veridicator needs a full round to acquire the data from a single target within 6 squares of the user. Then the veridicator provides a +5 bonus to Perception checks for the purpose of sensing deception or influence or for gambling against other players in games such as sabacc. The veridicator can be programmed for only a single species at a time. Changing the settings requires a DC 10 Use Computer check.

Vid-Vox Scrambler

When activated, this Tiny handheld device emits a low-frequency wave that scrambles all video, audio, and holographic recording within its area of effect, while leaving normal conversation unaffected. Vid-vox scramblers are prized by anyone worried that their conversations are being recorded, including criminal masterminds, CEOs, spies, and the paranoid.

The vid-vox scrambler prevents all video, audio, and holographic recording in the squares adjacent to and the square including the device. Anyone eavesdropping or reviewing recordings of targets protected by an interference generator must make a DC 30 Perception or Use Computer check to pick up only scattered words and phrases. A scrambler can operate continuously for one week on a single power cell, or it can be connected to a generator or other permanent power source.

EQUIPMENT AND WEAPON UPGRADES

The following upgrade is for use with either gear or weapons. Most universal equipment upgrades can be applied to any type of equipment, although some upgrades have limitations or special rules when applied to armor or weapons. Weapon upgrades can be applied only to weapons. See *Scum and Villainy* for more information on equipment upgrades and additional optional rules.

Componentization

Componentization is a process where a single piece of equipment or weapon is composed of several different pieces, each of which is disguised to appear as another type of equipment, such as a comlink, a datapad, or even a vibroshaver. Componentization is a common upgrade for assassins, smugglers, and nobles who want to carry weapons or other equipment into a location secretly.

The basic componentization upgrade (one upgrade slot) breaks the item or weapon into two component parts, each one size category smaller than the original item. An item or weapon with the deluxe upgrade (two upgrade slots) breaks down into four items, each two size categories smaller than the original item. For example, a Medium sporting blaster rifle can break down into two Small objects with the basic upgrade or into four Tiny objects with the deluxe upgrade.

A full round is required to assemble a componentized item from two parts. Two full rounds are required to assemble a componentized item from four parts. Identifying a component as part of this upgrade package requires a DC 30 Perception or DC 25 Knowledge (technology) check.

VEHICLES

On the whole, the elite of the galaxy—those most embroiled in intrigue and conspiracy—prefer to travel in the lap of luxury. Although a crime lord might set up headquarters in a battered cargo scow, most prefer to own and travel in the best vehicles available, complete with a discreet and accommodating crew to cater to their every need. The starships and vehicles here might not be the fastest or the best armed, but they get the heroes where they need to be in style.

STARSHIPS

Below are examples of starships that the heroes might encounter or use in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign.

PTV-2100 Incarcerator

Designed by Kuat Drive Yards during the Clone Wars, the PTV-2100 is a lucrative, if understated, transport vessel. The sole purpose of this vessel is the transport of prisoners, including some of the most dangerous individuals in the galaxy. Heavily armed, the incarcerator is a slow and ponderous starship,

so it relies on smaller, more nimble starfighters or frigates for protection. Although used primarily by governments, incarcerators are also employed by large criminal organizations for hauling individuals to the spice mines or slaves to markets in the Outer Rim.

The greatest part of an incarcerator is devoted to prison cells of various size and security, including minimum-security holding pens and thick-walled, heavily shielded isolation rooms with redundant protective measures. The hallways and cells are outfitted with cameras and sensors to monitor the inmates, and guard stations feature weaponry to quell riots or to stun or kill escapees.

The PTV-2100 incarcerator is a slow, ponderous vessel, so other ships can easily catch up with it. However, it excels at repelling boarding actions. The incarcerator and all allies in adjacent squares gain an additional die of damage against starships moving into the same square as the incarcerator to dock with it or board it.

PTV-2100 Incarcerator

CL 16

Colossal (frigate) space transport

Init -4; Senses Perception +6

Defense Ref 13 (flat-footed 13), Fort 40; +13 armor

hp 1,600; DR 15; Threshold 140

Speed fly 1 square (starship scale)

Ranged 2 turbolaser batteries +12* (see below)

Ranged 2 point-defense batteries +8 (see below)

Fighting Space 1 square (starship scale); Cover total

Base Atk +2; Grp +52

Abilities Str 71, Dex 10, Con —, Int 18

Skills Initiative -4, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot -4,
Use Computer +6

Crew 250 (skilled); Passengers 1,500 (prisoners)

Cargo 5,500 tons; Consumables 1 year; Carried Craft 2 shuttles

Hyperdrive x3 (x12 backup), navicomputer

Availability Military; Cost 4.5 million (1.8 million used)

*Apply a -20 penalty on attacks against targets smaller than Colossal size.

Turbolaser battery (4 gunners)

Atk +12 (-8 against targets smaller than Colossal), Dmg 5d10x5

Point-defense laser battery (2 gunners)

Atk +8, Dmg 2d10x2

Modified Incom A-24 Sleuth

The sleuth is a highly maneuverable scout ship with excellent sublight speed. Despite being older than more popular scout ship models, the sleuth became Mol Hedron's choice for spying on the fledgling New Republic. Most of the time, the New Republic never even knew he was there. On the rare occasion when they did discover his presence, he was able to complete transmission and jump away.

The modified sleuth contains a high-powered transmitter capable of sending a nearly undetectable signal by tight beam. Intercepting these signals is extremely difficult. Even if intercepted, the signal is often coded and requires deciphering.

Modified Incom A-24 Sleuth

CL 10

Gargantuan starfighter

Init +5; Senses Perception +6

Defense Ref 16 (flat-footed 12), Fort 25; +7 armor

hp 110; DR 10; SR 15; Threshold 45

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,000 km/h), fly 4 squares (starship scale)

Ranged laser cannons +7 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); Cover total (crew), +5 (astromech droid)

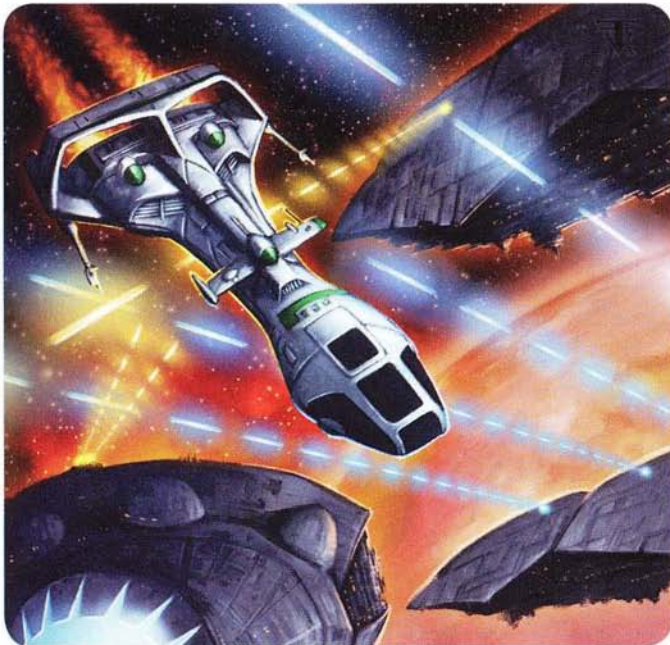
Base Atk +2; Grp +32

Abilities Str 40, Dex 18, Con —, Int 16

Skills Initiative +5, Mechanics +6 (+13*), Perception +6, Pilot +5, Use Computer +6 (+13*)

Crew 1 plus astromech droid (skilled); Passengers 1

Cargo 3 tons; Consumables 3 months; Carried Craft none



AN A-24 SLEUTH BLASTING ITS WAY PAST AN IMPERIAL BLOCKADE

Hyperdrive x1 (backup x10), navicomputer, 10-jump memory (astromech droid)

Availability Military; Cost not available for sale

**If the ship has an astromech droid, use these skill modifiers instead.*

Laser cannons (pilot)

Atk +7, Dmg 4d10x2

Ferret-class Reconnaissance Vessel

When New Republic Intelligence needs a single, stealthy pass through the heart of enemy territory, they choose the top-secret *Ferret*-class reconnaissance vessel. Operating on ion engines and utilizing a baffled drive technology, this droid-piloted ship becomes more difficult to detect at sublight speeds. Each Ferret is equipped with a large sensor-decoy package. In addition, they are coated with sensor-evading materials and fitted with a Fabritech sensor mask.

A Ferret is designed for stealth and, therefore, gains a +5 technology bonus to Stealth checks to hide the ship. When its sublight baffled drive is active, the ship moves at half normal speed but gains an additional +5 technology bonus to Stealth checks to avoid detection. The Ferret can run on its baffled drive for only one hour. Also, the ship's complement of sensor decoys can be deployed in the event of discovery. If deployed, the ship can reroll its Stealth check once per encounter. The Ferret contains enough sensor decoys to use this capability twice before needing to resupply.

Republic Engineering Corporation

Ferret-class Reconnaissance Vessel

CL 12

Gargantuan starfighter

Init +6; Senses Perception +8

Defense Ref 15 (flat-footed 12), Fort 26; +7 armor

hp 120; DR 10; Threshold 46

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,050 km/h), fly 4 squares (starship scale)

Ranged concussion missiles +9 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); Cover total (crew)

Base Atk +5; Grp +36

Abilities Str 42, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18

Skills Initiative +6, Mechanics +8, Perception +8, Pilot +6, Use Computer +8

Crew 3 (expert); Passengers none

Cargo 2 tons; Consumables 3 months; Carried Craft none

Payload 6 medium concussion missiles

Hyperdrive x1 (x8 backup), navicomputer

Availability Military; Cost 890,000 (not available used)

Medium concussion missiles (pilot)

Atk +11, Dmg 9d10x2



Prowler-class Reconnaissance Vessel

For longer reconnaissance and spy missions, the New Republic depends on its top-secret *Prowler*-class reconnaissance vessel. The Prowler is basically an expanded Ferret body containing less equipment. The ship is intended for two- to three-month tours while its crew works to keep it from becoming a target. Like Ferrets, the Prowler operates on ion engines, is coated with sensor-evading materials, and features an advanced masking system.

A Prowler is designed for stealth and, therefore, gains a +4 technology bonus to Stealth checks to hide the ship. When its sublight baffled drive is active, the ship moves at half its normal speed but gains an additional +4 technology bonus to Stealth checks to avoid detection. The Prowler can run on its baffled drive for only three hours. The ship has a complement of sensor decoys that can be deployed in the event of discovery. If the decoys are deployed, the pilot can reroll the Stealth check once per encounter. The Prowler contains enough sensor decoys to use this capability four times before needing to resupply.

Republic Engineering Corporation Prowler-class Reconnaissance Vessel

CL 12

Gargantuan starfighter

Init +6; Senses Perception +8

Defense Ref 16 (flat-footed 13), Fort 28; +8 armor

hp 150; DR 10; Threshold 48

Speed fly 12 squares (max. velocity 650 km/h), fly 3 squares (starship scale)

Ranged concussion missiles +10 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); Cover total (crew)

Base Atk +5; Grp +38

Abilities Str 46, Dex 16, Con —, Int 16

Skills Initiative +6, Mechanics +8, Perception +8, Pilot +6, Use Computer +8

Crew 6 (expert); Passengers none

Cargo 3 tons; Consumables 5 months; Carried Craft none

Payload 10 medium concussion missiles

Hyperdrive x1 (x10 backup), navicomputer

Availability Military; Cost not available for sale

Medium concussion missiles (pilot)

Atk +10, Dmg 9d10x2

Sabaoth Frigate Spy Ship

The Sabaoth spy ship is a modified frigate used as a scout vessel by the Sabaoth mercenary squadron, led by Captain Cavik Toth. This ship's modifications include sensor stealth, the ability to tap into communications, and an advanced sensor package. These additions come at the expense of the tractor beam projectors and half the heavy laser cannons found on other Sabaoth frigates. This ship was used around the time of the Occupation of Karthakk. Jedi Master Adi Gallia encountered a Sabaoth spy ship during a meeting with Reti in the Ruby Nebula. Believing it was tapping communications between them, Adi Gallia destroyed the ship from her Delta-7 *Aethersprite*-class light interceptor.

Sabaoth Frigate Spy Ship

CL 11

Colossal (frigate) capital ship

Init +1; Senses Perception +8 (+13 with sensor package)

Defense Ref 14 (flat-footed 11), Fort 34; +11 armor

hp 650; DR 15; SR 105; Threshold 134

Speed fly 3 squares (starship scale)

Ranged 4 heavy laser cannons +9 (see below)

Fighting Space 2x2 squares (starship scale); Cover total

Base Atk +5; Grp +49

Abilities Str 58, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18

Skills Initiative +1, Mechanics +8, Perception +8 (+13 with sensor package), Pilot +1, Use Computer +8

Crew 100 (expert); Passengers 450

Cargo 1,200 tons; Consumables 1 year; Carried Craft none

Hyperdrive x3 (x18 backup), navicomputer

Availability Military; Cost not available for sale

Heavy laser cannon (gunner)

Atk +9, Dmg 6d10x2

GROUND VEHICLES

Just as they have access to the finest starships, the galaxy's elite ride in the most luxurious ground vehicles possible. Emphasizing comfort and speed, these vehicles are, nonetheless, heavily armored and armed to protect their passengers, although weapons and armor are cleverly disguised or kept subtle to be discreet.

Corona Limited Luxury Groundspeeder

The Mobquet Corporation Corona Limited luxury groundspeeder is a popular model of high-end ground transportation found in almost every sector of the galaxy. The interior of the groundspeeder is opulent, with kudana leather seats that can change to sleeping berths for three with the flip of a switch. The Corona Limited comes in 500 different colors, some of which are not discernible to the Human eye—a marketing scheme that makes the model extremely popular with species with greater spectrum perception.

Corona Limited Luxury Groundspeeder

CL 4

Huge ground vehicle (speeder)

Init +7; Senses Perception +6

Defense Ref 14 (flat-footed 11), Fort 24; +3 armor

hp 90; DR 5; Threshold 34

Speed 12 squares (max. velocity 300 km/h)

Fighting Space 3x3; Cover total

Base Atk +2; Grp +26

Abilities Str 38, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14

Skills Initiative +7, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot +7, Use Computer +6

Crew 1 (skilled); Passengers 6

Cargo 300 kg; Consumables 2 days; Carried Craft none

Availability Licensed; Cost 70,000 (20,000 used)

SoroSuub JG-8 Luxury Landspeeder

During the Rise of the Empire era, the SoroSuub JG-8 luxury landspeeder serves as a status symbol for the wealthy and powerful. Expensive and built for style rather than performance, the JG-8 seats two in an open-air compartment. Twin turbothrust engines are mounted at the rear, augmented by ornate steering fins in the front. Although passengers wear webbing to keep them inside the vehicle, special tuning of the repulsorlift also provides continuous gravity relative to the passenger's orientation, preventing them from falling out even in the unlikely event that the JG-8 flips upside down.

SoroSuub JG-8 Luxury Landspeeder

CL 2

Large ground vehicle (speeder)

Init +8; Senses Perception +6

Defense Ref 14 (flat-footed 11), Fort 15; +2 armor

hp 55; DR 5; Threshold 20

Speed fly 12 squares (max. velocity 450 km/h)

Fighting Space 2x2; Cover +5

Base Atk +2; Grp +12

Abilities Str 21, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14

Skills Initiative +8, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot +8, Use Computer +6

Crew 1 (skilled); Passengers 1

Cargo 50 kg; Consumables 1 day; Carried Craft none

Availability Licensed; Cost 45,000 (12,500 used)

DROIDS

Droids are a vital part of any *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign. For example, protocol droids help translation, smooth over misinterpretations, and serve as walking repositories of information to help during negotiations. Droids also serve another purpose: As ubiquitous as they are, droids blend into the background easily and overhear conversations or record clandestine meetings when the parties involved believe they are otherwise alone. Counter-espionage hardware and software are developed for droids to oppose electronic eavesdropping and other advances. In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, droids are primarily used as translators, bodyguards, and valets on the legal side of operations and for espionage, sabotage, and assassination on the not-so-legal side.

FIRST-DEGREE DROIDS

First-degree droids are medical, analytical, or scientific droids. Specific examples include the 5-BT threat analysis droid.

5-BT Threat Analysis Droid

Built by Arakyd Industries decades before some of its more notorious droids, the 5-BT threat analysis droid is the precursor to the Mark VII and to other Inquisitor models. The 5-BT is a tiny spherical droid designed to accompany a VIP during assignments. A wide array of sensors scan for threats to its owner, including poisoned food or drink, eavesdropping devices, or hidden assassins. In addition, the 5-BT monitors a person's voice and nonverbal cues to detect stress—possibly indicating an impending attack—and dishonesty. New 5-BTs are sold with a bracelet that enables the droid to warn its owner of a threat by sending a signal that causes the bracelet to vibrate discreetly. Alternatively, the droid's warning can be directed to an earbud comlink. The 5-BT is also equipped with the equivalent of a holdout blaster, providing additional protection of its owner when warnings alone are insufficient.

5-BT threat analysis droids can be played as droid heroes.

5-BT Threat Analysis Droid

Tiny droid (1st-degree) nonheroic 3
Init +13; **Senses** darkvision, low-light vision; Perception +15
Languages Basic, Binary, 1 unassigned
Defenses Ref 14 (flat-footed 12), Fort 7, Will 12
hp 7; **Threshold** 7
Immune droid traits
Speed 6 squares (hovering)
Melee unarmed –1 (1 point)
Ranged blaster +4 (3d4)
Fighting Space 1 square; **Reach** 0 squares
Base Atk +2; **Grp** –6
Special Actions Coordinated Attack

CL 1

Abilities Str 4, Dex 14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 9

Feats Coordinated Attack, Skill Focus (Initiative, Perception),

Skill Training (Initiative), Weapon Proficiency (pistols)

Skills Initiative +13, Knowledge (tactics) +7, Perception +15

Systems hovering locomotion, basic processor, instrument appendage, tool appendage, improved sensor package, locked access, darkvision, translator unit (DC 10), vocabulator

Possessions blaster (treat as hold-out blaster), surveillance detector, toxin detector, veridicator

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 17,490 credits

SECOND-DEGREE DROIDS

Second-degree droids are typically astromech droids and technical droids. Specific models include the NR-1100 slicer droid.

NR-1100 Slicer Droid

The NR-1100 slicer droid is designed to slip into hostile territory and slice into computer networks. Used primarily by the Rebel Alliance, NR-1100s are crucial tools for stealing Imperial data or infecting networks with dangerous viruses.

The NR-1100 slicer droid uses repulsorlift technology and special sound dampeners that make it virtually silent. Its small size allows it to move through ventilation ducts and underground tunnels with ease where droids of Medium size would have trouble navigating. Although unarmed, the NR-1100 comes equipped with a self-destruct system to prevent it from falling into enemy hands or to serve as an ultimate solution for destroying data on the rare occasion when it fails to slice into a network.

NR-1100 slicer droids cannot be played as droid heroes.

NR-1100 Slicer Droid

Small droid (2nd-degree) scoundrel 3
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision, low-light vision; Perception +7
Languages Basic (understand only), Binary, 2 unassigned
Defenses Ref 18 (flat-footed 16), Fort 11, Will 15
hp 25; **Threshold** 11
Immune droid traits
Speed 6 squares (hovering)
Melee unarmed +0 (1 point)
Ranged blaster +4 (3d6+1)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** –1
Atk Options Point Blank Shot
Special Actions self-destruct (+5 area attack, 4d6, 2-square burst)

CL 3

Abilities Str 6, Dex 15, Con —, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 10

Talents Gimmick, Master Slicer

Feats Skill Focus (Gather Information, Stealth, Use Computer),
Point Blank Shot, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Gather Information +11, Knowledge (technology) +8, Mechanics
+8, Perception +7, Stealth +18, Use Computer +13 (can reroll when
improving access and keep the better result)

Systems hovering locomotion, basic processor, 2 hand appendages, 1 tool
appendage, darkvision, improved sensor package, self-destruct system
(4d6), locked access, internal comlink

Possessions security kit, sensor pack, video recorder, blaster (treat as
blaster pistol)

Availability Illegal; **Cost** 16,430 credits

THIRD-DEGREE DROIDS

Third-degree droids are typically protocol droids and replica droids. Specific examples include the 3D-4 administrative droid and the M4-Series messenger droid.

3D-4 Administrative Droid

To sidestep competition with its noted rival, Cybot Galactica, Genetech develops the 3D-4 administrative droid for administrative duties and systems management rather than direct diplomatic efforts. The 3D-4 is a common companion for business persons, ambassadors, and others requiring a droid that can fill multiple roles. The 3D-4 can handle basic negotiations and translate for its owner, and it carries an extensive database of data pertaining to business, trade, and law. Although the stock model comes unarmed, many owners refit their 3D-4s with hidden weaponry, in case negotiations become hostile.

3D-4 administrative droids can be played as droid heroes.

3D-4 Administrative Droid

Medium droid (3rd-degree) nonheroic 1

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +0

Languages Basic, Binary, 1 unassigned

Defenses Ref 10 (flat-footed 10), Fort 9, Will 10

hp 2; **Threshold** 9

Immune droid traits

Speed 6 squares (walking)

Melee unarmed –1 (1d3–1)

Ranged concealed hold-out blaster +0 (3d4)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +0

CL 0

Abilities Str 8, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12

Feats Skill Focus (Knowledge [bureaucracy], Persuasion), Skill Training
(Persuasion), Weapon Proficiency (pistols)

Skills Knowledge (bureaucracy) +11, Knowledge (galactic lore) +6,
Perception +0, Persuasion +11

Systems walking locomotion, basic processor, 2 hand appendages,
translator unit (DC 10), internal storage (5 kg), vocabulator, internal
comlink (encrypted)

Possessions concealed hold-out blaster (+5 bonus to Stealth check to
conceal the weapon), audio recorder, video recorder

Availability Licensed; **Cost** 7,320 credits

M4-Series Messenger Droid

This ubiquitous and extremely useful droid is used to relay messages to individuals who prefer receiving news in person, without transmitting or receiving information through comlinks. It can record messages, store data, or carry appropriately sized objects for delivery. The M4 is equipped with a small blaster for defense, although some municipalities require the blaster to be deactivated or removed prior to sale. The M4 is used in both the civilian and military worlds and is famous for its tenacity in completing its message-delivery missions. Its size, spherical shape, and repulsorlift allow it to slip into remarkably small spaces.



A MESSENGER DROID DELIVERING A HOLOGRAPHIC MESSAGE

M4-Series Messenger Droid

Diminutive droid (3rd-degree) nonheroic 2
Init +9; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +13
Languages Basic, Binary, 1 unassigned

Defenses Ref 18 (flat-footed 15), Fort 7, Will 12

hp 4; **Threshold** 7

Immune droid traits

Speed 9 squares (flying)

Melee claw -2 (1 point)

Ranged blaster +4 (3d4)

Fighting Space 1 square; **Reach** 0 squares

Base Atk +1; **Grp** -11

Abilities Str 4, Dex 16, Con —, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10

Feats Skill Focus (Perception, Stealth), Skill Training (Initiative),
 Weapon Proficiency (pistols)

Skills Initiative +9, Perception +13, Stealth +29

Systems flying locomotion, basic processor, 1 claw appendage,
 internal comlink, internal storage (1 kg), locked access,
 darkvision, vocabulator

Possessions blaster (treat as hold-out blaster), audio recorder,
 holo recorder

Availability Licensed (restricted with weapon); **Cost** 88,000
 credits

FOURTH-DEGREE DROIDS

Fourth-degree droids are combat droids, such as guard droids, battle droids, assassin droids, and probe droids. Examples include the FIII footman droid, the BL-Series battle legionnaire, and the B4J4 security droid.

FIII Footman Droid

Created by the Tac-Spec Corporation as the ultimate servant droid, this expensive model is marketed to the House of Tund on the dark-side-tainted planet of Vjun, although extremely wealthy buyers from other planets see the advantages of this model and purchase as many as possible. The FIII footman droid primarily serves as a humble valet, waiting tables, cleaning rooms, cooking food, and driving vehicles. However, the droid has a highly advanced processor more akin to those in assassin droids, making it an effective killing machine and a consummate bodyguard. These droids are incredibly strong, agile, and customizable, carrying powerful hidden weaponry to protect their owners.

CL 1

Fidelis and Solis were two FIII Footman Droids who served House Malreaux on Vjun for several centuries.

FIII footman droids cannot be played as droid heroes.

FIII Footman Droid

CL 9

Medium droid (4th-degree) scoundrel 5/soldier 4

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision, low-light vision; Perception +14

Languages Basic, Binary, 3 unassigned

Defenses Ref 22 (flat-footed 19), Fort 25, Will 23

hp 54; **Threshold** 25

Immune droid traits

Speed 6 squares (walking)

Melee unarmed +12 (1d6+9)

Ranged miniaturized rail cannons +10 (3d12+4) or

Ranged miniaturized rail cannons +8 (4d12) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +10

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Dastardly Strike, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Sneak Attack +2d6, Whirlwind Attack

Special Actions Draw Fire, Harm's Way,
 Logic Upgrade: Defender,
 Melee Defense

Abilities Str 20, Dex 16, Con —,
 Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 13

Talents Dastardly Strike, Draw Fire,
 Harm's Way, Sneak Attack +2d6

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium),
 Combat Reflexes, Logic Upgrade: Defender,
 Martial Arts I, Melee Defense, Point Blank Shot,
 Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Deception),
 Skill Training (Knowledge [galactic
 lore]), Weapon Proficiency (pistols,
 rifles, simple weapons), Whirlwind
 Attack

Skills Deception +15, Initiative +12,
 Knowledge (galactic lore) +12, Knowledge
 (tactics) +12, Perception +14, Treat Injury +12, Use Computer +12
Systems walking locomotion, heuristic processor, 2 hand
 appendages, darkvision, improved sensor package, diagnostics
 package, internal comlink (encrypted), locked access, vocabulator,
 translator unit (DC 15), durasteel plating (+6 armor)
Possessions 2 miniaturized rail cannons (treat as blaster cannons)
Availability Military; **Cost** 35,630 credits



BATTLE DROID AND SLICER DROID

BL-Series Battle Legionnaire

Designed by the Confederacy of Independent Systems, the BL-Series battle legionnaire bears an uncanny resemblance to the innocuous 3PO-Series protocol droid, but it is armed with a variety of weapons. The Mandalorian protectors are the primary recipients of these droids during the Clone Wars, although battle legionnaires see limited engagements with other groups and units. The Mandalorians paint their battle legionnaires dark green and gold to distinguish them from protocol droids.

BL-Series battle legionnaires cannot be played as droid heroes.

BL-Series Battle Legionnaire

CL 3

Medium droid (4th-degree) nonheroic 9

Init +16; **Senses** darkvision, low-light vision; Perception +12

Languages Basic, Binary, Mando'a

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 15), Fort 12, Will 11

hp 22; **Threshold** 12

Immune droid traits

Speed 6 squares (walking)

Melee finger blades +8 (2d4+2)

Ranged assault blaster +3 (3d8) with autofire or

Ranged assault blaster +6 (3d8) with braced autofire or

Ranged assault blaster +1 (4d8) with autofire and Rapid Shot

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +8

Atk Options autofire (assault blaster), Rapid Shot

Special Actions brace (assault blaster), Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Coordinated Attack, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Initiative), Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles)

Skills Initiative +16, Perception +12

Systems walking locomotion, basic processor, 2 hand appendages, gyroscopic stabilizers, darkvision, improved sensor package, internal comlink, quadanium plating (+5 armor), internal storage (1 kg), vocabulator, silence-bubble generator

Possessions assault blaster (treat as light repeating blaster), finger blades (treat as vibrodagger), medpac (in internal storage)

Availability Military; **Cost** 15,090 credits

Gyroscopic Stabilizers—A BL-Series battle legionnaire gains a +5 stability bonus on checks to resist attempts to knock it prone.

B4J4 Security Droid

Blujay designs the B4J4 security droid for use in the corporate sphere, and this model can be found in the largest and most prestigious corporate headquarters of the galaxy. As unobtrusive as possible, the B4J4 nonetheless is heavily armed. Its repulsorlift enables it to fly, so that it can ignore stairs and swiftly traverse turbolift shafts as needed. It carries twin heavy blasters—preset to stun setting to avoid casualties—and a snare pistol, which launches cables that entangle dangerous individuals.

B4J4 security droids cannot be played as droid heroes.

B4J4 Security Droid

CL 2

Small droid (4th-degree) nonheroic 6

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +13

Languages Basic, Binary

Defenses Ref 14 (flat-footed 13), Fort 11, Will 10

hp 14; **Threshold** 11

Immune droid traits

Speed 9 squares (flying)

Melee claw +5 (1d3+1)

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +6 (3d8) or

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +4 (4d8) with Rapid Shot

Ranged snare pistol +6 (special)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +0

Atk Options Rapid Shot

Abilities Str 12, Dex 12, Con —, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 8

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Training (Initiative), Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols)

Skills Initiative +9, Perception +13

Systems flying locomotion, basic processor, claw appendage (concealed), internal comlink, vocabulator, plasteel shell (+2 armor)

Possessions 2 heavy blaster pistols, snare pistol

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 25,340 credits

CHAPTER IV CAMPAIGNS





In addition to the Force, the galaxy is bound together by one other factor—intrigue. Republic Senators bluster and pontificate in the Senate Rotunda on Coruscant and engage in secret deals behind closed doors. Criminal masterminds scheme for profit and power, sometimes behind a facade of legality and legitimacy. Corporate CEOs try to maximize profits and expand their market shares while trying to force the competition out of business. Even a simple avenue in an obscure settlement on Tatooine can hold a wealth of secret deals, power struggles, and tangled relationships—all potential hooks for adventure.

A *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign can occur during any era, so Gamemasters have full leeway in when and where the game can take place. During the Old Republic era, corporate power expands and the Sith operate openly. The Clone Wars era is thick with intrigue, espionage, and intelligence gathering, not only between the Republic and Separatists, but also among neutral or otherwise unaligned planets and organizations—each with its own motives and agendas. The Dark Times are rife with paranoia and treachery, with the heroes facing the unbelievable might of the Empire. The Rebellion era pits the Rebel Alliance against Imperial forces for decades, leaving tremendous room for any intrigues the Gamemaster and players develop.

In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, the heroes delve into the tangled skein of intrigue to foil plots and expose the truth. As with *Scum and Villainy*, the heroes do not have to be the most law-abiding or altruistic individuals, and in fact, characters who strictly adhere to legal behavior can derail a campaign to a certain degree, since breaking and entering, assassination, extortion, and illegal slicing are standard themes. In most cases, the heroes are the underdogs, going up against powerful political organizations, corporations, or criminal networks. Secrecy and duplicity are the tools of a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, and even trust can be employed as a weapon. Nothing is as it seems in this type of campaign, as layers are peeled away to reveal deeper, darker secrets threatening the safety of the galaxy and the balance of good and evil.

A GATHERING OF HEROES

Although getting heroes together for a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign can be relatively easy, assembling a group of the right types of heroes and players for this type of campaign takes a bit more finesse. After all, some heroes, especially nobles and scoundrels, naturally fit into games where cloak and dagger maneuvering, political intrigue, and double crosses are commonplace. However, other heroes, such as scouts and soldiers, are better suited to the wilderness or the battlefield. A player who wants to portray a martial hero might change his or her mind upon hearing the type of campaign the Gamemaster has planned, and while the player ultimately decides the type of hero to play, the Gamemaster should clearly indicate that any class is appropriate in the campaign and that a variety of characters will be necessary for the adventuring group's survival.

If the Gamemaster and players have the time, allowing each player to begin the campaign with his or her own solo mini-adventure can help to craft the web of how the heroes' backgrounds and destinies are intertwined. When they finally adventure as a group, elements from each hero's past come forward, binding the heroes together.

Shared Hero Backgrounds

In a game where intrigue is the dominating theme, bringing the heroes together is considerably easier than in most campaigns. After all, the essence of intrigue is the intricate weaving together of plots and lives. Heroes from vastly different cultures, species, social classes, and heroic classes can be thrust together with a common event or patron. Indeed, part of the fun of an intrigue campaign can be figuring out what the heroes have in common—unraveling this mystery then leads to further adventures.

For example, the heroes are thrust together into an adventure when a local official is assassinated. Although they come from different backgrounds and classes, they begin to unearth clues and hints that tie them together. Each is related to the victim. The noble once worked for the official as an advisor, and the soldier was hired by another party to break the legs of the official's companions. The official framed the group's scoundrel long ago as a scapegoat for a crime he didn't commit, and so on.

However, unless the adventure revolves around the heroes' back-story, avoid weaving too intricate a web of relationships among the heroes. Allow the players to determine their characters' histories, and then build their ideas into your own plans. A simple, if broad, way to join the heroes together is to have them come from the same homeworld or belong to a large organization.

Common Origins

The heroes might commence the first story arc operating with some common elements. The Gamemaster should divulge common information relating to the first story arc during the players' precampaign discussion, encouraging them to work the features into their heroes' backgrounds.

Below are short examples particularly well suited for *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaigns. They should help the Gamemaster generate opportunities for the players to build common bonds.

- The heroes belong to a mercenary contingent hired by an anonymous but high-paying patron to perform a variety of shady paramilitary activities on a war-ravaged planet without getting involved with either side of the conflict.
- The heroes are assigned as the entourage, bodyguards, and trouble-shooters for a powerful Core Worlds noble. They are constantly on the move and ordered to take on varied, dangerous, and sometimes bizarre assignments to advance the noble's cryptic agendas.
- The heroes are spies ordered to go in deep undercover to unearth secrets about a corporation's plans to create super weapons and sell them to the highest bidder.
- The heroes are crew members of a luxury yacht that shuttles VIPs to different worlds. They overhear secrets and become unwittingly entangled in the schemes of their passengers.

A campaign idea that railroads the players into creating certain kinds of characters is less than ideal, and a Gamemaster should avoid imposing limitations on character types because of the kind of campaign being run. One hero in the mercenary contingent, for example, could be a Jedi sent to gather intelligence and discover the identity of the patron sending mercenaries to a neutral planet's civil war. The luxury yacht crew could be a loose association of scouts, scoundrels, soldiers, nobles, and even a Jedi. Players' enjoyment of the campaign depends more on how they define their heroes' motivations and what secret information, if any, they arrange with the Gamemaster.

Allies

Patronage, favors, mentors, and obligations are the key elements of a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign. Any number of a hero's allies could have their own connections, sometimes obvious, other times not, to the allies of another hero in the group. Depending on the relationship, a hero could be asked, begged, or ordered to do a favor on the ally's behalf, introducing them to the other heroes to form the adventuring group. However, in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, an ally has the potential to turn into an adversary.

Allies can provide information, transportation, access, and credits to the heroes as needed. When the heroes are on the run, allies might grant them a safe haven or use political power to call off the pursuit. Nothing comes for free, though, and the heroes are expected to return the favor whenever and however they can, creating hooks for new adventures in the process.

- The heroes all have ties to local law enforcement and are sometimes called upon to lend their unique skills to help in an investigation.
- The heroes have access to a representative of the Galactic Republic through blood relatives, old familial ties, or the time that they spent under the representative's tutelage.

- The heroes perform favors for a smuggler who makes runs for extremely wealthy and powerful individuals. The smuggler gives the heroes the use of a ship and provides access to the movers and shakers of the galaxy.

Location

Heroes might visit a location that generates intrigue. Certain places, such as royal palaces or the Senate on Coruscant, are prime settings for secret deals and skullduggery. Intrigue might be only a conference room away, or secret meetings might be occurring in hidden passageways. Even a chaotic battlefield can be full of intrigue. The heroes might be spies who must infiltrate a capital city during a vicious firefight, passing themselves off as members of the enemy force. Or in the middle of fierce house-to-house fighting, the heroes could stumble upon the corpse of an enemy courier carrying a cryptic message that reveals traitors within the heroes' unit.

This central location could later serve as a headquarters of sorts for the heroes to return to. Guildhalls, palaces, and other government facilities are all excellent venues for the heroes to come together and become surrounded by the sort of intrigue that sets off adventures.

- The heroes are all members of a house of bounty hunters, headquartered in a hollowed-out asteroid located near the Hydian Way.
- The heroes are employees of the same government, granted special authority to travel freely on its behalf.
- The heroes are all undercover agents who work from a secret field office, complete with a legitimate front.

Event

A single event can set a plot in motion, with the heroes either being integral elements or unwitting participants who must unravel the plot, restore their sullied names, or do the bidding of their patron. The heroes might have different motivations or reasons for uncovering the truth, but they must work together to achieve their goals.

Countless events in *Star Wars* can draw heroes together, such as the prolonged conflict of the Clone Wars, the annihilation of Alderaan, or the blockade of Naboo.

- The heroes witness an epic battle between two mighty Force users, resulting in the death of one of the combatants. As witnesses to the duel, they might be questioned about the event, or others might try to have them killed to keep the death of the Force user hushed up.
- The heroes are passengers aboard a small freighter bound for the Core Worlds. Upon waking, they find that the captain has been murdered in his locked cabin. The crew immediately blames the heroes for the crime, but the heroes suspect several NPCs with mutinous motivations.
- The heroes work on behalf of the Republic when Order 66 is carried out. After the deaths of untold numbers of Jedi, the heroes are surrounded by scores of now-hostile clone troopers.



Adversaries

Setting up a common adversary is a great way to draw heroes into a campaign of intrigue. The heroes bring to the table their own motivations and grudges, and they find that the best way to bring an antagonist down is to cooperate. The adversary can be anything or anyone, from a single powerful individual to a criminal cartel, a corporation, or an entire government. Of course, in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, an adversary might be an ally who betrays the heroes or one whom the heroes discover to be responsible for reprehensible acts.

Remember, however, that adversaries are not necessarily out for the heroes' blood. A rival corporation or intelligence organization might be more interested in subverting or capturing the heroes to learn what they know. Of course, if the situation becomes messy, violence is bound to happen, but the cleverest of adversaries try a variety of tactics in their attempts to dominate the heroes, including blackmail, extortion, and going after the heroes' loved ones or associates. The old adage "My enemy's enemy is my friend" applies to this situation, uniting heroes from seemingly opposing ideologies or mindsets to bring down a particular adversary.

- The heroes owe money or obligations to a crime lord noted for cruelty and a willingness to hurt the families and associates of those who do not repay their debts.
- The heroes' home planet has been slowly poisoned by the illegal dumping of toxins by one of the Banking Clan's numerous subsidiary manufacturing corporations. Corruption and public apathy has kept this information from the rest of the galaxy, so the heroes must find the damning evidence that could bring the polluters to justice.
- The heroes belong to different, but allied, intelligence organizations, each of which is tasked with undermining a regional office of Imperial Intelligence. Tackling such an imposing foe requires them to band together, combining their skills and resources.

CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

The most satisfying campaigns blend combat, chases, and hair-raising escapes with investigation, NPC interactions, and other roleplaying aspects that do not involve violence. After all, *Star Wars* isn't *Star Wars* without blaster fights and lightsaber duels, but a Gamemaster can easily incorporate the randomness of combat into the planned story arc.

A *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign is probably best initially portrayed as something else entirely. The heroes go on adventures oblivious, at first, to the machinations slowly drawing them into a plot. Once engaged, however, the heroes can find the world turned upside down—allies turned enemies, enemies turned allies, secret knowledge brought out into the light of day, and seemingly unrelated events revealed as part of a vast conspiracy. Intrigue occurs everywhere, so the heroes might become involved with the upper echelons of society in one encounter and then with the seediest parts of a spaceport in the next.

The Halls of Power

The Republic Senate, the noble houses of the Core Worlds, the board of directors of the Techno Union—each of these groups is involved in making decisions that have immense implications for untold billions of sentient beings throughout the galaxy. Within the palaces, boardrooms, and Senate chambers of the galaxy, those in power make deals and advance their agendas. These actions usually occur in the light of day, where bills are voted upon and debates take place to sway the opinions of their comrades. However, much also occurs behind closed doors, with secret alliances, political maneuvering, and even assassination attempts lurking just beneath the veneer of civility.

In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, the heroes might be members of a powerful group or might represent the interests of a particular cause. They meet with kings and tribal leaders, corporate CEOs, or crime lords to broker deals, often within the gilded halls that represent the power of the people. Although grand and plush in appearance, these buildings where the powerful meet and craft agreements are in fact hotbeds of deceit. The heroes might spend

their time traveling from one of these places to another, or the might spend an entire adventure in a single location attempting to unravel a mystery.

Those who walk the halls of power have vast resources, influence, and money at their command—enough so that the heroes might think that making an enemy of one of these VIPs is tantamount to suicide. To be sure, the Gamemaster should use these resources to put pressure on the heroes, just to let them know what they are up against, including opponents that use political maneuvering or the courts and bureaucracies to block investigations. Although the heroes can use the system to fight the system, *Star Wars* is not about campaigns littered with court documents and injunctions. Situations involving red tape should be resolved with a few Knowledge or Persuasion checks, leaving the rest of the time for cloak-and-dagger work.

Adventure Hook: The heroes are part of the entourage of a junior Senator, recently and hastily appointed after his predecessor was gunned down on the streets of her home planet. They travel to Coruscant, where the Senator must submit legislation to gain assistance against the pirates who have turned his system into a lawless zone. However, the new Senator is completely out of his element in the rough and tumble political cyclone of the Senate Chambers. The heroes find that they must protect the vulnerable Senator, both from the predations of politicians who seek to suborn him and from physical harm as well, as a cartel of corrupt officials that are bankrolling the pirates to do their best to prevent the Senator from submitting his plea for help.

Everyone Has Secrets

Even the most minor NPC in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign can have a back story and motivation that the Gamemaster and heroes can take advantage of during the adventure. Everyone has something to hide, whether a secret shame, a criminal background, a family scandal, or some other bit of information that they would rather not have out in the open. A *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign presses this theme as much as possible, with characters taking extreme measures to keep secrets hidden or to uncover the dirty laundry of others. Corporations—especially those that deal in weapons manufacturing, drugs, medicine, or other technologies with the potential for abuse—spend millions of credits to keep the skeletons in their closets locked away from prying eyes.

In an intrigue campaign, the heroes quickly discover that everyone has a secret and that their own pasts might come back to haunt them. The heroes can be manipulated with blackmail, as outside forces use scandalous information to lead the heroes to do their bidding or force them to pay an exorbitant price to keep it hushed up. Of course, if the heroes are unscrupulous, they might find that blackmail works in their favor as well. Even the Jedi, with their codes of conduct, know that using information to leverage a situation can be the best solution to a problem, especially if it averts violence. Heroes who insist that they have nothing to hide can still run afoul of dirty secrets—perhaps not their own, but those of their comrades, families, or



A LITERAL HALL OF POWER: THE SENATE BUILDING

patrons, who plead with the hero to conceal the secret or to silence those who might bring it out in the open.

Adventure Hook: After a battle in space, the heroes are forced to land their damaged starship on a barren planet far from help. Dangerous beasts and fierce windstorms make repairs difficult. The next day, a strange but friendly man emerges from the storm, claiming to have seen the ship's descent and offering assistance. He says that he is a hermit who came to the planet to contemplate the Force and to live in harmony with this hostile planet, but the heroes soon discover that the hermit's promised aid is a clever ruse, since he is actually a mass murderer on the run from his crimes. The hermit attempts to draw the heroes away individually, setting them up so that their possible deaths appears to be caused by native animals or exposure to the elements.

Power, Corruption, and Scandal

Any student of the Force can tell you that power corrupts. As nobles, Senators, and leaders grow in power, so too does the temptation to glean a few extra credits along the way or to use their influence to push through decisions that serve the few over the concerns of the many. In some cultures—especially those in the Outer Rim—graft and corruption are built into the system, with kickbacks and bribes as an integral part. No one blinks an eye at throwing in a few hundred additional credits to obtain a license or to pay off a law-enforcement officer. In other cultures, the mere idea that money or favors can be traded to push a particular agenda is anathema, although the temptation is there.

Corruption can be an important element of a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign. Not every official is on the take, but the heroes should not be surprised if they are expected to pay through the nose or if they must do some favors to gain the trust of key individuals. Corruption is all a matter of scope, of course. A wealthy diplomat might laugh at the idea of the heroes offering less than hundreds of thousands of credits for influence with his or her government, while a city clerk might grant the heroes an hour of access to government computers for something as simple as a packet of spice or an old, beat-up landspeeder.

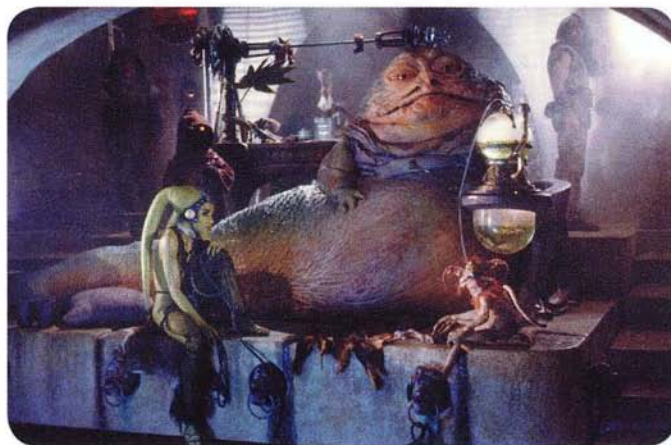
With corruption comes scandal. When secrets are dragged out into the light for all to see, formerly altruistic and trusted officials become mired in shame or charged with criminal wrongdoing. Religious leaders might be revealed as heretics, and beloved nobles might be exposed as traitors against the people they rule. For politicians, the threat of scandal is part of doing business. They do their best to keep their scandals and those of their associates hidden from view, while striving to uncover their opponents' scandals. Every day, the HoloNet features scandals ranging from the absurd to the monstrous. As such a scandal unfolds, the accused finds that friends and allies become hard or impossible to reach, and even simple tasks, such as traveling, become more difficult since they are dogged by reporters, law enforcement officials, or victims looking for vengeance. As the heroes go about their adventures in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, they might realize that their own reputations and honor are precious commodities.

Adventure Hook: The heroes are employed as personal servants for a noble, well known and beloved for providing food and medical relief to refugees during the Clone Wars. During a particularly crucial mission, word spreads over the HoloNet that she has been using the relief organization as a front to provide intelligence and supplies for the Separatists. Although she vehemently denies it, the heroes are presented with evidence that makes her claim of innocence suspect. They have seen the good that her efforts have provided, but if the rumors are accurate, the heroes are considered accomplices unless they turn her in or help hide her secrets.

Spies and Espionage

Every organization with a political agenda has its own spies, informers, and moles to ferret out information about rivals. Saboteurs, assassins, and enforcers do their best to disrupt the agendas of their enemies. Even during the most tranquil and enlightened times, spies work behind the scenes on behalf of their patrons. Indeed, the eras of relative quiet are still rife with intrigue, as the paranoid prepare for the coming decline or unscrupulous groups and individuals look to exploit the sleeping masses.

In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, the heroes might be part of an intelligence organization dedicated to any of these assignments. Different missions require different skill sets, so a diverse adventuring group can be an advantage. Nobles and scoundrels have social skills, and scouts are treasured for the ability to sneak into locations. Soldiers provide the necessary muscle when subtlety does not do the trick or when things go wrong and comrades need protection. Although the Jedi strive to avoid politics, many of their missions can be considered espionage because they gather information, follow up reports of corruption, and troubleshoot situations that threaten the peace of the Republic.



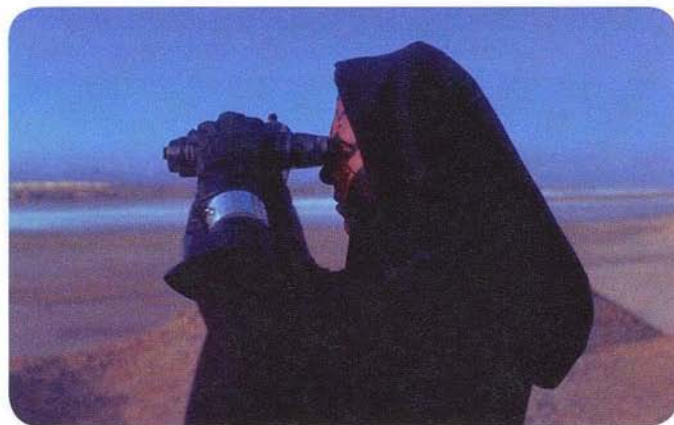
JABBA THE HUTT'S WEALTH AND RESOURCES ARE VAST.

Adventure Hook: After a cell of undercover operatives on New Plympto is discovered and terminated, Rebel Intelligence approaches the heroes individually to replace the cell of spies. However, the heroes are unaware that although the cell was indeed eradicated, the Empire had infiltrated it prior to its destruction. The heroes' handler, the Imperial mole, sends them on missions to uncover secrets of the Empire, but all for the purpose of locating additional Rebel spies and contacts. After the heroes gather enough information for the mole, he intends to set up an ambush to bring them in for questioning and detention. If the heroes learn of his secret beforehand, however, they can use it to their advantage, providing false information and setting a trap for the mole instead.

Secret Knowledge

Sometimes the heroes uncover knowledge that has been long forgotten or kept hidden from prying eyes for untold millennia. Secret societies and special-interest groups quietly remove mention of certain planets from public records or hush up the discovery of an ancient Sith temple, perhaps for the common good, but more often to keep the forbidden knowledge—and the power it provides—for themselves.

When confronted with previously secret or forbidden knowledge, the heroes must decide whether to release the information to the public, regardless of its impact on the galaxy, or to keep it to themselves and possibly capitalize on it for personal gain. Uncovering secrets stirs up a hornet's nest of trouble, as rivals, officials, criminals, or others come asking questions or demanding it for themselves.



DARTH MAUL SPYING ON MOS ESPA

Adventure Hook: During the course of the campaign, the heroes discover that a corporation has been funneling resources and manpower to a moon clearly labeled off limits by the Republic. After infiltrating a corporate freighter, they make their way to the moon and find a massive archaeological dig revealing a staggeringly old starship buried in the crust. The ship's origins are unknown. However, the intact but nonfunctioning technology on board could throw financial markets and the balance of power in the sector into chaos. Do the heroes try to shut down the operation, inform their superiors, or attempt to take it for themselves?

A Matter of Trust

Just as in *Scum and Villainy*, trust and betrayal are important in an intrigue campaign, and require additional mention here. In a campaign in which alliances might be nothing more than clever ruses and everyone has something to hide, players can soon fall into a trap of no longer trusting anyone, regardless of their apparent friendliness or helpfulness. A campaign can quickly fall apart if the Gamemaster's plans involve the heroes trusting a particular individual. The easiest, although least effective, way to circumvent such a possibility is to arrange for the heroes to have no choice but to deal with the NPC in question. However, trust is rarely given in such circumstances, so the heroes can probably see the NPC's betrayal far in advance.

The reverse is also true, in that alliances can shift, sometimes without notice, turning adversaries into potential allies. As the heroes uncover secrets, they can use them to their advantage, perhaps by presenting useful information to an enemy, since those with a sense of business or political savvy know that even an opponent can be a useful resource if approached in the right manner. Players should be encouraged to use their skills, wits, and diplomacy to find common ground with their enemies whenever possible, opening the door to additional adventures down the road.

Lastly, in a game rife with intrigue, the heroes might even begin to view each other suspiciously. If the heroes are thrust together with little unity to begin with, the campaign could possibly unravel as the heroes accuse their comrades of duplicity and holding back secrets. Although a certain amount of paranoia and suspicion is to be expected in a game of intrigue, the Gamemaster should be ready to step in before the situation gets out of hand and the heroes refuse to trust each other enough to even adventure together.

Adventure Hook: The heroes' mentor provides them with intelligence, gear, ships, and other resources. Over time, though, the mentor contracts a disease that even the best medical droids and physicians cannot cure. The mentor sends the heroes on increasingly lucrative, but dangerous, tasks in a desperate gambit to raise additional funds for his treatment. Eventually, the mentor sells the heroes out to their enemy for a big payoff and promise of access to expensive experimental care. Although the mentor loathes himself, he has little choice. If the heroes show mercy, they might be able to help him with his treatment.

BUILDING AN INTRIGUE CAMPAIGN

Creating adventures for a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign requires a little more foresight and planning than for other types of campaigns. Although it should also present opportunities for prolonged blaster fights, harrowing starship chases, and Jedi bounding about with lightsabers in hand, an intrigue campaign focuses more on uncovering secrets, on the intricate pull of power and corruption, and on helping shape the galaxy's destiny through subterfuge, negotiation, and investigation. The players and the heroes they portray find that asking questions, remaining alert for clues, and using deductive reasoning advance the story.

Pacing

Pacing is a crucial element in any *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign. If done correctly, the heroes discover tantalizing clues as they progress through their adventure, revealing previously unknown connections, unearthing the motivations of NPCs, and realizing that all is not as it appears, leading to a satisfying epic conclusion. Each session should combine social interaction, investigation, and deduction along with a healthy dose of action and combat to keep the game lively and interesting.

A Gamemaster should first determine how long the campaign will run. If the *Galaxy of Intrigue* game is intended to last for just a few sessions, then the clues and revelations should come rapidly and clearly, giving the heroes obvious paths to pursue during a session or for future sessions. If possible, each session encapsulates its own mini-arc, with a well-defined beginning, middle, and end, giving the heroes a sense of satisfaction at figuring out a vital piece of information. For example, during the first session of the campaign, an Imperial spy has managed to infiltrate the Rebel base that the heroes call home, unearthing vital strategic information and details about troop movements. The heroes must determine how the spy got into the facility in the first place. Then they uncover clues indicating where the spy escaped to, and they travel there for further investigation. For the last portion of the session, the heroes confront one of the spy's contacts, resulting in a gun battle as the contact tries to escape. Upon capturing or killing the contact, they discover just how vital the information was and what it means for the Rebellion. During the next session, they head off to their next location and plunge deeper into the intrigue laid out before them.

If the campaign is intended to take place over the course of several sessions, then the adventure should move at a slower—but no less exciting—pace with numerous side treks and intertwined plots, both to keep the heroes guessing and to keep the game from bogging down if they are stymied by a particular avenue of inquiry.

ASAJJ VENTRESS ATTEMPTS TO EARN KING KATUNKKO'S TRUST.



Layers Upon Layers

Even mundane scenes of a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign can contain the seeds for intrigue, so each encounter should relate to some scheme or plot. Masterminds hatch intricate plans with both minute and wide-sweeping scopes. Look at how each encounter fits into the overall arc of the story. Sometimes the players themselves help write the story in ways that are unanticipated but work well to add another layer of intrigue. With a little creativity, even a seemingly random encounter can be used as a stepping stone for further adventures or to advance the campaign. For example, a burglary unrelated to the heroes uncovers their secret plans, putting them in jeopardy when this information is sold to the highest bidder.

Conversely, the heroes' actions can have repercussions. Perhaps they interrogate a shopkeeper to find the location of a local crime boss. The Gamemaster decides on the spot that the shopkeeper—now fearing retribution for revealing this information—decides to pay local thugs to stop the heroes from finding the crime boss and revealing the transgression. If the heroes kill or injure the thugs, local law enforcement arrives and brings the heroes in for questioning. Once they are detained, the heroes discover that the police captain is in the pocket of the crime lord.

In another example, the Jedi Council asks the heroes to look into the disappearance of a Jedi Knight and a Padawan sent to handle a dispute between a Mid Rim planet and a nearby system. Upon arrival, the heroes quickly discover that the Jedi met with the planet's authority figures and then disappeared—the rulers accuse the other system of kidnapping the Jedi to disrupt negotiations. However, the heroes quickly realize that the planet boasts an unusually high number of servants with the characteristic traits of slavery, which is illegal in that sector of the galaxy. When the evidence of slavery is brought up to the rulers of the planet, the situation quickly takes a turn for the worse. Assailants capture the heroes and shuttle them up to a waiting slave vessel with a crew from the other system. If the heroes escape to reveal that the rulers of the supposedly warring planets are actually in partnership, gathering slaves to be sent to the fighting pits of Nar Shaddaa, they then draw the ire of the Hutts, who in turn send bounty hunters to silence the heroes permanently.

Pitfalls to Avoid

One key to creating a campaign of intrigue is the judicious use of suspense to keep the players on the edge of their seats. However, creating suspense can be a tricky affair, balancing expectation with realistic results or decisions that might derail the outcome that you intended.

Pacing Is Everything

Intrigue works best when information is revealed in a timely manner that keeps the heroes both guessing and hungry for more. To walk the fine line between interesting and dull, incorporate the uncovering of information along with action. For example, in order for the heroes to find out the identity of a traitor who has been shipping weapons to the Separatists, they must break into their own organization's computers without revealing their actions to their superiors.

"A FIGURE BURSTS THROUGH THE DOOR WITH A BLASTER..."

A common theme from the noir genre is a lone assailant bursting through a door blasting. The motivation for the attacker could be almost anything. Perhaps the attacker is a lackey of the main villain or a person with a grudge. This sort of random encounter spices up a scene that has slowed down with investigation or too much talk among the players. It spurs action and opens the door to finding out the attacker's identity and motives.

Of course, this technique should be used sparingly, or else the players might see lulls in the campaign as a setup for an ambush. You can vary the theme with a damsel in distress or a courier bearing a summons for the heroes to come before the Republic Senate.

Provide Tangible Results

Avoid burying the campaign in so many layers of intrigue that trying to sort out the truth is almost impossible, and worse, boring. A Gamemaster should look at each encounter and figure out exactly what sort of information or result the heroes should learn at its conclusion, clearly indicating that they are making progress. An apparently meaningless, random event might later be revealed to be a crucial element, but using that technique too often, or making epiphanies too subtle, can frustrate players. Allowing the heroes to winnow out red herrings in a solid and undisputed way also helps them feel that they are making progress. If you find that the heroes are following an incorrect conclusion for too long, help them get back on track. Even the simple task of having your players roll a Wisdom check can make them realize that they are chasing a dead end and lead them back to the more relevant path.

Encouraging the players to make full use of their characters' skills, especially when utilizing the Skill Challenge system (see Chapter 2: Skill Challenges), provides concrete and clear results for success.

Savvy Players

Unless you are a true mastermind, the players might see right through the intrigue you have laid out, coming to the correct conclusion on their own well in advance of the point you expected. Such a result is particularly likely in situations requiring only a single answer—identifying the professor's murderer or determining what the corporation is building on that secret moon base, for example. Several techniques can mitigate this problem:

- Shift later events so that the heroes' conclusions are close, but not exactly correct.
- Create a separate encounter or adventure that prevents the heroes from seeing the conclusion of the original adventure until later on.
- Make their conclusions an element of yet another, larger conspiracy leading to further adventures.

If your players are particularly insightful and solve the riddles early, they should be rewarded for their keen perception and deduction!

INTRIGUE CAMPAIGN ARCS

Even with all of the general guidelines this book provides, coming up with an intriguing storyline that uses many of the elements presented here can be a challenge. In order to help you envision what an entire campaign based on intrigue might look like, this section presents several new campaign arcs. These campaign arcs describe the basic premise of a campaign, and then walk you through the general events that take place over the course of the campaign, eventually culminating in the climax of the campaign. You can use these sample campaign arcs as the basis for a campaign, or just as inspiration when crafting your own campaigns.

SOME OF YOUR PLAYERS WILL BE AS SAVVY AS LANDO CALRISSIAN.



THE SECRET REVOLUTION

In the Secret Revolution campaign, the players become swept up in a web of intrigue meant to cover up the fact that a secret organization is planning to overthrow the galactic government. This campaign works best during a time period when the galactic government is mostly benevolent, such as during the days of the Old Republic, so that the players feel some reason to keep the government from being overthrown. The primary conflict in this campaign involves the heroes coming up against the revolutionaries, and hopefully stopping from harming the Republic.

The campaign opens when the heroes respond to a bounty posting on an Inner Rim world, with a bounty on the head of a Senator's aide (wanted alive) who has supposedly gone underground after betraying the Senator. As it turns out, the aide was actually kidnapped by a cabal of disgruntled soldiers, and the bounty was actually a plot to have the aide rescued from kidnapping. The heroes discover that the bounty was put on the aide by a member of the Senate Guard, a human named Bail Falcris, and he thanks the heroes and pays them to continue working for him. The aide reveals that his kidnappers took him after he discovered that his Senator had been communicating with someone called Domino, who has been hiring criminals and kidnappers on the Outer Rim for months. Over the course of the next few levels, the heroes try to find out who Domino is by posing as mercenaries for hire, but just as they are getting close their benefactor, Falcris, is recalled by the Senator that had been suspected of dealing with Domino. Now facing bureaucratic roadblocks, the heroes must find hard evidence (beyond the testimony of

the aide) that the Senator was dealing with criminals under the table. They do so, and the Senator is arrested and imprisoned.

As the second act of the campaign begins, the heroes are meeting with Falcris when an attempt is made on the Senate Guard's life. Republic Intelligence traces the attack back to a former Padawan that washed out of the Jedi Order and who now runs a semi-legitimate information brokering business out of Nar Shaddaa. When the heroes arrive, they find the Padawan already dead, and the computers containing the Padawan's stores of information stolen. This leads the heroes on a chase around the galaxy, always finding themselves one step behind the mysterious Domino. Their break comes when the heroes are contacted by a member of Domino's organization—a Sullustan slicer—who has decided to turn over a new leaf. The arranged meeting turns out to be a trap that leaves the Sullustan dead, but also sees the heroes recovering a computer core that the slicer had brought with him, rich with information on Domino's communications habits.

It is in the third act of the campaign that the full extent of the revolutionaries' plan is unveiled. The computer core that the heroes recovered contains communications between the mysterious leader of the organization and a number of undercover cells throughout the galaxy. Each communiqué seems to be setting up the assassinations of literally hundreds of Senators. After conferring with their contact in the Senate Guard, the heroes discover that each of the assassinations targets a Senator that is scheduled to be away from Coruscant at the same time. More frightening is the inference that Domino has some plan in place to take out all of the Senators on Coruscant during a Senate meeting. The heroes' final missions in the campaign require them to travel to distant stars and warn Senators of the plots against them, foil attacks on those Senators, and uncover the nature of the plot against Coruscant. The heroes finally discover the true identity of Domino when they go to warn a Senator about an impending assassination attempt, only to find out that the Senator was safe all along—because he or she was Domino all along.

The climax of the campaign takes place when the now-revealed Domino informs the heroes that the tragic deaths of nearly every other Senator is unavoidable. Domino reveals that Senate building is going to be the target of a tragic capital ship laser misfire, and that revolutionary forces are going to be on hand to finish off anyone that escapes. Domino also informs them that the Holonet has been brought down to keep them from interfering with his or her plans. With the heroes on the far side of the galaxy, and the true nature of the attack on the Senate now revealed to them, the heroes must race against time to make it back to Coruscant, disable the sabotaged capital ship that is going to be firing on the Senate, and then aid the Senate Guard in protecting the Senators from revolutionary forces.

PLOT AND METAPLOT

This section on campaign arcs is intentionally written as era-neutral. However, most of the eras in the *Star Wars* story have their own metaplot to deal with; that is to say, they have their own overarching story that defines what the era is all about. The Rebellion Era has the struggle against the Empire, the Rise of the Empire has the Clone Wars, and the New Jedi Order has the Yuuzhan Vong invasion. When using one of these campaign arcs, it's important to make sure that you use the trappings of that era's metaplot, but then make the main plot of your campaign your own. These campaign arcs work best when they are tweaked to fit in with the overall story of the era, and if you adapt the story to the era then it is less likely that your heroes will focus on the idea of "being in an intrigue-based campaign" and more likely that they will feel caught up in the story. Feel free to change who the villains are, who the heroes' allies are, and the specifics of certain events such that they blend with, not stand out against, the era's metaplot.

HOSTILE TAKEOVER

The Hostile Takeover campaign is a bit different from the others presented here, in that its scope is limited to a single sector of space. This kind of campaign can work during any time period, and in fact since the action is relatively confined in the galaxy it can work in conjunction with a second campaign arc as well, with the heroes alternating between plots. Though this campaign arc also somewhat relies on the heroes feeling amicable toward the government of the sector, you can adapt the story of the campaign such that the heroes might have other reasons for not wanting to see the government fall. For example, in the Rebellion Era this campaign arc might take place in a sector of space that is filled with Rebel sympathizers, and planets that have joined the Rebellion, meaning that the heroes won't want to see the government fall since it is largely sympathetic to their cause.

At the start of the campaign, the heroes are working in a remote sector of space when they receive a distress call from a starship that has come under attack and needs assistance. When the heroes arrive, they discover that the ship was attacked by pirates. As they investigate further, they find that these pirates have seemingly come out of nowhere, with significantly more advanced technology and resources available to them than other pirates. As reports come in from across the sector of similar attacks, the heroes discover that the pirates have significant financial backing, in the form of a group of powerful corporate entities whose wealth is spread throughout the sector. Realizing that those companies' ships never seem to run afoul of the pirates, the heroes also discover that the pirate threat is coming from a nearby asteroid base, and have a chance to stop the pirates once and for all.

With the pirates dealt with, the second act of the campaign involved the heroes' investigation into the involvement of the corporations who backed the pirates. Initial clues seem to indicate that the pirates were but one part of a larger plan, and through several adventures the heroes uncover other parts of that plan: sabotaging planetary weather control systems, inciting criminal riots in major cities, and staging attacks against well-populated areas by brigands and mercenaries. Over time, the heroes come to realize that these corporations are trying to incite unrest in the population, and in particular are making it seem like the sector governments cannot protect the people. The second act culminates when the heroes stop a major attack on a highly populated city, foiling a plan that was to be the corporations' capstone in a campaign to discredit the government.

As the campaign draws to a close in its final act, the heroes have not only stymied the corporate group, they have also become targets themselves. The corporations leverage their clout to portray the heroes as villains who were trying to perpetrate the very act they tried to stop in the second act, forcing the heroes to go underground rather than continue to fight. The heroes struggle to clear their names, and eventually discover that the corporations involved in the plan all seem to be under the influence of a Dark Jedi, and her evil apprentice. The two dark Force-users have been manipulating the corporations in order to destabilize the sector, and have planned to install their own puppet government once the sector government falls.

The climax of the campaign comes when the heroes infiltrate the towering structures controlled by the Dark Jedi and her apprentice, ending in a final showdown with the villains in the transparisteel-walled towers. With the Dark Jedi defeated and her schemes revealed, the heroes' names are cleared, and the villainous corporations crumble as their sedition becomes public.

INVASION FROM THE UNKNOWN REGIONS

In the Invasion from the Unknown Regions campaign, the heroes find themselves confronted with knowledge that no one in the known galaxy possesses—the knowledge of a secret invasion force poised to strike at civilization. This kind of campaign can work during pretty much any time period, though similarities to the Yuuzhan Vong invasion might mean that the campaign has a bit less impact during that time. Of course, you can always adapt the campaign to involve the Yuuzhan Vong invasion itself, but that might require some serious alterations to the conceits of the plot.

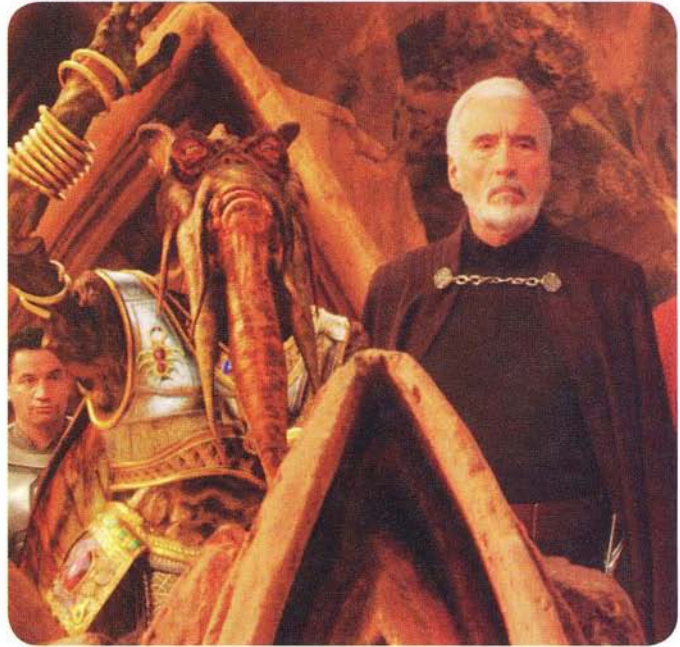
As the campaign opens, the heroes are traveling through the Outer Rim near the fringes of the Unknown Regions when they experience a hyperspace anomaly. More specifically, they are pulled out of hyperspace by a large object that simply shouldn't be there. As they enter realspace, they find themselves drifting at the edges of a massive fleet of ships, all of a completely alien design. It soon becomes clear that this is an invasion fleet, poised to strike at the galaxy, but when the heroes try to warn the government they find

that the fleet seems to have simply vanished. Over the course of several adventures, they follow a trail of sightings of this phantom fleet across the Outer Rim, and soon discover a frightening truth: the invasion has already begun. The invaders from the Unknown Regions have recruited many beings across the galaxy and have bribed them to sabotage planetary defenses across the Outer Rim. At the conclusion of the first act of the campaign, the invasion fleet launches attacks across the Outer Rim, and the heroes must quickly locate the saboteur on their own world in order to protect their planet from being invaded.

As the second act of the campaign opens, the invasion has begun, and countless worlds across the Outer Rim have fallen under the control of the invaders. Yet once the initial assault is over, the invaders seem to sit on their laurels. All space traffic and communications into, and out of, the captured worlds is cut off by the invaders. Weeks pass, and no further advancements are made. Since the heroes have been on the front of the invasion, they are tasked with infiltrating a captured world and finding out the next step in the invaders' plans. They do so, and spend several adventures infiltrating a captured world and insinuating themselves into the invaders' organization. Over time, the heroes realize that the invaders seem to lack any leadership at all, and at the climax of the second act they discover the truth: the invaders have no leader, for he, she or it was killed during the initial invasion. This fact has been kept from the invaders' forces by a cabal of officers, who fear that the invasion will fall apart if it becomes clear that their glorious leader is dead. As the heroes are about to reveal this fact to the galaxy, the invaders' leader miraculously reappears, and commands the invaders to launch a renewed assault against Mid-Rim worlds.

In the final act of the campaign, the heroes begin by discovering that the seemingly reborn leader is, in fact, a Clawdite imposter who was brought in by the cabal of conspirators. Worse, the Clawdite is a Black Sun Vigo, and now the invaders have one of the galaxy's most powerful criminal organizations on their side. With the invasion driving closer to the core every day, the heroes must find some way to reveal the Clawdite imposter and crush the spirit of the invasion. They find help in an unlikely place—a disgruntled Black Sun Vigo who doesn't want to kneel to invaders any more than he wanted to kneel to the galactic government. The heroes must recruit this Vigo, convince him to support their efforts, and then reveal the Clawdite imposter (likely by killing him and revealing the truth about his shapeshifting abilities).

The climax of the campaign comes shortly after the heroes make their revelation. As the invasion force begins to crumble under the knowledge that their sacred leader has died, the desperate cabal initiates one final parting shot against the galaxy. The mothership of the invasion fleet has been set on a hyperspace collision course with a major galactic metropolis (Coruscant, Empress Teta, Eriadu, Lianna, or Taris). The heroes have mere hours to stop the ship from slamming into Coruscant (even with planetary shields up, the death toll would be incredibly high just from fallout), and with that done the final threat to the galaxy from this invasion is put to rest.



CREATING VILLAINS OF INTRIGUE

The *Star Wars* universe is full of villains who play the game of intrigue like master dejarik players, pulling innumerable strings to shape the destiny of the galaxy to their own twisted agendas. Count Dooku masterfully manipulates the Separatists to act as pawns for the Sith Lord Darth Sidious. Prince Xizor carefully and studiously shapes the Black Sun into a personal empire that threatens that of the actual Empire.

When creating a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, the Gamemaster should spend time crafting the prominent villains. Most villains are able to hold their own against the heroes in combat, but a villain with considerably fewer levels than the heroes can still have access to sufficient influence, power, and resources to make the heroes' lives miserable. For example, the main villain of a campaign could be a child regent with only a few levels in the Noble class, but with a high Intelligence score, a full army of soldiers, and a coterie of spies to call upon.

Motivation

Determining the primary motivation of the villain goes a long way in determining how that villain can serve as an antagonist for the heroes. Is the villain a wealthy merchant who views competition as merely part of business, bereft of personal feelings? Did the heroes wrong the villain in some way, bringing shame and dishonor that must be avenged? Or is the villain driven by the influence of the dark side of the Force? A villain who regards the heroes as mere obstacles or annoyances can perhaps be bought off or negotiated with, but a villain driven by emotions might refuse to rest until the heroes' heads adorn the front of a luxury speeder.

Resources

The most effective villains are those with access to a large repository of resources, such as a personal army, vast family wealth, or powerful political clout. A wealthy or powerful villain has enough minions—typically droids, soldiers, or thugs—to send against the heroes, ensuring that they will have someone or something to fight when the game becomes too easy or the adventure gets too sluggish. However, as the heroes advance in level, the large number of low-level thugs required to make an encounter challenging can become unwieldy.

Beyond mere thugs, villains also have minions with superior skills and abilities, making them serious challenges on their own. Palpatine trains Darth Maul as his Sith apprentice, powerful enough to kill a Jedi master in his own right. Count Dooku directs the relentless Asajj Ventress to do his bidding. Darth Vader hires a crew of bounty hunters to hunt down the Rebels, with Boba Fett capturing Han Solo. Powerful and interesting minions can both distance the villain from danger and confuse the issue of who ultimately is operating behind the scenes. Setting up a few encounters in which the heroes must deal with a skilled minion without knowing his or her motivation is a great way to make your villain seem more mysterious and powerful.

Political power can be a serious problem for heroes, as adversaries frustrate the heroes' efforts with simple inconveniences such as docking fees or with greater threats, such as by branding them as traitors to the Republic. Although realistic, overuse of a villain's political or financial power can frustrate players who find that their heroes can never directly confront their enemy because of laws, denial of access to their funds, and the like. However, using this power occasionally can force the heroes to become creative when their usual avenues are denied. But *Star Wars* is about action, and no one wants to have his or her character spend the adventure going from bureaucrat to bureaucrat just to secure the proper documentation to leave the planet.

JEDI AS VILLAINS

Jedi are staunch defenders of liberty and dedicated to maintaining peace within the galaxy, so they are usually considered good guys. Jedi uphold ideals that are considered noble and rarely take sides. However, conventional wisdom can be turned on its head, making a Jedi the primary villain of your campaign. Jedi are not universally respected or loved throughout the galaxy. Some regular citizens consider the Jedi to be meddlers or mere muscle to enforce the Republic's corrupt policies.

This setup works best when the heroes are portraying antiheroes, as described in detail in *Scum and Villainy*. If the heroes' party consists of smugglers, mercenaries, con artists, and disgraced aristocracy, then Jedi might likely butt heads with the heroes' agenda. A Jedi sent on the trail of the heroes can be a challenging foe.

If the main villain of the campaign is a Jedi, then the heroes will be in a uniquely uncomfortable position. Perhaps the villain is teetering on the edge of slipping over to the dark side, or perhaps a Jedi hero is accused (rightly or not) of deeds consistent with the dark side. Part of the adventure might involve the Jedi hero attempting to clear his or her name, all the while avoiding capture by the Order he or she belongs to.

Methods

Once a villain's motives and resources are determined, then the methods that the villain employs come next. Is the villain a mastermind who prefers to sit behind layers of false fronts and minions, pulling on the strings of the heroes' destinies from afar? Or is the villain more aggressive, preferring to get up close and personal with the heroes? Once this aspect has been factored in with the villain's resources, adventures can seem to write themselves. For example, a relatively poor but charismatic and determined gang leader might not have a lot of credits to spend on bounty hunters or on bribing officials to make life difficult for the heroes, but she probably has access to dozens of loyal minions who can harass the heroes. On the other end of the power spectrum, a wealthy Senator can use political contacts to foil the heroes on many avenues, possibly using violence as a last resort.

Choosing your villain's classes can influence the methods used when confronting the heroes. A villain with many levels in soldier would probably use military-style tactics and resources against the heroes, while a scout villain might hunt the heroes as if they were prey in the wild, setting traps or shooting them from afar. Noble and scoundrel villains work the social angles, using influence and their charismatic personalities to turn allies into enemies or to set up the heroes in political ambushes. However, you do not have to determine a villain's methods solely by class. Playing against type can make truly memorable villains, such as a soldier who uses his clout in the Senate to make life miserable for the heroes or a noble who feels that only personal combat can avenge a transgression committed by the heroes.

CONTINGENCY PLANS

One crucial element when creating a villain—especially if that villain is a criminal mastermind—is determining how he or she handles the inevitable disruptions caused by the heroes' meddling. When creating adventures, break down the encounters and think ahead to the logical conclusions that might occur, just as the villain would. Taking into account possible failures as well as successes will keep your adventure from being derailed by the unexpected. The villain might have a vessel or escape pod ready to flee the scene if the situation goes wrong, or a patsy might be set up to take the fall if the heroes present the authorities with evidence leading to the villain's arrest. Just as generals on the battlefield must plan for defeat, so too must the villains of your *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign be prepared for setbacks.

For example, a villain plans to blackmail a politician into releasing the villain's main minion from a prison moon. However, the villain's plan is foiled if the heroes, after having heard about the villain's intentions, break into the prison themselves and kidnap the minion or leak the politician's corruption to the news media, making the blackmail attempt pointless. Realizing that the heroes might get to the politician before he does, the villain arranges for the politician to be assassinated, preventing the villain's plans from being exposed and diverting attention away from the plot to release the minion. Alternatively, if the heroes break the minion out on their own, then the minion directs the heroes to a hidden location for a prearranged ambush by the villain.

FIGHTING THE POWERS THAT BE

In most *Star Wars* roleplaying campaigns, the heroes' ultimate solution for dealing with a villain involves a climactic battle of blasters and lightsabers. In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, however, the consequences for such behavior can be severe.

The Repercussions of Heroism

In many *Star Wars* campaigns, the violent actions of the heroes are glossed over in the aftermath. For example, if the heroes bring a crime lord to justice, they receive their reward and move on to the next adventure, and no one asks any questions about the dozens of corpses left behind in the aftermath of the combat. In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, however, such events should not go unnoticed. The Gamemaster can add law enforcement into the mix, perhaps with an intense investigation afterward in which Sector Rangers question the heroes about several bystanders murdered in the confrontation. Alternatively, friends, relatives, or colleagues of the crime lord's servants might come looking for revenge against the heroes.

Heroes should consider the consequences of kicking in the door of the main villain and gunning him down, especially if he is an unarmed politician or other noncombatant. Heroes who disregard the law so blatantly might

find themselves under arrest or marked for bounty by the villain's constituency, corporation, or other affiliations. If the heroes continue to use violent means they could be labeled vigilantes. And although their motives might be pure, life will never be the same for the heroes if they become the targets of law-enforcement agencies, the Jedi Order, or hordes of bounty hunters.

Not every encounter or adventure should result in mass inquisitions. *Star Wars* is about action and heroism, not courtroom battles, but occasionally following up an adventure with a lot of questions from the authorities can send the heroes a signal about consequences. Use this feature to your advantage when making campaigns. If the heroes find themselves in hot water after completing an encounter, perhaps they then must clear their names or become more deeply entangled in layers of intrigue as their heroic deeds are instead twisted by the media into something horrific.

REMOVING THE VILLAIN

When building your *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, consider what might happen if and when the heroes kill the main villain sooner than you intend. After all, if your adventure hinges on a climactic showdown against the villain and the heroes shoot down his ship as he attempts to flee an early encounter, then you are left without a way to keep the adventure moving along. Here are some suggestions for dealing with the repercussions of a villain being removed from the picture earlier than anticipated.



SOMETIMES VILLAINS LIKE DARTH MAUL DIE TOO SOON.

Replacements

One way to keep an adventure on track after the unintended demise of the villain is to create a replacement. The logical choice is one of the villain's trusted minions who is privy to key plans and has a deep understanding of the layers of intrigue set in place. The downside, of course, is that minions are weaker than the villains they work for. So when that climactic battle occurs, you might need to adjust the replacement villain's statistics, increase the number of his or her minions, or add an additional element to make the encounter more difficult for the heroes.

Depending on the era, clone technology can be another solution for bringing the villain back into the campaign. For example, Emperor Palpatine returns as a clone after the destruction of the second Death Star. Of course, cloning is logical when the villain is powerful or wealthy enough to access such advanced technology. If your main villain is a petty warlord or young upstart politician, then cloning stretches credulity. Use this tactic sparingly because it dilutes the heroes' efforts to bring down their opponents, and it can be demoralizing, causing the heroes to wonder why they should even bother when the villain keeps coming back healthy and full of revenge.

Dealing with the Aftermath

If the heroes defeat the villain sooner than expected, you probably still have several unresolved plot threads that can occupy the heroes. The villain's trusted allies, contacts, and minions might continue to advance the cause or take it in a new direction, albeit with their own personal touches. Between gaming sessions the Gamemaster should consider how events would play out without the villain's involvement. Even with the villain's demise, secret weapons labs continue developing the ultimate weapon, assassins follow through on orders to kill their targets, and bribes and blackmail attempts continue as if nothing was amiss. Of course, the assassin expects someone to pay after the job, or the weapons researchers might decide to test the weapon on the intended target without approval. Each of these factors gives the heroes a significant amount of cleanup to do even after the death of the villain.

Another solution to the premature loss of a villain is to allow the heroes to revel in their success, moving them along on another, completely different encounter. Then, as they progress in the adventure, slowly reintroduce elements of the villain's scheme back into the scene. For example, after killing the villain in an early encounter, the heroes believe that the threat is over. The Gamemaster begins a new chapter completely unrelated to the previous storyline. After a few sessions, the heroes receive a cryptic note about "unfinished business" from one of the original villain's comrades, drawing them back into the intrigue that they thought was concluded.

THE JEDI COUNCIL CAN OFTEN PROVIDE AID AS WELL AS STAND
IN THE WAY OF A JEDI'S GOALS.



DESIGNING AN INTRIGUE ADVENTURE

So far, this chapter has discussed how to create intrigue campaigns in general and how to create villains to populate them. This section goes into more detail about how to create an adventure that is rife with intrigue and that fits in with the other concepts introduced in this book.

Most adventures contain some degree of intrigue. The heroes don't know who is behind the kidnapping of Wookiee slaves, or they stumble on plans for a secret battlestation. What separates an adventure based on intrigue from other adventures is that, from beginning to end, the entire purpose toward which the heroes are working is either a secret they must keep or a mystery they must unravel. Whether the heroes are proactive or reactive, or whether the adventure involves a lot of combat or very little, everything the heroes do is either part of a clandestine operation or is part of a plan to unravel a well-hidden secret.

From there, the adventure can progress like most others, with a few modifications. An intrigue-heavy adventure acts as a microcosm for the way the larger campaign plays out, and it uses many of the elements discussed earlier in the chapter. This section will construct the basic outline of an intrigue adventure, with an example of each element.

START WITH A SECRET

The core of an intrigue-based adventure is a secret. At its heart, an intrigue adventure should revolve around secrecy and protecting valuable knowledge. There are two major kinds of secrets that the heroes of an intrigue adventure must deal with: the secret objective, and the secret charge. A good secret, of either kind, on which an adventure can hang is more than just a passing bit of information; its revelation should have major repercussions not only on the heroes but also on the whole galaxy.

A secret objective is something that the heroes are trying to uncover. This could be a secret they know to exist—the true identity of the assassin that killed their Senator benefactor—or it could be a secret that they didn't even know existed beforehand. The latter kind of secret is often treated as a surprise twist or reveal at some point in the adventure; a good example of this secret twist is the revelation that Darth Vader is Luke's father at the end of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Luke was unaware that the secret existed, but once it was uncovered it radically altered the way that he saw the conflict between the Empire and the Rebellion, and forever changed his destiny.

A secret charge is a secret that the heroes have been given the opportunity to protect. Often, this secret is merely the secret of their actions. For example, if the heroes are planning to raid an Imperial weapons depot, they will want to keep their plans, and even their actions, secret in order to avoid drawing unnecessary attention. In an intrigue adventure where the heroes have a secret charge, their protection of that secret should be of the utmost importance. Regardless of whether or not their actions succeed or fail elsewhere, revelation of the secret they have been charged with should seem like a failure to them.

When coming up with the secret at the core of an intrigue adventure, use these simple guidelines:

- The secret should be something that has wide repercussions as a consequence of its revelation. Simple secrets don't make great adventure hooks.



THE EXISTENCE OF THE BLUE SHADOW VIRUS WAS A WELL-KEPT SECRET.

- Choose a secret that creates opportunities for dangerous situations. Discovering which Hutt crime lord hired the Senator's assassin can be dangerous; discovering who is spreading rumors about a local Moff probably isn't.
- The secret should be something the heroes care about. If they have no attachment to the Jedi Master who is secretly still advising the government on his home planet, the heroes won't be drawn into the adventure.
- The secret should be something that is not easily uncovered. Layers upon layers should separate the secret from its revelation. This goes for secret charges as much as secret objectives.

Example: The heroes have spent a few adventures finding the location of a secret weapons manufacturing facility where a Hutt crime lord is producing arms for a mercenary army. As agents of the Rebellion, they know that those weapons could prove extremely valuable to their cause, and plan to steal them. The basic secret of the adventure is the secret mission the heroes are about to undertake; if either the Empire or the Hutts discovered their secret plans, they would surely be ambushed and captured or killed.

PROVIDE AMPLE SKILL OPPORTUNITIES

Once you have the core of your adventure (its secret) in hand, you can begin constructing an adventure around it. Intrigue adventures usually provide players with lots of chances to use their skills in creative ways. While covert assassinations and other combat scenarios are certainly part of intrigue adventures, open violence is often too messy or too high profile to be an effective weapon in an intrigue campaign. Instead, you should try and focus on challenges that the heroes can use their skills to overcome, giving the players encouragement to do more than just go in, blasters blazing.

One of the best ways to design adventures that make heavy use of skills is to take a look at which skills the heroes are trained in and which ones they have Skill Focus feats for, and to design the challenges around those skills. Your heroes have invested valuable resources in obtaining those skills; let them use them. Likewise, don't be afraid to design challenges that cater toward lesser-used skills. Your soldier with a high Intelligence might have trained in Climb or Endurance, two skills that often see less use than Deception, Persuasion, or Use the Force. It's OK to construct situations where heroes with those skills can shine, even if they might seem a little out of place at first. Just because the heroes are infiltrating a party aboard a star yacht doesn't mean that those skills couldn't come into play. Maybe the soldier needs to climb up to a secret smuggling compartment high in the cargo hold, or forcibly hold a door open for several rounds while other heroes slip in, and then out, with whatever they came for.

Lastly, make it obvious when skill use could be a good solution. Many times, players can overlook the opportunities you set in front of them, and it's OK to offer suggestions during game play. When crafting your intrigue adventures, don't be afraid to put notes in your descriptions that highlight individual skills for use in that section.

Example: Raiding a Hutt weapons factory has to be more than smash-and-grab; the factory is well protected, and only authorized ships are allowed to land and offload supplies to the factory. The heroes will need to find someone who knows the security protocols (Gather Information, Perception), create false credentials or buy them (Deception, Persuasion), steal a cargo vessel destined for the factory (Pilot, Stealth), slice into the plant's security system to hide from sensors (Use Computer), and then reach a watchtower and disarm the guards there (Climb).

The Challenge of Investigations

When the concepts of secrets and skill use are thrown together in an adventure, it's tempting to fall back on the age-old investigation adventure. While this can be rewarding, there are a few pitfalls that you should be aware of before designing an entire adventure around investigation. First and foremost is to not overuse the investigation adventure; if the heroes spend every adventure going through the same kind of investigatory routine, they are quickly going to get bored with investigations as a whole. Setting a mystery in front of the heroes and turning them loose can be fun every once in a while, but over time the players might feel like they are playing "find the plot hook" every adventure.

When you do decide to create an investigation-based adventure, follow the advice about providing skill opportunities, above, and make sure that a wide swathe of skills are available as solutions. Although it's tempting to say that investigations are all about Deception, Gather Information, Perception, and Persuasion, there can be much more to investigations than that. Using skill challenges (see Chapter 2) is a good way to encourage your players to be proactive during an investigation, as it can help them see tangible results even when using unorthodox skills.

Lastly, failing a skill check or two should never derail the entire adventure. If your players fail to persuade the Imperial officer to let them see the prisoner in the brig, make sure there are other ways for them to get in and get the information they need from that prisoner. Whenever your adventure depends on the heroes learning something through investigation, make sure there are multiple ways that they can get the information they need. One failed Gather Information check shouldn't leave the heroes clueless. Even in failure, the players should be directed toward another solution. Continuing the example above, when the officer rebuffs the heroes, perhaps the scout sees on a monitor console behind the officer that there is an air duct leading into the prisoner's cell that the scoundrel might be able to sneak through.

PUT THE HEROES IN DANGER

So far, a lot has been said about secrets and skills, but perhaps the most important part of an intrigue adventure is the sense of danger. A secret is just a piece of information that the heroes don't know...until there is danger involved. When danger surrounds a secret, it makes the secret more exciting, builds tension, and can increase the heroes' desire to pursue that secret.

Putting the heroes in danger doesn't always mean pointing a blaster at them (although it can). The heroes might be in danger of being revealed as Rebel agents working undercover on a Core world; although that would eventually bring more direct danger (stormtroopers kicking down the door), the simple threat of Imperial reprisals is enough to raise the tension during an adventure. Threats to the heroes should always be visible and present. Otherwise, the PCs might not even be aware of the danger they face, which drains the tension out of the situation. The heroes should know that they are in danger, and they should know that the danger is directly tied to the secrets they are trying to uncover or protect.

Example: Besides the obvious danger that they face when infiltrating the weapons factory, the heroes discover that they are not the first ones to try and raid the Hutt factory. A group of mercenaries tried the same thing and were slaughtered when they arrived. It turns out the mercenaries were betrayed by one of the very people that provided them with information or with help in making it to the manufacturing facility. The heroes now have to figure out who the traitor is before they launch their own attack, balancing their need for help against the knowledge that someone might betray them.

Intriguing Combat

One of the easiest ways to throw some danger into an intrigue adventures is with combat. However, a good combat encounter in an intrigue adventure has more going on than simply defeating the enemy. When designing combat encounters for intrigue adventures, keep in mind that other objectives are at hand. When stormtroopers kick down the door, the heroes have to do more than defeat them; they have to defeat them, stop them from calling for help on the comlink, and keep witnesses from calling the Imperial garrison to report the firefight. Likewise, when the heroes finally make their way into the weapons manufacturing facility, they have to do more than just kill the guards; their objectives include stealing weapons as well as hiding their own identities. After all, it does them little good to pull off the theft, only to be pursued by bounty hunters hired for reprisal.

Combat should be used to reinforce the danger of an adventure, but it can also move the plot forward. Perhaps the heroes need to dispose of a local Moff—quietly—before he can order the execution of an informant carrying critical information. Combat in an intrigue adventure need not be flashy or on a massive scale; a short skirmish with Czerka Corporation enforcers in the lobby of a high-rise on Taris can be just as exciting as a starfighter dogfight, especially if the heroes have to keep the enforcers from sounding the alarm. Remember, when adding tension to the adventure via combat,

to make sure to give the heroes plenty of chances to succeed in ways that keeps the adventure moving forward. Failing in a combat encounter should be like failing a skill check; even in failure, another way of accomplishing the heroes' goal should be revealed.

TWISTS AND REVELATIONS

As the adventure begins to draw to a close, it becomes time for secrets to be revealed. As with all adventures in a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, there are layers within layers within layers of secrets, and as the adventure progresses some secrets should be revealed, while others should turn out to be quite different from what the heroes expected. It's important to let the players feel like they are uncovering critical information, or succeeding at protecting it, in tangible ways. Even within the context of a single adventure, there should be moments of revelation: the heroes discover that the bartender at the cantina has been selling secrets to the Hutts, or the party's slicer finally uncovers the secret access codes that will allow them to bypass automated security satellites. These particular revelations don't open up the plot of the entire adventure, but they do amount to progress, which is very important during an adventure involving a lot of secrets.

Likewise, an unexpected twist, when used judiciously, can not only bring the plot forward but also alter the way the heroes perceive the situation. However, there is a fine art to introducing a twist, and too blunt or too severe a twist can be jarring to the players. A twist in an adventure should be just believable enough that the players buy it, but it should also be shocking. The twist in *The Empire Strikes Back* when Lando betrays the heroes is shocking, because he is likable and an old friend of Han's, but believable thanks to Leia's suspicion and the clear power that Darth Vader has over him. When crafting a twist, look for places where story could conceivably go, and then eliminate any of the ones that seem too obvious. What you're left with is a series of twists that are believable, yet likely won't be expected.

Example: Part of the premise of the adventure is that the Hutts are hiding their stockpile of weapons from the Empire, which is one reason why it is shrouded in so much secrecy. A good twist for this adventure would be that the Empire, or rather a powerful figure within the Empire, actually knows about the Hutt weapons plant and is having the weapons crafted for a private army of his or her own. Then, when the heroes arrive, they face not only thugs working for the Hutts, but small groups of well-trained Imperial forces.

ONE DOOR CLOSSES, TWO DOORS OPEN

When the adventure is finally done and the heroes have achieved their goals, there is one more important technique that you should use when wrapping up the adventure. Each adventure will answer some questions, or allow the heroes to keep their own secrets safe, but after each success two (or more) secrets should be introduced. Although eventually you'll need to reveal all of these secrets, a successful intrigue adventure leaves the heroes wanting

to know more. Moreover, it helps lend credence to the idea that nothing is ever as simple as it seems, and that there are always wheels within wheels in any intrigue-based campaign.

The kinds of secrets that you might introduce can be either secret objectives or secret charges, and most will set the stage for subsequent intrigue adventures. However, these need not always be adventure hooks: Some of the questions these secrets raise might be little more than insights into the backgrounds of the heroes' allies, or questions about events that, at the time, seemed simple and straightforward. For example, at the conclusion of an investigation adventure, the heroes have discovered the information they were looking for; at the last minute, however, they discovered that their enemy for that adventure was only a pawn in someone else's scheme. Who that enemy served, and what the larger scheme is, can be the basis for future adventures. Alternately, this revelation can be used not to expose a larger plot on behalf of their enemies, but to make the heroes question the allies and benefactors who put them on the trail in the first place.

Example: To conclude our sample adventure, the heroes eventually make it to the weapons factory, defeat the Hutt's thugs and the Imperial forces alike, and make off with the contraband with the secret of their identities intact. However, they discover two new mysteries in the process. First, they learn that someone on the inside disabled the factory's communications system, keeping it from calling for help; someone wanted the heroes to succeed, but who? Second, they learn that the powerful Imperial agent that commissioned the weapons does not actually exist; someone fabricated the existence of a Moff, but for what purpose?

THE ART OF INDIRECTION

One way to really alter the feel of an intrigue-based campaign is to always keep in mind that, when it comes to secrets and plots, nothing is ever direct and to the point. Enemies come at you from odd angles, allies never tell you everything they know, and simple acts have wide-ranging repercussions. A *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign is all about using indirect methods to accomplish goals, because indirect methods are usually best for maintaining secrecy. When knowledge is power, any method that preserves knowledge—or creates false information—can be the difference between being powerful and being powerless.

Below, you will find some general advice on creating situations where indirect methods come into play. Like the section on building campaigns, villains, and adventures above, this section is intended to provide some basic guidelines for creating interesting events that occur in your campaign. Think of these suggestions as directions for constructing an individual scene within an adventure. Mixing and matching the advice below can produce memorable sequences that reinforce many of the themes of a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign.

ENEMIES TARGET THE INNOCENT

It is almost a given that the heroes' enemies won't come directly at them when it's time to strike, at least not at first. Enemies in an intrigue-heavy campaign know better than to try and take the heroes on with direct attacks and violence; savvy heroes will overcome such challenges quickly. Instead, such enemies try to hit the heroes where they are most vulnerable: through their allies. While a hero walks around in power armor or wields a lightsaber with amazing skill, he or she has little control over the lives of allies or over the lives of innocents. An opponent in an intrigue adventure will likely try to target those who can't defend themselves, to use as leverage against the heroes. The bounty hunter doesn't attack the heroes; he kidnaps their mentor and holds her hostage, offering to trade her life in exchange for turning over one of the heroes' party.

This kind of indirect attack works on almost any scale. Grand Moff Tarkin, a master of intrigue, uses this technique with Princess Leia to try and get her to reveal the location of the Rebel base: He knows his threats against her do no good, so he threatens Alderaan with the Death Star instead. The threats do not always have to be of physical violence, either. A powerful corporate executive might threaten to bring financial ruin to the heroes' benefactor, or an unscrupulous Senator's aide might threaten to reveal that Senator's dark past on the eve of a critical vote. For the most part, villains use these indirect attacks to get the heroes to do something, or to not do something, that the villain wants.

Occasionally, the villain strikes out at the innocent or the heroes' allies as a reprisal for the heroes' actions. This can be used as a deterrent against future actions by the heroes, or simply to reinforce the fact that the villain is, in fact, their enemy.



DORME IS JUST ONE OF THE INNOCENTS TARGETED BY THE QUEEN'S ENEMIES.

PROXIES, LIAISONS, AND MASKS

It is common for those involved in heavy intrigue to keep their identities and the identities of their allies a secret. Anonymity ensures security, and security is something everyone in this kind of adventure should be aware of. In a *Galaxy of Intrigue* campaign, it is common practice for both allies and villains to make use of proxies and liaisons during contact with the heroes. The heroes might not meet a mysterious benefactor, but instead deal only with a droid sent in his stead. An informant might refuse to come herself, instead sending a street urchin to deliver a message to the heroes. Enemies will often refuse to involve themselves in schemes personally, instead using pawns to direct their operations from a distance.

Disguises are equally common among those with secrets to keep. Exposing one's true identity is always a risk, and one that few with important secrets are willing to take. The *Star Wars* setting offers ample opportunities for such indirect contact. Villains can appear as holograms. Crime lords can send protocol droids to deal with the heroes, while others might hire shapechanging Clawdites to impersonate them, never making contact directly. Regardless of the actual method, allies and villains alike should erect barriers between themselves and the heroes, making extensive use of both proxies and technology to keep at a distance.

TRUST DOESN'T COME EASY

Much of the above advice on proxies and masks is a result of trust issues. When it comes to the intrigues of the galaxy, there is little room for trust. Trust often leads to betrayal, which can put months or even years of hard work to ruin. It should come as no surprise after a while that not even the heroes' allies will trust them, and in turn the heroes shouldn't give out their trust easily. Trust, in an intrigue-heavy campaign, is something that should be won, and winning trust isn't easy. It's important to remind the players that their allies have a hard time trusting them; if the heroes sense insecurity in their allies, it can help make those allies seem more real, and likewise make the heroes' own lack of trust seem less like paranoia and more like good tactics.

This is one area where the line you must walk as a GM is very fine. If the allies show too little trust in the heroes, the heroes might lose interest in working with them. The heroes should see some progress in earning the trust of their allies; each time they successfully complete an adventure, for example, they earn a bit more trust, and their next interaction with a certain ally should reflect that. The ally might be more forthcoming on details, or might finally offer to meet them in person. Building trust takes time, but the heroes should feel as though they are actually building it and making progress in their relationships.

DECOYS AND MISDIRECTION

A favorite tactic of those steeped in intrigue is to let others do the dirty work. Sending your own agents in to complete a job is all well and good, but the preferable solution is to convince someone else to do it for you. Not only is this typically cheaper, it also means fewer ties between the people performing the mission and those that set it into motion. Although a benefactor that manipulates the unwitting heroes into doing his or her bidding might be cliché, there are also other ways that decoys can be used in an intrigue campaign. Villains might use this tactic on others among the heroes' enemies, making the heroes think that an attack came from one source when the truth is that the villain caused it. Similarly, a villain might dupe one of the heroes' allies into doing his or her bidding. Introducing an aspect of betrayal, even unwitting betrayal, into the game is a way of creating greater tension.

At some point, though, a villain has to take direct action in order to further his or her goals. When this happens, the best weapon in the schemer's arsenal is misdirection. Even if a villain convinces someone else to do the dirty work, that villain will still need to exercise cunning to keep the heroes from tracing the deeds back to him or her. This is something that anyone skilled in the art of subterfuge knows: One of the best ways to hide your trail is to make sure that there is a trail leading somewhere else. Enemies might lay down false clues to lead the heroes (and others) away from their trail, but be careful with using this tactic too much. In a roleplaying game, the players rely on the Gamemaster for much of their information, and if that information turns out to be a false trail or a red herring too often, the players will begin to second-guess everything the Gamemaster says.

THE ART OF BEING SEEN

Tied to the concept of misdirection, the art of being seen refers to a technique where one provides false information simply by making it appear as though one thing has happened, when it truly hasn't. A favorite tactic of those with exceptionally good resources at their disposal, this kind of deception often relies on disguise, forgery, and other similar techniques to create a scene that is meant to be witnessed, either by the heroes or by others. One of the things that make a deception like this so effective is that these are not just rumors being whispered in dark cantinas; the witnesses see and hear these things themselves.

For example, the heroes have had a Falleen crime lord in their sights for a long time, and have become a thorn in his side. No longer able to operate without the heroes watching his every move, the Falleen puts a plan into motion to create a scene that the heroes are intended to witness. The crime lord offers to turn himself in to them, and arranges a meeting place where the deal can go down. As he is turning himself in, a crazed woman leaps out of a nearby crowd and guns him down, claiming to be a widow of a man the crime lord has executed. The Falleen lies dead before the heroes, and now they no longer have to worry about him.

Or do they? Perhaps the woman was a plant, and the whole scene was staged. Maybe the Falleen turning himself over was a replica droid, or a shapechanger, or a talented con artist. Maybe the Falleen was wearing armor and only meant to look dead, and when carted off to the morgue he stops playing dead and slips away unseen. Now, because the heroes think he is dead, the crime lord is free to act without their interference. The Falleen created a deception that he wanted to be seen, planting false information that is less likely to be scrutinized because the heroes saw it firsthand.

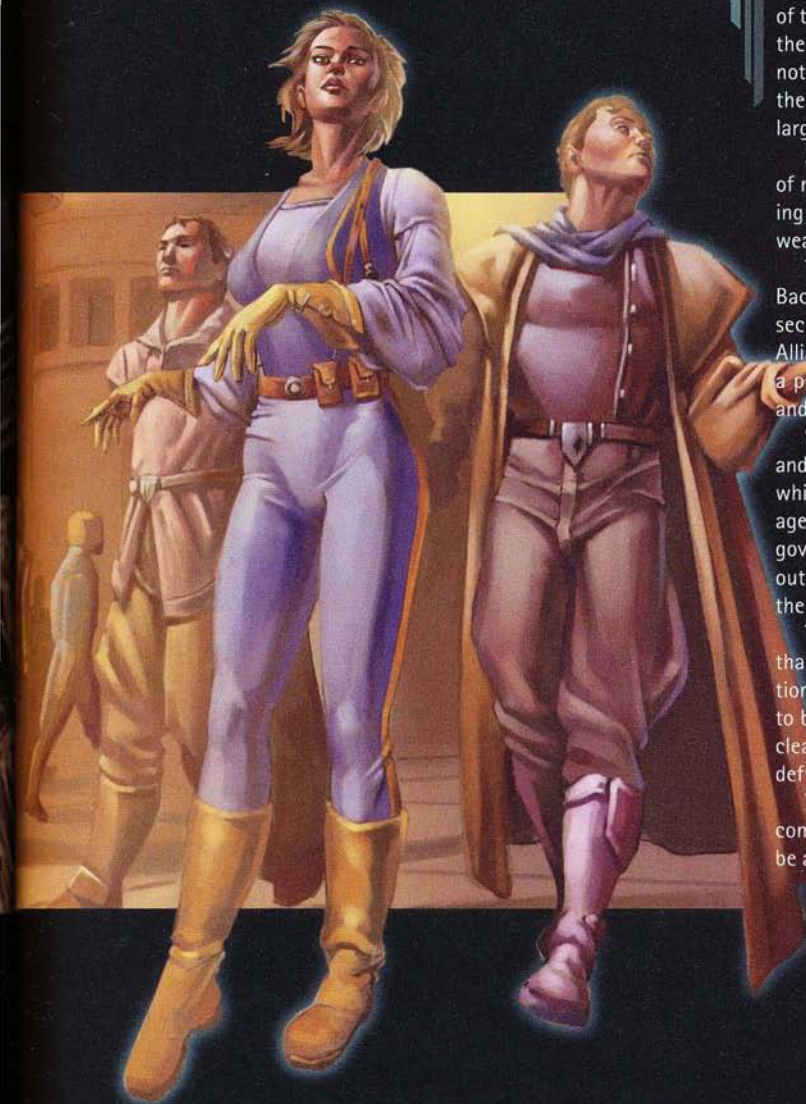
CLASHING FACTIONS

One final way to flesh out the events in your intrigue adventures is to understand the maxim that while manipulating individuals is good, manipulating factions is better. The entire concept of noble houses jockeying for position is based around this principle, and it is one that anyone with any skill in intrigue knows. It is for this reason that most politicians and powerful people tend to ignore the individual and instead try to maneuver large organizations into doing what they want. It's not just a matter of scale, but a matter of effectiveness; organizations are made up of individuals, and by convincing an organization to act in one way, it becomes easier to manipulate the individuals associated with the organization into acting along the same lines.

On a more practical level, this means that the enemies the heroes face aren't just going to be content with dealing with the heroes' small group, and instead will try to target any larger factions the heroes are a part of or are allied with. If the heroes are members of the Jedi Order, for example, their enemies will attempt to trick not just the heroes but the entire Order into taking action or into indecision. Although larger organizations are more difficult to manipulate, that won't stop the heroes' enemies from trying. If an enemy can pit one faction against another, that becomes the ultimate misdirection. To continue the example above, the villain might fabricate evidence that a crime syndicate is secretly being run by a resurgent Sith Order, pitting the Jedi Order against the crime syndicate while the villain continues to make his own plans, now free of the heroes' scrutiny while they are engaged in the faction conflict the villain manufactured.

CHAPTER V FACTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS





In the *Star Wars* galaxy, war is not always obvious and in the open. While the skies are full of fighters and blaster reports echo in the streets, more subtle combatants watch from the shadows. A Rebel deep within the ranks of the Imperial Army can do as much for the war effort as a fighter pilot on the front line. In fact, she might do more than the pilot, because if she does not "lose" a report from her Imperial Intelligence counterpart inserted into the staff of Admiral Ackbar, the pilot could be blown to pieces by a much larger, much better prepared force guarding the convoy he is sent to raid.

As the Empire and the Alliance struggle for control of the galaxy, leaders of noble houses curry favor with one side or the other, all the while hedging their bets. No matter which side wins, the nobles plan to retain their wealth and power.

The same is true in the boardrooms of the galactic megacorporations. Back room talks are organized with those who have the Emperor's ear, while security operatives are dispatched to either befriend or defend against the Alliance. The companies exist to supply the galaxy with goods and to turn a profit, and they need to protect their ability to do this during both war and peace.

Small stellar nations on the Empire's borders, such as those of the Chiss and the Hapans, need to secure their safety during and after the conflict. And while Imperial troops and Alliance soldiers blast away at each other, double agents, corporate spies, and emissaries from noble houses and independent governments whisper to one another and exchange information in their out-of-the-way corners. War in the shadows can be every bit as exciting as the one being waged in the open.

This chapter presents organizations that embody some of the intrigues that can unfold in a *Star Wars* campaign. The members of those organizations can be the heroes' friends, foes, or both, depending on the objectives to be achieved. Although most parts of the Empire and the Alliance are as clearly contrasted as black and white, many of the groups in this chapter defy such easy categorization.

They say to keep your friends close and your enemies closer. When it comes to the organizations and people in this chapter, the heroes might not be able to tell the difference.

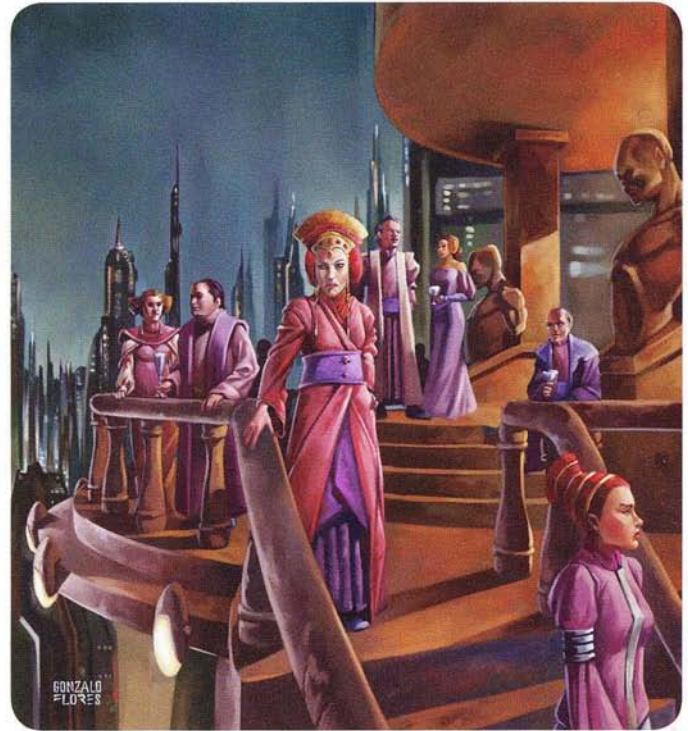
CORE WORLD NOBLES

Core World nobles are born and die in the lap of luxury, spending their days surrounded by fabulous wealth and organizing their years around festival days and key social events that they attend so that they can be seen by commoners and outshine their peers. Some of these nobles serve with distinction as officers in the military, some have successful political careers, and a few leave their marks on history as part of the Jedi Order. However, most nobles are dabblers and dilettantes who focus more on fashion and high society gossip than on any form of career or real work. Few Core World nobles are actively involved in business affairs. Instead, their wealth is derived mostly from holdings and investments established during colonization booms in previous ages of the galaxy, and it is managed by retainers whose families have served the noble houses for generations.

Whether they hail from Alderaan, Coruscant, Ralltiir, or any other Core systems listed in the ancient Registry of Noble Houses, Core World nobles are the very definition of the idle super-rich, and they go to great lengths to display their wealth. They travel set circuits, hosting and attending lavish parties and balls where their main objective is to upstage their fellow nobles.

Even when rendered relatively destitute—a fate that befalls a number of Core World noble families whose holdings are damaged or destroyed by galaxywide conflict—they keep up their extravagant lifestyles for as long as possible, even if it means the next generation of the family will have to live in poverty. Of course, “poverty” to a Core World noble is what most galactic citizens would define as “wealthy.” It usually takes two or three generations for a family to fully exhaust its riches, and before that happens, it often manages to recover, perhaps by looking to other noble families for financial infusions through arranged marriages or even for help in securing honest work. Corulag’s House Korden has been known to save noble houses teetering on the brink of ruin by forcing a work ethic on them. Members of House Korden are rare among Core World nobles in that they remain involved in the businesses that were the foundation of the lofty social status they currently enjoy.

As a whole, the Core World nobles are a frivolous bunch that are disconnected from the day-to-day affairs of the galaxy yet believe that their rank in society makes them superior to other beings. Their greatest concerns revolve around being invited to the right parties, repaying social snubs in kind, and putting upstarts and social climbers in their places. (Few things annoy a Core World noble more than the notion that the so-called nobles of the Tapani Sector, the self-declared Lords of the Expanse, are close to being their equals. Nor can they stand it when someone thinks that a member of the Tagge family is a Core World noble just because he or she has Palpatine’s favor and a hereditary title of baron.)



The arrogance of Core World nobles leads them to be taken in easily by fads and swept up in political causes that might prove detrimental to their own best interests in the long run. A prime example of this manipulation occurs when Emperor Palpatine gains the support of major families in the Registry by blaming aliens for the financial devastation of the Clone Wars (which causes many of the social season’s parties to be scaled back) or by giving the nobles positions in his government that sound important but that are ultimately meaningless. The real intelligence officers and politicians of the New Order consider the Core World nobles to be clowns. But Emperor Palpatine furthers the illusion of their significance by tasking them with rooting out Rebel sympathizers among the nobles, rewarding them for betraying their own by giving them the assets seized from the accused. Thus, many families, basking in the false impression of power and respect, assist Emperor Palpatine in strengthening his hold on the galaxy. By the time the more intelligent among them become aware of their mistake, most are too fearful of losing their wealth and status to act.

Although their reputation for disconnected frivolity is a drawback for most Core World nobles, the more cunning members of the families exploit this image so that they are underestimated. Over the centuries, some of the galaxy's greatest corporate spies, most successful art thieves, and most celebrated Rebel intelligence agents pose as empty-headed Core World nobles to hide their true natures and activities.

GOALS

As a group, Core World nobles want little more than to enjoy themselves, their wealth, and the adoration of their peers and the lesser beings they happen to pass on the way to parties. At the same time, they strive to outshine other nobles so that they will be noticed, gaining the attention they crave. To do this, they are always seen in the most cutting-edge fashions or the most expensive and opulent versions of formal wear or traditional garb. They also attempt to appear to be more generous than their peers, and if one noble is heard to be funding a home for wayward Wroonian females, another will soon start a university for them.

While the Core World nobles strive to be the brightest stars among their peers, they also work to tarnish the images of potential rivals. They are particularly fierce when targeting anyone not of noble rank who appears to be stealing their limelight or otherwise encroaching on their sphere of existence.

METHODS

Core World nobles abhor violence and most forms of direct confrontation. They deal in whispered half-truths and lies intended to undermine and embarrass rivals. If rumor and innuendo fail to stop a competitor, the nobles have their retainers secure hirelings that will take more direct action. A Core World noble is not above blackmailing a rival into throwing a race or spending thousands of credits to steal the design of a gown for the next big ball.

When Core World nobles enter politics or military service, they employ the same underhanded and duplicitous methods, resulting in careers that are either very short or very long and corrupt. Political nobles have been known to force rival houses into exile by skillfully applying pressure and by fabricating evidence of treason. Such scheming is especially common in the early days of Palpatine's Empire. Much of the Alliance's initial funding comes from Core World nobles who were ousted and hope to regain their place in society.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

With lineages so ancient that their family names are carved in dead languages on the foundation stones of long-lost cities, some Core World nobles legitimately can claim that their ancestors witnessed the birth of the Jedi Order or the formation of the Old Republic.

Thrackan Sal-Solo

A descendent of ancient Corellian royalty, Thrackan Sal-Solo is raised in a noble house on the verge of exhausting its last credit. His mother schools him in the traditions and habits of Core World nobles, and his bearing serves him well. Despite his impoverished state, Sal-Solo's grace and heritage land him a good position in the Imperial Navy, and he ends up an important player in Corellian politics, eventually becoming the head of state. Unfortunately, he is a virulent speciesist and launches genocidal attempts to drive aliens off the world of Corellia. He is the cousin of Han Solo and has always felt great shame over that association.

Finis Valorum

For 30 generations, House Valorum involves itself in Old Republic politics, concerned mostly with securing funding for arts projects and seeing that the central galactic government establishes some form of educational standards in the systems it governs. Finis Valorum rises through the Senate and eventually becomes Chancellor of the Republic. He is an honorable man with a good heart, but he is too idealistic to succeed in the position. The Tarkin family manipulates him early in his reign, and Palpatine ultimately drives him from office in disgrace during events that lead to the Clone Wars.

USING CORE WORLD NOBLES

Core World nobles make great patrons for a party of characters who are just starting out. They can also be used to show heroes that looks can be deceiving. For example, the heroes might be cajoled by their patron into performing a silly bit of sabotage against a gown that a rival noble plans to wear at a ball the following night, only to discover that the rival is secretly a Rebel agent or a master thief. The heroes then must decide whether to switch allegiances, become targets, or turn the rival in to the proper authorities.

DROID EQUALITY FOUNDATION

For as long as droids have existed, some individuals have seen these mechanical beings not as tools, but as fellow sentients that deserve the respect accorded to all intelligent species. Throughout the millennia, various groups have addressed the concerns of droids, although most were laughed off as naive idealists. However, as droid technology advances, the distinction between a sentient droid and a nonsentient droid becomes murkier, making it more difficult to argue against giving droids the rights enjoyed by other intelligent lifeforms.



DROID EQUALITY FOUNDATION

The Droid Equality Foundation is one of the largest, most vocal, and most powerful organizations in the galaxy to promote the cause of droids' rights. However, behind its appearance of altruism lies a dark secret—the current head of the foundation, Jolor Oron, is in fact a replica droid whose ultimate purpose is the complete destruction of droids throughout the galaxy. Programmed long ago by a brilliant technician with a serious grudge against droids, Jolor publicly advocates for peace and integration while covertly plotting to poison galactic opinion toward droids.

GOALS

The apparent goal of the Droid Equality Foundation is the emancipation of droids, raising their status from that of mere tools to that of sentient beings, with all the rights that living creatures possess. The foundation views the shackles of the restraining bolt and droid caller as symbols of oppression, and it works with sympathetic groups and individuals to help free droids from this plight. However, the foundation's true purpose is to stir up public resentment of droids so that they are seen as threats (as many droids proved to be during the Clone Wars). The foundation tries to spotlight legal disputes to draw awareness to the droid situation and to secretly nurture bias and bigotry toward these mechanical beings. It spreads reports of droids rebelling against their masters—exaggerating or fabricating details about bloody revolts—to foster fear and suspicion.

METHODS

The Droid Equality Foundation is an outspoken group that lobbies governments to pass initiatives to enhance the status of droids, and it manipulates the media to spark debate on the plight of droids. However, change is slow to come, and foundation members frequently organize huge protests and strikes on planets that have large droid work forces. Smaller covert cells of the foundation take more extreme steps, including sabotaging droid manufacturing facilities, assassinating enemies, and encouraging the wholesale revolt of droids. Through it all, the foundation strives to present a noble face to the public while working toward its true goal.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

The Droid Equality Foundation is an immense organization that is spread thinly across the galaxy and includes members with many different points of view.

Jolor Oron

Jolor Oron, the current head of the Droid Equality Foundation, exhibits a calm, cool demeanor as he preaches peace, tolerance, and understanding between droids and other beings. Jolor appears to be a tall, slender near-Human from a remarkably long-lived species that is thought to be sparse in population. In reality, Jolor is a nearly flawless replica droid with a highly advanced heuristic processor. Modified long ago by a brilliant technician whose family was killed by Separatist droids during the Clone Wars, Jolor became a weapon against droids. His purpose is to slowly change the galaxy's opinion on droids until, eventually, they are completely eliminated. Beneath Jolor's charismatic personality lies code designed to help bring about the destruction of all droids. Jolor understands his purpose and accepts the irony of the situation with the cold logic that only droids possess.

T-215 ("Toowon")

T-215, known as "Toowon," is an ancient CZ-Series secretary droid with a serious chip on its shoulder. Considered to be a dangerous radical by most authority figures, Toowon espouses the belief that droids should break the shackles of slavery and ownership imposed on them by organic sentients. Toowon moves from droid factories to sector palaces, stirring up rebellion wherever it goes. It is aggressive and abrasive in conversation, but remarkably persuasive in its arguments. Many critics of the Droid Equality Foundation point to Toowon as a prime example of why droids should not be granted full rights, although Jolor defends Toowon's behavior as a cautionary tale of what happens when a group is oppressed by the masses. All manner of uprisings, strikes, and industrial sabotage have been pinned on Toowon's metal shoulders, but so far, no one has been able to gather sufficient hard evidence of illegal activities. The foundation's army of lawyers and lobbyists works hard to keep it this way, much to the dismay of the organization's detractors.

A7-E3PO ("Aysev")

The protocol droid A7-E3PO (known as "Aysev") serves as the Droid Equality Foundation's voice of reason and patience. It speaks for Jolor Oron when he is not available and sometimes is sent as a representative in its own right. Aysev lacks the fussiness found in many protocol droids and projects a soothing personality with an uncanny ability to shift the attitudes of others during debates. Aysev is a counterpoint to Toowon's radical (and potentially dangerous) creed but is quick to defend the passion of its "brother" for the cause. Aysev travels the galaxy to spread the beliefs of the Droid Equality Foundation and can be found in courts, corporate headquarters, the Galactic Senate, and other governmental bodies, lobbying on behalf of the organi-

zation. Aysev possesses a secret, however—it is aware of Jolor's true plan. The protocol droid has been reprogrammed by its leader to exhibit utmost loyalty, even though the foundation's real goal works against the interests of all droids, including Aysev.

Kiyr Gir'sku

Kiyr Gir'sku serves as the second most prominent "soft skin" in the organization, behind Jolor Oron. Kiyr, a Bothan noble, is a master litigator who takes on the largest and potentially most explosive cases in the courts of the galaxy, using her media savvy and flamboyant personality to create a circus on HoloNet feeds. Sadly, Kiyr is ignorant of the foundation's true purpose and is viewed by Jolor as merely a tool to be exploited.

USING THE DROID EQUALITY FOUNDATION

The Droid Equality Foundation functions as a specialty organization that possesses a narrow focus but has broad implications for a *Star Wars* campaign. Droids are everywhere, and the Gamemaster could seed the background with reports of droids going on strike, businesses shutting down due to droid inactivity, fights between droids and organic beings, or even riots in the streets. The foundation could be in the forefront or the background, adding an air of intrigue and ulterior motives to seemingly unrelated events. Heroes with a sympathetic attitude toward droids might be targeted by antidroid activists, corporations, or government groups that lump the characters (intentionally or otherwise) in with the foundation, which is viewed as merely misguided by some and as dangerous by others.

If any of the heroes are droids, the Droid Equality Foundation can help them cut through the red tape regarding droid/owner regulations and responsibilities or act as legal counsel for heroes who run afoul of the law. In places where droids have no rights whatsoever, the intervention of the foundation can keep them from being systematically dismantled as a result of a transgression or a misunderstanding. The foundation also serves as a way to provide heroes with "unattached" droids that are looking for their places in the galaxy. By proving their independence, individuality, and usefulness, adventuring droids help to advance the belief that droids should be granted the same rights as other sentient beings.

If the heroes catch wind of the Droid Equality Foundation's true purpose, they earn the group's wrath. Since public sentiment about droids is already rather calcified, the heroes might find that authority figures consider their discovery to be little more than conspiracy theory claptrap. The foundation's inner circle spends a great deal of time monitoring news feeds that come close to revealing the truth, spreading lies and counter-rumors, and ruining the reputations of their opponents. Particularly careless heroes might even face an assault by the foundation's little-known assassination division.

THE FIREBIRD SOCIETY

Until the Imperial period, the Firebird Society is a harmless organization devoted to providing networking support and recognition for female military officers. As with so many other parts of galactic civilization, it becomes something more sinister when touched by Emperor Palpatine's shadow.

Founded on the Core World of Lianna 2,000 years ago, the Firebird Society is initially created as an exclusive club for females who achieve top status as fighter pilots in the Lianna military academy. They serve as "wingmates" for one another as they rise through the ranks of the military and as mentors for similarly talented women who follow in their engine wash.

As the centuries pass, the Firebird Society achieves its goals and transcends its roots by transforming into an organization with a far less restrictive membership requirement. Chapters of the Firebird Society start appearing at military academies throughout the galaxy and in all branches of the armed services. Membership remains exclusive to females, and a candidate has to be nominated by two members in good standing, one of whom must produce the Firebird Society pin for the newcomer. Members also have to be dedicated to upholding the highest standards in military traditions and to defending their sisters-in-arms and the Republic in general. In some parts of space, members of the Firebird Society perform so well on the field of battle that the group becomes a semiofficial organization, with members being granted permission by the High Command to wear their Firebird pins on their dress uniforms. Some of the most highly decorated pilots and officers who fight alongside the Jedi during the Freedon Nadd Uprising are Firebirds.

As Palpatine's New Order gains in strength, it brings more than political change and rank speciesism to the structure of the galactic military. Sexism bordering on misogyny becomes common in the highest ranks of all military branches, and soon only the most exceptionally talented women (or those from the wealthiest and most powerful noble or ancient military families) are able to rise above the rank of major in the Army or the rank of commander in the Navy.

When Major General Tessala Corvae gets fed up with the situation, the Firebird Society becomes home to a secret order dedicated to striking back at those who would deny rightful opportunities to female officers. Under her leadership, this subgroup uses any means necessary to punish military officers who stand in their way, short of betraying the Empire to the Rebels. Members engage in blackmail and vigilante attacks against corrupt officials and suspected Alliance agents alike. At its height, the secret Firebird Society has over 200 members and is well equipped with misappropriated Imperial military hardware.

Eventually, Corvae's Firebirds become so successful that they are targeted by the intelligence organizations of both the Alliance and the Empire. Although both sides capture some members, the Firebirds remain unfailingly loyal to the sisterhood, and the organization remains intact and mostly hidden.

When Ysanne Isard takes control of Imperial Intelligence following Palpatine's fall, Corvae offers the services of her group. Isard is impressed with the Society's record, and she promotes many members to key, high-level military posts while keeping others working covertly as her eyes and ears within Imperial ranks.

The Firebird Society has always been composed mostly of fighter pilots, although its ranks are open to all branches of military service. Even members of the Space Rescue Corps can be considered for membership in the official group; distinguished military service is the only requirement. Similarly, the Firebirds have been almost exclusively Human through the centuries, although there are no restrictions on what species a member must be.

During the Legacy era, the Firebird Society is placed on the Galactic Alliance Guard's watch list of subversive organizations, primarily because the GAG does not trust any group whose members seem more loyal to one another than to the Alliance. To some extent, the GAG is right not to trust the Firebird Society. Although violent vigilantism died with Tessala Corvae, the group continues to aggressively and covertly seek damaging information against any individual or organization it perceives as standing in the way of a worthy female's military career for no reason other than her gender.



THE FIREBIRD SOCIETY

GOALS

The official Firebird Society exists as a way to recognize elite military officers and provide its members with a network of contacts through which they might further their careers. During the Imperial period, a small movement within the Society is dedicated to undermining and destroying the careers of male officers they view as standing in the way of female advancement. Ultimately, both branches of the Society are interested in recognizing and promoting the military prowess of honorable female officers throughout the galaxy. They simply differ in how far they are willing to go to achieve that goal.

METHODS

The official Firebird Society holds regional meetings during which individual members keep their eyes open for new recruits or opportunities to help their sisters advance their careers.

The secret Firebird Society uses the meetings to covertly exchange intelligence about politicians and military functionaries they blame for their stalled careers. The Firebirds then use this information to undermine these targets, perhaps by leaking details about corrupt activity the targets are involved in or by blaming the targets for security breaches or sabotage (perpetrated by the Firebirds themselves). Occasionally, the secret Firebirds also engage in vigilante attacks against suspected Alliance agents or corrupt officials, forcing the disbandment of Rebel cells. When on such attack missions, the Firebirds wear hoods and masks to conceal their identities, and they don form-fitting black commando jumpsuits that leave no doubt about their gender.

The secret Firebirds also create their own weapons caches and secure transports for their missions. They accomplish this by altering supply orders and manifests so that arms and even small ships are directed to the Society's clandestine hideouts.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

The membership roster of the Firebird Society reads like a who's-who of the best and brightest female military commanders to serve during the past two millennia. However, one woman more than any other has made an impact on the galaxy at large: Tessala Corvae.

Tessala Corvae

Major General Tessala Corvae comes from a long line of highly decorated officers and possesses a brilliant military mind and a natural flair for command. Yet after working twice as hard to achieve her rank as officers who had a fraction of her talent or heritage, she ends up in command of a battalion stationed on Tallaan in the Tapani Sector, where the worst conflicts are brawls between young nobles during parties. With no opportunity to prove herself in the real war, Corvae knows that she has reached the pinnacle of her career, thanks to the misogynistic military high command of the New Order.

As she fumes over her fate, an idea starts to form in her mind. She has been a member of the Firebird Society since her days at the Academy. She never considered it more than a simple social club and minor networking tool, but now she starts to view it as more. She realizes that the Firebird Society could become a vehicle through which female officers could earn true respect and recognition, even if only among their peers.

Corvae forms a secret organization within the structure of the Firebird Society. She reviews the service records of thousands of members and carefully feels out the opinions of a dozen who seem the most brilliant and most embittered by their lack of advancement. After determining their true level of anger and frustration, she offers them an opportunity to use their superior skills and intellects in the service of the Empire while evening the score.

Corvae's secret Firebirds evolve into a shadowy group hunted unsuccessfully by both Alliance and Imperial Intelligence. She eventually allies with Ysanne Isard and finally achieves the recognition she sought for herself and her followers.

Ultimately, Corvae dies in the same battle that leads to the demise of Isard and the final fall of the Empire.

USING THE FIREBIRD SOCIETY

Originally, the Firebird Society is a mostly harmless sorority whose members network and help one another advance their careers. A particularly sexist member might try to undermine the careers of males who are viewed as obstacles—particularly after Palpatine comes to power—but in general, the society is a benign group working to legitimately advance the careers of its members.

Once Tessala Corvae creates the secret branch of the Firebird Society, however, the intrigue and conspiracy blossom. The clandestine group maintains a treasure trove of blackmail material that the Alliance could put to excellent use if it could gain access to the information. Heroes with Rebel sympathies, if recruited, might end up as double agents within the ranks of the organization. An Imperial officer could offer a captured Rebel an opportunity to walk if she locates and destroys damaging information about him that is in the Firebirds' possession.

A natural use for the Firebirds Society is to have a party of female heroes legitimately join the society. The heroes can work to bring down the Rebels and their sexist Imperial male counterparts by any means available.

THE GALACTIC ALLIANCE GUARD

When the weak central government of the New Republic is unable to coordinate an effective response during the Yuuzhan Vong invasion, Chief of State Cal Omas spearheads a reorganization of the galactic government. He creates a stronger regime that takes many political and military decisions away from individual star systems. The result is the Galactic Federation of Free Alliances (shortened to "Galactic Alliance"), and this new centralized government not only drives back the Yuuzhan Vong but also forges a series of alliances that unites such disparate groups as the Chiss, the Hapans, and the Imperial Remnant under one banner. Not since the height of the Old Republic has a central galactic government included so many people under its control.

For five years, the Galactic Alliance directs efforts to rebuild a galaxy devastated by the Yuuzhan Vong. In the face of growing protests and violent terrorist groups opposing the increasingly dictatorial methods of the government, a covert branch of Alliance Intelligence is formed. Termed the Galactic Alliance Guard (GAG), this secret police force is dedicated to finding and eliminating those who threaten galactic peace and order.

From its founding, the GAG is led by Jedi Knight Jacen Solo, who is severely scarred by trauma experienced during the Yuuzhan Vong War. As a result, he brings an overzealous and coldhearted attitude to his duties, giving those under his command leave to use any methods to identify enemies of the Alliance and force them to reveal their comrades. The GAG is soon feared across the galaxy by common citizens from every walk of life, no matter what their political bent.

The fanaticism and brutality with which Jacen Solo and the GAG hunt down those considered to be enemies of peace lead him to fall prey to the corrupt guidance of Lumiya, a self-styled Dark Lady of the Sith. Jacen's excesses grow more severe, and eventually he gives himself fully to the dark side and is reborn as Darth Caedus. He then turns the GAG apparatus toward elevating himself to the position of leader of the Galactic Alliance and in doing so triggers the Second Galactic Civil War.

Darth Caedus is killed in a lightsaber duel by his twin sister, Jedi Knight Jaina Solo, in 41 ABY. That same year, many of the GAG's top operatives are killed during a failed operation in the Corellian System.

GOALS

The Galactic Alliance Guard is founded to protect government institutions and citizens from violent terrorist attacks being coordinated primarily from Corellia. Later, the organization expands its mandate to target anyone their leader views as a threat to galactic peace and to his own power. Anyone who expresses a negative opinion of the Galactic Alliance risks brutal interrogation in the GAG's holding cells at its Coruscant headquarters or aboard its mobile command center, an *Imperial II*-class Star Destroyer named the *Anakin Solo*.

The GAG wants to seem as omnipresent as the intelligence apparatus of Palpatine's Empire had been, and it wants to inspire the same level of fear in the populace. On Coruscant, the group achieves this goal, although on Corellia, the GAG only hardens resistance against the central government, inspires further terrorism, and ultimately is one of the catalysts of the Second Galactic Civil War.

Once Jacen Solo falls to the dark side and seizes the reins of galactic power, the GAG becomes his personal enforcement tool. Anyone he views as standing in the way of his personal goals—which involve bringing about a lasting peace by forcing the galaxy to obey his will—is targeted for imprisonment or assassination.

After Jacen Solo's defeat, the GAG is formally disbanded. If any of the organization's top operatives survive, it is likely that they continue to operate in secret as the Galactic Alliance reestablishes itself (now under the leadership of Grand Moff Tarkin's one-time mistress Daala) and that they harbor particular animosity toward Corellians.

METHODS

The Galactic Alliance Guard is well equipped and well funded, staffed with top agents recruited from the Coruscant Security Force, the Galactic Alliance Intelligence Service, former New Republic Intelligence and Special Forces operatives brought out of retirement, and a handful of Jedi. The GAG has access to the most elaborate and modern surveillance and communication gear available, as well as a vast budget, all of which is put to efficient use. Forty years of counterintelligence, insurgency, and counterinsurgency expertise is brought to bear in the creation of the GAG, and its intelligence-gathering methods and capabilities are the finest and most extensive that the galaxy has ever seen.

All manner of simple and technological methods are applied, including sitting in cantinas and listening to conversations, planting bugging devices, and designing elaborate systems to monitor local and interstellar transmissions for key phrases, faces, or images. The GAG gathers and processes all information that might lead to plots against the Galactic Alliance and its citizenry.

If someone is suspected of being a terrorist or of harboring antigovernment sentiments, the GAG dispatches teams to arrest the suspect and his or her entire family. They subject the suspect to the harshest forms of interrogation, hoping to force him or her to reveal fellow conspirators. Meanwhile, they apply other techniques to the suspect's relatives—including letting them witness what is happening to the suspect—to gain supporting information or the names of more targets for investigation.

The GAG also encourages informants to report anyone they believe to be suspicious, and the group pays handsomely for tips that provide actionable intelligence.

When Jacen Solo assumes the identity of Darth Caedus, the GAG morphs into a brutal paramilitary force that orchestrates assassinations and engages in commando operations augmented by the *Anakin Solo*.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

In its early days, the GAG includes a wide swath of top-of-the-line operatives from four decades of galactic intelligence operations; it is a veritable who's-who of spies and law enforcement personnel. Shortly before the death of Jacen Solo, however, the group consists more of operatives who have been drummed out of various intelligence services than of those who have served with honor.

Jacen Solo (Darth Caedus)

As a young man, Jacen Solo is a gentle Jedi whose empathy for all living things causes him to develop a number of Force skills related to animals and nature. However, torture at the hands of the Yuuzhan Vong and the death of his younger brother Anakin darkens and stunts Jacen's spirit. He becomes easy prey for the dark side, and when he gets a taste of real power as the head of the GAG, it claims him.



Jacen is an officer who leads from the front. He never asks his agents to perform tasks that he himself is not willing to do, and he personally conducts some of the most brutal raids, most vicious interrogations, and bloodiest assassinations. Jacen even attempts to assassinate his own parents when he comes to the conclusion that they are plotting against both him and the Galactic Alliance—Han Solo is a Corellian, after all.

Despite his dark and violent turn, Jacen's heart remains committed to the same goal he has followed since childhood: bringing peace and harmony to those around him. But, twisted as he is by the dark side, he intends to force that peace and harmony upon the galaxy on his terms.

USING THE GALACTIC ALLIANCE GUARD

The GAG is nearly perfect for a campaign in which the Gamemaster wants to hit a range of intrigue-related story points. When it is first formed, the GAG is a place where law enforcers and covert agents (such as the heroes) use their skills to prevent terrorism and ferret out those who would disrupt the hard-won peace enjoyed by the galaxy after the defeat of the Yuuzhan Vong. But as time goes on, the heroes realize that their missions increasingly are directed not at terrorist sympathizers and insurgents but at harmless writers or politicians who have questioned the government's direction. At this point, the heroes might be approached by someone working for another branch of the regime or for the Jedi Order who seeks their help to determine Jacen Solo's true agenda. This contact might be sincere or might be a plant sent by Jacen to test the party's loyalty. Depending on their interests, the heroes might find themselves at odds with the GAG, or they might become Jacen's trusted minions and help support his overthrow of the Galactic Alliance leadership, whom he views as having betrayed the public trust.

The GAG can also be used as a simple replacement for the stormtroopers and Imperial Intelligence officers of the Rebellion era, but putting the heroes on the inside and having them gradually realize the truth about the organization is a more exciting story prospect.

THE HAPANS

The Hapans are a species of attractive near-Humans who hail from the Hapes Cluster, a group of stars isolated from the rest of the galaxy by ionized gas clouds that are difficult to navigate. Hapans diverge from baseline Humans in that they tend to have weak night vision because their planets never get truly dark due to the illuminated gases that fill their star systems.

Hapans live on 67 worlds that they call the Hapes Consortium. They have been ruled by a strict matriarchy led by a Queen Mother for 4,000 years, ever since a group of females enslaved by the pirates who first settled the Hapes Cluster rose up against their captors. The Hapans intentionally isolate themselves from the rest of the galaxy, their mighty warships zealously patrolling the few passages that exist through the stellar drifts and repelling all attempts at military action, diplomacy, or trade that the Old Republic or the Sith attempt to initiate with them.

Things change with the fall of Emperor Palpatine's government and the creation of the New Republic. Queen Mother Ta'a Chume personally leads diplomatic efforts that result in the Hapes Cluster becoming a founding state in the New Republic, but the Hapans ultimately play a very small part in the new galactic government. They do not even bother to seat more than a third of their Senate delegates, nor are they particularly cooperative with mercantile houses wanting to establish trade on anything but a few border worlds.



THE HAPANS

The Queen Mother is, primarily, looking for a way to pacify a growing rebellion on the planets located on the frontier between the Hapan dominion and the rest of the galaxy. These worlds have always been difficult to govern, but they become even more unruly in the period during which Emperor Palpatine rules the galaxy. Imperial Intelligence provides support for would-be insurgents in the hopes of gaining a foothold from which the Empire can scout the mysterious and reportedly very rich regions of the Queen Mother's domain.

By allowing the restless planets to feel as if they have some independence from the government and a part to play in the galaxy, the Queen Mother hopes to give them the illusion of freedom. However, no laws change on those worlds, and the enforcement methods of Hapan police and space patrols remain as draconian as ever. The majority of Hapans stirred up by Emperor Palpatine's agitators are content with the illusion of change, and Hapan control is reasserted.

Due to a shaky history with Force users, the Hapes Consortium is not fond of Jedi. In fact, an organization known as Ni'Korish, which is named for the mother of Queen Mother Ta'a Chume, reflects its namesake's deep hatred for the Jedi.

Because of the many pirates that plague the Hapes Consortium, the government keeps a sizable fleet to protect its worlds. The Hapan Royal Navy includes Hapan Battle Dragons and *Nova*-class battle cruisers among its key capital ships. The fleet's known flagships include *Star Home* and *Song of War*. For starfighters, the Consortium prefers the Olanji/Charubah Miy'til fighter and assault bomber. (For details on the Miy'til, see page 112 of *Starships of the Galaxy*.)

During the Yuuzhan Vong invasion, the Hapans lose most of their fleet at the Battle of Fondor. The public perception is that they could have kept their fleet and remained safe within the stellar drifts if they had stayed out of galactic affairs. As a result, the Hapan government becomes even more isolationist during the Legacy era, despite a desire for more openness on the part of Queen Mother Tenel Ka.

GOALS

The Queen Mother's government in all its forms and branches wants to maintain control. For the Hapan rulers, keeping order comes first, and the happiness of the people is a distant second. The government wants its citizens to be healthy, wealthy, and comfortable, but only if it can tell them when and how to enjoy such benefits. The leaders are also concerned with maintaining female superiority within Hapan culture by continuing traditions held since the first Queen Mother took her throne.

Over the centuries, there are a variety of movements that intend to bring change to Hapan society, usually focused around granting males the rights to own and inherit property and to receive advanced education without the authorization of female relatives or government officials. These movements range in character from peaceful groups that petition the Queen Mother's

government to violent insurgencies that seek to overthrow the Hapan leadership and carve out their own territory within the Consortium. Invariably, leaders of these groups continue their work from prison.

METHODS

On the surface, Hapan society appears beautiful and graceful. The people are considered to be more physically attractive than the Human norm elsewhere in the galaxy, and their architecture, ship designs, and fashion focus on elegant lines that echo rather than overwhelm the beauty of the environment. Beneath the surface, however, Hapan society is brutal, oppressive, and violent. From the lowest beggar to the Queen Mother, Hapans get ahead in life by forcing their will on others, using blackmail, threats of violence, and outright violence. Still, the illusion of civil society must be maintained, and no criminal is punished more harshly than the murderer or blackmailer who is caught red-handed.

The Queen Mother's government does what it can to discourage rampant violence, but the government institutions that exist to protect and control the people are structured to use fear to achieve their ends. In addition, a well-known network of informants, police officers, and others have the freedom to be judge, jury, and executioner when the situation warrants it. This network rarely uses this draconian authority, however, instead relying on the nonlethal technology of the Gun of Command. This unique weapon fires an energy beam that makes the target docile and pliant to suggestion. The Hapans use it to force suspected criminals to make public admissions of guilt before the captives are taken to prisons, subjected to more extensive brainwashing techniques, and reprogrammed to be productive citizens. Of course, some political figures cannot be dealt with in such a fashion, and some criminals are beyond the reach of the law. When the Hapans deal with such people, assassinations are commonplace.

The resistance to the Queen Mother's government is no less underhanded and brutal. In fact, the insurgents tend to be more violent than the oppressors, since they often fund themselves by piracy and by holding public figures for ransom.

In the past, someone who got on the wrong side of a powerful leader or group in Hapan space could seek safety by fleeing beyond the territory of the Consortium. But as the Hapans expand their interests outside their borders, so too do their assassins begin to pursue targets to the ends of the galaxy, if need be.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Before the Galactic Civil War, members of Hapan society have no significant impact on the galaxy at large. After that conflict, Hapans begin to become active outside their own territories.

Prince Isolder

Known as the Chume'da or prince, Isolder is the second son of the Queen Mother during Emperor Palpatine's reign and in the early years of the New Republic. He spends his youth adventuring throughout and beyond Hapan space, hunting the pirate lord who assassinated his older brother. Isolder eventually returns to Hapes, where he assumes his duties as crown prince. During a series of adventures surrounding his mother's diplomatic mission to Coruscant, he meets and falls in love with Dathomiri Princess Teneniel Djo and marries her over his mother's objections.

When Isolder's mother steps down from the throne, he rules as Queen Mother Djo's consort. He is more widely traveled than many Hapans, and Djo is an outsider, so the two of them start to change the strict and matriarchal nature of the government. When most of the Hapan fleet is lost fighting the Yuuzhan Vong and Queen Mother Djo is assassinated following a miscarriage, Isolder's daughter Tenel Ka takes the throne.

Queen Mother Ta'a Chume

With the longest recorded reign of any Queen Mother of the Hapes Consortium, Ta'a Chume is a cold-hearted, vicious ruler who would do anything to cling to power, short of openly bringing shame to the royal bloodline. A great strategist, she maneuvers those around her like pawns in a game to do whatever suits her needs. She views her eldest son, Kalen, as pathetic and orders his assassination. When her younger son, Isolder, falls in love with Lady Ellian, Ta'a Chume orchestrates the lady's murder. The Queen Mother reluctantly accepts Teneniel Djo as Isolder's wife, but her plots continue.

USING THE HAPANS

Players choosing to take on the role of a Hapes Consortium member should decide with which noble house they are connected. The Gamemaster is encouraged to create characters that oppose the goals of Hapan heroes. The Consortium might be used to aid or deter New Republic plans, to give Jedi party members a difficult time, or to serve as allies against the local pirates or the invading Yuuzhan Vong.

Those allied with the New Republic might be able to find friends within the Hapes Consortium, but not everyone in the Consortium is sympathetic. Females, especially beautiful ones, find it easier to make alliances here. Jedi will not earn respect or trust easily. Because of the cluster's isolationist history, its residents do not warm to outsiders. Those who fight pirates or keep the Yuuzhan Vong invasion out of the Hapes Cluster might find allies within the Consortium. The Hapans might even aid against the Imperial Remnant, but only if it suits them.

Pirate and mercenary characters will find themselves at odds with the Hapes Consortium. Force-users are not well liked in the cluster and might become the victims of frame jobs or assassination attempts. Noble women of influence in the Consortium might be targeted by other female nobles scheming to increase the chances of their bloodlines taking the throne someday.

HOUSE KORDEN

For 14,000 years, the fortunes of House Korden have been tied intimately to those of the galactic citizenry. The name might not loom large in the public consciousness, but few histories of galactic civilization are written without reference to the Korden line.

Some 12,000 years before the Battle of Yavin, successful Corulag merchant Haddius Korden stakes his future on the ever-larger waves of colonists that are heading to the farthest frontiers of space to make new lives for themselves. He reshapes the family business into Korden Outfitting and Surveying and sets about supplying gear and necessities for the colonists' new homes. The business venture is a tremendous success.

As the centuries pass, the Korden family starts investing in actual colonies. As a result, a Korden Outfitting and Surveying retail outlet is usually the first business in a colony's new port, and the Kordens are among the first major landowners in thousands of colonies. During the Imperial period, the family owns property in over 6,000 star systems.

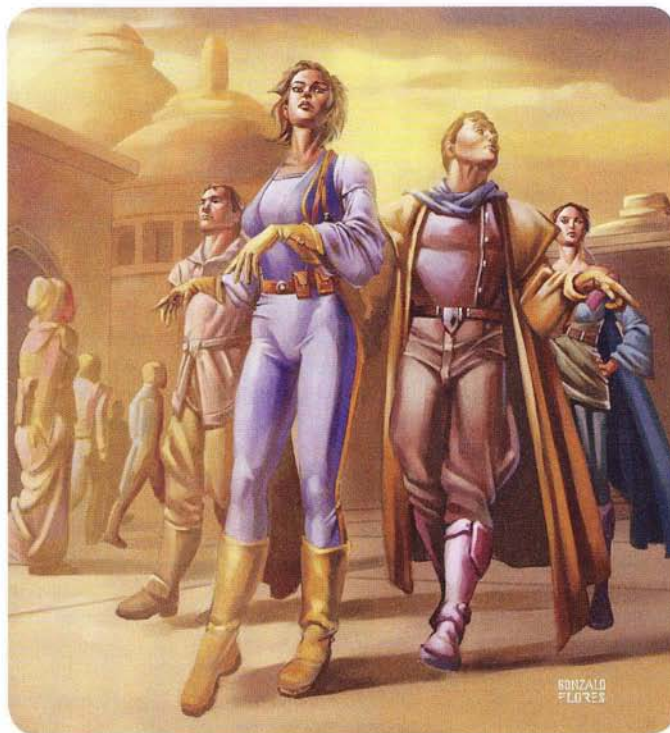
As interstellar commerce matures, the Kordens' early efforts in starport development are central to developing port regulations. They spend a good deal of credits petitioning the Republic Senate and local governments to standardize safety requirements for starships of all types and sizes. They feel that too many lives are lost because unscrupulous traders market substandard ships, perform slipshod repairs, and sell badly mixed fuel.

House Korden is officially created 9,349 years before the Battle of Yavin. As part of the observation of the 1,000th year since the colonization of the Expansion Region world of Novar, the people create a principality for the Kordens, granting them 3,000 square kilometers of land on Novar. In one corner of that domain, the Kordens build an elaborate vacation resort to be used by themselves, their friends, and their favored employees and retainers. They open the rest of the land for public use and continue to keep the area maintained as a nature preserve.

As the Republic grows in strength and influence, House Korden's Core Worlds roots guarantee that the Republic has the support of both the Korden family and its company, but the far-flung and diverse natures of its holdings ensure a perspective that is broader than most. Over the millennia, Kordens are found as representatives in the Senate and among the ranks of the Jedi Order, and in both places, they are voices of moderation and peace, arguing that armed conflict leads to suffering that politicians and generals never see or experience. Even when its corporate empire is in flames during the Great Sith War, House Korden argues for peace to the very end.

During the Imperial period, House Korden's long-held pacifist beliefs fall by the wayside. While wearing a purposefully bland mask in public, the House quietly supports the Rebel Alliance with supplies and equipment needed to establish hidden bases in inhabited systems. The Kordens' lack of open support for the Empire costs their business billions of credits, and the family suffers socially and financially, but when Emperor Palpatine's end comes, the Kordens are among a very few of the galactic elite whose honor is intact.

HOUSE KORDEN



GOALS

The Korden family is rare among the elite. Its members are motivated by serving the greater good, and they never lose sight of the fact that wealth and power do not earn them a place above the common citizens of the galaxy. The Kordens want to bring comfort, happiness, and prosperity to as many people as they can, regardless of species or political affiliation, and they want to do it in ethical ways. They use their wealth and authority to be advocates for the ordinary people.

METHODS

Members of the Korden family have always believed firmly in the rule of law, and they wield whatever influence they can to enforce it. When they encounter a situation that they consider to be unfair or unjust, they use their wealth and standing to address problems in the system. But they do not flaunt their credits or authority, preferring a more subtle, low-key approach.

For example, when the Republic sets aside the Corporate Sector as a free trade zone, House Korden eagerly helps survey the region and establishes early settlements. When more organized efforts get under way, the Kordens decide they cannot take part. Colonists on worlds sponsored by the Corporate Sector Authority are required to enter into agreements that render

them one step above slaves, a requirement that the Kordens find abhorrent. House Korden leases its Corporate Sector grants to other firms and turns its back, while quietly lobbying the Senate to impose more regulations on the corporations operating in the region.

Predictably, the Korden family's tradition of working within the system to improve it fails completely during Palpatine's rise to power. The family's quiet attempts to mount political resistance to the New Order results in Palpatine's propagandists labeling the Kordens as the sort of do-nothing leeches that brought the galaxy to its current state. Although the Kordens counter such publicity on worlds where they have large holdings, they become pariahs, and most markets—except those on wild, untamed worlds and with certain large corporate clients—are closed to them. As a result, the Empire virtually forces the Kordens to work with the Alliance. Even then, the Kordens argue for peaceful overtures and diplomacy, encouraging propaganda efforts intended to cause military officers to defect to the Rebellion.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

In its 14,000-year history on the galactic scene, the Korden family has touched every corner of the explored galaxy.

Prince Tavin Korden

The head of Korden Outfitting and Surveying during Palpatine's reign as Chancellor and Emperor, Tavin Korden indiscreetly reveals his true opinions about the New Order during a meeting of Corulag's Planetary Assembly. Lord Darth Vader subsequently starts harassing him and other Kordens. Tavin is a close friend of Orman Tagge, the head of the Tagge Company, and together the two concoct a number of subtle schemes to turn the tables on Vader. (Friendship and hatred of Vader are the only things the two men share; Tavin never reveals his deep sympathies for the Rebel Alliance to Tagge.)

Jedi Master Jayshon Korden

During the wars that lead to the scattering of the Mandalorians and the eradication of the Sith Empire, Jayshon Korden is a reluctant warrior who fights alongside his fellow Jedi while arranging secret negotiations with their enemies. Korden's attempts at paving the road to a negotiated peace fail miserably. As the Jedi Order rebuilds in the wake of the war, Korden's philosophies help to shape the future of the Order, and a number of isolated Korden family holdings are given to the Jedi for agricultural purposes or as places to build new temples and training centers.

Arani Korden

The eldest child of a branch of the Korden family that settled Naboo as part of the first group of colonists on that world, Arani Korden is a frivolous, spoiled teenager—until she takes part in the underground resistance during the Trade Federation's occupation. More than any Korden in centuries, she sees that true suffering exists in the galaxy and that people with backgrounds of privilege and power must take responsibility.

Arani asks her father to arrange a job for her at the Korden Outfitting and Surveying headquarters on Corulag. As Palpatine reshapes the Republic in his image, Arani watches reports from all corners of Korden's business empire of the chaos and destruction that spread as the old ways crumble and as the Jedi are betrayed.

Arani's experience on Naboo causes her to feel more loyalty for and support of the Jedi Order than the average citizen feels, and she helps a number of Jedi escape the Empire's clutches. That same experience leads Tavin Korden to place Arani in charge of Korden's internal security; he reasons that someone who was a rough-and-tumble delinquent in her youth is ideal for outwitting hijackers and thieves. However, as the Rebel Alliance's opposition to Emperor Palpatine's reign grows, Arani uses her position to facilitate thefts of equipment from Korden warehouses, which are then delivered into Rebel hands.

Arani eventually becomes the head of the company, and as the New Republic devolves into a dictatorship, she turns Korden resources to founding out-of-the-way settlements that remain secret from the regime. She also helps people who need to keep a low profile vanish into the wilds of the company's undeveloped holdings.

USING HOUSE KORDEN

House Korden is an ancient noble family. As such, its members have reputations to protect and holdings and secrets to guard. They might be more concerned about the common citizen than are most of their peers, but they are still nobles.

The family employs thousands of retainers. The heroes might be among them and could be called upon to perform tasks such as covering up some of Arani Korden's more embarrassing youthful indiscretions or discovering and countering plots launched against the family by Darth Vader and his followers as payback for Tavin Korden's comments. Alternatively, the heroes might be hired by others to find or fabricate evidence that would show the Kordens to be traitors to the Empire.

Korden Outfitting and Surveying is also a rich source of intrigue. During the early years of the family business, the heroes might untangle schemes aimed at stopping colony efforts being funded by the firm. Once the Empire is established, the heroes might be tasked with finding Imperial agents among the firm's staff so that Arani Korden can aid the Alliance safely, or the characters might be Imperial agents trying to catch Arani red-handed. Similar scenarios work during the Legacy era.

IMPERIAL INTELLIGENCE

Although scattered and a shadow of its former self, what is left of the Imperial Intelligence network tries to thwart the rise of the New Republic. Once the Empire has been split into endless, petty factions, each military leader, rogue warlord, and greedy politician needs information not just about the New Republic but also about the other factions vying for Imperial control.

After surviving the Battle of Endor in disarray, Imperial Intelligence aids director Ysanne Isard in taking over the Empire. Eventually, competing warlords lead to a variety of agents, military leaders, Moffs, governors, and other Imperial representatives coming into conflict for territory and information. In some cases, this conflict pits Imperial Intelligence against itself. Many personnel and resources end up in the service of Warlord Zsinj and, later, of Grand Admiral Thrawn.

Imperial Intelligence members receive standard military ranks and wear official Imperial uniforms when not in the field.



IMPERIAL INTELLIGENCE

GOALS

Imperial Intelligence seeks to help restore the Empire to its former glory and to crush the New Republic. Sometimes, though, its goals might seem at odds even with itself due to the many warlords vying for power among the remains of the network.

METHODS

The organization, which is responsible for covert operations, uses most of its resources to spy on the New Republic, but it also spies on itself and other Imperial agencies. Eventually, agents begin to take orders from sector Moffs without regard for High Command. Imperial Intelligence also works with Imperial Palace security as necessary. In addition, the group keeps track of various government and corporation activities throughout the galaxy, and agents note mercenary, bounty hunter, and outlaw activities.

Warlord Zsinj is fond of using Imperial Intelligence. His agents infiltrate the New Republic, including its fleet. His greatest nemesis is New Republic Intelligence's Wraith Squadron.

One of the ships used by Imperial Intelligence is a modified Incom A-24 Sleuth scout ship. The Sleuth is known for its ability to slip past blockades undetected. Mol Hedron uses one of these vessels to intercept New Republic messages and deliver them to Imperial Intelligence using an advanced tight-beam subspace transmission.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Ysanne Isard remains at the forefront of most Imperial Intelligence dealings even after she moves on to become a warlord. During the time of its conflicts with the New Republic, Imperial Intelligence has several key agents that become thorns in the side of the fledgling New Republic government. (For more information about a basic Imperial Intelligence agent, see page 184 of *The Force Unleashed Campaign Guide*.) Members include informants, agents, spies, black ops experts, spymasters, and leaders.

Rodin Baem

Imperial operative Rodin Baem purchases information from spies and others within the New Republic for the Imperial Remnant. Thanks to his information-gathering skills, the Empire hinders the rebuilding efforts of the new government. Baem's known Imperial associates include Admiral Gaen Drommel and Moff Lankin.

Ten Dorne

Formerly one of the engineers who assisted the Rebel Alliance's Admiral Ackbar in creating the B-wing assault starfighter, Ten Dorne now works for the Empire. The female Sluissi has vast knowledge of the ships of the New Republic fleet. Prior to defecting to the Empire, Dorne works on an experimental shearing plane, a device that might render tractor beams ineffective.

Haanen Felean

As a member of the Rebellion, this Klatootinian supply officer equips various cells with materials and provisions. During the rise of the New Republic, Felean defects from the Alliance and joins the Empire, providing his new allies with information on plans to rebuild the Republic and with commonly used New Republic supply routes. His information leads the Empire to New Republic bases across the galaxy.

Ysanne Isard

Before his death, Emperor Palpatine places his faith in Ysanne Isard as the Director of Imperial Intelligence. In fact, he presents her with the *Lusankya*, an *Executor*-class Star Dreadnought, which she uses as her headquarters—complete with prison and brainwashing facilities. At the birth of the New Republic, few know of the *Lusankya*'s hidden location, buried beneath Coruscant's surface.

Isard tortures her captives to collect secrets and turns selected prisoners into sleeper agents. She is known for her masterful interrogation skills and can extract full and true confessions out of most subjects before day's end.

While in control of the Empire, Isard manipulates other Imperial nobles and creates a vendetta against the New Republic's Rogue Squadron. She recruits Imperial Intelligence agent Kirtan Loor to help her destroy the squadron. She also manages to get a spy inside the squadron to discover the identities of the pilots. Isard learns that the New Republic plans to take Coruscant from her, so she orders the creation of the Krytos virus, which affects non-Humans. She allows it to be added to the planet's water supply as the New Republic takes the world.

False Kadann

Imperial Intelligence is credited with doing whatever it takes to fulfill its needs. The group goes so far as to have one of its own, a Bimm agent known as the false Kadann, masquerade as the Supreme Prophet of the Dark Side in a plot to control Imperial subjects. He and other Imperial Intelligence operatives form the Church of the Dark Side to promote the false religion. Although he lacks the Force sensitivity of the true Kadann, the false Kadann takes advantage of his connections to make "prophecies" based on intel gathered by spies and informants. In the event that his educated guesses do not come to pass, other "prophets" make them occur. The false Kadann's arsenal includes murder and bribery.

OTHER ERAS

The version of Imperial Intelligence discussed on these pages is that from the time after the death of Emperor Palpatine. However, the organization has existed from the time of its conversion from Republic Intelligence at the end of the Clone Wars. For more information on Imperial Intelligence at the height of the Galactic Empire, see *The Force Unleashed Campaign Guide*.

USING IMPERIAL INTELLIGENCE

Imperial Intelligence agents can be anyone, anywhere, but they are more likely to be Human males. A player who chooses to take on the role of an agent might need to hide his or her true identity and agenda from the other player characters. If the spy's activities are discovered, it could cause tension and create havoc among the party. Complicated situations are likely to arise, in which the agent must choose between loyalty to the party and his or her secret mission.

Heroes who are Imperial sympathizers might make contacts within Imperial Intelligence to gather or purchase information to prepare for a mission. Freelance characters might also spy or carry out special ops for the greater glory of the Empire. Independent parties, such as groups of mercenaries, bounty hunters, or outlaws of the New Republic, could buy information from (or sell it to) Imperial Intelligence agents. Heroes allied with the New Republic will have a difficult time working with Imperial Intelligence unless they find a common enemy, such as the Yuuzhan Vong.

Almost anyone can find his or her path blocked by Imperial Intelligence agents. Even loyal subjects of the Empire might find the group's intrusive activities excessive. As they say in the world of spies, trust no one. Player character parties made up of New Republic allies or outlaws on the run from the Empire have much to fear from Imperial Intelligence. Fringe elements—such as mercenaries, criminals, and bounty hunters—are usually on shaky ground with the Empire already. Such characters could easily find agents skulking in the shadows wherever they go because their latest job infuriated some official of the Imperial Remnant.

KASHYYYK RESISTANCE

The Kashyyyk Resistance is a formal name given to the informal organization responsible for fighting against the oppression of the Wookiee species. The Kashyyyk Resistance truly forms around the time of the Clone Wars, at first as a group of Wookiees fighting off the Separatists, and then later as a rebellion against the Empire and its practice of using Wookiees as slaves. Once the Empire has risen to its peak, the Kashyyyk Resistance engages in a desperate struggle not only to survive but also to free their people from oppression.

The Kashyyyk Resistance has no formal organization, although it does have leaders and small groups that could be described as cells. The Resistance forms when a small group of Wookiees finally decides to stand up to their oppressors. Although sometimes these small groups join together to form a larger force, this can be dangerous, as their Imperial masters are ruthless in crushing opposition and zealous in searching out any organized resistance movement. For this reason, the Kashyyyk Resistance can only communicate sporadically, and many members of the resistance don't know that there are others on their world resisting the Empire. On rare occasions, multiple groups of freedom fighters will come together to strike a blow at the Empire, but the Empire's response is usually swift and devastating.

The Kashyyyk Resistance is mostly made up of Wookiees that have thrown off the bonds of slavery and have gone into hiding within the jungles of their world. However, some off-world help occasionally makes its way to the Resistance, although the Wookiees are reluctant to trust outsiders for fear that their help may actually be an Imperial trap. On rare occasions, members of other insurgent organizations (such as the Rebel Alliance) will come to Kashyyyk specifically to aid the Wookiees' cause, and in those cases the Empire finds itself facing an enemy with the resources of a larger organization but with the ferocity and local knowledge possessed by their Wookiee slaves.

GOALS

The Kashyyyk Resistance has one overarching goal, shared by all of its disparate members: free the Wookiee species from the oppression of slavery, and cast the Empire out of Kashyyyk. In the short term, their goals focus on increasing the number of freed Wookiees (by raiding small slave transports) and finding ways to smuggle those that have been freed off-world. The Kashyyyk Resistance aims to sabotage further Imperial efforts on the planet and to ensure that as many Wookiees as possible reach the safety of other planets.

METHODS

Kashyyyk Resistance fighters use the dense jungles of their world to move undetected, then climb up the towering trees to strike at targets. This tactic sometimes allows them to free Wookiee slaves before blending back into the dense foliage. In the event that Imperial forces pursue, the Empire's casualty rate is high.

Although Wookiees are renowned for their great strength, the freedom fighters also defeat targets with traditional bowcasters, grenade launchers, and recon droids. These droids, which are used to scout nearby areas, are linked through comlinks for remote control. Their explosive charges are capable of dispatching hidden opponents.

During the second Battle of Kashyyyk, Wookiees use retrofitted oev-vaor jet catamarans (see page 219 of *The Clone Wars Campaign Guide*) in an attempt to fend off Imperial landers and gunships. Some local traders and merchants help evacuate Wookiee families or engage Imperial slave transports.



THE KASHYYYK RESISTANCE

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Although most members of the Kashyyyk Resistance are Wookiees, a few key offworlders come to their aid, including several Jedi, smuggler Han Solo, and slicer Filli Bitters.

Chewbacca

Chewbacca, a Clone Wars veteran, is a well-known and respected Wookiee. Chewie, as his Human friends call him, bonds a life debt to Corellian smuggler Han Solo for saving him from Imperial slavery. The two become best friends and work to free captive Wookiees and stop Trandoshan slavers.

Filli Bitters

Filli Bitters is a Human scoundrel who has a crush on the Jedi Olee Starstone. Bitters serves as slicer on the *Drunk Dancer*, a smuggling freighter. He programs a derelict Separatist ship to take out an Imperial cruiser, enabling Wookiees to flee Imperial forces during the second Battle of Kashyyyk.

Han Solo

Corellian smuggler Han Solo helps his best friend, Chewbacca, to free Wookiees from Imperial captivity and Trandoshan slavers. For Solo, it begins when he is a lieutenant in the Imperial Navy, ordered to assist in slaving and construction work. While on this assignment, he meets an injured Chewbacca. During a construction job, a senior officer draws a blaster on the Wookiee, and things escalate quickly. Solo stuns the officer, saves the Wookiee, and helps him escape. Later, Chewbacca informs Solo that he is losing family and friends to slavery, and the duo head to Kashyyyk to help. During a Life Day Celebration, they save Chewbacca's son Lumpawarrump from Imperials. Solo's most important aid to the resistance includes defeating Trandoshan slaver Pekt and Moff Darcc.

Jent Koush

Imperial Lieutenant Jent Koush, stationed on Kashyyyk, finds himself sympathetic to the Wookiees' plight. Through the alteration of manifest records, he secretly aids Wookiees escaping Imperial control whenever possible. Allegedly, he also gives aid to smugglers, merchants, and others who try to help the resistance. Most often, that aid comes in the form of misdirection or turning a blind eye to certain activities. It is not clear whether Koush has contacts within the Rebel Alliance or acts of his own accord.

Galen Marek

Raised on Kashyyyk, Galen Marek is the son of Jedi survivors of Order 66. After Vader murders his father, Marek is taken by Vader to become the Sith Lord's secret apprentice under the name "Starkiller." Galen Marek aids the Wookiees as they resist the newly formed Empire, destroying the Empire's gigantic machine used to transport Wookiee slaves into space. His family's crest later becomes the inspiration for the Rebel Alliance's symbol.

Salporin

Master of the curved ryyk blades and veteran of the Clone Wars, Salporin is one of the Wookiees enslaved by the Empire. A childhood friend of Chewbacca, Salporin learns that a group of Rebel Alliance commandos have infiltrated Kashyyyk's jungle and breaks free to find them. His knowledge of the forests and Imperial slave camps, as well as his battle skills, are valuable in helping liberate Kashyyyk from Imperial control. (For more on Salporin, see page 217 of *The Clone Wars Campaign Guide*.)

USING THE KASHYYYK RESISTANCE

Most Kashyyyk Resistance plots revolve around rescuing enslaved Wookiees, stopping slavers, or making hit-and-run strikes on Imperial forces, vehicles, or structures. While members' plans are usually straightforward, their strategies and their natural strength allow them to persevere during dark times.

Heroes wanting to help the Kashyyyk Resistance will have to be careful how they go about it, since the Empire has officers, troops, and spies trying to put down the freedom fighters or anyone giving aid. Heroes who are Wookiee resistance fighters combat not only Imperials and slavers but also the planet's natural fauna, creating challenging encounters that rely on excellent tactics, team coordination, and some surprises.

The Alliance and others sympathetic to the Rebel cause find the resistance accepting of aid. Most Wookiee warriors who flee Kashyyyk following Imperial bombardment are willing to join the Rebellion as freedom fighters. Wookiees are not above accepting assistance from smugglers, mercenaries, or other similarly unsavory types.

Trandoshans and members of the Imperial forces are not likely to ally with the resistance. The Trandoshans' history of slavery and brutality is enough to enrage even the calmest Wookiee, and the bombardment of their world by Imperial forces not long after the attempted Confederate invasion does not leave the Wookiees sympathetic to the Empire, either.

NABOO RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

The resistance movement on Naboo ten years before the outbreak of the Clone Wars is a good example of a short-term organization that deals in intrigue. Formed during the Trade Federation blockade and occupation of Naboo, the Naboo Resistance is formed by the volunteer security forces of Theed and encompasses a planet-wide insurgency against the occupying forces. Although the Naboo Resistance only exists for a short time, the resourceful members of this organization stage a campaign of covert operations, espionage, sabotage, and armed resistance against the droid armies occupying their home planet.

The Naboo Resistance first forms in Theed, when Jedi Knights free the Queen of Naboo and many of her security forces from Federation captivity. These freed security forces in turn contact other security forces in other human cities, creating a growing network of resistance cells that spreads across the planet in days. Thanks to their security training, the personnel of the Naboo resistance are highly organized and create an underground paramilitary force that carries out a campaign of complex operations against the Trade Federation's forces. The Naboo Resistance already has an organizational structure in place at the time it is formed (using the same hierarchy as the existing security forces), meaning that the Resistance suffers none of the organizational growing pains of other subversive groups.

Although most of the organization is made up of former security personnel, volunteers from across Naboo quickly flock to the Resistance, providing either direct support or funneling food and supplies to Resistance members. The Resistance includes a small cadre of skilled pilots and mechanics, allowing them to use what vehicles the Resistance has to devastating effect. The Resistance does garner some off-world assistance, particularly in the form of mercenaries who work against the Trade Federation, but for the most part its membership is confined to citizens of Naboo. Late in the occupation, the Gungans join forces with the existing movement, but their involvement in the Resistance is short-lived as the occupation ends within days of the accord between the people of Naboo and the Gungans.

GOALS

The Resistance's primary goal is to free the people of Naboo from the occupation of the Trade Federation. Their short-term goals include disrupting Federation communications, smuggling supplies to other Resistance cells, hiding Resistance members from droid security forces, and ensuring that the people of Naboo suffer as few casualties as possible.

METHODS

During the land-based portion of its strategies, the Naboo Resistance Movement prefers hit-and-run tactics, diversions, and an alliance with the Gungans and their Grand Army. To free their planet from the Trade Federation, the resistance is not above accepting aid from mercenaries, such as Nym. The movement's vehicles include Gian speeders for land-based attacks and Naboo Royal N-1 starfighters, part of the Royal Space Fighter Corps, which are used in the assault against the Trade Federation's droid control ship. For more details on the N-1 starfighter, see page 118 of *Starships of the Galaxy*.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Although the Naboo Resistance Movement's key members are its Queen and governor, many others assist them in freeing Naboo from the Trade Federation's grip. In addition to those described below, Jedi Master Qui-Gon Jinn, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and pilots of Bravo Squadron (the group led by Ric Olié) lend their aid to the resistance.

Gregar Typho

Naboo lieutenant Gregar Typho is the nephew of Captain Panaka. During the resistance, Typho is injured and loses his left eye. For more details on Typho, including his life after the Naboo Resistance, see page 14 of *Threats of the Galaxy*.

Jar Jar Binks

Recently promoted General Jar Jar Binks of the Gungan Grand Army helps lead the Gungan forces as they fend off the battle droids of the Trade Federation. Binks also accompanies Queen Amidala as she attempts, through political means, to convince the Republic Senate to free their world.

Nym

Although the Feeorin pirate Nym is not officially a member of the Naboo Resistance, he attacks the Trade Federation blockade several times and is later declared a hero of the resistance. He works with Vana Sage, Rhys Dallows, and Reti against the blockade. Their attacks include striking a Trade Federation freighter convoy, attacking other convoys and escorts, disabling missile frigates, and attacking part of the battle droid forces destined for the Battle of Grassy Plains. Nym is responsible for destroying heavy artillery guns, AATs, and Scarab droids. For more details on Nym, see page 216 of *The Clone Wars Campaign Guide*.

Padmé Naberrie

Padmé Naberrie, also known as Queen Amidala of Naboo, leads the resistance to free her people from control of the Trade Federation. When her appeal to the Republic Senate fails, she takes matters into her own hands and forms an alliance with the Gungans, with whom her people share the world. Together, they face the invading battle droids.

Panaka

Captain Panaka is head of the Royal Naboo Security Forces and uncle of Gregar Typho. He and his men are overwhelmed by battle droid leader OOM-9's forces and captured along with the Queen. Later, after being freed by the Jedi, he helps create the battle plan and coordinate the liberation of the capital city. Panaka also assists the Queen and the Jedi in freeing the captured Naboo pilots to launch an attack against the droid control ship in orbit.

Ric Olié

Naboo Royal Space Fighter Corps Commander Ric Olié is a starship pilot who serves in the Royal Naboo Security Forces. Olié leads the space battle against the Trade Federation droid control ship to save the overwhelmed Gungans.

Roos Tarpals

Captain Roos Tarpals is one of the leaders in the Gungan Grand Army. Tarpals, an old friend of Jar Jar Binks, serves bravely in the battle to repel Trade Federation forces.

Rugor Nass

Gungan High Council Boss Rugor Nass makes an alliance with the Naboo to defeat the Trade Federation invaders. After being petitioned by Queen Amidala and outcast Jar Jar Binks, Nass comes to realize that the inhabitants of the world need to join against their common enemy. He commits the Gungan Grand Army to repel the battle droid invasion forces.

Sio Bibble

Naboo Governor Sio Bibble begins formation of the resistance while Queen Amidala attempts to end the Trade Federation occupation of Naboo through political means.



USING THE NABOO RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

Naboo Resistance Movement members are likely to be Human or Gungan and can be of most classes. A hero who takes the role of a Naboo freedom fighter will need strong tactics to deal with battle droid forces or a silver tongue to deal with Trade Federation leaders. Skill challenges can create a series of events leading up to a rescue attempt by the resistance.

During the resistance, the people of Naboo ally with the Gungans and accept help from mercenaries such as Nym. They also take aid from the Jedi Council, but they do not necessarily follow Jedi advice. They are independent in nature, as the example set forth by their Queen demonstrates. The citizens of Naboo are members of the Republic, but the invasion lessens their taste for politics and weakens their faith in the galactic government. Most of the inhabitants of Naboo would ally with a Republic official, but some might feel differently.

Freedom fighters from Naboo are likely to be at odds with anyone representing the Trade Federation. Most of the time, they fight or outwit battle droids, but some confrontations include the federation's Neimoidian leaders. These enemies might find themselves the targets of sabotage by the resistance or assaults by Gungan forces.

NEW REPUBLIC INTELLIGENCE

Following the Battle of Endor and the death of Emperor Palpatine, the Rebel Alliance reforms as the New Republic and in doing so also forms the underlying New Republic Intelligence (NRI). The newly formed military division is led by General Airen Cracken, former resistance fighter and Rebel Alliance general, who is assigned the duties of Supreme Commander for Intelligence. Under his leadership, the NRI keeps a watchful eye on warlords, foreign governments, mercenaries, bounty hunters, spies, corporations, the Imperial Remnant, and other threats to the fledgling government.

Information gathered by the NRI is reported to various New Republic divisions. As a branch of the military, NRI members receive standard military ranks but wear dark green uniforms when not in the field. The NRI runs parallel to the New Republic Fleet Intelligence, whose members wear Defense Fleet uniforms.

The intelligence service is divided into several subdivisions, including Alpha Blue, Alpha Red, Analysis Bureau, Intelligence Operations Command, Ongoing Investigations Division, Special Threats Division, and Tactical Analysis Bureau.

GOALS

The NRI's purpose is to help rebuild the Republic by tracking, documenting, and eliminating its many foes. Its foremost goal is to stop the disorganized Imperial Remnant. Additionally, the NRI keeps track of the increasing criminal activities of terrorists, smugglers, mercenaries, and spies.

METHODS

Gathering secret information requires a wide variety of personalities, knowledge, skills, and technologies. The NRI collects holovids, sensor scans, personal histories, corporate records, captured Imperial databases, and any other information it can obtain. The NRI's networks dig deep into acquired Imperial archives to determine threat levels to the safety of the New Republic. The NRI also uses reports from underground agents, researchers, service personnel, and documented events. Despite the group's best efforts to gather accurate information, some reports originate from unreliable sources such as independent traders, smugglers, mercenaries, or other unsavory sorts.

Sometimes the NRI feeds false information to spies of the opposition. This form of counterintelligence is heavily used during the Yuuzhan Vong invasion.

The NRI also uses ships and pilots, such as Wraith Squadron, as Intel units. Speedy and stealthy ships are its choice information-gathering fleet. NRI agents and operatives are fond of the Incom T-65BR X-wing starfighter (see page 153 of *Starships of the Galaxy*), as well as Republic Engineering Corporation *Ferret*-class and *Prowler*-class reconnaissance ships. The *Ferret* is a pilot-free intelligence-gathering vessel. Designed as a covert ship from its conception, it is better matched to infiltrating hostile territory than the

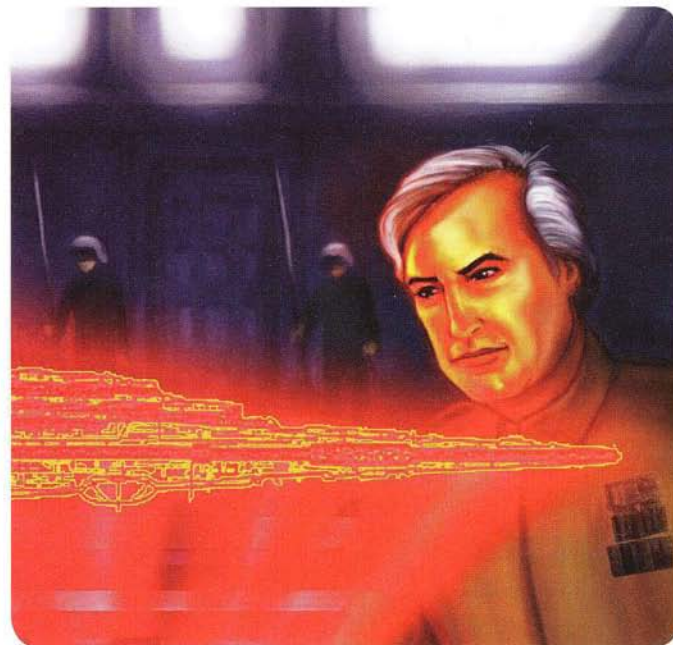
T-65BR. Its hull is coated in sensor-negating materials and uses a new baffled drive system. The baffling allows the ship to leave a minimal trail at sublight speeds. The *Prowler* shares most characteristics with the *Ferret* but requires a sentient crew and is designed for longer missions. Each of these stealth ship models includes a decoy package.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Although General Airen Cracken has been at the forefront for most of the NRI's history, field operatives are the backbone of the organization. These agents risk their lives to glean every possible piece of covert information, or they take calculated risks to rescue fellow operatives whenever a cover is blown. Members include informants, spies, black ops experts, spymasters, and leaders. For more information about a basic intelligence officer, see page 61 of *Threats of the Galaxy*.

Tru'eb Cholak

Tru'eb Cholak is a Twi'lek slave turned gunrunner who sold arms to struggling Rebel Alliance cells and now serves the New Republic. Primarily working the Outer Rim Territories and the Mid Rim in his modified Ghtroc freighter, the *Luudrian Star*, Cholak seeks out worlds in conflict so that he can help oppressed people. For more details on Ghtroc freighters, see page 88 of *Starships of the Galaxy*.



NEW REPUBLIC INTELLIGENCE

General Airen Cracken

Willing to bend the rules if he deems it necessary to the stability of the New Republic, Airen Cracken makes his mark on many important events throughout the galaxy. After the New Republic takes control of Coruscant, Cracken forms the New Republic Security Force and relocates it there. His forces are instrumental in combating Warlord Zsinj, Ysanne Isard, and others who vie for galactic control. During this time, he deals with Rogue Squadron and Wraith Squadron; later, he oversees the separation of the NRI from the New Republic military. At that point, he becomes the Director of New Republic Intelligence.

Belindi Kalenda

Following the accidental death of her older brother, Tindel, the Human Belindi Kalenda is taken in by a military orphanage and trained by the Empire. Years after the Battle of Endor, she becomes one of the first New Republic Military Academy graduates and works in the Operations branch of NRI Special Threats. By showing "great courage and resourcefulness," according to *Cracken's Threat Dossier*, Kalenda earns Cracken's trust and respect. Because of her wide-spaced and glassy eyes, she almost seems cross-eyed, and many believe her to be blind. As a wise agent, she takes advantage of this misconception, and it becomes her most effective disguise.

Jan Ors (alias Captain Jan Strange)

As former Imperial Intelligence agent Captain Jan Strange, Jan Ors reached nearly legendary status with the Alliance to Restore the Republic. Although she appeared to be an asset to the Imperial Surveillance section, she was in reality a double agent working for the Alliance. Following her deep cover and the fall of the Emperor, Ors assists the New Republic and agent Kyle Katarn on many missions to thwart the Imperial Remnant.

In fact, it is Ors who convinces Rebel Alliance leaders to trust Katarn, a former Imperial cadet. She falsifies accounts of their previous meetings to assist in his defection. Later, Ors joins the Alpha Blue branch, where she accompanies Katarn on missions against the Imperial Remnant. Just before the Yuuzhan Vong invasion, Ors is promoted to lead Alpha Blue.

Ander Rendrake

Ander Rendrake is an important NRI field operative who acquires data in his role as a lieutenant and communications officer aboard the *Imperial*-class Star Destroyer *Vendetta*. In addition, he runs a black market aboard the capital ship. As the vessel's "scrounge," he has built up an in-depth network through which he can send sensitive data to New Republic Intelligence.

Rivoche Tarkin

Rivoche Tarkin is the niece of Grand Moff Wilhuff Tarkin. Her uncle and her father, Brigadier Gideon Tarkin, both swear allegiance to the New Order and Emperor Palpatine. After her father dies in the Erhynradd Mutiny, Rivoche stays at her uncle's estate and begins to question his beliefs after seeing

the cruelty around her. Eventually, she earns a place as a deep-cover agent for the Rebellion, with contacts throughout the Core Worlds. Because of her background, she gains access to information that most agents could never acquire, and her family name alone places her above most Imperial suspicions.

General Airen Cracken keeps her identity secret even within his own ranks. If Rivoche's status as a deep-cover agent were to leak out, it could put her life in danger and stir up trouble among those who doubt her support or seek revenge for her family's dark deeds. Following her extraction, she serves the NRI as a reporter and accompanies Generals Wedge Antilles and Lando Calrissian aboard the Star Destroyer *Liberator* during a series of assaults that eventually lead to the capital ship crash-landing on Coruscant.

USING NEW REPUBLIC INTELLIGENCE

New Republic Intelligence has participated in many official military missions as well as many that are off the record. These missions include infiltrating Coruscant, dealing with the Krytos virus, bringing down Warlord Zsinj, assisting in the Black Fleet Crisis, overseeing the addition of Adumar to the New Republic, attempting to thwart the Corellian Crisis, and gathering information during the Yuuzhan Vong invasion. The Bacta War was retroactively claimed by the NRI as one of its operations.

New Republic Intelligence agents can be of any species, gender, or class. A player who chooses to take on the role of an NRI agent might need to hide his or her true identity and agenda from the other player characters. As with characters affiliated with Imperial Intelligence, if a NRI agent's activities are discovered, it could cause conflict in the party. Similarly, situations might arise in which the agent must choose between loyalty to the party and accomplishing his or her secret mission.

A party of heroes allied with the New Republic might be able to establish contacts within the NRI to gather information needed for missions. Freelance heroes might also spy or carry out special ops for the fledgling government. Independent parties, such as mercenaries, bounty hunters, or outlaws on the run from the Empire, could buy information from (or sell it to) NRI agents. Faithful New Republic members should have few problems with the NRI unless they come under suspicion, perhaps as the result of the leak of false information.

Player character parties composed of Imperial allies or outlaws wanted by the New Republic frequently will be opposed by the NRI and fringe characters such as mercenaries, criminals, and bounty hunters will not be looked on kindly by the organization. Such characters could easily carry out a job that thwarts a New Republic mission and subsequently find a homing beacon hidden on their ship or NRI agents waiting in the docking bay. Heroes allied with the Imperial Remnant will be unlikely to find themselves working with the NRI unless they unite against a common foe, such as the Yuuzhan Vong.

PRAETORITE VONG

Prior to launching a full invasion, the Yuuzhan Vong send in their spearhead force, the Praetorite Vong. These specialist military forces, led by a high prefect from the intendant caste of the Yuuzhan Vong, infiltrate targets to spy and spread confusion, hoping to weaken their enemies for the first wave of invasion forces. Primary members come from the intendant caste, but the membership of the Praetorite Vong includes other castes and a vast number of slaves. When fighting becomes necessary, warrior caste members augment core personnel.

Information gathered through deep-cover spies and military scouts is analyzed to select the best targets for the Praetorite Vong. The size of a strike force ranges from a few dozen members to several million.

Among its troops, the Praetorite Vong have scouts, pioneers, logistics corps members, assault troops, engineers, and defensive units. Some members act as bodyguards for high-ranking commanders. In addition, a group of underlings known as the Shamed Ones serve the Praetorite Vong. Their status is the lowest of the low within Yuuzhan Vong society.

Yuuzhan Vong are immune to the Force and cannot be sensed normally using the Force.

GOALS

The Yuuzhan Vong seek conquest because they believe that the worlds they invade were promised to them by their gods. In addition, they see the use of mechanical technology as an abomination that must be stopped.

The primary goal of the Praetorite Vong is to pave the way at the location called Vector Prime for the forthcoming invasion of the promised land. This activity includes espionage and intelligence gathering, infiltration, preparing bases of operation, and sowing seeds of confusion within the target governments. The Praetorite Vong hope to turn the populations of target worlds against themselves.

METHODS

Infiltration is the hallmark of the Praetorite Vong. Keeping the outlying planets at odds with one another, agents hope to render the worlds defenseless for the impending invasion. The Praetorite Vong recruit saboteurs, spies, and propagandists from the local populace to work against their own governments and societies.

As with all Yuuzhan Vong, the Praetorite Vong use only organic gear, weapons, and ships. In fact, they consider technology to be an outrage against their gods. Their hatred of mechanized vehicles and droids runs deep. While subverting the local governments, they spread antidroid propaganda to help eliminate that which they despise.

THE PRAETORITE VONG



When they need to gather information, the Praetorite Vong use chilabs—tiny, grublike creatures that record audio and visual data while hidden inside Yuuzhan Vong nasal cavities. The collected information is transferred to a biological memory device called a qang qahsa. The Praetorite Vong also use creatures known as sliviliths as living probes.

When in deep cover, Praetorite Vong use oogolith cloakers and masquers. These biological entities grant a Yuuzhan Vong protection and allow it to adopt a Human disguise, respectively. The gablith variant disguises the spy as a Duros or other non-Human. Another symbiotic tool is the tizowym, an organic translator carried inside the ear that allows a Yuuzhan Vong to speak other languages.

Among its arsenal of organic starships, the Yuuzhan Vong employ yorik-stronha—spy vessels that are built from yorik coral and that resemble asteroids. The invaders use these ships to enter a system undetected so that they can study space traffic and enemy fleet strength or secretly insert Praetorite Vong spies behind enemy lines. The subsequent invading force arrives in a convoy of mammoth worldships.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Although Prefect Da'Gara is a key member, the Praetorite Vong require a wide variety of skill sets to accomplish their manifest destiny. Soldiers and scouts find plenty of opportunities within the order, and nobles have an equally important role.

Da'Gara

Prefect and leader of the Praetorite Vong, Da'Gara is a ruthless and fanatical warrior. He keeps in contact with spy Yomin Carr through Carr's hidden villip. The two coordinate the infiltration of the *Star Wars* galaxy.

E'thinaa

E'thinaa is an agent of the Praetorite Vong. He is placed in a high-ranking military position within the Ssi-Ruuvi Imperium and is instrumental in the rise of the Keeramak—a multicolored Ssi-Ruu that is thought to fulfill prophecy. The Praetorite Vong hope to use the Ssi-Ruuk as a diversion during the invasion.

Nom Anor

Executor Nom Anor is one of the chief spies among the Praetorite Vong. A member of the intendant caste, Anor disguises himself as the leader of the Red Knights of Life on Rhommamool and works to bring down Sernpidal's moon, killing millions. He is credited as being responsible for half the invasion. Anor infiltrates the Imperial Interim Council and strikes a deal with Boba Fett to have the Mandalorians aid the invasion force.

Yomin Carr

An agent and scout of the Praetorite Vong, Yomin Carr infiltrates the ExGal station on Belkadan. From there, Carr keeps in contact with Prefect Da'Gara using a hidden villip to coordinate the destruction of the populace. He is also responsible for infecting New Republic diplomats with a fatal Yuuzhan Vong disease.

USING THE PRAETORITE VONG

In addition to baiting targets into ambushes, creating governmental strife, and spreading antidroid propaganda, the Praetorite Vong are not above making suicide attacks. Members of the Praetorite Vong will even commit ritual suicide when facing defeat.

To be a member of the Praetorite Vong, a character must be of the Yuuzhan Vong race or one of its inferior subjects. Players choosing to take on the role of a Praetorite Vong member must select a caste, a connection to the group, and their duties within it. Praetorite Vong characters have many opportunities for subterfuge, infiltration, and dealing with counterintelligence agents, perhaps from New Republic Intelligence or local organizations.

Few creatures can find allies among the Praetorite Vong. Members of races that respect nature and shy away from technology are more likely to find common ground with most Yuuzhan Vong, and anyone willing to convert and follow the will of the invaders' gods might receive aid. In addition, the Praetorite Vong might be willing to make temporary truces to gain assistance or unhindered travel. They are most likely to ally with the Mandalorians and the Hutts early in the invasion. Aside from the main forces, the Shamed Ones—who hold the *Jeedai*, or Jedi, in almost religious awe—might collaborate with other races if they believe that it will lead to their freedom.

Droids, Jedi, and Force-users in general are targets for the wrath of the Praetorite Vong, although their hatred does not end there. The Yuuzhan Vong are at war with the entire galaxy. Even those who ally with the invaders might find themselves at odds with the extragalactic race, especially if they make undercover attempts to aid Yuuzhan Vong targets or report the details of Yuuzhan Vong fleet locations.

THE TAGGE COMPANY

The Tagge Company ("TaggeCo") is one of the most diversified megacorporations in the galaxy. It starts as a heavy construction, mining, and exploration company that, to a large degree, is a front for a crime syndicate with an extensive interest in counterfeiting and contraband. By the time of the Clone Wars, however, it transforms into a legitimate business operation, even if it continues to operate in a brutal fashion.

TaggeCo is founded 200 years before the Battle of Yavin when a crime boss, Tarzen Tagge, becomes a local hero on his Mid Rim homeworld of Tepas by using his fleet of small freighters (and a couple of hijacked bulk freighters) to ferry supplies and crews to a part of the world devastated by a series of groundquakes. By the time the area's production facilities and roads are rebuilt, the foundation of TaggeCo is also in place.

Although Tarzen Tagge could have taken this chance to convert his enterprise into a legitimate business, he is so entrenched in the criminal mindset that he sees the construction company as the perfect front for his smuggling operation. While the company secures and works construction contracts on other worlds, the criminal side of the enterprise uses those opportunities to smuggle goods to new markets.

Even though his construction firm is a front, Tarzen insists that it deliver top-notch work because he does not want the facade to become the target of complaints or investigations. The end result is a reputation so sterling that the company competes on a galactic scale within a few short decades. In fact, suppliers cannot keep up with the company's demand for construction materials when it lands a contract to expand a starport on Wroona. Although Tarzen first attempts to fall back on old habits—stealing supplies from the competition—his brother Halven suggests that they start their own supply chain to locate and mine resources.

Tarzen receives permission to explore a large group of planets that were set aside centuries ago for corporate development by the Republic. When established megacorporations try to stop this rapidly growing upstart by refusing to sell it scout ships and supplies, the Tagges acquire a small company that specializes in customizing ships and convert it to a full-fledged ship construction and design firm by extending employment offers (of the kind that cannot be refused) to a handful of engineers. Soon, the company has its own multipurpose bulk freighter/survey ship/colony transport, the highly sophisticated House of Tagge Mining Explorer.

In the background, the criminal enterprise continues. The Mining Explorers carry everything needed to survey planetary systems and perform analyses of samples on location, and they double as mobile bases for establishing planetary operations. Meanwhile, the ships' labs serve as drug refining centers. The shipyard that builds the Mining Explorers also does a booming side business in knock-off parts for other ships.

The various industries started by Tarzen Tagge and his brother feed the legitimate economy of their homeworld, sparking a boom that Tepas has not seen since its initial colonization. The grateful government grants Tarzen a

chain of islands as a hereditary barony. In less than a generation, the Tagges go from being lowlifes to rubbing elbows with the galactic elite.

At its height, TaggeCo owns hundreds of subsidiaries, including publishing houses, news agencies, starship design firms, shipyards, computer companies, security providers, speeder design and manufacturing firms, medical and pharmaceutical corporations, and more. It expands most rapidly during Palpatine's reign as Chancellor of the Republic and becomes a symbol of his New Order during the Empire. For a while, the company's oft-lampooned slogan "TaggeCo: We're Everywhere You Are" is absolutely true.

When the New Order falls to the Rebel Alliance, TaggeCo bears the brunt of the aftermath. Its assets are seized by local governments throughout space, and many of its executives are imprisoned or killed. Within a few short years, an enterprise that had spanned the stars is reduced to a single facility on Tepas, where the Tagge name is still revered.

GOALS

For the first few hundred years of its existence, TaggeCo has the straightforward goal of maximizing its profits and expansion through any means possible. During the Imperial period, this means taking full advantage of any political or business opportunity that is connected to Emperor Palpatine's government, as well as doing everything it can to put down uprisings against the New Order. After Palpatine's fall, the company struggles to save what it can as it crumbles to pieces.

METHODS

When conventional buy-out offers for competitors or enticing employment contracts for executives fail, TaggeCo falls back on intimidation, blackmail, industrial espionage, and terrorism. The company's intelligence-gathering capacity rivals that of Imperial Intelligence, and TaggeCo is even more unscrupulous in its methods.

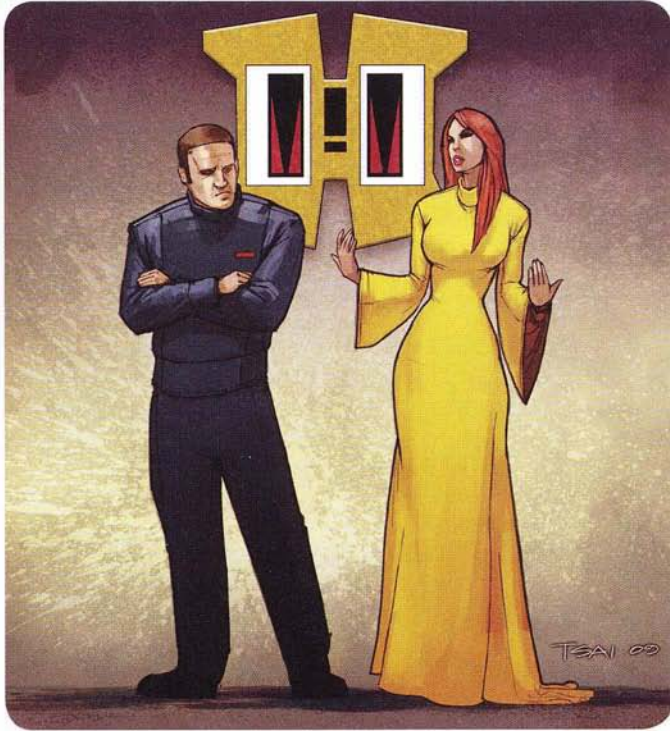
NOTABLE MEMBERS

The Tagge family has been known for flamboyance and brutality since it first emerged on the galactic scene.

Domina Tagge

The fifth child of the core Tagge family, Domina is born two years before the death of her parents, and, from the age of 7, she is raised in an isolated monastery by a religious order founded around Jedi traditions of peace and harmony (but not the Force). Her oldest brother sends her there, hoping that the isolation from the family business and the corrupting influence of New Order operatives will allow her to develop into a woman of true nobility—someone who might bring grace to the thuggish Tagge family and guide the company into a future divorced from its criminal roots.

Orman's dreams for his little sister are shattered when Darth Vader draws her into their feud. Vader uses Domina and the Sacred Circle Monastery as part of a scheme to capture Luke Skywalker, but she double-crosses Vader



because she sees his plan as an opportunity to gain revenge on those responsible for the deaths of her brothers, Orman and Silas. Domina is as ruthless and calculating as any Tagge since her great-grandfather Tarzen.

Following her conflict with Vader and Skywalker, Domina is forced to leave the Sacred Circle, and she assumes leadership of TaggeCo and the title of baroness. She turns the company's security forces and laboratories toward destroying the Rebels, and for several years, TaggeCo poses as much of a threat to the Alliance as the Imperial military and intelligence agencies do. However, Domina remains obsessed with vengeance against Darth Vader, and her fixation undermines the effectiveness with which TaggeCo coordinates its efforts with the Empire.

Domina Tagge vanishes under mysterious circumstances while inspecting a laboratory that develops biological weapons.

Silas Tagge

The second oldest Tagge sibling during the reign of Emperor Palpatine, Silas Tagge is a brilliant engineer and physicist who leads TaggeCo's network of research facilities, which include pharmaceutical labs and secret weapons design shops. Silas Tagge approaches science the way some beings approach religion—with complete fanaticism and a devotion that overwhelms common

sense. He never wears natural fibers and never eats anything but highly processed food substitutes, usually vitamin-enriched pastes.

Tagge's devotion to all things scientific is matched only by his amorality and sociopathy. No sacrifice is too great if it advances his projects, and, since his projects are funded through TaggeCo, no sacrifice is too great to ensure the company's success. Of course, underlings and test subjects always make those sacrifices.

Under his guidance, TaggeCo becomes a scientific brain trust rivaled only by government-sponsored efforts on Arkania and projects managed by the Empire's Grand Moff Tarkin and Grand Admiral Zaarin. In fact, the Empire and TaggeCo compete for the best and brightest students from technical academies throughout the galaxy, with TaggeCo often recruiting the superior talent due to a habit of making offers that cannot be refused.

Tagge and his design teams are almost as prolific as Tarkin and Zaarin when it comes to devising weapons of mass destruction. His crowning achievement is the Omega Frost, a weapon that uses electromagnetics and other force fields to drop temperatures below what had been considered absolute zero in an area that could theoretically span an entire solar system.

Tarzen Tagge

Although descended from a long line of criminals, Tarzen Tagge loves his homeworld of Tepasi and is willing to sacrifice selflessly for it. He lays the foundation for TaggeCo when he takes on the task of rebuilding a ground-quake-ravaged region after the planetary government fails to take action. He also sets the stage for TaggeCo's future methods by using his new wealth and prestige to destroy the politicians who did not help the locals. Tarzen is a brutal thug, and he delights in shocking members of the corporate elite.

USING TAGGECO

TaggeCo can be the source of just about any form of intrigue and double-dealing.

During the company's early years, heroes might be smugglers working for the company or scouts conducting surveys for it. Along the way, they discover that there is more to the job than meets the eye. After the heroes gain this knowledge, a TaggeCo executive marks them for death—or perhaps invites them deeper into the company's heart of darkness.

During the initial years of Orman Tagge's reign, the heroes might be industrial spies working for or against TaggeCo. Later, Rebel agents could break into the company to steal plans for a weapon being developed for the Empire.

After the Battle of Yavin, the heroes might infiltrate TaggeCo to learn which of the company's many Mining Explorers houses a secret Imperial Intelligence prison, knowledge the heroes need to rescue a key captive. Established Rebel agents might find themselves contacted by Orman Tagge, who wants to recruit them in a scheme to embarrass or assassinate Darth Vader. The heroes might also be hired by Domina, but if they are Alliance agents rather than independent operators, she is likely to betray them at the end of their mission.

TAPANI NOBLES

The noble houses of the Tapani arise after an ambitious warlord named Shey Tapani brings several squabbling independent Human colonies under one banner some 7,300 years before the Battle of Yavin. Tapani allows the leaders of the conquered colonies some degree of self-governance, naming them nobles in the Tapani Empire.

The government system unique to this isolated section of the Colonies Region evolves for centuries on its own, apart from the Sith Empire, the Republic, and other major powers that rise and fall around it. The Tapani Empire trades with its Herglic and Mrlsst neighbors, but since no major hyperspace lanes enter its territory, it has little contact with the rest of the galaxy. During this time, Tapani society becomes severely stratified; the ruling elite develop a three-tiered system of nobles, and those who are ruled do what they are told. The ordinary citizens are mostly happy and prosperous because the nobles are expected to uphold codes of conduct meant to prevent excesses, but commoners can hope to achieve the rank of knight at best—the only nonhereditary noble rank. Lords and Highlords are born, not made.

After a dynasty that lasts nearly 5,000 years, the Tapani Empire gives way to a federal government ruled by a council of nobles from the empire's one-time capital on Procopia. Seven noble houses oversee dozens of minor ones, arranged in an elaborate hierarchy that evolves over centuries, and a vast lower class of common citizens. The seven major houses of Tapani are House Barnaba, House Cadriaan, House Calipsa, House Mecetti, House Melantha, House Pelagia, and House Reena. Each determines how to govern the planets over which it holds sway, but they present a united front to outsiders. This unity eventually gains them admission into the Old Republic, and the Tapani Sector is formally created. Consistently navigable hyperspace lanes are charted, and from these, routes to major Tapani worlds are charted in turn.

Although the Tapani send representatives to the Galactic Senate—representatives appointed by the Grand Council rather than elected by the people—they view the Republic as a business necessity and look down on the rest of civilization, when they care about it at all. The Tapani nobles remain interested mostly in their internal affairs, dealing with the outside only when absolutely necessary.

An exception arises when the Jedi discover that the bloodline of House Pelagia is strong in the Force and that an unusually high number of commoners native to the House's throneworld of Pelagon are Force-sensitive. The Jedi establish a training center on the world, which gives House Pelagia more of a stake in the galaxy. While the rest of the noble Houses enrich themselves financially through the use of the new trade routes, House Pelagia becomes the most outward looking and cosmopolitan among them. Together, House Pelagia, House Melantha, and House Cadriaan become the only economic and political forces that truly matter in the sector as the Republic slouches toward Empire.

Pelagia pays a heavy price for its association with the Jedi, however. When the Jedi Purge is decreed, Pelagia's ancient rival House Melantha strikes hard against its holdings, using ships and weapons that Emperor Palpatine secretly provided to them in preparation for this day. House Pelagia is shattered, and House Melantha seizes most of its territory, leaving only a few token bombed-out worlds as its domain. House Melantha goes on to become the Emperor's favored proxy in the sector, although he makes sure that the other Houses also remain strong so that Melantha does not grow too confident. (The exception is House Pelagia. It survives the Rebellion era on the charity of allied Houses like Calipsa and Reena and starts its slow rebuilding process only after the Emperor's demise at the Battle of Endor.)

GOALS

All Tapani nobles are driven to succeed, to be the best in their chosen fields, and to receive the maximum amount of public exposure for their acts. They pursue these goals not because they want to prove their superiority—that is a foregone conclusion—but because it is their duty to be the best at all they do. Anything less would be a betrayal of their heritage and their place in society. Tapani nobles always cover up their failures and shortcomings.

METHODS

Tapani nobles are a highly legalistic set of beings. They rely on social and legal codes to settle disputes and accomplish goals. If appeals to tradition do not resolve a situation, the nobles resort to lawsuits. If working through the proper channels also fails, they fall back on threats and blackmail. They rarely use these unsavory methods themselves, instead letting their retainers "do whatever is needed" so they can deny involvement if something goes wrong. The nobles are not above hiring spies and saboteurs to harass or inconvenience their personal, social, and business rivals.

Most crimes committed by Tapani nobles within their sector are swept under the rug by their peers and the courts, although the offenders are usually sent into exile. The exception to this arrangement is murder, especially if the victim was of noble rank—typically, killers are executed quickly and publicly.

If a dispute is more intimate, a Tapani noble might invoke an ancient code to challenge the offender to a duel. These duels are technically illegal, but no one is ever prosecuted for engaging in them.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Tapani nobles are as varied as the citizens they rule. Some are business dealers, some are artists, some are politicians, some are interested in spreading pain and suffering, and some are professional partiers more dedicated to the social circuit than the most frivolous Core World noble.

Grand Admiral Octavian Grant

Grand Admiral Grant is a Tapani Lord of House Mecetti who, after serving with distinction in the Tapani Home Defense Fleet, joins the Imperial Navy and proves himself a brilliant tactician during the late stages of the Clone Wars. He is one of the 12 officers to be elevated to grand admiral when Emperor Palpatine creates that rank.

Although Grant has a brilliant military mind, he does not generate the sort of personal following that the other grand admirals do—at least, not outside the Tapani Sector. He is much loved at home, and the Tapani media cover every campaign he conducts and every function he attends throughout the galaxy with great detail, with reporters assigned to do nothing but keep track of him. However, Grant carries with him the belief that he, as a Tapani

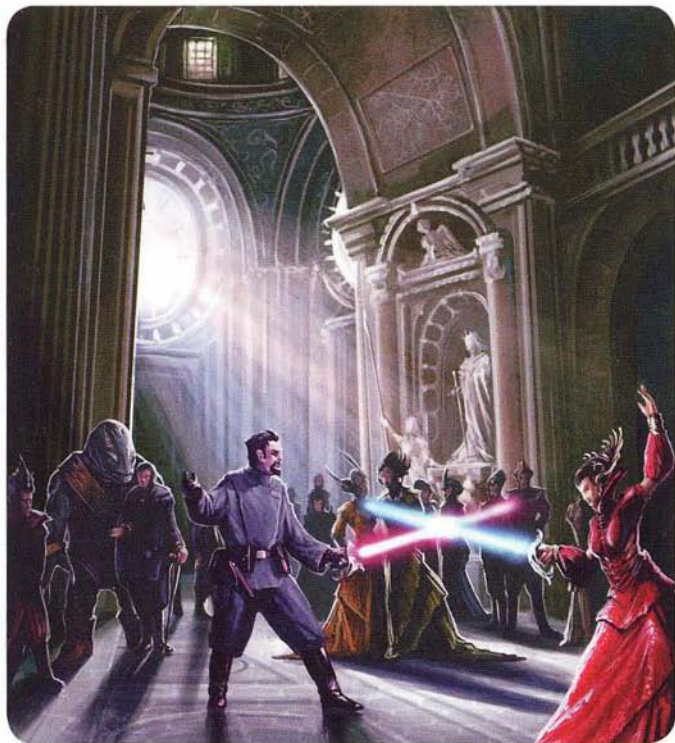
noble, is superior to those he deals with. He is not aggressive about declaring his superiority, but he never curries favor with sector Moffs or Imperial advisors, nor does he engage in political games with other admirals. He will not lower himself to the level of his inferiors but simply performs his duties as the Emperor has decreed. (Secretly, Grant wonders if perhaps even Emperor Palpatine is inferior to him, being neither a true noble nor Tapani.)

After the Battle of Endor, Grant alone among the surviving grand admirals does not continue the fight against the Rebels or try to carve out a personal kingdom. Instead, he offers to defect to the Rebel Alliance, an offer that is turned down. However, the Alliance allows Grant to retire to a private estate on the Inner Rim resort world of Rathalay.

Grant remains a celebrated figure in the Tapani Sector, and whenever he hosts a gathering at his Rathalay home, it is covered in the society sections of news broadcasts.

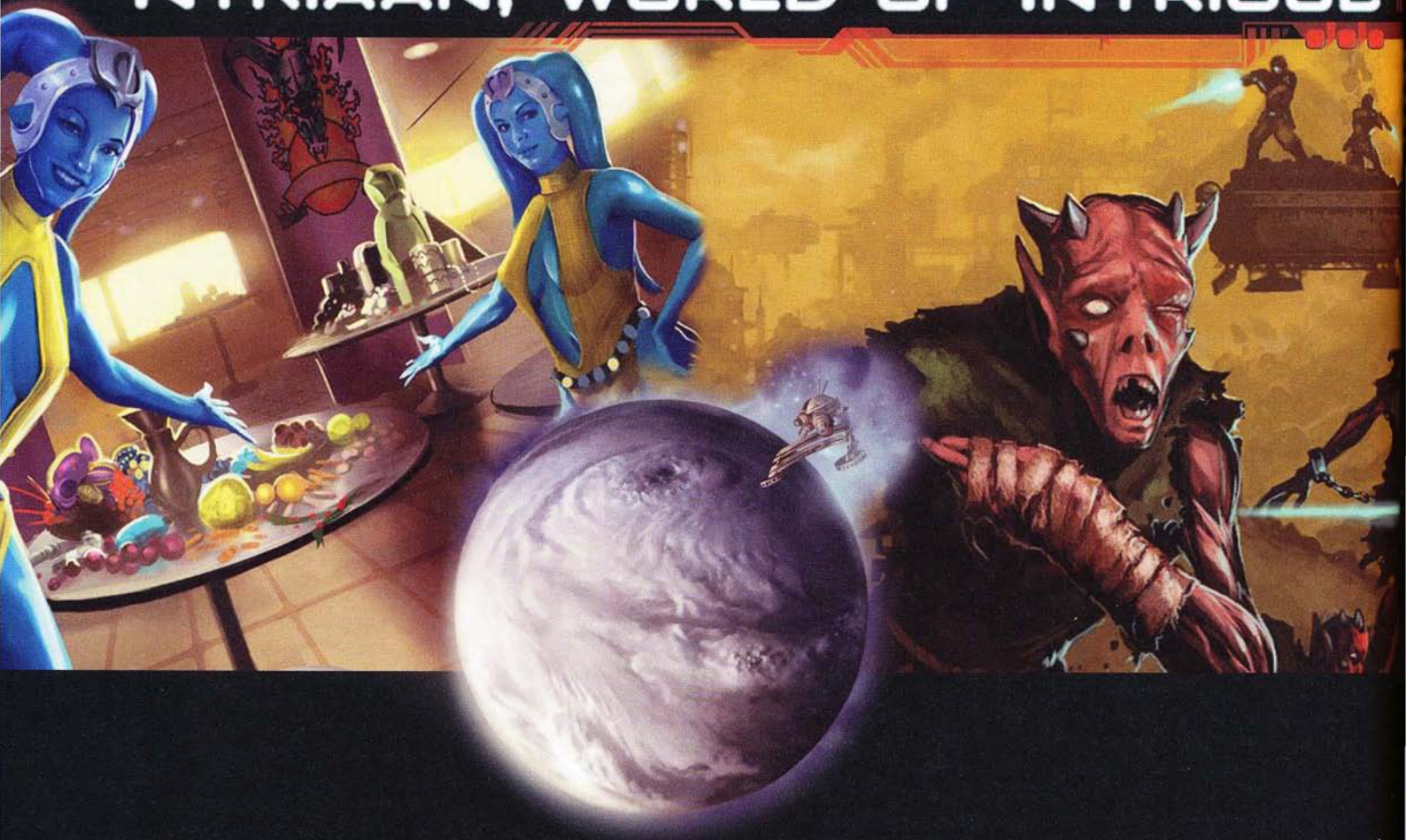
USING THE TAPANI NOBLES

Tapani nobles are an insular lot, but during the Imperial period, members of House Pelagia try to rebuild their fortunes and reputation by engaging in business outside the sector. They are watched by the Empire and harassed by agents of House Melantha, both of whom fear that Jedi might still be hiding in the rubble of Pelagia. Nobles of House Pelagia might hire a party of heroes to assist with various tasks, or perhaps one of the characters is a member of the House.



TAPANI NOBLES

CHAPTER VI NYRIAAN, WORLD OF INTRIGUE





The planet Nyriaan is the center of a struggle as turbulent as the planet's violent atmosphere. It is a world rich in madilon, a rare naturally occurring alloy that is crucial to modern hyperdrive production, making Nyriaan an invaluable piece on the game boards of a dozen competing galactic superpowers. Nyriaan possesses great stores of a much-sought-after commodity, and many beings in the galaxy would do almost anything to acquire those resources. Controlled by none and coveted by many, Nyriaan is a dangerous planet steeped in intrigue and conspiracy.

Nyriaan is covered in a dense cloud layer that makes landing on the planet without assistance challenging. Moreover, the planet's atmosphere makes sending data and other communication by any means difficult, effectively walling off the planet from the rest of the galaxy. The high demand for Nyriaan's resources, combined with the difficulty that outsiders face when attempting to intervene in the planet's affairs, creates a situation where only those on the planet can truly influence the flow of resources to the galaxy, and it puts a great deal of power in the hands of those who control the madilon mines on the planet's surface.

By the same token, the inhabitants of Nyriaan are caught in the midst of a constant struggle between the various factions seeking to control the planet's natural resources. Daily life on Nyriaan is filled with political maneuvering, infighting between factions, espionage, sabotage, and the scheming machinations of the most cunning minds in the galaxy. Although tensions on Nyriaan rarely erupt into full-scale, violent conflict, the intrigue runs so thick on the planet that anyone—and everyone—is entangled in some scheme or plot.

TEN ASPECTS OF NYRIAAN

Nyriaan is a world where heroes with a knack for intrigue can flourish. As the Gamemaster, you should familiarize yourself with the basics of the planet to create adventures filled with twisting plots and unraveling mysteries.

Nyriaan is rich with a rare mineral called madilon. Madilon, valuable even in small quantities, is a mineral that allows hyperdrives to be miniaturized enough to fit into smaller ships, such as space transports and starfighters.

Nyriaan is covered in a cloud layer that blocks communications and makes unaided landing on the planet almost impossible. Communications, sensors, and other methods of broadcasting and receiving information are ineffective when trying to penetrate the planet's atmosphere. Even communications on the surface face serious challenges. The planet's unique atmosphere both isolates it and serves as a protective shield.

The planet's governing council is comprised of members representing several different factions that constantly vie for greater control of the planet's mining industry. The Corporate Sector Authority, the Mining Guild, and the current reigning galactic government (be it Republic, Empire, or otherwise) all hold seats on the governing council and share control of the planetary government.



NYRIAAN'S GOVERNING COUNCIL

The factions on Nyriaan strive to undermine and weaken one another in the hopes of driving off competitors. Although the government of the planet is shared, each faction struggles for power and tries to depose its weaker enemies to increase its own share of control over Nyriaan.

Temporary alliances, and their inevitable betrayal and collapse, keep the wheels turning on Nyriaan. No faction has ever risen to dominate Nyriaan because as one faction grows too powerful, the others unite against it. The factions are forced to work together to prevent one faction from gaining too much power, but each faction is secretly working to tip the balance of power so far in its favor that the other factions can do nothing to stop it.

Workers in Nyriaan's mines have long been treated badly by the mining operations, eventually driving the workers to rebellion. The bureaucrats in charge of the mining operations on Nyriaan see their workers—including the relocated Elomin and Pa'lowick species—as a disposable commodity. Frequent worker uprisings must be squelched by the planet's police and military forces lest they disrupt the entire mining operation.

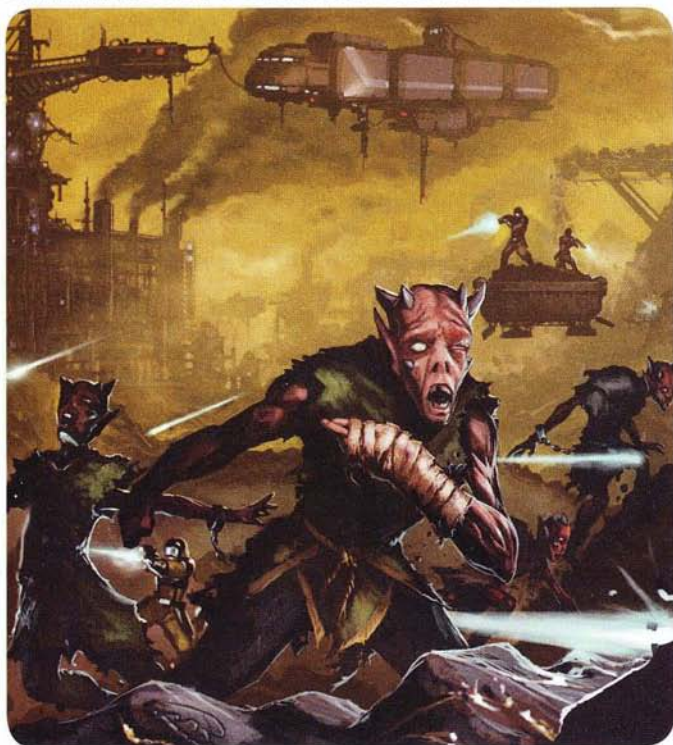
Sabotage, theft, and violence are common tactics used by the different factions. Although full-scale battles rarely break out on Nyriaan, the factions on the planet are not afraid to get their hands dirty by taking out opponents. Conspiracies, covert activity, assassinations, and other underhanded deeds are common means of advancing one's interests on Nyriaan.

Anyone who visits the planet is assumed to be working for a faction—either an off-world faction or one from Nyriaan. No one comes to Nyriaan without good reason, and any new arrivals are immediately treated as potential allies or enemies by the factions of the world. Unsuspecting visitors who are unused to the high degree of political maneuvering constantly taking place on Nyriaan are soon drawn into conflicts they had no intention of meddling in.

Nyriaan's cloud layer enables conflicting groups to use the world as neutral ground. Since Nyriaan's atmosphere makes invasion fleets and orbital bombardment nearly useless, Nyriaan is used as a haven where meetings between rival factions can take place without fear of ambush. Diplomats from warring offworld groups commonly meet on Nyriaan to broker treaties and other deals.

Nyriaan holds many secrets. Nyriaan is home to a Sith Lord in stasis, a cache of ancient Mandalorian weapons, and other mysteries that have yet to be uncovered. From time to time, scavengers and other treasure hunters come to Nyriaan, hoping to plunder the planet of its secret riches. Some of these treasure hunters are sponsored by major factions on Nyriaan.

ELOMIN MINERS ESCAPE RETRIBUTION FOLLOWING A RIOT.



SHROUDED IN SECRECY

Nyriaan is the fifth planet of the Luire system. Although located in the Mid Rim, the Luire system is so close to the Expansion Region that it has been mistakenly labeled as part of that region from time to time. If not for Nyriaan's unique atmosphere and strong magnetic fields, its valuable resources likely would have been exploited and completely depleted by the corporate operations that left many Expansion Region systems in tatters.

Aside from Nyriaan's deposits of madilon, there is little else of value in the Luire system. Of the seven planets that orbit the system's white star, which is also known as Luire, Nyriaan is the only habitable world. Five of the remaining six planets are gas giants with countless small moons. The last planet, Caillte, is a frozen, irregularly shaped asteroid, rarely noticed by passing prospectors.

Nyriaan's cloak of perpetual clouds blocks light from its sun. The clouds descend to the surface of the planet, forming thick fog banks and restricting visibility. The planet's unusually strong ionosphere and intense magnetic field render all conventional communications, sensors, and scanning equipment useless. Landing on Nyriaan is a risky endeavor. Apart from the hazards presented by the impenetrable atmosphere, powerful storms in the planet's ionosphere can ionize starship systems and nullify sensors. Vessels with hardened systems stand a better chance of surviving the descent, but only a few such vessels of sufficient size exist in the galaxy—most are automated drones or small survey ships with little capacity for colonization.

MADILON

Even though Nyriaan is home to a number of other valuable resources, not the least of which is its distinctive biosphere, the bounty that most groups seek to reap from the planet is the alloy madilon. Discovered in the Old Republic era, about 5,000 years before the Great Hyperspace War, madilon enables hyperdrive technology to become progressively smaller. Using madilon, starship and hyperdrive manufacturers create relatively small vessels with excellent hyperdrive capability. Without madilon, however, powerful modern hyperdrives would need to be ten times larger.

Madilon is a naturally occurring, light-weight memory alloy with a unique molecular structure. The alloy possesses high tensile strength while still retaining an incredible amount of elasticity, especially under stress. These properties allow it to remain rigid while still resisting the stressful effects of hyperspace travel. Even though its role in hyperdrive construction is so important, the amount of madilon required for a single hyperdrive system is relatively small. Successful synthesis of the material has eluded scientists, making veins of the alloy highly prized and sought after the galaxy over. Few planets possess significant deposits of madilon, and those that do are tightly guarded.

NYRIAAN

Region: Mid Rim

Climate: Tropical

Gravity: Standard

Moons: 2

Length of Day: 22.25 standard hours

Length of Year: 226 standard days

Sapient Species: 98% Human, 2% other species

Government: Various

Capital: Locus

Major Exports: Ore (madilon), radioactive compounds

Major Imports: Equipment, foodstuffs, luxury items

Knowledge (Galactic Lore)

DC RESULT

- 15 Nyriaan is a major source of madilon, an alloy crucial to the construction of hyperdrive engines.
- 20 The planet's strong magnetic field and thick, turbulent ionosphere disable conventional sensors, making landing on the planetary surface without aid nearly impossible.
- 25 Nyriaan hosts no native sapient species, but several Human tribes populate the world's farthest reaches. These tribes are said to be descended from an exploration vessel that crash-landed on Nyriaan at least one thousand years ago.
- 30 Scientists have hypothesized that Nyriaan's cloudy atmosphere might be forcibly condensed on a planetary scale, neutralizing the atmospheric disturbance and creating a number of seas on the planet's surface.

ATMOSPHERE AND WEATHER

The surface of Nyriaan is moist and sultry, but not particularly wet. Although standing bodies of water are relatively rare, the world's perpetual fog and thick cloud cover ensure that nothing is ever completely dry. The heat retained by the thick atmosphere is generated by intense geothermal activity deep beneath the planetary crust, and it is released by vast geyser fields and hot springs. Although Nyriaan's atmosphere is predominately nitrogen and oxygen, the constant expulsion of hot gasses from the planet's interior causes the air to be strong with the scent of sulfur and other gasses.

The mean surface temperature of 40° centigrade is within acceptable limits for most species, but the heat is further exacerbated by the world's extreme humidity. Nyriaan's polar regions are no exception to this rule since most of the planet's geothermal anomalies are located at its poles. Visitors find Nyriaan's climate to be extremely uncomfortable, even after prolonged exposure.

Vast storms—referred to as tempests by Nyriaan's populace—are a constant threat to settlements and mining camps. Coalescing high in the planet's choking atmosphere, these massive storm formations eventually extend from the edge of space to the surface the planet. A tempest can last for months, circling the globe several times before dispersing. At any one time, as many as a dozen small tempests can be active, with major disturbances occurring once every three or four years. The lack of mountains and other large surface features contributes to the force and violence of Nyriaan's tempests.

Since surface-based sensors are useless, Nyriaan's tempests must be monitored visually from orbit. Daily reports are exchanged between surface facilities and the Tempest Observation Bureau by laser comm arrays. Although it is apolitical and billed as a neutral organization, the TOB commands a great deal of power and respect on Nyriaan because of the Bureau's access to up-to-the-minute weather feeds and analysis, as well as the extensive storm database it uses to analyze tempests and predict possible trends.

GEOGRAPHY

The surface of Nyriaan consists of plains and gently rolling hills. Low-lying gullies and valleys collect moisture, creating boggy conditions and increased growth of the native flora. The northern hemisphere consists of shallow, rocky valleys, where most of Nyriaan's mining operations are found. Only a few viable mines and quarries are located in the southern hemisphere, and the loamy soil found there does not conceal much in the way of valuable alloys, ores, or minerals. The largest standing bodies of water on Nyriaan, such as Lake Viron and the Yellow Sea, are found in the planet's southern hemisphere.

Even though Nyriaan features a great deal of geothermal activity, few active volcanoes break through the planetary surface. Fields of hot-water geysers and boiling springs are common, especially in the planet's extreme polar regions. The extreme temperatures and the dangerous eruptions of steam, poisonous gasses, and mud make these geologically active areas not navigable by foot. Several of Nyriaan's known indigenous species are evolved to survive these extremes of temperature, but most of the native species have yet to be researched and catalogued.

SURFACE CONDITIONS

Nyriaan is a dark place, but in the wild, bioluminescent flora produce a significant amount of ambient light. Although shrouded in mists and fogs of varying density, the planet's surface is still navigable. Given optimal atmospheric conditions, visibility averages about 30 meters (20 squares), creating an eerie landscape in which the light shines up from the ground rather than down from the sky. Larger species of local fungi, which spring treelike from the soil, develop brightly glowing buds—or lanterns, as they are called locally—that shed even more light.

Even in populated settlements and cities, surfaces are covered with beds of fungus that produce dim phosphorescence. Constant attention and cleaning is required to remove such fungal accumulations, which can grow into massive coral-like formations. Vehicles, weapons, and personal armor are not immune to this phenomenon and must be scrupulously maintained to preserve functionality.

Although most equipment can be used on the planetary surface without ill effect, sensors and communications gear suffer from interference. Personal comlinks are rendered useless by the interference, while computers and datapads, if properly shielded, can be used without penalty. Most surface-to-surface and surface-to-orbit communication is accomplished by laser comms. Electrobinoculars, recording devices, and sensor packs, however, are incompatible with Nyriaan's atmospheric peculiarities. The sensitive surveillance gear used by spies is also affected, although many factions have developed units that function despite the ambient interference.

SKILL CHALLENGE: OVERLAND SURVIVAL

Traveling across the surface of Nyriaan can be dangerous, especially given the fact that the planet's atmosphere tends to wreak havoc with portable sensors and other survival equipment. Should the heroes find themselves stranded on Nyriaan with no means of transportation (for example, if their ship crashed on approach to the planet), you can use this skill challenge to represent the difficulty of making it to safety. Note that this should be a challenge for low- to mid-level heroes; by the time the heroes reach 8th–10th level, they should have enough resources and survivability to make their way across the planet safely. If the heroes are traveling through a particularly hazardous area of the planet, feel free to scale up the challenge by increasing its CL (and adjusting the skill DCs accordingly).

CL 6

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this challenge:

Endurance [DC 17]: A hero can attempt to carry more of the burden of supplies or to take on more than his or her share of the scouting and hunting duties in order to allow his or her allies to preserve their strength.

Knowledge (physical sciences) [DC 17]: A hero can attempt to use his or her knowledge of terrain formations to find easier paths, reducing the chances of running into danger during the trek.

Survival [DC 22]: A hero can attempt to use common survival techniques to bolster his or her allies' energy reserves and find adequate food, water, and shelter during the trek.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Degrees of Failure: Each time a hero earns a failure (whether or not that failure is later removed), the heroes are delayed in their trek by one day.

Recovery: Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more can forfeit that success in exchange for removing one failure.

Second Effort: Whenever a participant in the skill challenge would accrue a failure, he or she can instead choose to move –1 persistent step down the condition track to turn that failure into a success. This persistent condition can only be removed by resting for 8 hours in a civilized location with adequate food, water, and medical resources.

Success: The heroes make it safely to civilization. The time it takes to reach civilization depends on their relative distance and overland speed, modified by the number of failures they accrued (see the *Degrees of Failure* challenge effect, above).

Failure: The heroes become lost in the wilderness of Nyriaan and encounter a hazard or dangerous wildlife in an encounter appropriate to their level. Once that encounter is complete, they can attempt this skill challenge again to reach civilization.

SETTLEMENTS

Settlements dot Nyriaan's surface. Few contain large populations; most settlements average fewer than five hundred inhabitants each. A settlement might persist for several years, only to be destroyed by a passing tempest or abandoned when a nearby mine dries up. Many such settlements spring back to life years later, although not always in the same locations as their previous incarnations.

Large communities, such as Locus, are built on Nyriaan's driest land, where larger permanent structures can be erected with little threat of moisture-induced subsidence in the soil. Aside from the constant darkness and inclement weather, little differentiates these small cities from their counterparts on other planets throughout the galaxy. Architecture ranges from prefabricated colonial structures to buildings of the proto-Imperial style common on other colony worlds.

Settlements established by the Corporate Sector Authority are modern and visually striking. All are brightly lit, highly regimented, and well maintained. CSA guards patrol in small groups, routinely checking everyone for proper identification and authorization to travel. Conversely, independent mining towns are universally shoddy in their construction. Crime is rampant, and law in such places is determined by whoever can defend themselves and the stakes they claim.

Arumed

Arumed is a small Corporate Sector facility that manages to survive unimpeded due to its focus on biotechnology and medicine, as opposed to madilon. The settlement is named after AruMed, the corporation that administers it. Unlike other CSA facilities, this settlement welcomes anyone in need. Although its corporate policy emphasizes obtaining new biotechnologies from previously undiscovered planetary resources, doctors in the facility are willing to offer emergency and even long-term care to individuals in need.

The doctors' behavior is not entirely altruistic. Arumed's chief scientists are studying the physiology of those living on Nyriaan, especially as it concerns symbiotic fungal growths such as Tempest's Blessing. Most natives avoid Arumed, but those who do end up in the care of the corporation's physicians are often subjected to tests that exceed the scope of any injury or condition they might be suffering.

Plot Hook: Several natives have vanished in the vicinity of Arumed, and native scouts sent to find them disappear as well. The heroes are contacted by a native delegation from Starveil that wants to locate its missing people without stirring up trouble. They suspect that the missing natives are being held in the Arumed facility, perhaps against their will.

Locus, Capital of Nyriaan

The planetary capital of Nyriaan is Locus, which is built around the remains of the Republic vessel of the same name. Home to the only starport on the planet, Locus is not controlled by any one superpower or government. Instead, the city, which is built in a pinwheel shape, has been divided into different sectors, each of which is controlled by a different faction. In addition to the aligned sectors, several neutral zones in Locus cater to independent miners, prospectors, and traders. After its establishment in 30 BBY, the Nyriaan Concord is also headquartered in one of the city's neutral zones.

The largest of the city's aligned sectors belongs to the Corporate Sector Authority. The CSA has a long-standing interest in Nyriaan, either because the planet represents such incredible profits or because the Corporate Sector is unwilling to admit that the madilon it takes from the planetary mines is more trouble than it's worth. The Corporate City Sector is heavily trafficked by armed security, and high walls topped by stun fields surround it on all sides. In addition to facilities that cater to CSA employees and house its day-to-day operations, the Corporate City Sector of Locus also features a small starport, complete with advanced Laser Transport Array receivers.

The Republic Sector is the next largest of Locus's regions. Although it changes hands several times over the course of Nyriaan's history, the Republic Sector is the most recognizable part of the city, no matter the era. Upkeep is sporadic, sector services are largely undependable, and security is alternately lax or heavy handed. Although far from a slum, the Republic Sector does not compare favorably to the Corporate City Sector in a variety of ways.

The Neutral Zone is in the center of Locus. In addition to housing the planetary government after its establishment, it is also home to Nyriaan's one true spaceport. Raised gondola transport systems and a wide net of Laser Transport Arrays surround the facility like iron flowers. The sector's services are provided by independent contractors and are, therefore, more reliable than those found in the Republic Sector. Living conditions decline the farther from the spaceport one travels, and neighborhoods farthest from the city's hub are little better than slums.

The majority of Nyriaan's criminal activity takes place in Locus's Neutral Zone. Criminal syndicates, such as Hutt kajidics and Black Sun, operate

there with relative impunity. Violence, while not common, is not unknown in the seedier parts of the sector. The Neutral Zone also provides a haven for espionage, as agents from the ruling factions rub elbows with one another in cantinas, speakeasies, and supply depots.

Plot Hook: A Corporate Sector employee contacts the heroes, asking for aid. He possesses information concerning a valuable shipment of madilon (or another commodity) that is scheduled to leave Locus, and he is looking for a party to sabotage the CSA Laser Transport Arrays, causing the transport carrying the shipment to crash. In reality, the shipment is part of an off-world personnel transfer, and the mission is actually an attempt at an internal CSA assassination.

New Lowick

In 29 BBY, the Corporate Sector Authority sponsors a large emigration of Pa'lowicks into the Luire system. Luring the aliens with promises of new lives as corporate employees on a lush world of opportunity and adventure, the Corporate Sector instead provides the newly indentured Pa'lowicks with back-breaking labor in the madilon mines. Although many Pa'lowicks honor their one-sided contracts with the CSA, a handful break ties with their new masters to eke out an existence elsewhere. The settlement of New Lowick results from these defections.

With its population composed solely of Pa'lowicks, New Lowick might be mistaken for a traditional Pa'lowick village. The Pa'lowicks, being adaptable, grow accustomed to Nyriaan's harsh climate. In fact, those who leave their CSA contracts behind soon come to appreciate their new home for its moist atmosphere, dark ambience, and plentiful fungi. Friendly and open to new alliances, the free Pa'lowicks reach out to other Nyriaanans with varying degrees of success.

The appearance of New Lowick does little to stem the tide of Corporate Sector greed. Once word of the Pa'lowick settlement reaches the CSA, retrieval teams are sent to bring back laborers who have violated their work contracts. In addition to netting guilty Pa'lowicks, the CSA also manages to capture a handful of Pa'lowicks who are legally free. Unwilling to spend time on such trivialities, the CSA puts the captives back to work while making painful examples of those that refuse to submit.

Despite the occasional raids by CSA security, New Lowick continues to thrive. An underground community is established to aid Pa'lowicks and others who have been forced into labor by the CSA. Not only do the free Pa'lowicks of New Lowick support this freedom movement, several native settlements participate as well. After all, anything that harms the Corporate Sector's operations on Nyriaan is seen as beneficial to the native clans.

Plot Hook: A recent violator of a Corporate Sector labor contract is hiding in New Lowick. A Pa'lowick with unusual Force powers, the fugitive is considered blessed by her fellow Pa'lowicks. The Corporate Sector Authority knows of the fugitive's powers and has been using her as an organic divining rod to locate madilon deposits in the mines. The heroes are approached by the

Pa'lowick underground and asked to escort the fugitive away from Nyriaan. Conversely, the CSA might contact the players and ask them to track down and capture the wayward worker.

Prosperity

The largest CSA settlement outside Locus is cynically dubbed Prosperity by the corporate employees who originally settled it. Nevertheless, Prosperity is a bright light in the dark Nyriaanan wilderness. A good deal of this light is cast outward toward the world beyond its fifteen-meter-high walls. The fusion generators that power Prosperity are never turned off, and the terrain surrounding the community has been cleared of any obstructions to provide CSA guards an open killing ground for over three hundred meters in every direction. In reality, Prosperity is little more than a frontier outpost erected to keep the natives at bay while the nearby Prosperity Mine is gutted of all remaining madilon.

NEW SPECIES: PA'LOWICK

The Pa'lowick, a species firmly grounded in tradition and belief, are native to the planet Lowick. Although primitive and reluctant to leave their homeworld under most circumstances, they nonetheless enjoy contact with other species and appreciate technology that they can use to further their traditional ways of life. A Pa'lowick has a rotund torso, slender arms and legs, two eyes atop short eyestalks, and a slim proboscis featuring a pair of Humanlike lips at the end. Tusks grow from a secondary mouth beneath the proboscis, but the tusks are lost when a Pa'lowick reaches middle age.

Pa'lowick Species Traits

Pa'lowicks share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: -2 Strength, +2 Wisdom.

Size: Pa'lowicks are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Pa'lowick base speed is 6 squares.

Expert Swimmer: A Pa'lowick can reroll any Swim check. In addition, a Pa'lowick can choose to take 10 on Swim checks even when distracted or threatened.

Hold Breath: Pa'lowicks are at home either in air or in water. A Pa'lowick can hold his or her breath for a number of rounds equal to 25 times his or her Constitution score before needing to make Endurance checks to hold his or her breath.

Primitive: Pa'lowicks do not gain Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, or heavy weapons) as starting feats at 1st level, even if their class normally grants them.

Language: Lowickese.

Weekly shipments of ore are sent to Locus for processing by repulsorlift transports, while new laborers and fresh troops are brought in at least once a month. Mortality rates are high in Prosperity for a number of reasons, the most evident being that the facility is a popular target for native insurgents. The Prosperity Mine is also rife with safety violations that would be corrected on other worlds.

Plot Hook: The CSA is experimenting with new mining technology in one of its nearby mines, and madilon output in Prosperity has increased by nearly two hundred percent. This rate of productivity, if sustained, might undermine the efforts of other interests on Nyriaan. The heroes are contacted to find out what the new mining technology is and, if possible, to sabotage it.

Silence

Silence stands as a testament to the grit of Nyriaan's independent miners and the entrepreneurial spirit of those who can remain planetside for an extended length of time. The run-down colonial prefabs of the original town center are covered in thick layers of phosphorescent fungus, barely resembling the structures that lie beneath. The streets of Silence, if you can call them such, are narrow, muddy, and treacherous.

Although Silence has little light, the small prospecting town does offer one amenity: company. The community here is as tightly knit and supportive as any you might find on Nyriaan or any other back-water planet. Locals know one another on sight, and strangers stick out painfully. Citizens are not shy about confronting newcomers, so they seem rude and suspicious to the uninitiated. Nevertheless, anyone who proves to be useful, or at least amicable, can expect to be welcomed back to Silence if they ever decide to return.

Despite the affable demeanor of its citizens, Silence is home to a large contingent of smugglers and petty criminals. Madilon is the initial commodity for Silence's scum, but new sources of profit are established following the discovery of Nyriaan spice. Although the town remains a haven for Nyriaan's unwashed offworlders, it becomes much more dangerous once spice enters the equation.

Over the decades following its establishment, Silence is destroyed and rebuilt at least three times. The remains of the old town lie beneath the creaking structures of the new one. Townsfolk occasionally comb these sunken, mud-soaked ruins for salvage, but most of what remains after the last tempest has already been taken and recycled.

Plot Hook: A number of miners have gone missing outside Silence, and local wildlife is thought to be behind the disappearances. A group of locals approaches the heroes about tracking down the beast or beasts responsible. In truth, the missing miners have been killed by claim jumpers who are looking to sell their mines to the Mining Guild. Alternatively, the claim jumpers might be Mining Guild employees disguised as criminals.

Starveil

The largest native settlement on Nyriaan is called Starveil after the Old Republic vessel that crashed there. Much of the *Starveil's* hull remains intact, and has been integrated into the surrounding Meadlin's trees. Centuries of growth and use has made the transition between the exterior of the ship and its interior seamless. The elders of the Melan clan administer Starveil, keeping the peace and defending it from intruders. Few offworlders are allowed within the settlement's sacred boundaries, and the natives are not shy about protecting their home. Nevertheless, a small colonial town, Temperance, has sprung up about a kilometer from the edge of the native community.

With a native population nearing one thousand, Starveil is viewed by corporate interests as a nest of snakes. The CSA occasionally petitions for the native settlement to be destroyed, especially during times of heightened insurgent activity. However, the Melan clan is never successfully implicated in any form of guerrilla activity, and Starveil continues to act as a hub for native communities that would rather remain anonymous. In Starveil, several native clans from across Nyriaan establish small enclaves, jokingly referred to as "embassies" by corporate agents.

Plot Hook: Natives have reportedly kidnapped the son of a Tapani noble and taken him to Starveil. Since no offworlders are allowed within the boundaries of this sacred native settlement, gaining entry and retrieving the boy is difficult, if not impossible, without external aid. The heroes are contacted by the Tapani noble house in question and asked to infiltrate Starveil to locate the boy. If they do, they learn that the boy has gone with the natives willingly to marry the daughter of a native elder.

Temperance

Temperance is established outside Starveil by offworld traders attempting to capitalize on the native market. Although the town is not an immediate success for merchants hoping to hawk their wares to the locals, their perseverance eventually pays off. Native technology is based heavily on that of the Old Republic, so spare parts and modern weapons become popular commodities in the native marketplace. Although some products are initially of low quality, the native clans that frequent Temperance make a point of taking merchants to task for defective goods.

Agents from Nyriaan's factions find work in Temperance, given its proximity to Starveil and the frequency of native traffic into the village. Independent fortune seekers and adventurers also frequent Temperance, and the cantinas and hotels along the settlement's main thoroughfare are constantly filled with rowdy patrons. Fights break out every evening, and an ad hoc arena has been erected on the outskirts of town. The Temperance Arena boasts weekly gladiatorial bouts, and individuals are welcome to settle their own personal vendettas there anytime they choose.

Plot Hook: Large numbers of blaster carbines, ostensibly for hunting use, have recently been sold to native insurgents. Many of the carbines, however, have been rigged to explode when fired, leading the natives who purchased

them to seek out the seller and repay his treachery in kind. Unfortunately, the seller is nowhere to be found. The heroes are contacted to locate the merchant who sold the carbines to the natives. Alternatively, the heroes are contracted to sell the sabotaged weapons to the natives, but are not told of the deadly nature of the product.

Tonnage

The largest of the Mining Guild's colonies on Nyriaan is Tonnage. Built at a focal point between four profitable madilon mines, Tonnage sees a constant flow of the valuable alloy pass through its processing facility. Given the Mining Guild's experience with ore processing, Tonnage features an on-site smelting facility where madilon is extracted and cast into ingots prior to being shipped offworld. This practice saves the Guild credits in the long run, because the excess weight of slag and other impurities is left behind.

Unfortunately, the Mining Guild's industriousness comes at a price to the local environment. Dumping of waste and other contaminants is widespread, and the land surrounding Tonnage is quickly becoming a wasteland. This ecological disaster does little to endear the Mining Guild to the natives, who view the facility as a blight that must eventually be dealt with.

Plot Hook: A Mining Guild whistleblower is looking for someone to escort him out of Tonnage in exchange for a large amount of information on the Mining Guild's operations on Nyriaan. The heroes are contacted, either by the whistleblower or a third party, to facilitate the extraction. Even after the whistleblower is found and removed from Tonnage, the information given in exchange exposes anyone involved with its release to a great deal of hostile attention from Mining Guild operatives.

Tor'Oront

A smaller mining colony on the surface of Nyriaan, Tor'Oront is unique in that it is made up almost entirely of Elomin settlers who came to the planet long ago to work as miners and laborers. The founding of Tor'Oront took place in the days of the Old Republic when a con artist from the Corporate Sector tricked a group of Elomin settlers into coming to Nyriaan. Once there, the con artist effectively forced the Elomin into a kind of indentured servitude, using the settlers to mine madilon right under the nose of the planetary government. Though eventually the Elomin overthrew the con artist and freed themselves, most were too poor to leave the planet. After a time, the planetary council agreed to allow the Elomin to stay, though the Elomin are often used and abused by the Nyriaanian government.

Tor'Oront is named for a city on the planet Elom. The settlement is rough, even after centuries of habitation, and while they do have the basic necessities, most Elomin in Tor'Oront live lives not much better than slaves. In fact, the buildings and hovels of Tor'Oront are comparable to the slave quarters of Mos Espa on Tatooine with regards to their amenities, which is to say there are few. Many of the Elomin of Tor'Oront dream of one day returning to Elom, but so far they have lacked any ability to get their whole colony off-world, and few are willing to leave their families behind.

NEW SPECIES: ELOMIN

Elomin Species Traits

Elomin share the following species traits.

Ability Modifiers: +2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma. Elomin have trouble relating to other species, but they are exceptionally good at a number of intellectual pursuits.

Size: Elomin are Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Elomin base speed is 6 squares.

Impose Order: Elomin are exceptionally focused on order, and strive to ensure that their chaotic companions are in the place where they are supposed to be. Once per encounter, an Elomin can spend a swift action to allow each ally within 12 squares to move up to half that ally's speed as a reaction. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Logical Mind: Elomin gain a +5 species bonus to Will Defense against mind-affecting effects.

Languages: Basic and Elomin

Vineyard

Unlike Nyriaan's larger settlements, Vineyard is not designed around an ore processing facility. Established by House Melantha in 16 BBY, Vineyard is more akin to a place where colonials might take a holiday retreat, rather than a focal point for noble house profits. Despite its luxurious accommodations, Vineyard serves a singular purpose: to serve the Imperial aristocracy, such as it is, on Nyriaan.

Although Melantha's mining operations elsewhere on Nyriaan are profitable enough, the house leadership views cultivation of its Imperial ties as much more valuable. As such, Vineyard offers Imperial officers and their retinues a bright spot in an otherwise dismal landscape. Imperial clients are pampered, sometimes free of charge, but anyone with sufficient money and connections can make a reservation in Vineyard and experience the decadence that the Tapani nobility take for granted.

The concentration of high-level Imperials in Vineyard makes it a prime target for espionage and skullduggery during the Rebellion. A number of Alliance agents find work within the spa as servants and menial laborers, and even unaligned workers are willing to sell the secrets that fall unbidden from the lips of House Melantha's clients. Security is tight, of course, and covert maneuvers attempted in Vineyard must be made with great care.

Plot Hook: A high-ranking Imperial officer is taking an extended vacation in Vineyard. Local Alliance cells recognize a prime opportunity to hurt the Empire by taking out one of its most experienced officers. The heroes are tasked with gaining entrance to Vineyard so that they can either assassinate or capture the officer.

MADILON MINES

Although the surface of Nyriaan is by no means rocky, the boggy nature of the landscape gives way to solid bedrock after only a few meters. Madilon deposits have formed deep within this bedrock, and into these depths miners must descend if they are to pry the valuable alloy from the guts of the planet.

With few exceptions, the mines of Nyriaan are dank, dark, and dangerous. Although some are natural cave networks, the vast majority of mines are created by enterprising prospectors and corporate workers. Surface moisture seeps into the tunnels, making footing treacherous in even the best of conditions. The walls of the tunnels seem to sweat, and nothing remains dry for long. Unless properly protected against moisture, droid labor tends to corrode and malfunction within a short period of time. Even so, droids are occasionally used for mining, but organic labor is more economical and less likely to require constant maintenance.

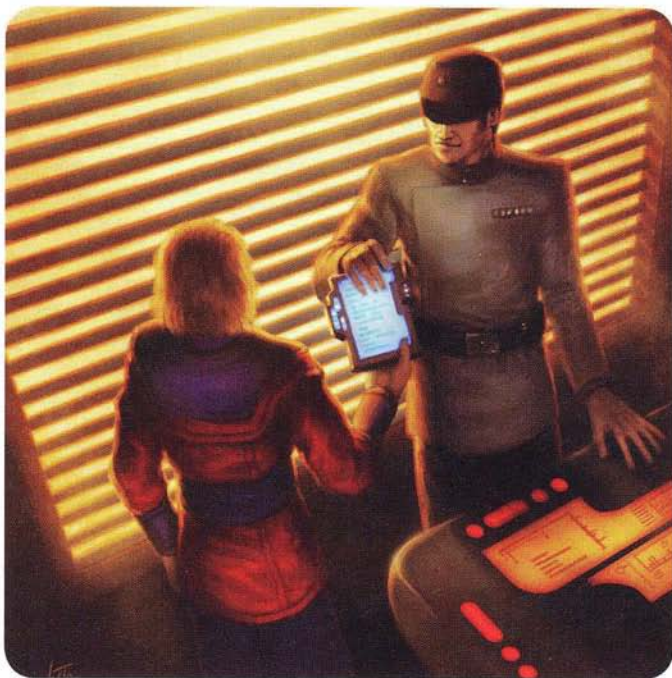
Madilon veins are located in areas of high geothermal activity, so mines are often filled with noxious vapors and scalding steam. The heat of the planet seeps up to the soles of a miner's feet and courses out of the surrounding walls. The phosphorescent fungus of the surface is no less prevalent below, and it casts its eerie luminescence from wherever it can successfully take root. Conditions are cramped in newer mines, while older, more highly developed mines have large galleries where the rock has been blasted, drilled, or chipped away. Miners might remain underground for days or sometimes weeks at a time, depending on the richness of the mine's lode or the employer's concern for safety. The lucky few who have successfully staked and maintained private claims must still beware of claim jumpers, both criminal and corporate.

The largest of Nyriaan's mines are the domain of the planet's heavy hitters: the Corporate Sector, the Mining Guild, the Empire, and so on. These vast networks of laser-carved stone descend for kilometers into the bowels of the planet, and they grow hotter as they delve deeper. Lava flows and underground rivers of boiling water are constant dangers at such depths, and drilling into such a hazard can be deadly. Unstable strata can cause fatal cave-ins, and without the resources or incentive to rescue trapped miners, survivors of such accidents are rare.

NYRIAAN AND THE GALAXY

Nyriaan is not the only planet with a supply of madilon beneath its crust. Many such worlds are scattered throughout the galaxy, each with its own reserve of the precious material. The majority of these planets are claimed or occupied by a single power, making them jewels that are otherwise inaccessible to other would-be mining interests. Nyriaan is such an object of contention because it is not controlled by a single power and is instead split between several.

ON NYRIAAN, MANY DARK DEALS TAKE PLACE
BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.



Increasing the amount of madilon available on the galactic market affects its price throughout the galaxy. Although the difference in price might seem marginal on a per-unit basis, it becomes more significant as quantity increases and demand decreases. The price decrease is good for end users, such as hyperdrive and starship manufacturers, but bad for mining interests and speculators. Nyriaan's deposits of madilon are significant, so they will likely influence prices on the galactic stage for centuries to come.

Galactic powers respond by sending agents to Nyriaan to artificially influence the planet's rate of madilon production. The threat of outside forces creating temporary shortages or making the extraction process more costly by sabotage or theft is a constant worry for Nyriaan's colonists. In addition, other powers and mining interests attempt to use Nyriaan's natives against their competition, especially during times of crisis.

NYRIAAN TIMELINE

10,000 BBY: Madilon is discovered and becomes a principle component in hyperdrive production. Millennia pass before the true miniaturization of hyperdrive technology is realized, but the use of madilon allows manufacturers to construct more compact systems than ever before. Limited availability of the alloy restricts its use. However, deposits of madilon are found on several planets over the course of the following centuries.

4,129 BBY: The Luire system is discovered and surveyed by the Old Republic. Initial reports indicate that the Luire system is of little interest, and it is largely ignored.

4,067 BBY: The *Starveil*, a Republic-aligned civilian exploration vessel, is lost while performing a comprehensive study of the Luire system. The last communication from the *Starveil* indicates that the crew is planning to attempt a landing on the fifth planet in the system. Two rescue ships are dispatched to locate the missing *Starveil*, but the vessel is never found.

3,964 BBY: A short-lived Mandalorian outpost, Unity, is established on Caillte, the last planet of the Luire system. The Mandalorians use the facility for six years before mysteriously abandoning it.

3,957 BBY: The Sith take a mild interest in the Luire system following Darth Glovoc's vision that something of interest is concealed on the surface of the system's fifth planet. Glovoc takes command of the *Dying Sun*, an *Interdictor*-class warship, and he orders his crew to set a course for the Luire system.

3,956 BBY: As it surveys Nyriaan, the *Dying Sun* encounters several Republic cruisers that have stumbled into the Luire system. In the ensuing battle, three Republic cruisers are destroyed and the *Dying Sun* is critically damaged. Caught in Nyriaan's gravity well, the *Dying Sun*'s orbit slowly decays, and it eventually makes planetfall. Escape pods from the *Dying Sun* and from the Republic cruisers crash on Nyriaan, but none is ever heard from again.

NYRIAAN OF THE DISTANT PAST

Nyriaan is a paradise for enterprising geologists and climatologists, given its distinctive mineral deposits, geologic activity, and violent weather patterns. Taming the planet has become an obsession for the groups that desire control of its valuable resources. Most have sought to conquer Nyriaan through technology and perseverance. Others, however, seek to change the planet rather than bend to the restrictions it imposes upon them.

So far, research points to Nyriaan's distant past, when it was a world with a more habitable environment. Vast seas covered the planet's surface tens of thousands of years ago. Some manner of geologic upheaval or cosmic event caused the oceans to evaporate, forming the thick atmosphere that now envelops the planet. Scientists speculate that if the moisture in the atmosphere were to condense into rain, it would flood Nyriaan's surface. This change would destroy the world's ecosystem, not to mention most of its inhabited settlements, but researchers theorize that it would result in a more stable atmosphere.

3950 to 500 BBY: At least thirty vessels of various types are lost in close proximity to the Luire system. Local spacer legend proclaims that the space surrounding the system is haunted.

405 BBY: The Corporate Sector Authority establishes a small outpost on Caillte. Ostensibly, the outpost is a mining facility, but actually, it is a small scientific outpost used for testing questionable technology. During the construction of the Caillte facility, the Corporate Sector discovers the remains of a subterranean settlement that dates to the Mandalorian Wars.

403 BBY: A CSA scouting vessel, *Commerce*, disappears while attempting an orbital scan of Nyriaan. Corporate Sector survey ships confirm that the planetary atmosphere, combined with its magnetic field, makes conventional observation of the planet impossible. Additional CSA ships are dispatched to investigate the planet, but no significant discoveries are made. The *Commerce* is never seen again.

90 BBY: Two Republic-funded survey vessels, the *Locus* and the *Ardent Virtue*, arrive in the Luire system to conduct a five-year observation of the system's five gas giants. By this time, the Corporate Sector outpost on Caillte has been reduced to a skeleton crew of unfortunate employees sent there in lieu of disciplinary action.

87 BBY: The *Locus* loses power while scanning Nyriaan's atmosphere from orbit. The vessel founders and makes a controlled descent to the planetary surface. The *Ardent Virtue* attempts a rescue, but its initial attempts to contact the crew of the *Locus* are unsuccessful and two planetary shuttles are lost in the process.

86 BBY: The *Ardent Virtue*, with additional support from the Republic, constructs a primitive gondola that is tethered to the orbiting starship and lowered to the surface of the planet. Crews secure a planetside station for the gondola eight kilometers from the site of the crashed *Locus*. The wreckage of the *Locus* is found, but none of the surviving crew is found by the landing party. Crew from the *Ardent Virtue* conduct preliminary surveys of the planet from the ground and establish laser comm arrays to communicate directly with their ship.

85 BBY: Traces of madilon are found in soil and rock samples taken from Nyriaan. Although the *Ardent Virtue* attempts to keep the information a secret, the CSA research station on Caillte intercepts communications from the *Ardent Virtue*, and several members of the *Ardent Virtue*'s crew attempt to sell the information for personal profit. The latter half of the year sees a steady influx of survey and prospecting vessels into the Luire system, many of which unsuccessfully attempt landings on Nyriaan.

84 BBY: The CSA claims possession of the entirety of the Luire system, but is rebuffed by the Republic. In the lengthy legal battle that ensues, a planetary quarantine is enforced on Nyriaan, preventing vessels from attempting to land. Despite the quarantine, high levels of activity continue in the Luire system for the next three years.

LANDING ON NYRIAAN IS DANGEROUS FOR ALL SHIPS.



81 BBY: A Republic court rules that the CSA's only legally held property in the Luire system is Caillte. Nyriaan is opened for settlement, and all eligible parties (including the Corporate Sector Authority) are permitted to stake individual claims if they can establish permanent settlements on the planet's surface. Several settlements are established by updated gondola technology. Two of these settlements belong to House Reena, while one belongs to House Mecetti, both noble houses of the Tapani Sector.

69 BBY: The first laser transport arrays are established on Nyriaan by the Corporate Sector Authority, allowing properly equipped vessels to land on the planetary surface.

67 BBY: The specifics of laser transport array technology are leaked, enabling anyone to acquire and use the technology to land on Nyriaan's surface in relative safety. The CSA protests, accusing the Republic of stealing and leaking the data.

66 BBY: The Hyperspace Navigator's Guild presses the Senate to pass legislation requiring that bonded navigators assist with all LTA-assisted landings on Nyriaan. Despite Corporate Sector protests and accusations of legalized extortion, the bill passes in the Senate by a wide margin.

47 BBY: A coordinated uprising by Nyriaan natives wipes out a number of frontier villages and mining towns. Although the uprising is a response to a CSA-sponsored liquidation of a Nyriaanan settlement, it is made to look like an unprovoked attack.

43 BBY: The Nyriaanan clans negotiate a planetwide nonaggression pact with the Republic and various mining interests. Although the CSA attempts to stall the proceedings, a grudging peace descends upon the planet. Amar Cros, a Jedi Knight sent to negotiate the nonaggression pact with the natives, refuses to return to the Jedi Temple on Coruscant.

39 BBY: Through the machinations of the Mining Guild, the Trade Federation insinuates itself upon madilon exports throughout Mid Rim and Expansion Rim systems. Although intending to appear completely autonomous, the Mining Guild represents Trade Federation interests on Nyriaan in an attempt to drive up prices. The Corporate Sector Authority, helpless to react legally, attempts to undermine the Mining Guild. In response, the Mining Guild sabotages CSA ore transfer facilities.

36 BBY: The CSA violates mining agreements by prospecting on native Nyriaanan land. Hostilities between natives and settlers erupt once more, this time directed solely at the Corporate Sector Authority. Elements of the Trade Federation and Mining Guild quietly support the native insurgency.

30 BBY: The Year of the Luire Accord. By decree of the Senate, Nyriaan is divided into a number of regions, parceled out to groups based on their political and financial backing. In addition, Locus is cordoned off into sectors, and a planetary government, the Nyriaan Concord, is based there. Several reservations are also set aside to preserve the environmental purity of Nyriaan, such as it is, as well as to appease native Nyriaanan groups. As a result, native clans withdraw into Nyriaan's unexplored regions.

29 BBY: The Corporate Sector Authority initiates a massive immigration of indentured laborers, primarily Pa'lowicks. The Pa'lowicks are subject to many corporate abuses allowed by the contract arranged with them by the CSA. Within the year, every major settlement on Nyriaan is host to a Pa'lowick ghetto. Pa'lowicks who manage to free themselves from their corporate bondage establish the settlement of New Lowick.

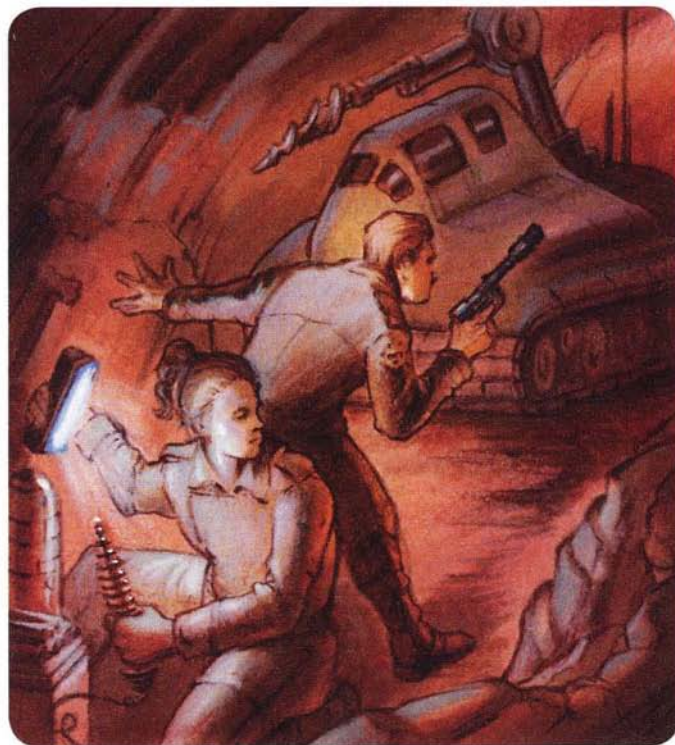
22 BBY: The Clone Wars begin. Although no ally to the Trade Federation, the Corporate Sector Authority opposes the Republic. An uneasy truce between the Trade Federation and the CSA is established.

21 BBY: The Confederacy of Independent Systems wages what becomes known as the First Battle of Nyriaan. With support from elements of the Corporate Sector Authority, the Republic's holdings on Nyriaan are annexed and split between the Mining Guild and the CSA.

19 BBY: A combined Republic and Jedi strike force arrives in the Luire system, starting the Second Battle of Nyriaan. The fight is short, resulting in the defeat of the Confederacy of Independent Systems. Shortly after Republic victory is declared, the Emperor initiates Order 66 and all Jedi known to be in the system are killed.

17 BBY: House Melantha of the Tapani Sector nobility stakes a mildly profitable claim on Nyriaan.

13 BBY: The Empire begins construction of a massive ion shielding station just outside Locus.



8 BBY: The Empire's first ion shielding station is completed. The station is capable of projecting a nearly limitless number of energy shields to protect starships from the effects of Nyriaan's ionosphere and magnetic fields. The Empire and the Mining Guild are able to begin Operation Cloudfall, which involves stripping the entire planet of all useful ore.

1 BBY: Rebel agents and their allies sabotage the Empire's ion shielding station. The sabotage is not nearly as effective as was hoped, and the station is operational again within three months.

2 ABY: Operation Cloudfall is neutralized by a Rebel Alliance-sponsored insurgency. Most of the Imperial operation's labor force consists of Wookiee and Mon Calamari slaves, most of whom are all too happy to bolster the local insurgency.

8 ABY: The New Republic offers to recognize the complete planetary autonomy of Nyriaan, as governed by the planetary natives. Offworld interests in Nyriaan's madilon exports rail against the offer. Nyriaan's native clans, although intrigued, are suspicious of the offer.

10 ABY: The Corporate Sector Authority legally challenges the New Republic for rights to elicit Nyriaan's independence, beginning a lengthy court battle that is never fully resolved.

26 ABY: The Yuuzhan Vong invade the Luire system and conquer Nyriaan. Nyriaan's atmosphere and magnetic field have no adverse effect on Yuuzhan Vong biotechnology, making their invasion that much easier. Yuuzhan Vong priests believe the planet to be blessed because of the resistance of its atmosphere to the Force. All mining operations on Nyriaan are destroyed. The native Nyriaanans watch quietly from the shadows, taking no side in the conflict.

29 ABY: Following the Second Battle of Coruscant, several Yuuzhan Vong refugees make their homes on Nyriaan. After a period of transition, the aliens are accepted as equals by Nyriaan's native clans.

31 ABY: The New Republic reestablishes the city of Locus and begins reconstruction efforts. These efforts include the repair of the Imperial ion shielding station.

38 ABY: Major mining operations are reestablished on Nyriaan's surface by the Corporate Sector Authority. Since the CSA avoided invasion by the Yuuzhan Vong, they are economically and industrially solvent enough to rebuild their old facilities and continue their former operations unhindered.

41 ABY: The New Republic's ion shielding station is completed. Although a number of technical problems arise, the station is fully operational by the end of the year.

LANDING ON NYRIAAN

One vexing problem for prospectors and settlers is the simple matter of landing on the surface of Nyriaan. Many starships are lost to the planet's unique combination of ionosphere and magnetic fields, and career spacers consider Nyriaan to be bad luck. When the *Locus* is lost and the *Ardent Virtue* comes to her rescue, the first practical landing on Nyriaan is performed by a jury-rigged gondola system. Later, when the planet is opened to prospectors, the Corporate Sector introduces a more efficient, albeit more dangerous, system that employs laser arrays.

GONDOLAS

The first method used to reach the surface of Nyriaan—other than crash-landing—is a gondola. The theory behind the gondola is simple enough: a ship, station, or vessel in a stationary orbit lowers a cable system to the planetary surface. Once the cable is properly anchored on the planet, transports are attached to it and cycled to and from the planetary surface with relative ease. Tethered transports can be small starships or simply pressurized cargo containers.

Because of Nyriaan's strong magnetic field, successful deployment of a gondola requires that the deploying vessel's orbit is high enough to avoid the planet's magnetic interference. Although this distance varies based on a number of factors, the minimum orbital distance between Nyriaan's surface and an orbiting vessel is 900 kilometers.

A REPUBLIC ATTACK SHUTTLE RECEIVES SHIELDING
BEFORE LANDING ON NYRIAAN.



Although the gondola system functions and continues to remain in use, it is impractical for a number of reasons. The physical requirement of providing nearly 2,000 continuous kilometers of strong cable is the first obstacle. In addition to the cable requirement, a suitable anchor must also be secured beneath the planet's surface. The speed at which such a contraption can convey containers to and from the surface is limited, and averages from four to five hours per trip. Multiple containers can be conveyed simultaneously, but this procedure requires precise timing. Other issues, such as Nyriaan's tempests, create additional dangers. Even minor storms in the planet's atmosphere increase the risks of using a gondola system.

Gondolas have been compared disparagingly to low-tech skyhooks. Although skyhooks have been considered as an alternative on Nyriaan, the power requirements and the inevitable disruption of those systems by Nyriaan's atmosphere and magnetic fields made the technology unsuitable for use on Nyriaan.

LASER TRANSPORT ARRAYS

Recognizing the limited capability of gondolas for transporting materiel and personnel to and from Nyriaan's surface, the Corporate Sector Authority devises laser transport arrays as an alternative. Nyriaan's thick atmosphere prevents most light from reaching the planetary surface, but a narrow band of wavelengths manage to penetrate the world's thick cloud cover. Powerful lasers attuned to such wavelengths can easily pierce Nyriaan's atmosphere.

Such lasers are used to communicate with facilities on Nyiriaan's surface shortly after its initial settlement. The CSA takes the technology one step further with the development of laser transport arrays—or LTAs. Starships equipped with a laser acquisition system (LAS) can lock on to the beams produced by LTAs and follow them to the planet's surface in relative safety. A safety corridor of two laser beams (one outgoing and another incoming) is required for the system to work effectively. Laser acquisition systems, expensive and largely unnecessary away from Nyiriaan, are usually rented and affixed to starships in orbit at exorbitant prices.

Traveling to and from the surface of Nyiriaan in this manner is not without risk. The majority of a starship's systems, including computer systems and sensors, must be powered down during the journey, and only the most basic control systems can be active to minimize the risk of ionization. Additionally, sublight propulsion systems can operate only at their lowest power settings, making a slow ride, with no margin for error on the part of the pilot.

Despite the relative safety of the process, mistakes and accidents happen all too frequently. If either of the laser transport arrays malfunction or shut down during a flight, accurate avionics data (such as altitude, speed, or heading) are unavailable. And the minimal shipboard systems required for flight are subject to the whims of Nyiriaan's magnetic fields and ionosphere. Such malfunctions, while rare, are nonetheless dangerous.

Laser transport array technology is among the CSA's most prized secrets during the early days of Nyiriaan's colonization, but the plans for the system are eventually stolen and disseminated. The Corporate Sector immediately blames Republic espionage for the leak, but no proof of the Republic's involvement in the scandal is ever produced. Some suggest that elements within the CSA leaked the technology for profit, an allegation that the Corporate Sector vehemently denies.

With laser transport arrays seeing widespread use in the Luire system, the Republic soon steps in to regulate use of the technology, initially arguing that LTAs are a form of safety equipment, the malfunction or misuse of which could result in disaster and loss of life. Not surprisingly, the legislation is supported by the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild, a body that had lost a great deal of its once far-reaching power. With enough money, senatorial votes are bought and paid for. Soon afterward, regulations stipulate that a bonded navigator must be aboard any ship that attempts a descent or ascent by LTA technology. Navigator's fees, of course, are payable prior to services being rendered.

Landing by Laser Transport Array is somewhat more difficult than a normal landing given the lack of sensor data, reduced engine power, and the sluggishness of the controls due to a decrease in the effectiveness of starship control surfaces. A typical orbit to surface landing by LTA requires a DC 15 Use Computer Check followed by three consecutive DC 15 Pilot checks. Failing the Use Computer check indicates a LTA problem that must be corrected before landing or takeoff can occur. Failing any of the Pilot checks results in a cumulative DC increase of +5 on all remaining Pilot checks for that specific landing, and failure of the third check results in a crash-landing.

SHIELDING STATIONS

One of the most hotly contested technologies on (or more appropriately, above) Nyiriaan are the shielding stations. Starting around the time of the Clone Wars, these orbital space stations use experimental shield projection technology to sheath ships in a special shield that is capable of withstanding the ionic forces of Nyiriaan's atmosphere. Using the same technology that will later be developed into off-ship combat shielding by Lando Calrissian, these shielding stations guarantee a ship safe descent into the atmosphere thanks to powerful shield projectors that use the station's own reactor to power them. This means that the shields are harder for the ion storms in the atmosphere to interrupt them, and guarantees a smoother and safer ride to the surface. Though the technology isn't perfect and accidents happen, it is by far the safest way to descend onto the surface of Nyiriaan.

When a ship with proper authorization approaches Nyiriaan, they enter a queue of ships awaiting remote shielding before descent onto the planet. Not just any ship gains access to this service; only those approved by the planetary government are given such a privilege, and it is believed that non-government starships must pay an exorbitant "shield license fee" to the right government office, a sum of 50,000 credits which is believed by most to be a semi-legitimate bribe. The government periodically awards temporary shipping licenses to vessels doing government work, and corporate vessels usually have such a license as a matter of common operation around Nyiriaan. Once a shielding station license is held by a ship, it can request off-ship shielding for descent onto the planet. Unfortunately, the return trip back up to orbit must use the other means available, but even a one-way safe trip onto Nyiriaan is worth the high price.

Nyiriaan's shielding stations are a prized commodity, and are almost constantly a main source of contention between the factions that rule Nyiriaan. Fortunately the stations are also extremely valuable to invader and defender alike, meaning that when outside forces attack the planet they almost always take the shielding stations intact. On at least one occasion, the commander of a shielding station ordered it to be destroyed via self-destruct system rather than let it fall into enemy hands, but the station was quickly replaced once the planet was once again freed.

SKILL CHALLENGE: BLIND DESCENT

Should the heroes attempt to make a blind descent into Nyiriaan, there is a significant chance that they will not make it down safely. The descent is tough, even for veteran pilots, and the risk of failure also brings with it the promise of a crash landing. However, if the heroes are foolhardy (or simply desperate) enough to attempt a blind descent into Nyiriaan without the advantage of any of the planet's normal technology, use the skill challenge below to determine the outcome of their descent.

CL 12

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Mechanics [DC 31]: While the ship makes its descent, heroes aboard the ship can make Mechanics checks to boost power to shields and internal system buffers, reducing the chances that the ship will suffer a blackout during its approach.

Perception [DC 31]: The heroes can use Perception to watch out for stray bolts of energy discharging through the atmosphere, warning the pilot when it looks like things are going to get rough up ahead.

Pilot [DC 26]: The pilot of the ship can try to bring the vessel down on a safe course using instinct and natural skill to guide the craft.

Use Computer [DC 21]: A hero can use the Use Computer skill to calculate trajectories, anticipate wind and energy discharge powers, and try to boost sensors to provide the pilot with at least some data with regards to their descent.

Use the Force [DC 35]: Force-sensitive heroes can use the Use the Force skill to sense danger in the descent, but the strange atmospheric effects of the planet make this a tricky proposition at best.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Catastrophic Failure: If a hero fails a skill check by 10 or more, the heroes accrue two failures instead of one.

Degrees of Failure: The final outcome of the skill challenge depends on the number of failures accrued during the entirety of the skill challenge.

Second Effort: Whenever the heroes accrue a failure, they can choose to instead have their ship move -1 persistent step down the condition track, and turn that failure into a success.

Success: When the heroes have achieved their eighth success in the skill challenge, they make it safely to the ground. However, depending on the number of failures they have accrued (and the number of times they had to use the Second Effort challenge effect), their ship may not be in very good condition.

Failure: Each time the heroes accrue a failure, their ship ends up landing more and more off-course. Each time the party accrues a failure, their ship takes 5d10x2 damage. If the challenge ends with 1 failure, the ship lands 1d10 km off-course. If the challenge ends with 2 failures, the ship lands 3d10 km off-course. If the heroes fail the skill challenge, the ship crash lands 5d10 km off-course, and the ship is automatically reduced to 0 hit points. The heroes take each take 3d10x2 damage from the crash.

NYIRIAAN AND THE FORCE

Force-users are consistently confounded by the interference they receive when using Force powers in the vicinity of Nyiriaan. The first Force-user to notice this phenomenon is Darth Glovoc, and Jedi from the Republic later rediscover the phenomenon. To be clear, Nyiriaan does not prevent use of the Force. Powers used on the surface of the planet work normally, as do those used in space outside the planet's magnetic field. However, attempting to use powers through the atmosphere invariably fails. Jedi hypothesize that the planet's atmospheric conditions are to blame, although this theory has not been confirmed. Nyiriaan's tempests also cause difficulty for Force-users within close proximity of the storms.

Assume that any Force power used by an individual on Nyiriaan's surface against a target outside Nyiriaan's atmosphere automatically fails, and vice versa, including powers of extrasensory perception, such as sense Force and farseeing, as well as any attempts at telepathy or other forms of communication. Essentially, Nyiriaan's atmosphere is considered to be Force null.

Use of the Force on the planet is somewhat less restricted, although still difficult, and is dependant largely on atmospheric conditions. Whatever causes this interference, it makes no distinction between light-side and dark-side powers; all are penalized equally. During calm weather conditions, which are rare during most of the planetary year, Force powers can be used on Nyiriaan with no penalty. During inclement weather, which is common throughout the year, the DC of any Force power increases by 5. During strong storms, including low-end tempests, the DC modifier is +10. The strongest of Nyiriaan's tempests result in a maximum of +15 to the DC of any Force power.

The Reasons Why

No one is sure why Nyiriaan's atmosphere affects the Force powers. Scholars believe that it is a combined result of the planet's ionosphere and magnetic field. Others theorize that a heretofore undiscovered lifeform or sentience lives within the atmosphere and impedes or intercepts the use of Force powers. Disciples of Darth Glovoc believe that something within Nyiriaan is to blame.

Despite the difficulties experienced by Force-sensitive individuals on Nyiriaan, Force sensitivity remains a valuable talent. Mundane surveillance devices on Nyiriaan are only slightly more useful than dianoga waste, so Force-users who want to sell their services as living listening devices can turn their talents to a profitable, if dangerous, profession.

ECOLOGY

Animal and plant life on Nyriaan evolve to survive efficiently in the planet's harsh greenhouse environment. The majority of animal life is amphibious, despite the fact that large bodies of water are a rarity. A plethora of small insectoid species have also been documented, many of which are parasitical. The native amphibians possess slimy hides and/or bioluminescence. Many of Nyriaan's native lifeforms extract needed moisture, as well as some nutrients, from the thick fog that covers the planet.

Most of Nyriaan's animal species are small—often no larger than gorts—and subsist easily in ponds or small pools of standing water. The few large species present are nomadic, traveling in herds. Such animals include the herbivorous lluma and small prides of the omnivorous pherin, which are constantly stalked by packs of chlovi cats.

Nyriaan's animals are typically amphibious, and its plant life is fungal. Much of the flora is low-lying, growing on any damp surface and collecting nutrients from the omnipresent fog. Despite the violent storms that crisscross the planetary surface, a number of treelike fungi grow to exceptional heights, enabling them to exploit the high winds to spread their spores.

Like Nyriaan's fauna, much of the fungus generates dim levels of bioluminescence and phosphorescent light, lending a ghostly ambiance to the mist-shrouded landscape. Many species of fungus are capable of growing upon nearly any surface, so structures, vehicles, and even clothing can develop beds of fungi that grow from hitchhiking spores. Although most are harmless, a few indigenous funguses are actively parasitic and can be crippling or deadly if allowed to grow upon an individual's skin unchecked.

COMMON ANIMAL SPECIES

The following three species—lluma, pherin, and chlovi cats—are indigenous to Nyriaan. Although hundreds of thousands of other animal species have evolved on Nyriaan, these are the most commonly recognized creatures on the planet.

Lluma

The lluma are a large, long-limbed species that roams the surface of Nyriaan in herds. They are herbivorous, grazing on a wide variety of fungi as they roam. Lluma herds typically consist of at least twenty individuals, although as many as two hundred roam Nyriaan's equatorial regions in larger herds. The creatures are considered a delicious staple of the local menu, and some of the smaller herds have been hunted to death by colonists and settlers.

Lluma are hermaphroditic and are able to assume one of three genders depending on the composition of the herd and the season. A single bull usually protects the herd, although large herds can have several. Fertile females, also known as cows, make up about twenty percent of any given herd. They mate continually with the bull, storing fertilized eggs in large pouches until the young hatch. The remaining eighty percent of the herd maintain a

neutral gender, neither male nor female. The purpose of these neuters is not completely clear, but they seem to perform a protective role by surrounding fertile males and females as the herd travels.

Biologists study lluma because the species seems to have an innate reliance on the violent tempests that wrack the planetary surface. Lluma herds follow in the paths of prior tempests, sometimes changing direction when their route intersects the path of another tempest. Scientists hope that research into this behavior yields clues that might help to predict future tempests.

This large amphibian is covered in a slimy gray-brown hide. Two lines of green bioluminescent spots, which start just behind its bulbous eyes, pulse along either side of its prominent backbone. It possesses a long, curving neck, four long knobby legs that end in four-toed feet, and a short, stubby tail.

Lluma

CL 7

Large Beast 8

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision; **Perception** +11

Defenses Ref 14 (flat-footed 13), Fort 16, Will 12
hp 84; **Threshold** 21

Speed 8 squares

Melee trample +8* (1d6+16) or

Melee trample +10* (1d6+20) with Powerful Charge

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +18

Atk Options Bantha Rush, Power Attack, Powerful Charge

Abilities Str 24, Dex 12, Con 22, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 6

Feats Bantha Rush, Power Attack, Powerful Charge

Skills Perception +11

*Includes 5 points of Power Attack

Lluma Tactics

Lluma prefer to flee rather than fight, although lluma bulls protect their herds violently if provoked. Cows can also become violent when their young are endangered. In either case, lluma of any gender charge and trample enemies, crushing them until they exhibit no sign of life.

Pherin

Pherins are omnivores of Medium size. They are as close to being genuinely sentient as any other species native to Nyriaan. A pherin is froglike, with four spindly limbs, knobby joints, bulbous eyes, and a wide, tooth-lined mouth. Two or more pherin families might travel alongside a herd of lluma, competing—and occasionally feuding—with other groups of pherin for resources and food.

Pherins have been known to use rudimentary tools, including improvised melee weapons and thrown stones. They are curious to a fault, and many meet violent ends after wandering into a prospecting town or other settlement. Like the lluma they follow, pherins can assume one of three genders,

seemingly at will. Family units consist of equal numbers of males and females, with neuters making up between ten and twenty percent of the population.

The creature is Human-sized, but its form is distinctly alien. Long, spindly limbs with large, knobby joints protrude from its body at seemingly random angles. Its wide head is squat with two bulbous eyes that look about independently. A series of blue-green spots produce a dim glow along the creature's abdomen.

Pherin

CL 3

Medium Beast 4

Init +4; Senses darkvision; Perception +4

Defenses Ref 14 (flat-footed 12), Fort 11, Will 12

hp 26; Threshold 11

Speed 6 squares

Melee slam +3* (1d4+8) or

Melee bite +6 (1d6+5)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options Power Attack

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 10

Feats Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +9

*Includes 3 points of Power Attack

Pherin Tactics

Pherins attack en masse, disabling targets that seem dangerous or especially intimidating before moving on to less-capable prey. Although they are peaceful and rarely attack unless provoked, they are nonetheless capable of spontaneous violence if given the opportunity. Male pherins are more likely to attack than females, with neuters being especially aggressive if their family unit is threatened.

Chlovi Cat

Chlovi cats, which are not feline at all, reside at the top of Nyriaan's food chain. They have been responsible for hundreds of deaths in mining towns across the planet. Settlers on Nyriaan shoot chlovi cats on sight rather than risking the danger that they represent. Unfortunately for Nyriaan's colonists, chlovi cats have learned to predict the movements of their prey and attack from ambush rather than attempting direct assaults.

Named after a species of fungus that grows across Nyriaan's surface, chlovi cats are small amphibians with long, sinewy bodies and glistening skin that changes color from black to steely gray. Like other species on Nyriaan, they create bioluminescence, which they use for mating displays and rudimentary communication while hunting. A chlovi cat's primary weapons are its wide maw filled with needlelike teeth and four sets of wickedly curved claws.

CHLOVI CAT



Despite their small size, a pack of chlovi cats can bring down a full-grown lluma bull. They prefer to eat young lluma and pherins, although chlovi cats that have tasted Human flesh prefer it to their natural staples.

This amphibian is the size of a large dog and has a long, sinewy body. Its skin glistens with a slimy coating and changes color as the chlovi cat creeps through the fungal underbrush.

Chlovi Cat

CL 5

Small Beast 6

Init +6; Senses darkvision; Perception +6

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 14), Fort 12, Will 14

hp 33; Threshold 12

Speed 8 squares

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d3+3) and

bite +4 (1d4+3) or

Melee 2 claws +2 (2d3+3) with Rapid Strike

Base Atk +4; Grp +2

Atk Options Rapid Strike

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 16, Cha 8

Feats Coordinated Attack, Improved Defenses, Rapid Strike (claws)

Skills Stealth +16

Chlovi Cat Tactics

Chlovi cats use pack tactics, communicating with their pack mates through a combination of bioluminescent displays and croaking calls. They swarm over targets in groups of three or more, biting and clawing in an attempt to disable their prey. Once the prey is disabled, the rest of the pack converges on the victim.

COMMON PLANT SPECIES

The number of different plant species on Nyriaan is staggering, and fewer than five percent have been identified by scientists. However, a number of these fungi are notable.

Chlovi

One of the most common of Nyriaan's plant species is the chlovi, a large fungus that grows in large, spiraling patches all across the planet's surface. It is edible and, having become an important part of the local cuisine, is considered a delicacy. Attempts to cultivate chlovi have varying degrees of success. Problems in the chlovi's development arise when the fungi produce spores. Some growers hypothesize that chlovi depends upon interaction with the predatory chlovi cats, which use patches of the fungus as hunting and nesting grounds. The specific connection between the two is yet to be determined.

Chlovi grows in spiral formations, with individual plants consisting of oblong brown bodies with brightly colored phosphorescent red and orange gills that produce spores.

Falsin's Rot (CL 7)

Named after the fungus's first recorded victim, Falsin's rot is a much-feared parasite that is rare in Nyriaan's more civilized locations. It begins as a spore that can take root anywhere on a subject's skin, although infections usually begin on the extremities. Painful, itching lesions form as the fungus multiplies, spreading along the limbs and onto the victim's torso and abdomen. If left alone, Falsin's rot consumes a subject in less than a standard week.

Although deadly in the earliest days of Nyriaan's colonization, Falsin's rot can be treated and cured. Treatment consists of applications of salves concocted from combinations of local flora and standard medicinal compounds, such as bacta. If treated early, few signs of the infection remain. Victims of advanced cases exhibit severe scarring, with the worst cases resulting in limb loss.

When a character is exposed to Falsin's rot, make an attack roll (1d20+10) against the character's Fortitude Defense. If the attack roll succeeds, the character takes 1d8 points of damage and moves -1 persistent step on the condition track (see page 148 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). This attack occurs again each day that Falsin's rot remains untreated. Furthermore, a character who remains at -3 steps on the condition track for two days as a result of Falsin's rot permanently loses the use of an affected limb. Treatment requires a successful DC 20 Treat Injury check.

Meadlin's Tree

The largest fungi on Nyriaan are known as Meadlin's trees, after the Ithorian botanist who discovered them. Meadlin's trees regularly grow up to sixty meters tall, with some specimens in the unsettled regions of Nyriaan reported as twice as tall as that. Individual fungi grow and twine and merge together, forming complicated networks that resemble large root formations that span several kilometers. Spherical bioluminescent spore buds grow from Meadlin's tree outcroppings, and provide dim blue illumination.

Within the caverns and canyons of the largest networks of Meadlin's trees, natives of Nyriaan traditionally make their homes. Native communities care for the trees, directing their development and using the fast-growing branches and boughs to form defensive emplacements and living spaces.

Nyriaan Spice

One of Nyriaan's most recent contributions to the galactic fringe is known as Nyriaan spice. It begins as a low-lying fungal weed called mire nettle. When properly processed, mire nettle is transformed into a powerful narcotic stimulant that enhances awareness and provides an unparalleled euphoric experience. Natives of Nyriaan have long used mire nettle as a mild intoxicant. Pharmaceutical interests in the medicinal potential of the fungal weed ultimately lead to distilling the active ingredients into a powerful form of spice. Although it has yet to make much of an impact on the galactic drug trade, Nyriaan spice is gaining a momentum as Black Sun and the Hutt kajidics experiment with it in the Inner and Outer Rims.

When imbibed, Nyriaan spice provides an instant second wind, moving the user +1 step on the condition track and granting a +5 bonus to his or her damage threshold for 1 hour. In addition to the usual effect, Force-sensitive characters who are exposed to Nyriaan spice gain a +5 bonus to Use the Force checks made in conjunction with the farseeing Force power. When the effect of Nyriaan spice wears off, users lapse into near catatonia, resulting in a -5 penalty to Wisdom for 4 hours.

Tempest's Blessing

One of Nyriaan's notable parasitic fungi is referred to by planetary natives as tempest's blessing. The fungus, which is a fine gray dust that adheres to exposed skin, lives in symbiosis with its host organism. Natives apply tempest's blessing spores to their bodies as part of a purifying ritual. Application of the fungus results in a distinctly unpleasant body odor, loss of body hair, and a two-fold increase in the normal requirement of ingested liquids.

Tempest's blessing increases the visual acuity of its host organism, granting darkvision for as long as the fungus is present and growing on the host's body. Bathing and scraping the body removes the fungus, although the process is uncomfortable. In addition, tempest's blessing cannot survive in white light, and prolonged exposure—one hour or more—to such light kills the fungus, as well.

GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

Nyriaan is ruled by a governing council that oversees the planet's bureaucracy. The governing council consists of four representatives from various factions. The Mining Guild and the Corporate Sector Authority each have a permanent seat on the council. In addition, one seat is held by a member of a noble house, and this seat is hotly contested by nobles from across the galaxy. Nobles from the Tapani Sector have traditionally held this seat the longest, although from time to time a noble house from the Core Worlds will assume control of the council seat for a time. This seat is appointed by the three other members of Nyriaan's governing council and usually falls to the house that bribes the right people or fits in with the council's plans the best. The final seat on the governing council is always held by a member of the reigning galactic government. The other factions on Nyriaan are happy to share control of the planet with the galactic government, because this prevents that government from trying to seize control of Nyriaan by force.

The governing council, called the Council by the locals, oversees the highest levels of the planet's government. Beneath the Council is a bureaucracy that enacts the Council's decrees. Each major settlement on Nyriaan has its own bureaucratic system that reports to the Council and its bureaucracy, creating a tree of authority that stretches across the planet. Although this decentralizes the Council's power, it also means that no one faction or government office ever has too much power. Some members of the Council have tried to consolidate power in the past, but their power grabs have been short-lived as other Council factions opposed their efforts.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement on Nyriaan is not a function of the government bureaucracy. One faction holding a Council seat is required to provide a private security force to police the planet. While this may seem as if it puts a single Council seat in a position of great power, it is also a significant drain on that seat's resources, as bringing in a private security force (and keeping it supplied) is no easy task on Nyriaan. Every five years, a new seat is chosen by the Council to provide planetary law enforcement, and no seat can hold this responsibility twice in a row. However, during the two decades when the Empire is at its height, the Council enacts a special decree that allows the Empire to provide planetary security for the duration of the Emperor's reign (a necessary concession after the Moff sitting on the Council threatened to invade the planet by force if the measure was not passed by the Council).

THE FACTIONS OF NYRIAAN

Over the years that Nyriaan is in the sights of the galaxy, it does not always play an important role in the galactic economy. Once its bounty is discovered, however, Nyriaan becomes a coveted asset to be controlled. Unfortunately for the most powerful factions with interest in Nyriaan, their attempts to garner complete control of the world are met with opposition on many fronts.

THE NATIVES OF NYRIAAN

Humans have populated Nyriaan for at least four thousand years, perhaps longer. The original colonists are the crew of the *Starveil*, a Galactic Republic exploration vessel that crashes on the planet. Because of the ion storms in the planet's upper atmosphere, they are unable to leave the planet even after repairs are made to the ship. The *Starveil* crew's descendants go native and survive through a combination of ingenuity and determination. From a starting population of 52 individuals, their numbers grow over the millennia through childbirth and through the addition of other groups of survivors to their population.

Nyriaan's current native population is unknown, but authorities estimate it to be anywhere between 1,200 and 2,000 individuals living in small communities. In truth, the figure is much larger. Although they have been confined to Nyriaan for generations, the planetary natives are biologically Human. Minor evolutionary changes are evident, such as their adaptation to the darkness prevalent on the planet's surface. Their spoken language is a mixture of High Galactic and Basic that has been combined into a unique colloquial dialect. Referred to as Nyriaanan by locals, the language is easily learned by anyone who speaks Basic and has a passing familiarity with High Galactic. Likewise, Nyriaanans easily learn Basic once exposed to it.

NEW SPECIES: NEAR HUMAN (NYRIAAN NATIVE/NYRIAANAN)

The Human natives of Nyriaan, also known as Nyriaanans, appear at first glance to be of typical Human stock. Their skin is pale and their eyes are well suited to Nyriaan's dim light. Nyriaanans are stocky, although a good deal of variation exists in body types depending on an individual's clan or tribe. Nyriaanans are distrustful of outsiders, and they see settlers, colonists, and prospectors as competitors for Nyriaan's resources. They despise corporate interests above all, because they fear that their planet might be destroyed in the pursuit of an easier way to procure madilon.

Nyriaanans divide themselves along family lines into hundreds of different clans. Some are nomadic, wandering the waterlogged plains of their homeworld, while others inhabit the same groves of Meadlin's trees that their ancestors settled centuries, or even millennia, before. They are a peaceful people, but the natives are easily angered by offworlders that care more for turning a profit than for honor or integrity.

Although they are not technological in nature, Nyriaan's natives foster the technology of their ancestors as well as adopt newer technology as they acquire it. In fact, Republic anthropologists that have come to Nyriaan to study the native clans are surprised by how the Nyriaanans manage to maintain and continue to utilize Old Republic technology. For natives, everything has a use, and keeping the artifacts of yesteryear in good working condition honors one's ancestors.

Nyriaanan Species Traits

Nyriaanans share the following species traits:

Ability Modifiers: +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma.

Size: Nyriaanans are of Medium size, gaining no bonuses or penalties for their size.

Speed: Nyriaanan base speed is 6 squares.

Bonus Class Skill: Survival is always considered a class skill for Nyriaanans.

Bonus Feat: Like their Human ancestors, Nyriaanans are versatile and gain one bonus feat at 1st level.

Low-Light Vision: Nyriaanans ignore concealment (but not total concealment) from darkness.

Languages: Nyriaanan.

THE SITH ON NYRIAAN

During the Jedi Civil War, a brief but violent battle takes place in the Luire system. When the debris clears, the Galactic Republic has successfully dealt a killing blow to the *Dying Sun*, a Sith *Interdictor*-class warship. The Republic never considers why the Sith are in this largely ignored area of space and assumes that the enemy vessel was merely avoiding discovery by hiding in a remote system. The *Dying Sun* is eventually pulled into Nyriaan's gravity well, and it breaks up into several pieces as it tumbles to the planet's surface. A number of these pieces endure the crash, and perhaps even more miraculously, a handful of the *Dying Sun*'s crew manages to survive as well.

Although their population has never been significant, the surviving Sith pull together under the ruthless leadership of Darth Glovoc, their captain, and survive the hardships of Nyriaan. Over the millennia the Sith become twisted and inbred, biding their time until they are able to shrug off Nyriaan's shackles and fight the Jedi once more. The Sith occasionally encounter other Nyriaan natives, upon whom they prey mercilessly, but they are mostly content to subsist on their own in relative seclusion.

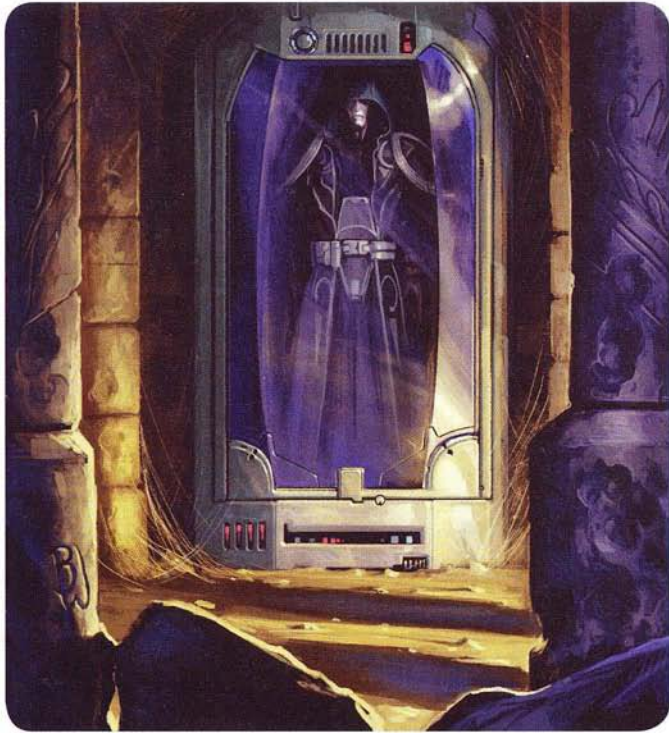
Darth Glovoc goes into suspended animation within an oubliette, initially awakening every hundred years or so to take stock of his people and their progress. His episodes of consciousness grow less and less frequent as the millennia slowly pass until he is worshiped as a sleeping god, the Dying Sun, by the depraved descendants of his crew. After the colonization of Nyriaan, his sleep becomes fitful and restless. The creatures that serve Darth Glovoc's sleeping form try to awaken him, but to no avail. If he finally regains consciousness, he doubtless brings his servants together to venture out in search of conquest beyond the murky prison of Nyriaan.

THE OLD REPUBLIC ERA

During the years of the Old Republic, Nyriaan is little more than a turbulent blip on the sensor screens of anyone who chances to pass through the Luire system. Given the lackluster first impression that the system makes on passersby, that Luire serves as little more than an occasional battleground during the many wars between the Old Republic and the Sith Empire is hardly surprising.

The Galactic Republic

The earliest reports of a Galactic Republic survey vessel entering the Luire system date back to 4,129 years prior to the Battle of Yavin. The survey finds little of interest in the system and marks it as such. From that point onward, Luire is rarely visited by Republic-aligned forces. Civilian prospectors and criminals, especially pirates, find occasion to enter the Luire system, but they rarely stay long.



In 4,067 BBY, sixty-two years after the system is initially surveyed, the *Starveil*, a civilian exploration vessel partially funded by the Galactic Republic, arrives in the Luire system. The *Starveil*'s purpose is officially declared to be exploration with a focus on finding alien life, yet Republic records of the ship's findings are sketchy at best. The captain of the *Starveil*, Bethanie Melan, holds the rank of commander in the Republic Navy prior to her resignation and subsequent attachment to the *Starveil* Project. No official explanation is ever given for her departure from the Navy, nor is her commission ever officially listed as being terminated.

The truth of the *Starveil* Project, although never revealed to the public, is that it is searching for the remains of a highly secret and experimental Republic Navy vessel that is reported lost in the vicinity of the Luire system. Beginning with the planets closest to Luire, the *Starveil* conducts a thorough scan of the entire system in an attempt to locate the remains of the mysterious experimental vessel.

The results of the scans remain inconclusive until the *Starveil* approaches Nyriaan. Nyriaan's magnetic and atmospheric anomalies prevent successful orbital scans, forcing Melan to attempt a landing upon the turbulent world to get a first-hand look. Melan's last communication to the Republic reveals her intention to land, as well as her suspicion that her crew might not be able to leave the planetary surface once they make their landing. After this communication, the *Starveil* is never heard from again.

Following the *Starveil*'s disappearance, the Republic sends a pair of rescue ships to the Luire system. The ships orbit Nyriaan, but neither attempts to make planetfall at the commanders' discretion. The final report of the rescue vessels lists the *Starveil* as being lost due to Nyriaan's magnetic field, and all crew are officially listed as dead.

The final report could not be further from the truth. Although the *Starveil* does crash on Nyriaan, most of the crew, including Bethanie Melan, survives the crash. The *Starveil* survivors become the first of Nyriaan's colonists and form the basis for the planet's native population, which plays an important role in Nyriaan politics in the centuries to come.

The Mandalorians

Mandalorian interest in the Luire system is brief and restricted to the system's seventh planet, Caillte. A tiny outpost, dubbed Unity, is established on Caillte in the last months of the Mandalorian Restoration. To avoid detection, the settlement is concealed beneath the rocky crust of the barren planet. Although it is intended as a forward supply post, Unity becomes something more in the early years following the Mandalorian Wars.

Feruun Lern, a Mandalorian crusader who is highly regarded by his fellow clansmen, establishes his dominance on Unity shortly after the outpost is founded. Although Unity is intended to supplement the Mandalorian advance into the Mid Rim and beyond, Lern invites others to join him, both to rediscover the warriors within themselves and to establish themselves as new warriors within the Mandalorian movement. Many of these revitalized Mandalorians, along with Feruun Lern, leave Unity and join their brothers at Malachor V.

When the Mandalorians are defeated at Malachor V, Lern and his surviving comrades return to Caillte for a short time. In his absence, the outpost is stripped by Neo-Crusaders and other Mandalorians who have chosen to abandon their warrior heritage. As the Jedi Civil War rages, Lern and his followers, viewed as staunch traditionalists, leave Unity and join with Canderous Ordo. Together they seek glory in death during the Dark Wars against the Sith. Although some survive, Lern and most of his clan lose their lives.

Without the Mandalorians, the Unity outpost remains empty and forgotten beneath Caillte's surface until its dusty corridors are rediscovered by the Corporate Sector Authority in 405 BBY. Although much of what remained following the Mandalorian Wars is lost, enough remains behind to whet the CSA's appetite for forgotten technologies and techniques of war.

The Sith Empire

Darth Glovoc, self-proclaimed Lord of the Mind's Eye, wages a series of successful campaigns during the waning years of the Jedi Civil War. Considered brilliant but mad—even by the standards of the Sith—Darth Glovoc is often left to his own devices. When not engaging the Republic, he spends his time in deep meditation, searching for the key to his people's ultimate victory.

On the eve of Darth Malak's death at the hands of Revan, Darth Glovoc experiences an epiphany in the form of a dream. In his vision, he sees a dark world covered in perpetual cloud, violet lightning piercing the dimness of the planet's surface like bolts of dark-side energy. As vague as the vision is, Glovoc awakes from his trance with an overwhelming desire to see this world, to walk its shadowed vistas, and to conquer its sodden landscape. Something is there, he is sure, and the dark side beckons him to find it.

Darth Glovoc takes his flagship, an *Interdictor*-class warship dubbed *Dying Sun*, and sets course for the one place that his records show matches his vision: the Luire system. He is sure that Luire is his destination, and he executes on the spot those who dare to contradict him. Leaving the Jedi Civil War behind, the *Dying Sun* forges its way across the galaxy. As the warship travels through hyperspace, Darth Glovoc sleeps, his mind's eye seeking out the turbulent planet of his prophecy.

Although he finds Nyriaan, Darth Glovoc's mind cannot penetrate its rolling veil of clouds—as if the planet resists his attempts to see what lay on its surface. This phenomenon both enrages and mollifies him at the same time, for it proves that something on the planet deserves his attention. When the *Dying Sun* leaves hyperspace just outside the Luire system, the captain of the ship intrudes upon Darth Glovoc's chambers to inform him of the journey's end. Instead of a slow death at Darth Glovoc's enraged hands, the captain finds his lord awake and serene—or so he seems.

Darth Glovoc orders the *Dying Sun* to proceed directly to the fifth planet of the system and to begin a comprehensive scan of the area surrounding the planet. Unfortunately, the *Dying Sun*'s active sensors attract the attention of a Republic strike force, which moves to intercept the Sith. With his attention focused on Nyriaan, Darth Glovoc fails to notice his approaching enemies until too late.

The resulting battle is swift and brutal. The Sith crew, no strangers to war, fight well. Three Republic cruisers and countless Republic starfighters are destroyed, even as the *Dying Sun* is whittled away by massed fire and volleys of enemy torpedoes. The *Dying Sun*, its back broken in the violent combat, begins a slow, uncontrolled descent into the clouds below. The remaining Republic ships claim victory, take stock of their dead and wounded, and leave the Luire system behind.

THE RISE OF THE EMPIRE ERA

On the surface, the conflict that is so prevalent during the Rise of the Empire seems a distant distraction from Nyriaan's own politics. Nevertheless, the effect of the Clone Wars and its aftermath are no less pronounced in the Luire system. Much of the conflict on the planet during this time stems from the Corporate Sector Authority and its desire to control the extraction and dispersal of Nyriaan's veins of madilon.

Although Nyriaan begins as a lawless and sparsely populated colony world, it grows in stature during this time. The formation of the Grand Army of the Republic boosts the need for madilon, since new ships must be designed and built to support to war effort. The Confederacy of Independent Systems recognizes the Republic's reliance on Nyriaan's cash crop and does not sit idly by. Between the Mining Guild and the Corporate Sector Authority, the Republic's assets on Nyriaan are put through a proverbial wringer.

The Confederacy of Independent Systems

The Confederacy's interest in Nyriaan is a passing one, and is reflected solely in the business practices of the Commerce Guild, the Trade Federation, and the Mining Guild. In fact, Count Dooku's only concern for Nyriaan is that all Republic holdings on the planet be neutralized in order to deny his enemies the alloy they require to fuel the war effort. With the First Battle of Nyriaan in 21 BBY, this goal is easily achieved, and the Republic's facilities and mines are divided between the Confederacy's allies.

All is not peaceful following the battle, however. With the Republic's restrictions and rule of law no longer applicable, the Mining Guild and CSA ramp up their operations and begin to exploit native land. The native Nyriaanans, no strangers to corporate greed, resist violently. CSA and Mining Guild operations suffer at the hands of the natives who are, at times, supported by remnants of the Republic as well as by Commerce Guild and Trade Federation agents.

When the Second Battle of Nyriaan takes place in 19 BBY, the Confederacy's forces are swept aside in a single night. With the combined blow of losing both Count Dooku and General Grievous only a few days earlier, the CIS's will to fight is completely broken, and the Republic's clone units spend much of the battle mopping up and taking prisoners. When Order 66 is issued by the Emperor, the three Jedi in the system are assassinated by their erstwhile allies.

The Trade Federation, the Commerce Guild, and the Techno Union fail to survive the Clone Wars intact, but the Mining Guild comes out ahead. Although officially supportive of the Confederacy, the Mining Guild does not marshal forces during the Clone Wars. Additionally, all evidence of Mining Guild complicity with the Confederacy somehow vanishes around the time of the Second Battle of Nyriaan. Emperor Palpatine is unconcerned, however, and folds all Trade Federation, Commerce Guild, and Techno Union holdings on Nyriaan into those controlled by the Mining Guild.

The Corporate Sector Authority

Of all the parties claiming a stake in Nyriaan's riches, the Corporate Sector Authority probably has the most solid claim to entitlement of any. Establishing a small base on Caillte in 405 BBY, the Corporate Sector Authority views the Luire system as little more than the location of a remote research facility. In fact, the outpost becomes a prison of sorts for employees who have achieved spectacular failure in the eyes of the Authority, but who are innocent of any criminality.

The Caillte outpost's pilot light is kept on for more than three hundred years. In the centuries of its occupation, the Corporate Sector discovers a number of caverns, caves, and subterranean structures that date back to the Mandalorian Wars. Artifacts of the period, including weapons and other martial technologies, are unearthed. The Mandalorian connection to Caillte is kept secret, and becomes the pet project of a number of Corporate Sector vicepreses.

When traces of madilon are discovered on Nyriaan by the Republic, the Corporate Sector's interest in the Luire system is suddenly renewed. The CSA immediately claims dominion over the entire system, insisting that their outpost on Caillte constitutes ownership of Nyriaan as well. In response, the Republic quarantines the system and initiates a lengthy court battle to determine who has mining rights on Nyriaan.

In the end, a combination of Senatorial corruption and the flexibility of law results in a legal loss for the Corporate Sector. Although it is permitted to stake claims upon Nyriaan like any other interested party, the CSA is found to lack entitlement to planetary ownership. The CSA response—both to increase its own profitability as well as to spite its competitors in the Republic—is to advance its own technology to allow for greater production. The most important of these assets is the laser transport array, a device that allows properly equipped vessels to navigate through Nyriaan's atmosphere in relative safety.

LTA technology proves valuable to all interested parties on Nyriaan. Despite the CSA's attempt to keep the inner workings of the laser transport arrays a secret, Republic spies procure the information from CSA contacts. Although expensive to produce and install, laser transport arrays become the standard method of landing and taking off from Nyriaan's surface. They become so prevalent that the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild, hungry for a piece of Nyriaan's profitability, petitions for a Republic mandate requiring a bonded navigator aboard all incoming and outgoing flights.

Despite the constant troubles experienced by the CSA on Nyriaan, the planet's value to the Corporate Sector is undeniable. Throughout most of Nyriaan's tumultuous history, the CSA remains one of the major players in the planet's affairs. The CSA's methods are of dubious morality, especially when they concern the planetary natives, but the bottom line is the final arbiter of right and wrong in the eyes of the CSA's Direx Board.

The Galactic Republic

The Galactic Republic presents two diametrically opposed faces to anyone interested in profiting from Nyriaan's bounty. The first is that of an august body concerned with fair play and preservation of natural resources, while the second is one of greed, corruption, and avarice fueled by the desire for political gain. Insofar as Nyriaan is concerned, the Republic's interests in the inhospitable world are initially focused on denying its entirety to the Corporate Sector Authority. In fact, a great deal of the intrigue on Nyriaan during the Rise of the Empire is prosecuted between the Corporate Sector and the Republic.

Madilon is such a rare commodity that the Republic is just as concerned with keeping its own options open in regard to the precious metal as it is in allowing smaller, noncorporate entities to practice a bit of free enterprise. Not only that, but the Republic is the first faction to make a successful landfall on Nyriaan, albeit by gondola technology. In this regard, Senate politicians are inclined to believe that if Nyriaan belongs to any one group, it is to the Republic. Only because of the interest of high-paying groups, such as the Mining Guild and the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild, do they acquiesce to allowing others to stake claims and extract ore.

The Luire Accord of 30 BBY creates a planetary government known as the Nyriaan Concord. The Concord allows anyone with a claim on Nyriaan to petition the body for aid or arbitration. A Senator is elected by the members of the Concord to represent the Luire system in the Senate. The Concord also includes a separate political body, referred to as the Native Delegation, made up entirely of Nyriaanan natives. Despite their presence in the Concord, the concerns of the natives are largely ignored by the corporations that dominate its day-to-day politics.

During the Clone Wars, Nyriaan is taken over by the Confederacy of Independent Systems. The loss of Nyriaan for the seventeen months that the Confederacy has complete control of the planet is felt by the Republic's war machine. Despite the dire need for madilon, Republic forces are able to acquire the alloy as spoils of war as the tide turns against the Separatists. When the clones finally return to the Luire system, the Confederacy is only a hair's breadth away from total collapse. Only a slight nudge, militarily speaking, is needed to reclaim Nyriaan and its deposits of madilon for the Republic.

GHIA PREYSSOLA

One of the Republic's staunchest agents on Nyiriaan is Ghia Preyssola. Ghia, a Twi'lek, has been a willing tool of the Republic for most of her life. She is responsible for forming and coordinating Republic intelligence cells in and around the Luire system, and she does so with a significant amount of aplomb. When the hammer falls and the Confederacy invades, Ghia seeks refuge with independent miners and prospectors in the village of Silence. She reemerges when the Republic returns, and continues to perform her job for the Rebellion after the establishment of Emperor Palpatine's New Order.

This striking Twi'lek female—her green eyes an arresting contrast to her flawless blue skin—does not fit the description of a typical colonial miner. She looks as though she was once lithe, but her grace has given way to ropy muscles that are an obvious product of hard physical labor.

Ghia Preyssola

CL 6

Medium Twi'lek scoundrel 4/scout 2

Destiny 1; Force 4

Init +5; Senses low-light vision; Perception +9

Languages Basic, Ryl

Defenses Ref 22 (flat-footed 18), Fort 20, Will 18; Dodge hp 43; Threshold 20

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +7 (1d8+6)

Ranged blaster pistol +7 (3d6+3)

Base Atk +4; Grp +7

Atk Options Lucky Shot, Point Blank Shot, Running Attack

Special Actions Knack

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 14

Special Qualities deceptive

Talents Evasion, Knack, Lucky Shot

Feats Dodge, Martial Arts I, Martial Arts II, Point Blank Shot, Running Attack, Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +10 (can reroll),

Gather Information +10, Perception +9

Possessions blaster pistol, miner's outfit, comlink, breath mask, field kit, syntherope

Ghia Preyssola's Tactics

Having lived for years in the tough mining town of Silence, Ghia Preyssola is renowned for her skill at hand-to-hand combat. Few knowingly enter into a boxing match with her, and those who do usually end up unconscious or dead. Lacking an opportunity for confrontation of a more personal nature, she is never shy about pulling her trusty blaster pistol.

The Jedi Council

The Jedi Council shows little interest in Nyiriaan as a whole. Although initially troubled by the planetary atmosphere's resistance to the Force, the Council finds that it has enough to worry about without focusing its limited resources on a world that is interesting only for the single commodity that it can produce. When native unrest comes to a head in 47 BBY, the Jedi are obliged to take notice. A single Jedi, Amar Cros, is sent to negotiate a truce. Despite his best intentions, a treaty is not recognized until 43 BBY.

During his time on Nyiriaan, Cros becomes enamored with the mysterious planet and its native population. Despite the Council's request that he return to the Jedi Temple on Coruscant, Cros decides to remain on Nyiriaan. The Jedi tolerate his insubordination, feeling that it is better that they have an envoy on the planet in the event of further violence erupting. Another uprising occurs seven years later, this time with Amar Cros at the forefront of the native insurgents.

Although the Council declares that Cros has become a rogue Jedi, they refrain from sending a Jedi Master to deal with him directly. By the time the violence subsides in 30 BBY, Cros surfaces once again as the leader of the native delegation to the Nyiriaan Concord. Finding the Concord to be just as ill-prepared and corrupt as the Galactic Senate, Cros leaves in disgust, taking a large contingent of natives into Nyiriaan's unexplored regions.



THE NOBLES OF THE TAPANI SECTOR KNOW HOW TO OFFER A PROPER BRIBE.

AMAR CROS

Amar Cros has given up his Jedi robes in exchange for the clothes of a native Nyriaanan. Although he still clings to some of his Jedi philosophy, he sees the current struggle between the natives and the offworlders as a different type of war with a different kind of morality. In his fight against Nyriaan's oppressors, Amar Cros does anything to win. He is willing to call upon the dark side of the Force if it means serving the greater good. That he has not fallen to the dark side is a wonder to most Jedi, but Amar is never too proud to seek solace in mediation and atonement when the opportunity presents itself.

With his graying, braided hair and the lightsaber dangling from his belt, this older Nyriaanan looks out of place among his native companions. He eyes you with a mixture of suspicion and contempt, as if he is deciding what to do with you.

Amar Cros

CL 10

Medium Human Jedi 7/Jedi Knight 3

Destiny 2; Force 5; Dark Side 2

Init +11; Senses Use the Force +13

Languages Basic, Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 23 (flat-footed 22), Fort 23, Will 24; Deflect, Lightsaber Defense, Niman

hp 89; **Threshold** 23

Speed 6 squares

Melee lightsaber +9* (2d8+12) or

Melee lightsaber +11/+11 (2d8+7) with Double Attack

Ranged by weapon +11

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Cleave, Double Attack (lightsabers), Great Cleave, Power Attack

Special Actions Adept Negotiator, Force Persuasion, Lightsaber Defense

Force Powers Known (Use the Force +13): *battle strike, farseeing, Force slam* (2), *mind trick, move object, rebuke* (2), *surge*

Force Techniques Force Power Mastery (rebuke)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 17

Talents Adept Negotiator, Deflect, Force Persuasion, Lightsaber Defense, Multiattack Proficiency (lightsaber), Niman

Feats Cleave, Double Attack (lightsabers), Force Sensitivity, Force Training (3), Great Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (lightsabers), Weapon Proficiency (lightsabers, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +11, Initiative +11, Knowledge (galactic lore) +11, Persuasion +8, Use the Force +13 (can substitute for Persuasion checks)

Possessions lightsaber (self-built), native Nyriaanan garb

**Includes 5 points of Power Attack*

Amar Cros's Tactics

Amar Cros uses the Force as his primary weapon, using his lightsaber when necessary to lay his enemies low. He rarely fights alone, preferring to keep a small cadre of Force-sensitive natives with him. Although not trained as Jedi, his apprentices are nonetheless formidable.

Tapani Nobility

When madilon was discovered on Nyriaan, the floodgates open up to any group interested in capitalizing on the valuable metal. Word spreads as far as the Tapani Sector, and within a few months, parties representing various noble houses arrive in the Luire system, ready join in stripping Nyriaan of its assets.

The first of the noble houses in the Luire system is House Reena. Reena is well known for its profitable mining operations within its home sector. Although much of the ore that supports House Reena's economy is relatively mundane, House Reena does possess at least one mining operation that produces madilon. House Reena's people are well spoken of, both in and out of the Tapani Sector, and they have few enemies even among their fellow nobles. Prior experience with madilon, as well as experience creating and maintaining profitable mining ventures, makes House Reena one of the fastest growing and most profitable of the noncorporate operations on Nyriaan.

The next of Tapani's noble houses to stake a claim on Nyriaan is House Mecetti. Interested only in what it can gain by exploiting Nyriaan, House Mecetti chooses to use thinly veiled violence to prey on small-time stake holders and mining groups. Although House Mecetti's mining operations

are plagued by the effects of their poor working conditions, House Mecetti manages to turn a small profit from its activities on Nyriaan while simultaneously keeping an eye on House Reena's operations.

House Melantha initially chooses to watch as its sister houses stake their claims on Nyriaan, waiting until just after the Clone Wars to become involved. Given House Melantha's support of the Emperor's New Order, as well as the whisperings that House Melantha would gain control of much of the Tapani Sector if the Empire ever decided to invade, few are surprised when the fruits of House Melantha's mining labors on Nyriaan are ceded directly to the Empire.

When the Confederacy invades the Luire system, both House Reena and House Mecetti abstain from taking sides. While House Reena continues to operate at peak capacity, House Mecetti uses the chaos as an opportunity to strengthen its own position through claim jumping operations and outright theft. When the Republic returns, House Mecetti reverts to its covert activities once more.

THE REBELLION ERA

Following the Clone Wars and the formation of the Empire, Nyriaan remains much the same as it did under the Republic. Although the Corporate Sector Authority and the Mining Guild retain their holdings on the planet, they are required by treaty to divert the vast majority of their mined ore directly to Imperial interests at prices that are dictated by the Empire. Both entities chafe under the Imperial yoke, but the alternative—complete Imperial control of their holdings as punishment for their involvement with the Confederacy of Independent Systems—is unthinkable. Life on Nyriaan continues much as it has for the past several decades, although Nyriaan's citizens are aware that the Empire is now in complete control.

The result is a thriving black market in madilon, and several of the galaxy's largest criminal enterprises, including the Hutt kajidic and Black Sun, exhibit a renewed interest in Nyriaan. Even with a pronounced Imperial presence in the form of stormtroopers and orbital starships, Nyriaan is far more lawless than it once was. The Empire, concerned only with procurement, is unconcerned with the rights of Nyriaan's natives. When the inevitable uprisings occur, the Empire steps in and puts them down violently; in response, the native insurgents resort to guerilla tactics to slow their enemies' mining operations.

The Galactic Empire

One benefit that the Empire brings to Nyriaan is technological progress. Unwilling to rely on outdated technology such as gondolas and laser transport arrays, the Emperor charges his scientists and engineers to design and construct a series of ion shielding stations in Nyriaan's equatorial regions. The first of these massive facilities, powerful enough to project a moon-sized energy shield into high orbit, is completed in 8 BBY. The Empire controls the facility, but prefers to maintain it with a civilian staff culled from both Sienar Technologies and Kuat Drive Yards.

Once the first of these massive shielding stations is in place and functional, the Empire begins Operation Cloudfall in conjunction with the Mining Guild. Operation Cloudfall is a secret project that involves the systematic stripping of Nyriaan of all valuable resources. The operation runs on schedule, and in the short term, the Empire appears to have merely stepped up wartime production of madilon. When native clans protest Imperial exploitation of their lands, they are killed or enslaved. Although Operation Cloudfall brings ecological disaster to nearly twenty-five percent of Nyriaan's surface, it ultimately fails when native insurgents, supported by the Rebel Alliance, succeed in neutralizing much of the Imperial work force. Given that most of that workforce is comprised of Wookiee and Mon Calamari slaves, the insurgency grows with every prisoner that is liberated.

Other Corporate Interests

The two largest corporate interests in the Luire system during the Rebellion era, other than the Corporate Sector Authority and the Mining Guild, are Sienar Technologies and Kuat Drive Yards. Both companies are closely allied with the Empire, and receive a number of lucrative contracts in support of the New Order. Both corporations are instrumental in the design and construction of Nyriaan's ion shielding stations, and each plays a critical role in both maintaining and operating these massive facilities.

Kuat Drive Yards is responsible for the initial design of the ion shield projector. Using their expertise in planetary weaponry as a basis for the projector, KDY's engineers develop a monstrous facility that is surprisingly efficient in spite of its huge size. Perhaps just as surprising is the lead time necessary to construct the facility: a minimum of five years. A number of KDY executives lose their lives when important deadlines are not met to the Emperor's satisfaction. In the end, the facility is operational on schedule, and it sets the standard for the shielding station that is eventually constructed on the forest moon of Endor.

KDY sees to the design and construction of the ion shielding stations, but Sienar Technologies is brought in to staff and maintain them. Sienar also uses the opportunity to capitalize on the ready availability of madilon to design new hyperdrive engines in its Locus-based research facility. Sienar is a quiet yet sinister presence on Nyriaan. It sends a number of agents into the surrounding areas to spy on Corporate Sector interests and to maintain a covert network that answers only to Sienar's board of directors.

The Rebel Alliance

The entry of the Rebel Alliance on the galactic scene does not go unnoticed by Nyriaan's natives. Those natives with contacts offworld seek to garner Alliance support for their continued insurgency against their oppressors, both corporate and Imperial. Few of the remaining factions on Nyriaan are inclined to resist the Imperial occupation because it allows them to increase their workflow.

Keeping madilon out of the hands of the Empire and, more importantly, putting it into the hands of the Rebellion and its allies is a high priority for the Alliance. Although the Rebel Alliance's presence on Nyriaan is small in the early years, it gradually increases and finally peaks just after the Battle of Yavin. Assuming that a second Death Star is a distinct possibility, and knowing that such a project requires vast amounts of the rare alloy, the Alliance rallies what support it can in the Luire system.

ZERIK

Among the Rebel agents operating on Nyriaan, the most enigmatic is Zerk, a Bothan who began his stint with the Alliance prior to the destruction of Alderaan. Pragmatic by Bothan standards, he quickly recognizes the evils of the Galactic Empire and Emperor Palpatine's New Order. Rather than seek wealth for his services, Zerk performs much of his pro-Alliance work for free.

The death of his sister—one of the Bothans who die in the effort to retrieve information pertaining to the second Death Star—eclipses any value Zerk has for his own life with a seething, uncontained hatred. Although he still works for the Rebellion, Zerk is more interested in making the Empire pay for his sister's death than he is in overthrowing its tyranny.

The Bothan you see before you is dressed in the stained coveralls of a career miner, yet the dangerous twinkle in his eyes reveals a more sinister intention. As he talks, his right hand rarely ventures far from the butt of the blaster pistol in a holster on his belt.

Zerk

CL 8

Medium Bothan scoundrel 5/soldier 3

Destiny 1; **Force** 4; **Dark Side** 3

Init +13; **Senses** Perception+5

Languages Basic, Bothese, Ryl, Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 24 (flat-footed 20), Fort 21, Will 22

hp 56; **Threshold** 21

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +7 (1d4+5)

Ranged blaster rifle +10 (3d8+4) or

Ranged blaster rifle +11 (4d8+4) when aiming or

Ranged blaster rifle +8 (4d8+4) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +7

Atk Options autofire, Careful Shot, Dastardly Strike, Deadeye,

Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Skirmisher,

Sneak Attack +1d6, Sniper

Special Actions Indomitable

Abilities Str 13, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 13

Talents Dastardly Strike, Demolitionist, Indomitable, Skirmisher, Sneak Attack +1d6

Feats Careful Shot, Deadeye, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Gather Information), Sniper, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +10, Gather Information +15, Initiative +13, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +11, Mechanics +11, Stealth +13

Possessions blaster rifle, blaster pistol, knife, 2 thermal detonators, field kit

Zerk's Tactics

Zerk prefers to remain hidden until he feels that the time is right to strike his enemies. He feigns a harmless demeanor, hoping to lull his targets into a sense of false confidence before unleashing his formidable combat skills against them. In the event that he is unable to rely on surprise, Zerk fights like a cornered animal. He has no honor, especially when dealing with Imperial agents, and does anything to win. Short of victory, he accepts only death. To Zerk, surrender is never an option.

Most Alliance agents on Nyriaan operate as sleeper agents within the different factions on the planet. Many disguise themselves as independent miners or prospectors, while a few are employed by Sienar, KDY, the Mining Guild, or the Corporate Sector Authority. Most work with criminal organizations to secure much-needed resources for the Alliance, while others keep tabs on Imperial operations such as Operation Cloudfall. These agents eventually form the backbone of armed resistance on Nyriaan following the death of Emperor Palpatine on the second Death Star.

"THE REBEL
ALLIANCE IS TOO
WELL EQUIPPED,
THEY'RE MORE
DANGEROUS THAN
YOU REALIZE."
-GENERAL CASSIO TAGGE

THE NEW JEDI ORDER ERA

The invasion of the Yuuzhan Vong leaves few systems untouched, and Luire is no exception. Given Nyriaan's inexplicable effect on the Force, as well as the volatility of its atmosphere, the Yuuzhan Vong invasion is quick and brutal. Yuuzhan Vong see Nyriaan as a holy place, and a contingent of warriors and priests is left behind to police it after the initial invasion of the Luire system. Nyriaan's industry, which focuses primarily on madilon, is virtually eradicated during the Yuuzhan Vong invasion. Since they have no use for the rare alloy and consider the technology used to extract it to be in direct defiance of Nyriaan's sanctity, the invaders are unrelenting in their assault upon the commercial interests that dominate the planet.

Prior to the Yuuzhan Vong invasion, the New Republic does what it can to mitigate the damage inflicted upon Nyriaan by the Empire's failed Operation Cloudfall. An offer is extended to Nyriaan's natives by Republic politicians, asking them to join the New Republic. In exchange, these politicians offer to lobby the Senate for Nyriaan's independence, which would allow the natives to form their own government and collect tariffs and other export fees from mining interests on their planet. The Corporate Sector and the Mining Guild are not at all happy with such a proposal, and they protest loudly. Nyriaan's native clans, although interested in the offer, are wary of becoming embroiled in the New Republic's politics. They've known little goodwill from any of their planet's invaders, and are suspicious of the New Republic's motives.

Even after their acceptance of the offer, the native clans on Nyriaan are cast into a political limbo as the Corporate Sector files legal objections with the New Republic Senate. As the legal battle rages, the CSA and the Mining Guild step up their operations on Nyriaan, determined to gut the planet of as much alloy as they can before a decision is made. Distracted by the Imperial Remnant as well as other threats to their new government, the New Republic never formally recognizes Nyriaan prior to the Yuuzhan Vong invasion.

The New Republic

The New Republic finds itself troubled on a number of fronts following Emperor Palpatine's death. Despite the numerous problems confronting it, the Republic reaches out to the natives of Nyriaan in 8 ABY and attempts to bring them into the fold. The gesture is only partially successful, as elements of the Corporate Sector block the New Republic with legal proceedings, citing decisions made by the Senate of the Galactic Republic.

Even so, Nyriaan remains a valuable resource that the New Republic wants to keep close. Republic agents are sent to Nyriaan, both to monitor the powerful factions that plunder its landscape as well as to woo the native clans with promises of equality and prosperity. Unfortunately, these efforts bear little fruit. The little that is accomplished is marred by CSA and Mining Guild interference, both overt and covert.

When the Yuuzhan Vong invade and scour Nyriaan in 26 ABY, the New Republic's presence there—like the presence of all technological powers—is nearly obliterated. The few remaining Republic agents hide among Nyriaan's native clans, which watch the alien invaders warily from the shadows. Although they are not friends of the Yuuzhan Vong, the clans view the aliens as an improvement on their world's former tenants. After all, the Yuuzhan Vong show Nyriaan a kind of respect that, up until that time, only the native clans had shown to it.

Following the retreat of the Yuuzhan Vong, the New Republic attempts to reestablish the city of Locus and repair the ion shielding station there. The station is, however, beyond repair, forcing the New Republic to dedicate more resources to rebuilding it. The process is long one, taking nearly twice as long as the original Imperial construction did. In the meantime, less impressive means of making planetfall, such as gondola systems and laser transport arrays, are brought back into use.

The Yuuzhan Vong

For the brief time the Yuuzhan Vong control Nyriaan, they are content to search its landscape for answers to questions of faith. They are aware of the existence of the native clans on Nyriaan, but are content to leave them alone, initially. As time wears on and contact between the two species becomes more common, the Yuuzhan Vong begin using natives as fodder for experiments. The natives, not taking kindly to the Yuuzhan Vong's renewed interest, hide and fight back in equal amounts, with varying degrees of success.

By the time that the Yuuzhan Vong are defeated at the Second Battle of Coruscant, the guerilla war on Nyriaan reaches its peak. The natives, supplemented with whatever resources the New Republic can spare, fight a daily, desperate battle to evict their enemies from the surface of Nyriaan. When the time finally does come, most of the Yuuzhan Vong heed the call of their brothers and sisters, leaving Nyriaan without so much as a backward glance. A handful, however, remain behind, unwilling to leave the paradise that they have found. In time these expatriates manage to connect with the native clans in a way that their people could not—or would not—when they were Nyriaan's masters.

THE LEGACY ERA

After centuries of abuse, the Nyriaan of the Legacy era is much as it was before the crash of the *Locus*. The Yuuzhan Vong invasion leaves Nyriaan's mining infrastructure in tatters, while landing upon the surface of the planet is a complicated affair once more. With the rest of the galaxy a shambles, Nyriaan is once again a remote pearl in the minds of the galactic powers that once coveted its treasures. While the New Republic, the CSA, and countless other governments bury their dead and rebuild their infrastructures, the natives of Nyriaan and the remaining Yuuzhan Vong continue to integrate with one another. By the time Cade Skywalker witnesses the death of his father on Ossus, the two cultures have melded seamlessly.

The Corporate Sector Authority returns to Nyriaan with a vengeance. In the absence of the exercise of any real authority by the New Republic, the CSA takes de facto control of the entire planet. The natives and their new Yuuzhan Vong allies do not take kindly to the corporate invasion, resisting it on every front. CSA facilities are sabotaged, employees are killed or disappear, and in a handful of rare events, open warfare takes place between CSA security forces and armies of natives. This ongoing struggle provides much of Nyriaan's backdrop during the Legacy era. Despite their losses, the CSA sees madilon as far too profitable for them to be dissuaded from their exploitation of Nyriaan. The CSA's executives, safe in their boardrooms, care little for anything but the bottom line.

The Galactic Alliance

Although it initially continues the work of the New Republic on Nyriaan, the Galactic Alliance fails to recognize the potential of Nyriaan's bounty. Instead, it cedes stewardship of the planet to the Corporate Sector Authority, accepting shipments of madilon in exchange for control of the planet. Until the Alliance's overthrow by the Galactic Empire, it maintains a grudging presence on Nyriaan to oversee Corporate Sector operations. Alliance agents are sent into the wilderness to contact native clans, but most are never heard from again. A number of these agents run afoul of the clans, while the rest are silenced by the CSA, which happily blames their deaths upon Nyriaan's natives.

The ascension of the Galactic Empire results in a nearly immediate loss of Nyriaan for the Alliance. The Alliance agents who remain on Nyriaan join their new masters, leave the planet entirely, or retreat into the wilderness and attempt to wage a guerilla war. A few manage to contact elements of Nyriaan's native clans with varying degrees of success, while the remainder are hunted down by the Corporate Sector Authority and turned in for bounties offered by the Galactic Empire.

The Galactic Empire

Under the rule of Roan Fel and his predecessors, Imperial interest in Nyriaan is cursory at best. The valuable metal exports from the planet are taxed, but little else is done to curb the violence that continues to be targeted at the planetary natives. Prejudice against the Yuuzhan Vong, especially following the Sith-sabotaged terraforming attempts on other worlds, is easily manipulated in the CSA's favor. Although Emperor Fel garrisons troops in and around Locus, ostensibly to keep the peace, little is done to curb the excesses of the Corporate Sector Authority.

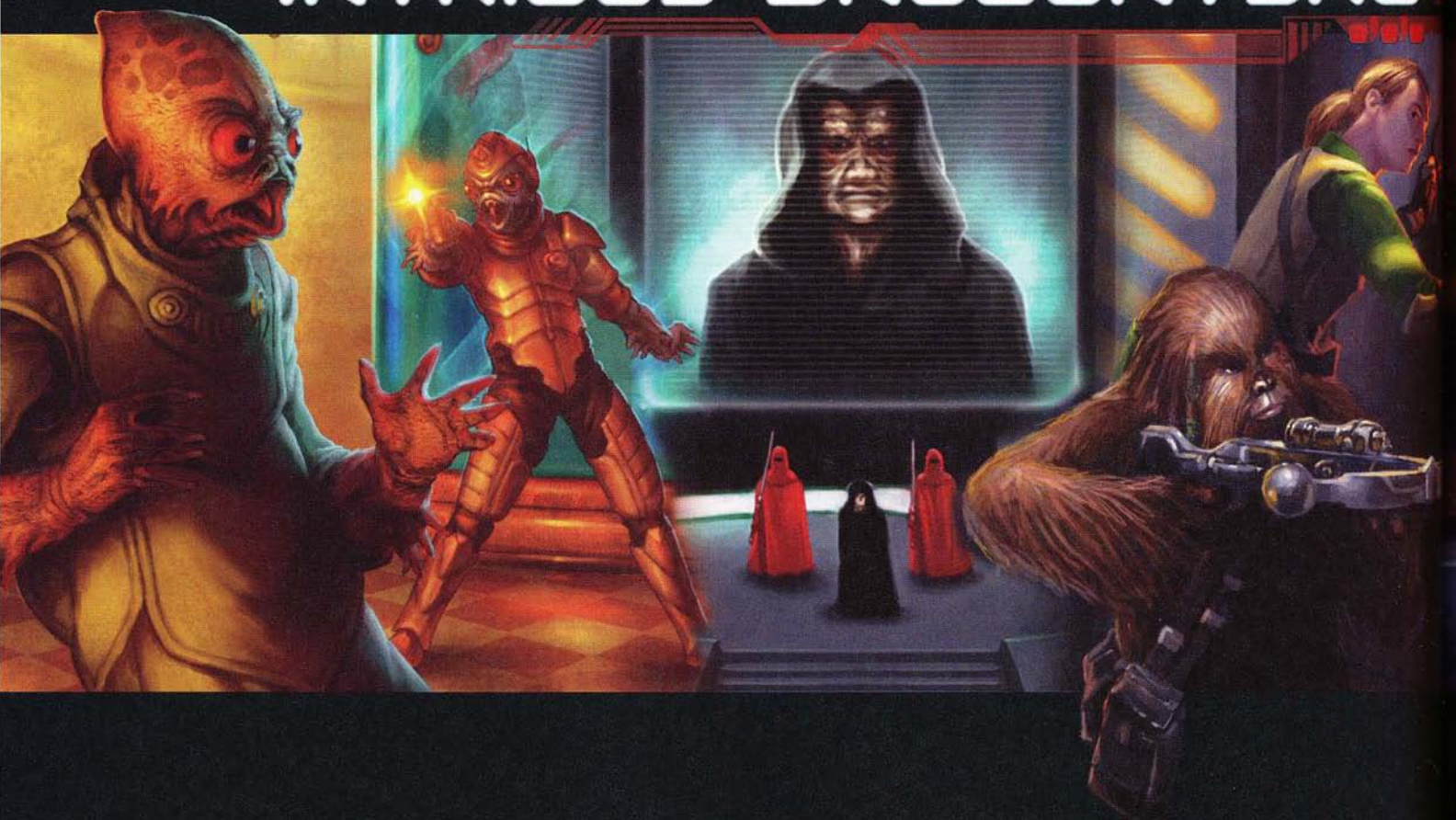
When Darth Krayt usurps the throne, his interest in Nyriaan is piqued when Sith agents uncover rumors of the *Dying Sun*. A Sith warship dating to the years of the Old Republic, the *Dying Sun* would be quite a find, especially if it contains Sith artifacts such as holocrons from that bygone age. In 132 ABY, Darth Krayt dispatches Darth Vurik to Nyriaan to investigate rumors of the *Dying Sun*. As he investigates the scant clues provided by his master, Darth Vurik discovers the descendants of the Sith who survived the crash of the *Dying Sun*. The descendants of the Sith, twisted in both body and spirit by their fanatical worship of the sleeping Darth Glovoc, resist Darth Vurik's advances, and many lose their lives in defense of their comatose master.

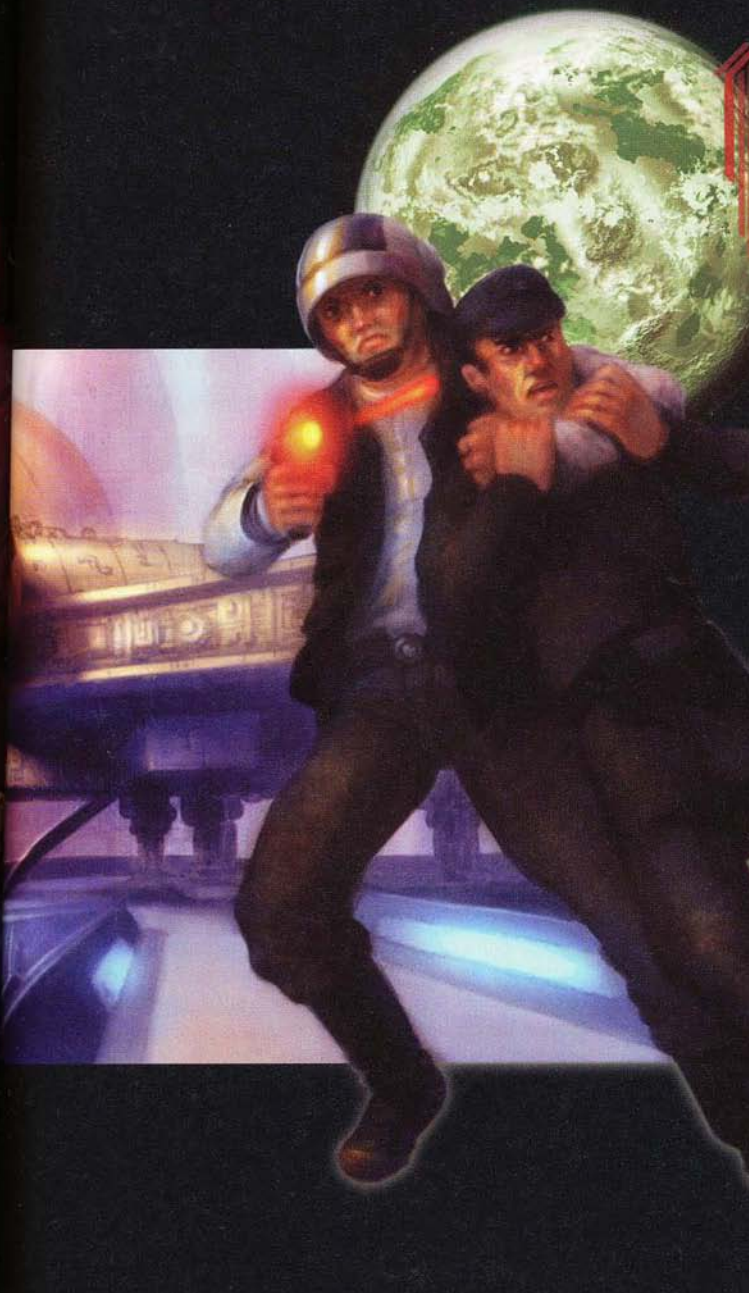
Darth Vurik's investigations into the Sith natives are not unnoticed. Members of Nyriaan's native clans observe him as he moves through their wilderness, as do the Jedi who hide among them. Before Darth Vurik can discover the location of Darth Glovoc, the sleeping captain of the *Dying Sun*, he is set upon by several fugitive Jedi. Although he is defeated, Darth Vurik leaves many of the Jedi wounded and kills at least one before retreating to Locus. While the Jedi and Darth Vurik distract one another, the Sith natives move Darth Glovoc to another hidden location. Haunted by his failure, Darth Vurik does not immediately report back to Darth Krayt. Instead, he hires bounty hunters to locate and kill the Jedi on Nyriaan while he continues his hunt for Darth Glovoc's body.

"MY VISION OF
GALACTIC ORDER IS
NOT YET A REALITY
BUT IT WILL BE...IT
WILL BE..."

-DARTH KRAYT

CHAPTER VII INTRIGUE ENCOUNTERS





This chapter is intended for Gamemasters and contains several mini-adventures ideally suited for heroes of intrigue. If you're a player, you probably should skip this chapter and wait for your GM to spring these adventures on you and the other players in your group.

USING MINI-ADVENTURES

Occasionally, heroes take a tangent that their Gamemaster had not planned for, or the GM needs to fill a few hours of play with an entertaining diversion from the main plot. The GM can improvise something, but, when he or she is at a loss for a scenario (or is just pressed for time), a mini-adventure might fit the bill.

The mini-adventures presented here cover a range of themes and challenge levels, including stakeouts, infiltrations, and the extraction of deep-cover spies from behind enemy lines. Each mini-adventure includes background on the events and challenges presented in the scenario, which the Gamemaster can use to construct a few "off-the-cuff" situations or as a jumping-off point for future encounters.

In addition, each mini-adventure also features a fully developed tactical encounter designed to serve as the climax of the scenario. The Gamemaster can use these encounters as written, alter the details to play to the heroes' strengths, or completely redesign them to fit the needs of the campaign. The GM can also reference these encounters when designing his or her own mini-adventures and scenarios.

These mini-adventures are designed to cater to different heroes' abilities, as well as the players' interests, within the realm of intrigue. For example, action-oriented heroes should appreciate "My Enemy's Enemy," while stealthy and tech-savvy heroes will like "Arms Dealers Beware." Heroes hoping to show off their espionage skills should enjoy "Betrayal at Cloud City" and "Double Down." Similarly, "Opportunity Knocks" is aimed at heroic nobles, and the group's fast-talking con artist should find that "Shooting Trouble" makes good use of Deception and Persuasion. Each mini-adventure in this chapter gives heroes of all classes a chance to shine, even if the scenario is not aimed specifically at their competencies.

Each mini-adventure opens with a two-page spread that outlines the plot and various encounters. This is followed by another two-page spread detailing the climactic encounter. In addition, the mini-adventures make use of the new skill challenge rules described in Chapter 2.

Although these mini-adventures are designed to be completely independent of one another, common threads run through all of them, allowing them to be strung together and run as a sort of "sub-campaign" within the main campaign. How they are used is purely up to the Gamemaster's discretion.

ADVENTURE #1: SHOOTING TROUBLE

"Shooting Trouble" is a mini-adventure designed for 2nd-level heroes. In this scenario, the characters are hired to infiltrate a corrupt corporation's branch office to slice into its mainframe and locate incriminating evidence. Along the way, however, they learn that the organization they are working for might not have the best of intentions.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Although the Joruba Consortium is relatively unknown to the general populace, it is well respected in the Mid Rim business community as a capable wholesale distributor for a bewildering array of goods—airspeeders, foodstuffs, holoivid projectors, and much more. The Consortium does not produce these goods, but buys them in enormous quantities and ships them throughout the galaxy using its diverse fleet of starships. Beneath this veneer of respectability, however, lies a dark truth. The Joruba Consortium uses its shipping fleet, wealth, and bureaucratic favors to smuggle almost every type of illegal item known, including slaves, to the lawless planets of the Outer Rim.

A pair claiming to be members of the Sector Rangers—a law-enforcement agency with authority throughout the galaxy—approaches the heroes with an unusual request. Officers Malbo and Tyri are in deep cover for their agency, investigating the Joruba Consortium for smuggling, tax evasion, and trafficking in sentients. They tell the heroes that they are close to cracking the case but require one last bit of evidence to close the books. This information lies within a computer network inside one of the Consortium's branch offices on the edge of Hutt Space. Unfortunately, the rangers claim, neither they nor their usual contacts can infiltrate the office without blowing their cover. Malbo and Tyri request that the heroes undertake the mission on behalf of the Sector Rangers. They will provide a method for infiltrating the office and another for escape if the heroes will undertake to secure the evidence. In exchange, they promise both credits and the goodwill of the Rangers.

BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

Malbo and Tyri offer 15,000 credits to the heroes, payable when they deliver the desired information. With a successful Persuasion check opposed by Malbo or Tyri's check (+15), the heroes can increase this amount to 17,500 credits. If they make the check by 5 or more, they increase the reward to a maximum of 20,000 credits.

If the heroes find the circumstances suspicious, demand more credits, or otherwise do not want to take the job, the request for assistance quickly turns to innuendo and then threats. Malbo (playing the bad cop) drops hints about the heroes' past that can be used as leverage against them. If even this fails to sway them, Malbo reveals incriminating information about a relative or colleague of one of the heroes—information that is not public knowledge. It becomes obvious that the pair have been watching and researching the heroes for some time. If the heroes consent to take the job, at which point Malbo and Tyri revert to their pleasant and professional demeanors.

WAIT, ISN'T THIS ILLEGAL?

The characters might realize that taking the actions required of them without a warrant, as civilians, is illegal and that any evidence gathered stands a good chance of being thrown out of court. They would be right to question Malbo and Tyri on these points. Despite their assurance that everything is above board, the truth is that this operation is being carried out without the proper paperwork or legal approval. The situation sets up further opportunities for the heroes to be pulled deeper and deeper into corruption.

JUST THE HIRED HELP

Once the heroes agree to take part in the mission, Malbo and Tyri give them a day to tie up any loose ends and arrange to meet them at the nearest starport the following day. During that meeting, the rangers take the heroes into a private room and explain that they will travel to the planet Nyriaan aboard a Joruba Consortium freighter. The heroes are to pose as corporate troubleshooters sent by headquarters for a surprise inspection of the facility's computer network and security measures. Each hero is given an appropriate outfit (either business attire or a Consortium uniform, depending on the character's skill set) and a code cylinder containing data on his or her false identity. Because the mission is meant to be clandestine, Malbo and Tyri forbid the heroes from taking oversized weapons that cannot be stowed in their luggage, including weapons from the rifle or heavy weapons groups. Heroes can attempt to smuggle in these items, however, with a Deception check opposed by Malbo or Tyri's Perception check (+10). If caught, they will be ordered to hand over the weapons, which will be returned after completion of the mission.

There is a catch, of course. The code cylinders have only enough data for the heroes to board the Joruba Consortium freighter, the *Windswept*. Once aboard, the heroes need to make contact with the real troubleshooting team, also aboard the vessel, and obtain their code cylinders. When the real cylinders are connected to the heroes' cylinders, they will slice through



the encryption and adjust the heroes' identifications, making them seem authentic. If the heroes ask about using deadly force to obtain the cylinders, Malbo and Tyri are remarkably noncommittal and simply reply that the heroes should do what needs to be done. They note that bribes have been made to the right people to allow the heroes' presence on the *Windswept* to be removed from the ship's logs.

Once the heroes are ready, the rangers point them to the appropriate gate and explain that after completing the mission, the characters must return to the starport on Nyriaan. There, they will board another vessel named the *Last Call*, which will return them to their point of origin, where they will receive their reward.

I'M TAKING THIS (CL 2)

The *Windswept* is an aging Corellian corvette, garishly painted in the colors of the Joruba Consortium. The false identification in the heroes' code cylinders allows them to board the vessel with no problems, and they are shown to their quarters while the ship takes off for Nyriaan. Once aboard, the heroes are free to move about the passenger area, where they encounter three groups of passengers, each of which is affiliated with the Consortium in some way. One group consists of Joruba employees who are the real troubleshooters; the

other groups can be fleshed out by the Gamemaster as desired. The heroes have a full day to formulate their plans and obtain the code cylinders from the real troubleshooters before the *Windswept* arrives at Nyriaan.

The real troubleshooter team has the same number of members as the heroes' party. They spend half the journey in their quarters (each member of the team shares a cabin with another member) and the other half in the passenger common area, watching holovids, reading, or conversing with one another. The heroes must figure out a way to get the troubleshooters alone long enough to obtain the code cylinders that they wear on their uniforms. The characters can try several avenues.

If a Joruba employee is in his or her quarters, the heroes must gain access to the room. Bypassing the door lock requires a DC 20 Mechanics check. With a DC 15 Persuasion check, a hero could convince a crew member that he or she is the rightful occupant of the room, locked out by accident. If the heroes gain access to a room, there is a 50% chance that the Joruba employee inside is asleep (imposing a -10 penalty to Perception checks to notice the heroes sneaking in). If combat occurs, see below.

The heroes could also attempt to use Stealth checks to pick the pocket of a Joruba employee and take the troubleshooter's code cylinder. Because the employees stick together when outside their quarters, they gain a +2 bonus to Perception checks to notice such attempts.

Of course, even if the heroes obtain all the real code cylinders, they still must contend with the Joruba employees, who will try to exit the *Windswept* when it docks on Nyriaan and head for the branch office. If the heroes kill the troubleshooters, each character immediately gains a Dark Side Point. With a DC 20 Stealth check, the heroes can hide a body on the *Windswept* well enough for it to remain undiscovered until they are long gone. More ethical heroes could subdue the employees and store them bound and gagged in a storage closet or the like. With a DC 15 Intelligence check, the heroes can find a suitably disused space in which the employees will not be discovered by the crew before the ship heads back to the Mid Rim.

Combat

If violence ensues, the Gamemaster should create a basic map for the appropriate area. Passenger quarters are 2 squares wide by 3 squares long, and each room contains two bunks, a table, and a basic computer. The ship's common area is 5 squares by 5 squares, with couches and tables arranged as appropriate. In the common area, any particularly loud noise (such as blaster fire) draws the attention of a crew member in 1d6 rounds. If the noise occurs in a passenger's quarters, make a +5 check against a generic crew member's Perception check (+2) to determine whether anyone is alerted.

ENCOUNTER: THE TROUBLE- SHOOTING

Challenge Level 3

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Shooting Trouble," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

If the heroes manage to obtain the real code cylinders and prevent the genuine troubleshooting team from reaching the Joruba branch office on Nyri-aan, they can travel to the facility with no additional problems. The real code cylinders provide the necessary identification, and the security staff admits the heroes and gives them access to the facility's main computer system.

Outside the main computer room is a security station, where four bored security guards (use the Rebel Trooper statistics on page 280 of the Saga Edition core rulebook) monitor the room with cameras. Two technicians remain inside the computer room while the heroes go about their activities.

The computer room contains three terminals that are not linked to one another in any way. The heroes must complete a skill challenge to determine which terminal holds the database with the information they seek.

SKILL CHALLENGE: THE SLICE

In this skill challenge, the heroes must determine which computer system contains the files they seek. At the same time, they must maintain their cover as legitimate Joruba employees inspecting the systems for faults in its security measures, fooling the two technicians. As the heroes accrue failures, the technicians become suspicious, eventually calling the security guards to seize the intruders.

CL 3

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [Opposed DC]: The heroes bluff their way through a tight spot by threatening dire consequences for a technician that questions their activities as corporate troubleshooters.

Knowledge (technology) [DC 18]: The heroes determine which of the systems is primarily used for data storage and which is used for security and monitoring.

Persuasion [Opposed DC]: The heroes try to persuade the technicians to reveal information that will help them determine which computer system contains the data they seek.

Use Computer [DC 20]: The heroes slice through the many layers of the computer's defenses to find the incriminating information they seek.

Use the Force [Opposed DC or DC 18]: The heroes attempt to determine whether the technicians are holding back information about which system contains the data they seek. The heroes can also use move object to block the security cameras from monitoring their activities.

Challenge Effects: The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:

Opposed DC: The technicians that the heroes are trying to fool or keep distracted throughout the skill challenge use Perception to see through deceptions and sense the heroes' intentions.

Success: The heroes manage to locate and download the files they seek without setting off alarms or drawing undue attention from the technicians or the security guards.

Failure: The heroes set off an alarm in the security system or in the firewall protecting the data, or they do something that makes the technicians overly suspicious. Either way, the technicians call for the four security guards, who arrive the following round.

JORUBA CONSORTIUM TROUBLESHOOTER TEAM MEMBERS

The members of the Joruba Consortium troubleshooter team are no-nonsense individuals that just want to get the job done. They are inherently wary, but they have no reason to suspect the heroes at first.

Joruba Consortium Troubleshooter Team Member	CL 2
Medium Human nonheroic 6	
Init +4; Senses Perception +10	
Languages Basic, Bocce, 1 unassigned	
Defenses Ref 11 (flat-footed 10), Fort 11, Will 12	
hp 20; Threshold 11	
Speed 6 squares	
Melee unarmed +4 (1d4)	
Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6)	
Base Atk +4; Grp +5	
Abilities Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 11	
Feats Cut the Red Tape, Mechanics, Use Computer, Skill Focus (Knowledge [technology], Skill Training (Perception), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)	
Skills Knowledge (bureaucracy) +10, Knowledge (technology) +15, Mechanics +15, Perception +10, Use Computer +15	
Possessions blaster pistol, Joruba Consortium uniform, comlink, code cylinder	

JORUBA CONSORTIUM TECHNICIANS (2)

The technicians have endured visits from snooping corporate troubleshooters before and are not thrilled to have the heroes in the computer room. If combat breaks out, the technicians hide or flee but do not confront the heroes.

Joruba Consortium Technician

CL 0

Medium Human nonheroic 2

Init +1; Senses Perception +11

Languages Basic, 1 unassigned

Defenses Ref 10 (flat-footed 10), Fort 10, Will 10

hp 4; Threshold 10

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +1 (1d4)

Base Atk +1; Grp +1

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Skill Focus (Knowledge [technology], Mechanics, Perception, Use Computer), Skill Training (Perception)

Skills Knowledge (technology) +12, Mechanics +12, Perception +11, Use Computer +12

Possessions datapad, Joruba Consortium uniform

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The computer room has the following features:

Illumination: Any area occupied by a character is well lit unless otherwise noted.

Doors: The door to the computer room is a strong blast door with DR 15 and 80 hit points. The lock can be overridden with a DC 20 Mechanics check.

Security Camera: Two cameras (each DR 1, 5 hit points) monitor the computer room, providing a constant feed to the security station. The heroes can destroy the cameras or use some other method to block their view. Simply covering or disabling the cameras, however, draws the attention of the guards in 1d4 rounds.

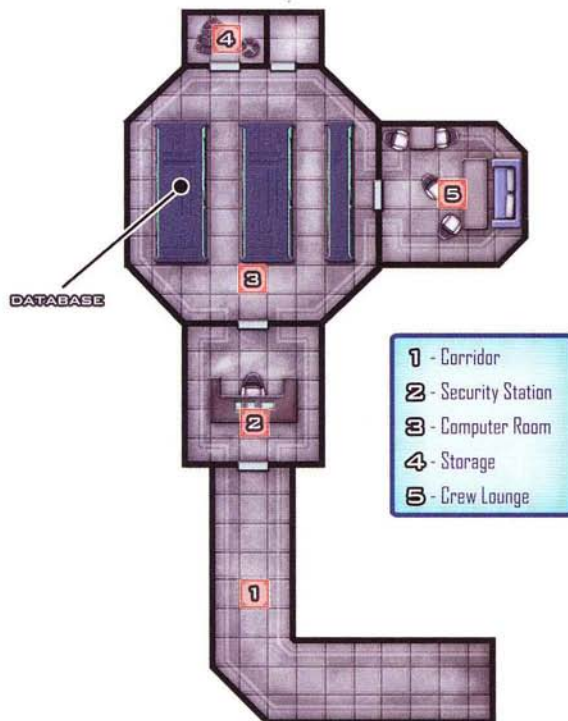
Databases: One of the three computer terminals in the room contains the data that the heroes seek. The systems are not linked to one another, preventing the characters from logging into one system to access another.

CONCLUSION

If the heroes obtain the data they need from the computer system and make their way to the *Last Call*, they discover that Malbo and Tyri are waiting for them aboard the vessel, although the rangers reveal themselves only after the ship is in deep space. They ask for the data, and if the heroes give it to them, the rangers deliver the payment agreed upon.

If the heroes take at least 10 minutes to look through the data before delivering it, they discover that it implicates Malbo and Tyri in some illicit business activities of the Joruba Consortium—the real reason that the rangers wanted the data. If the heroes confront Malbo and Tyri with this information, the rangers try to arrest them to shut them up. If the heroes resist, combat occurs; treat both rangers as bounty hunters (see page 283 of the Saga Edition core rulebook).

The heroes might defeat Malbo and Tyri or find some other way to deliver the information to the headquarters of the Sector Rangers. If they bring proof of corruption to the officers' superiors, they receive 10,000 credits as a reward, and they might be asked to help the Rangers further investigate the Joruba Consortium's misdeeds.



ADVENTURE #2: ARMS DEALERS BEWARE

"Arms Dealers Beware" is a mini-adventure designed for 2nd-level heroes. It gives the heroes an opportunity to stake out a facility where illegal arms are believed to be stored and sold.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For the past year, the Hutt crime cartel based on Nar Shaddaa has been secretly operating a warehouse on Naboo, outside of their usual jurisdiction. Naboo, a peaceful world that has strong restrictions on weapons, has had a recent outbreak of crime. Local authorities have been baffled by this turn of events, and their investigations have been fruitless.

Events escalated earlier this week when a Naboo plasma-processing factory was the target of a major theft. The factory was hit by heavy weapons, such as those normally used only by the Naboo Royal Security Force. This event triggers hysteria and fear among the peaceful populace. Naboo's government has sent out a request for mercenaries to aid it in uncovering the source of these illegal weapons and munitions.

The heroes hear of the job offer through HoloNet resources. The contact is Trayl Caltos, a lieutenant with the Naboo Royal Security Force. Caltos is a lower supervisor who has been charged with investigating the matter and ending it by any means necessary. All of the crime zones so far have been in the capital city of Theed.

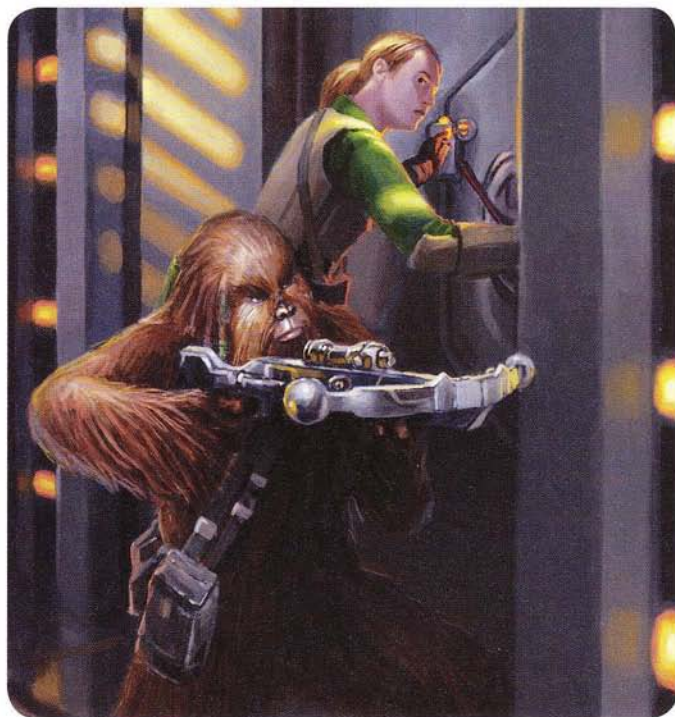
Caltos offers the heroes 2,500 credits to aid the security force in staking out a potential illegal-arms warehouse. If they accept, he provides them with a special intercepting short-range comlink and a set of coordinates for a building in the warehouse district on the outskirts of Theed. Caltos recommends that the heroes begin their stakeout of the building as soon as possible—if they hurry, they can arrive around dusk. He believes that the criminals, who typically work after dark, might know that the security force is on their scent. He adds that the real criminals responsible for the illegal weapons are a Corellian scoundrel named Kal Jorek and his Defel sidekick, known only as Frizz. Caltos believes that their capture might also lead to identifying their offworld partners—the ones ultimately responsible for the lives lost. Caltos asks the heroes to report any findings to him using the special comlink.

BARGAINING WITH CALTOS

The heroes might choose to bargain with Caltos for more credits. With a successful Persuasion check opposed by the lieutenant's check (+13), the heroes can negotiate the pay up to 3,000 credits. If they beat his check by 5 or more, they can negotiate a payment of 4,000 credits. If they try for even more, Caltos explains that he is not authorized to offer additional pay.

THE STAKEOUT

Around dusk, the heroes reach the coordinates supplied by Caltos, arriving at what appears to be an abandoned warehouse in a run-down portion of the Theed outskirts. If they believe that they are staking out the correct warehouse—that is, if Caltos did not admit that he was sending them on a decoy mission—the heroes probably make DC 24 Stealth checks to sneak or hide in the warehouse district. Most likely, they will choose a hiding place to lie in wait.



BREAKING INTO THE WAREHOUSE

THE SWITCH (CL 4)

After a while, the heroes hear a few approaching voices. If the heroes are out in the open, four approaching thugs (see page 284 of the Saga Edition core rulebook) easily spot them and open fire with blaster pistols. If the heroes defeat the thugs, they can confiscate their opponents' comlinks and overhear communications that reveal that the heroes are, indeed, at the correct location.

If the heroes make successful Stealth checks to remain hidden from the approaching thugs, the characters eavesdrop as the thugs make small talk outside the warehouse. After a moment, one of the thugs answers a call on his comlink. The hero in possession of the special comlink provided by Caltos can try to tap into the thug's communication. With a successful DC 21 Use Computer check, the hero intercepts the thug's conversation and learns that they are, indeed, outside the correct warehouse.

If the heroes use Stealth to get the drop on the thugs and attack, begin the surprise round in their favor.

WARNING CALTOS

If the heroes decide to contact Caltos to apprise him of the news, they learn that he is currently under fire from another group of thugs. If the heroes offer aid, Caltos refuses, claiming that his soldiers can handle the situation, and he orders the characters to raid the warehouse they are staking out: "The weapons flow must be stopped!"

SKILL CHALLENGE: RUMBLE IN THE WAREHOUSE

When the heroes approach the main entrance to the warehouse, read the following text aloud:

The main entrance to the warehouse features an unexpected blast door. A computer interface terminal is located to the right of the door. You see no cover and no easy way inside the building.

As you evaluate the scene, you hear someone shout "Over there!" as another group of thugs rounds the corner and opens fire on you.

ENTRY

In this skill challenge, the heroes must gain entrance to a possible illegal weapons facility as thugs engage them in combat. As the heroes accrue failures, additional thugs arrive or additional security measures (such as automated weapons) activate. Each success indicates another level of security protocol bypassed.

CL 2

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Use Computer [DC 24]: The heroes can attempt to slice into the computer interface to bypass the blast door's security protocols. If they accrue a failure, the interface might sustain damage, in which case the heroes can try to use this skill to repair it. A successful repair does not accrue a success in the skill challenge but instead removes the failure from the previous check.

Knowledge (technology) [DC 27 or 24]: The heroes can try to remember what they know about computer lock systems to bypass the door's security protocols. The standard DC is 27, but it can be reduced to 24 for heroes who have experience in bypassing security locks.

Mechanics [DC 19]: The heroes can use the Disable Device application of the skill (which requires a security kit) or the Repair application (which requires a tool kit). A successful Disable Device check earns a success. A successful Repair check removes a failure caused by a failed Disable Device check.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Close Call: Because of variance in security protocols, some attempts yield no change in the outcome. The heroes accrue failures only on skill checks that fail by 5 or more.

Initiative: Since the heroes are engaged in combat, they must act in order of initiative during the skill challenge.

Restricted Skills: The following skills cannot be used in this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, Swim, and Treat Injury.

Success: The heroes enter the warehouse to learn whether it contains the illegal weapons.

Failure: Thugs overwhelm the heroes, who are either captured or forced to flee.

ENCOUNTER: RAIDING THE WAREHOUSE

Challenge Level 2

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Arms Dealers Beware," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

READ-ALoud TEXT

In this encounter, the heroes face off with thugs and their leader, Kal Jorek, as they further investigate the suspect warehouse. When the heroes enter the building, read the following text aloud:

As your eyes readjust from the night outside to the artificial lighting inside the warehouse, you see many large crates in stacks of varying height. Some are lined against the walls and some are out in the middle of the warehouse.

Across the room, you see a round table where five individuals are seated, playing sabacc. One is a Human, possibly Corellian. To his right is a small, barely visible, almost blurry figure. The others appear to be common thugs. They look up from their game when you enter. The Human yells "They've found us!" as he topples the table in front of him, scattering cards, drinks, and credit chips. The others draw their weapons.

KAL JOREK

A low-grade weapons smuggler, Kal Jorek has been upsetting peaceful systems for years by importing illegal weapons. Jorek creates a demand for his wares by promoting chaos and fear, after which the local populace comes to him for weapons to protect themselves. Jorek, who ultimately answers to the Hutt crime cartel in Nar Shaddaa, leads a small band of thugs, which includes his right-hand "man," a Defel he calls Frizz.

Kal Jorek (J)

Medium Human scoundrel 2/noble 1

Force 1; Dark Side 2

Init +9; Senses Perception +7

Languages Basic, Defel, Huttese, 3 unassigned

Defenses Ref 19 (flat-footed 16), Fort 14, Will 17

hp 25; Threshold 14

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +1 (1d4+1)

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +5 (3d8+1)

Base Atk +1; Grp +4

CL 3

Atk Options Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Special Actions Disruptive, Inspire Confidence

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14

Talents Disruptive, Inspire Confidence

Feats Far Shot, Improved Defenses, Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Deception +8, Initiative +9, Mechanics +8, Perception +7, Persuasion +8, Stealth +9

Possessions heavy blaster pistol, 1,200 credits

Kal Jorek's Tactics

When he sees the heroes, Kal Jorek uses his Disruptive talent, spending 2 swift actions to topple the card table and the cards, drinks, and credit chips resting on it. Until the start of his next turn, he suppresses all morale and insight bonuses of the heroes within his line of sight. Jorek then uses his standard action to activate his Inspire Confidence talent, granting a +1 morale bonus to the attack rolls and skill checks of allies within his line of sight until the end of the encounter (unless he becomes unconscious or dies). Additionally, he uses the table as cover as long as the heroes are at range. Whenever Jorek has 2 swift actions to spare, he uses Disruptive again to cause further chaos.

FRIZZ

This Defel befriended Kal Jorek soon after leaving his homeworld of Af'El. Because Jorek could not properly pronounce the Defel's name, the smuggler decided to call him "Frizz," and the new name stuck. Frizz has grown accustomed to the moniker.

Frizz (F)

Small Defel scout 1/scoundrel 1

Force 1; Dark Side 1

Init +9; Senses Perception +6

Languages Basic, Defel, 3 unassigned

Defenses Ref 18 (flat-footed 15), Fort 14, Will 13

hp 30; Threshold 14

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed -1 (1d3)

Ranged blaster pistol +4 (3d6+1)

Base Atk +0; Grp +3

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Sneak Attack +1d6

Special Actions Shake It Off

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 12

Special Qualities partial invisibility

Talents Improved Stealth, Sneak Attack +1d6

CL 2

Feats Point Blank Shot, Shake It Off, Weapon Focus (pistols),
Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Climb +5, Endurance +7, Initiative +9, Jump +5, Knowledge
(technology) +9, Mechanics +9, Perception +6, Stealth +14 (can reroll,
keeping the second result)

Possessions blaster pistol, ultraviolet visor, 900 credits

Partial Invisibility—The fur of a Defel helps bend all but ultraviolet light, rendering him or her nearly invisible. A Defel in normal light is treated as having concealment, and a Defel in shadowy illumination or darker conditions is treated as having total concealment. Defel are fully visible and gain no concealment against opponents with darkvision, but low-light vision gives no such benefit.

Ultraviolet Visor—The eyes of Defel have evolved in such a way that they can see only in the ultraviolet spectrum. Defel that leave APEI must wear a special ultraviolet visor to see in normal light. Without such a visor, a Defel is considered blind.

Frizz's Tactics

Frizz tries to stick to the darker areas of the warehouse so that he has total concealment from which to strike out at nearby heroes. He enjoys sneaking up on victims with his Stealth skill and making ranged sneak attacks.

CONCLUSION

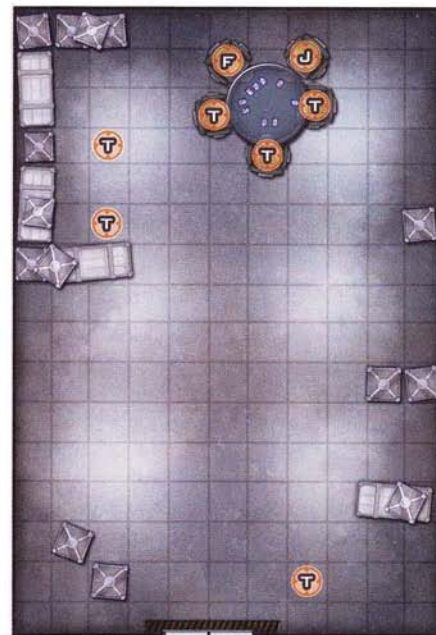
Following the warehouse fight, the heroes recover many crates of illegal weapons. Caltos arrives with his soldiers shortly after the heroes win the battle. Caltos explains that he and his group were ambushed as a diversion to draw them away from the real weapons hideout. He congratulates the heroes on recovering the illegal arms and reminds them to come by his office later for the promised reward.

If the heroes kill Kal Jorek, Caltos admits that he feels justice has been done—Jorek's criminal enterprise has claimed the smuggler's own life. Still, Caltos would have liked for Jorek to have been taken alive for questioning. There is no guarantee that the supply chain of illegal weapons will end with his death.

If the heroes capture Jorek alive and turn him over to Caltos, the lieutenant is grateful, promising that the arms dealer will be interrogated and subject to Naboo justice. Caltos believes that the weapon supply line has been dealt a critical blow and that Jorek will be made to reveal the identities of his suppliers.

If the heroes capture the elusive Frizz, Caltos says that he has never actually seen a Defel up close before (in fact, few people have). In response, the shadowy shape seems to grin with pride. Caltos gives the heroes an additional 500 credits for the Defel's capture.

T	- Thug
F	- Frizz, NPC Defel scoundrel/scout
J	- Kal Jorek, NPC scoundrel/noble
1sq.	= 1.5 meters



FEATURES OF THE AREA

The warehouse interior has the following features:

Illumination: The battle takes place indoors, with penalties for low light.

Cover: The warehouse is full of places where the heroes can gain cover, including numerous large crates full of military-grade weapons.

Table: The thugs use this small card table to play sabacc.

MINI-ADVENTURE #3: BETRAYAL AT CLOUD CITY

"Betrayal at Cloud City" is a mini-adventure designed for 4th-level heroes. It gives characters of intrigue an opportunity to do what they do best—make under-the-table political deals, meet in secret, and apprehend elusive double agents.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Recently, Iridonia increased the taxes on technology imported from Duro, and the Duro's government officials are furious about the higher tariffs. In retaliation, they have banned shipments of all technology to Iridonia. As anyone might imagine, the Zabrak have not taken the ban well, although not all residents of their planet are in agreement. After a short time, word reaches the Duro government that the Zabrak are ready to negotiate.

The heroes, who are likely working with an intelligence bureau, receive orders to finalize an under-the-table political deal between the Iridonian dictatorship and the corporate leaders of Duros. Cloud City, above the gas giant Bespin, has been selected as a neutral location where each government's officials will feel more at ease, and the covert treaty will be kept from prying eyes. Reportedly, the Zabrak rulers have asked to meet in secrecy so the news does not spread to their populace. The Duros, wary of this request, have asked the heroes to mediate on their behalf.

MEETING THE SIDES

After the heroes arrive on Cloud City, they meet with Belai Kaleeg, the Duros corporate official, to discuss the details of the signing. Kaleeg tells them that he was contacted by a female Zabrak by the name of Koon Odan, who said that the Iridonian government would like to secretly negotiate a treaty to end the trade disagreement. Kaleeg was told that the Zabraks are willing to make a substantial offer "that would be in our best financial interests." However, he refuses to reveal the details of the transaction to the heroes, claiming that he is sworn to secrecy by his government.

Kaleeg offers to purchase dinner for the heroes at the Twin Star restaurant in the upper plaza, arranging to meet them there after they talk to the Iridonian representative.

Next, the heroes meet with Koon Odan, the female Zabrak. She has little to say and is straightforward and almost rude. Odan provides them with the time and location for the treaty signing and quickly leaves.

With a successful Perception check opposed by Odan's Deception check (+9), the heroes notice that she seems nervous, impatient, and in a hurry to be someplace else. Unknown to the heroes, Odan recognizes someone in the crowd, and the sighting makes her anxious about the coming transaction.

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT (CL 4)

The heroes meet Belai Kaleeg for dinner at the Twin Star restaurant. The upper plaza is a nice area, filled with tourists, well-to-do travelers, and business representatives. It is far different from the rougher crowds found in Port Town or the Mining Quarter. Music flows into the restaurant from the small synthtone cantina next door.

Suddenly, the meal is interrupted by the shriek of laser fire—Kaleeg has been shot! He slides out of his chair and falls to the floor. A second blast hits the chair where he had been sitting. The heroes catch a glimpse of a cloaked figure fleeing into the crowded corridor.

If the heroes give medical aid to Kaleeg, he can be stabilized with a successful DC 21 Treat Injury check. Upon closer examination, the heroes learn that the Duros has been shot in his arm and should survive, but it would be wise for him to seek medical help immediately.

If the heroes pursue the cloaked figure, they can spot the suspect in the crowd with a successful Perception check opposed by the figure's Stealth check (+10). The suspect rounds a corner. With an additional successful Perception check opposed by the figure's Stealth check (+10), the heroes determine which adjoining corridor the suspect ran down. When they arrive, they find only the cloak lying on the ground.



ESCAPING THROUGH THE STREETS OF CLOUD CITY

THE SIGNING

After an uneventful night, the heroes escort a wounded but recovering Belai Kaleeg to the room where the treaty is to be signed. Koon Odan arrives on time. Kaleeg, increasingly suspicious following the events of the previous day, requests that both he and Odan be searched for weapons prior to the transaction. If the heroes comply, they learn that neither representative has a weapon.

Odan provides a legal datapad and a credit chip. Kaleeg looks them over, then hands them to the heroes to inspect. With a successful Use Computer check (an automatic success), the heroes find that everything is in order. With a successful Perception check (DC 16), the heroes notice that Odan is calm and collected.

Kaleeg attempts to agree to the terms of the document shown on the datapad, but the screen suddenly goes blank. Puzzled, he hands the datapad to the heroes for further inspection. With a successful DC 16 Use Computer check, the heroes find that all of the datapad's documents have been locked or deleted. In addition, the credit chip attached to the datapad now has no balance and reports that all assets have seized by the Iridonians.

Odan does not know why the datapad and credit chip no longer function, and she worries that she is being set up—perhaps by her own government, or perhaps by Kaleeg and the heroes. Regardless, she decides to make a quick exit. With a successful Perception check opposed by Odan's Deception check (+9), the heroes notice that she has become extremely nervous and is easing toward a nearby window.

Unless she is physically subdued, Odan leaps out the window and runs away. Kaleeg yells something about a double cross and orders the heroes to "bring that Zabrak back!"

SKILL CHALLENGE: THE CHASE

In this skill challenge, the heroes must pursue Koon Odan on foot through the corridors, walkways, businesses, and crowds of Cloud City's upper plaza. During the chase, the heroes travel through different parts of the plaza in an attempt to cut off her escape route. As the heroes accrue failures, Odan slips farther away, possibly escaping altogether. Once the heroes have earned either five successes or two failures, the objective of the skill challenge changes—an assassin enters the chase, targeting Odan. At this point, the heroes are in opposition to the assassin rather than to Odan.

CL 4

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (galactic lore) [DC 26 or 21]: The heroes can try to remember what they know about Cloud City to find shortcuts or secret routes. The DC is reduced to 21 for heroes who are familiar with the city.

Perception [DC 21]: The heroes can attempt to locate the best path to keep pace with Odan or notice indicators that suggest where she is headed next.

Stealth [Opposed DC]: The heroes can try to sneak along alternate routes to cut Odan off. This check is opposed by Odan's Perception check.

Use Computer [DC 28]: If one of the heroes stops at a computer terminal, he or she might be able to determine Odan's possible routes and relay that information to the other heroes via comlink. The hero who stops to check the computer is effectively out of the chase but can check the computer again if Odan's path changes.

Treat Injury [DC 15 or 25]: This is a restricted skill that can be used to earn successes only after the changing objectives effect is initiated. To earn a success with this skill, the heroes must heal Odan from wounds she sustains from the assassin. To attempt to heal her, a hero must have a medpac; having a medical kit grants a +2 equipment bonus to the check. Making a DC 15 check allows a hero to administer first aid. Making a DC 25 check allows a hero to revivify Odan if she has died within 1 round.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Changing Objectives: When the heroes accrue either five successes or two failures, the cloaked assassin from the day before opens fire on the fleeing Odan. She stops to take cover at the nearest spot, giving the heroes another round or two (depending on how close they are) to catch up. The hidden assassin continues to fire from afar at Odan, ignoring the heroes unless they close with him in melee range. This development should cause the heroes to suspect that Odan is innocent of the assassination attempt on Kaleeg and make them want to question her. Their new objective is to stop the assassin from killing Odan.

Containment: The heroes do not accrue failures for failed skill checks. Instead, they accrue a failure only if everyone takes an action but no one earns a success, since to maintain pursuit, they need to keep Odan in sight of only one character. After the changing objectives effect is initiated, the containment effect no longer applies.

Opposed DC: Certain skills in this challenge can be opposed by Odan. After the changing objectives effect is initiated, certain skills can be opposed by the assassin.

Restricted Skills: The following skills cannot be used at the start of this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, Swim, and Treat Injury. After the changing objectives effect is initiated, Treat Injury can be used, but only to heal injuries that Odan receives.

Success: The heroes catch up to Odan, who is still alive, and defeat the assassin.

Failure: Odan gets away or is killed.

ENCOUNTER: CHASE THROUGH THE CLOUDS

Challenge Level 2

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Betrayal at Cloud City," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages. This encounter can be used when the heroes catch up to Koon Odan, or to break up the action in the middle of the skill challenge.

READ-ALoud TEXT

If the heroes chase Koon Odan, their pursuit begins on Cloud City's upper plaza. Read the following text aloud:

Humans and Ugnaughts traverse the busy corridors of Cloud City's upper plaza. Koon Odan darts through the crowd, dodging passersby as she heads in the general direction of the Twin Star restaurant where you had dinner the evening before. A patron of a nearby dance hall stumbles out amid a blast of laser illuminations and pulse-pounding music and nearly trips Odan, who spins to avoid the collision and continues her flight.

KOON ODAN

A female Zabrak, Koon Odan arranged to meet with Duros corporate representative Belai Kaleeg to negotiate a trade agreement to benefit their worlds. She is unaware that her government sent a second agent (the assassin) on a mission opposing her own.

Koon Odan (O)

CL 4

Medium Zabrak scoundrel 3/noble 1

Force 2

Init +11; **Senses** Perception +3

Languages Basic, Bothese, Durese, Ryl, Rodese, Zabrak, 3 unassigned

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 17), Fort 16, Will 18

hp 34; **Threshold** 16

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +2 (1d4+2)

Ranged by weapon +6

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Acrobatic Strike, Point Blank Shot, Running Attack

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 14

Talents Disruptive, Presence, Walk the Line

Feats Acrobatic Strike, Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Running Attack, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Deception +9, Gather Information +9, Initiative +11, Perception +3 (can reroll, keeping the second result), Persuasion +9, Stealth +11, Use Computer +10

Possessions noble's clothing, datapad, secure credit chip containing 1,250 credits

Koon Odan's Tactics

Koon Odan does not attack the heroes unless cornered and threatened. Even then, she fights unarmed unless she can somehow acquire a weapon. She spends all of her efforts fleeing and trying to stay ahead of the heroes. She heads down a path similar to that taken by the assassin the day before.

ASSASSIN

This unknown male Zabrak was sent to kill representative Belai Kaleeg to stop the trade agreement from being signed. After the assassination attempt fails, Kaleeg receives new orders—take out Koon Odan instead.

Assassin (A)

CL 4

Medium Zabrak scoundrel 4

Force 2; **Dark Side** 4

Init +10; **Senses** Perception +3

Languages Basic, Zabrak, 2 unassigned

Defenses Ref 20 (flat-footed 17), Fort 15, Will 17

hp 29; **Threshold** 15

Speed 6 squares

Melee baton +5 (1d6+4)

Ranged blaster pistol +6 (3d6+2) or

Ranged blaster pistol +4 (4d6+2) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Careful Shot, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Sneak Attack +2d6

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 11

Talents Sneak Attack +2d6

Feats Careful Shot, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +7, Gather Information +7, Initiative +10, Perception +3 (can reroll, keeping the second result), Stealth +10, Use Computer +9

Possessions blaster pistol, cloak, baton, 1,600 credits

Assassin's Tactics

The assassin does not attack the heroes unless he is threatened by them in melee. He spends all of his efforts trying to kill Koon Odan. During the skill challenge, once the changing objectives effect is initiated, the assassin is revealed in his hiding place atop the building in the center of the encounter map, and he begins shooting at Odan. If the assassin kills Odan, he flies off on a small repulsorlift craft.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The Cloud City upper plaza has the following features:

Illumination: The battle takes place during the day, with no penalties for low light.

Cover: The corners and other structures in the corridors offer cover for the heroes.

Cantina: A small synthtone cantina is next door to the Twin Star restaurant. Maneuvering through the cantina is considered difficult terrain.

Civilians: When the chase begins, civilians are walking the corridors. Some disperse or head inside businesses to avoid the confrontation, especially if blasters are fired.

Computer Terminal: The computer terminal is designed for public use. This object also provides cover.

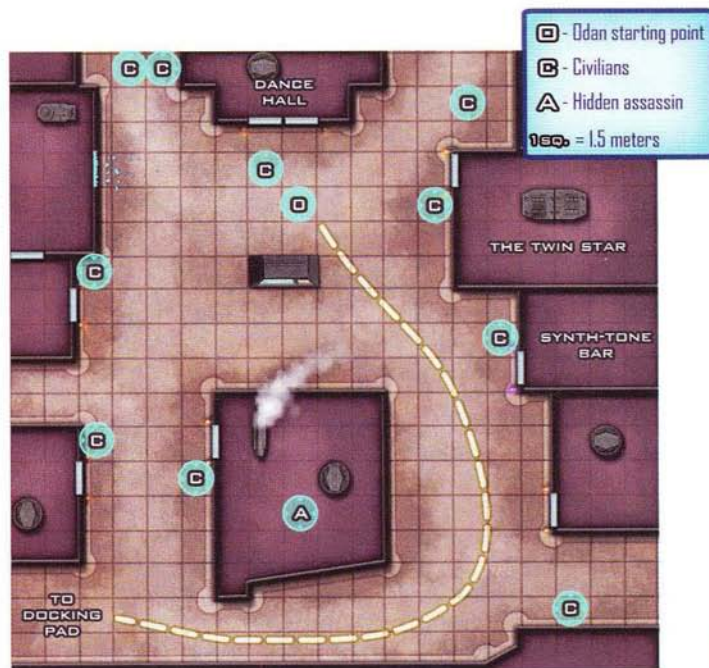
Dance Hall: A dance hall adjoins the building where the treaty is to be signed. When Koon Odan leaps out the window, she lands just outside the hall's entrance.

Docking Pad: The docking pad has a lone cloud car. If Koon Odan reaches the cloud car, she can use it to escape.

Restaurant: The Twin Star restaurant is one of the finer establishments in the upper plaza. Maneuvering through the restaurant is considered difficult terrain.

Security: If blasters are fired, Cloud City Security Force officers are likely to arrive on the scene.

Window: The heroes begin the encounter near the window of the meeting room, after Odan jumps out of it.



CONCLUSION

If Koon Odan survives, she surrenders to the heroes once the dust settles. She explains, "I was sent here by my government to oversee the treaty signing. But it appears I was blacklisted—that assassin is one of our agents. Perhaps my government had second thoughts about my mission. It seems there are more sinister forces at work here."

If the heroes subdued the assassin, his story matches the one Odan tells. Later, during transport, he is found mysteriously dead or missing.

If the heroes contact the Iridonian government, Zabrak officials deny any involvement in the activities of the past few days. They claim to know nothing about Odan's mission or the assassin. Strangely, Odan's datapad and credit chip are fully restored within a few minutes after the communication. The treaty goes ahead as planned.

If Odan is killed, the assassin tries to flee. Whether he is caught or escapes, the proposed treaty between Iridonia and Duro is canceled. Eventually, the disagreements between the two worlds escalate, resulting in a small-scale war in which other, more powerful entities intervene.

MINI-ADVENTURE #4: EYE ON THE PRIZE

"Eye on the Prize" is a mini-adventure designed for 6th-level heroes. The heroes, part of Alliance Intelligence, are ordered to help a prominent neurobiologist escape from Imperial custody and reach a vessel that will ship him to safety.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As the war between the Empire and the Rebel Alliance grinds on, the Empire takes more extreme measures to ensure victory, including the creation of powerful biological and chemical agents to raze entire planets. The Empire has forced countless scientists who excel in biology, chemistry, and weapons development to create vast stockpiles of virulent strains and toxic substances. Some of these scientists work willingly for the Empire, while others chafe at the abuse of their knowledge for such a purpose.

Alliance Intelligence has recently intercepted communications about the reassignment of Saludar Narubo, a brilliant Givin neurobiologist noted for developing vaccines for some of the galaxy's most devastating diseases. The Alliance realizes that if anyone could create even more dangerous strains of biological agents, it's Saludar, and has decided to abduct the scientist before he is shipped off to some hidden base, never to be seen again.

The heroes are sent to the planet Taris, where Narubo has worked for decades. At this time, neither the Rebel Alliance nor the Empire has a strong footing on Taris, and both groups maintain an extremely low profile on the world. The heroes must work undercover to get the job done with little in the way of assistance from their superiors.

PLOTTING THE ASSAULT

Alliance Intelligence has little information on the Empire's plans, but it knows that Narubo remains under guard at his laboratory in the Middle City on Taris. Spies have revealed that the Imperials plan to transfer the neurobiologist within a few days after the heroes arrive. Analysis droids have concluded that the best time to kidnap Narubo is the moment that he leaves his lab under guard. Imperial agents will be relatively few and probably will try to remain as inconspicuous as possible in order to avoid drawing attention to the transfer. Alliance Intelligence provides the heroes with false identities and 10,000 credits to use for bribes or for purchasing equipment on Taris.

The area around Narubo's laboratory is cramped enough that traffic consists primarily of groundspeeders and public transportation; fliers need to cruise well above ground level or risk smashing into gantries. If the heroes use surveillance on the lab, allow them to make three separate Perception checks against the Imperial agents guarding Narubo. The Imperials consist of a field officer (treat as Imperial Officer; see page 280 of the Saga Edition core rulebook) and seven lower grade agents (treat as Elite Rebel Troopers, without armor; see page 281 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). If the heroes succeed on all three checks, they learn that the Imperials never leave the facility, except for a single lower agent out front keeping watch.

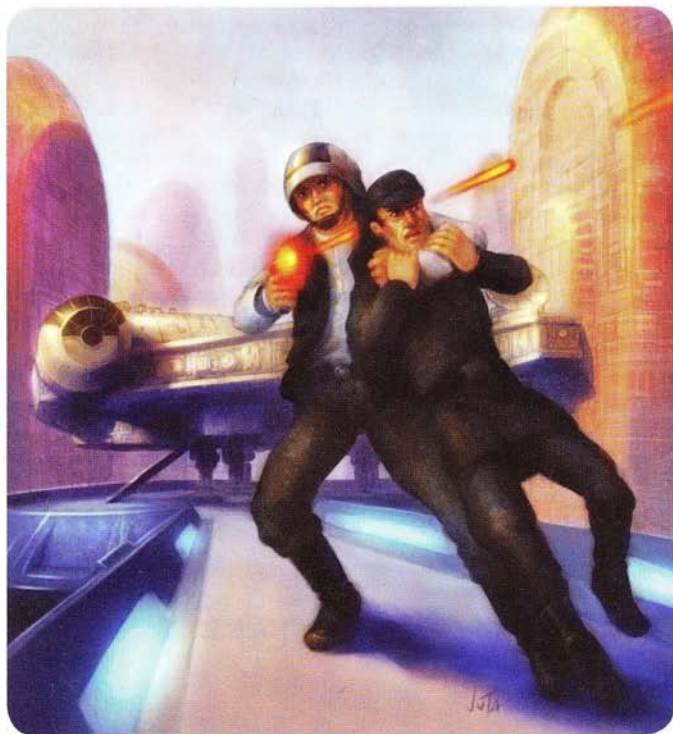
If the heroes hope to escape with the neurobiologist, they will have to obtain their own transportation to get him to the spaceport. For 500 credits, they can rent a Corona Limited luxury groundspeeder, which is large enough for their purposes and can be parked nearby for a speedy escape (or they can steal one if they do not want to leave a trail). Alternatively, they can steal the Imperials' groundspeeder.

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (tactics) check reveals two locations nearby that would allow snipers a clear shot at Imperial agents exiting the laboratory, but still be close enough for the heroes to grab Narubo and reach their escape vehicle.

THE KIDNAPPING

Once everything is in place, the heroes have to wait for the Imperials to leave the laboratory. The agents have hired a Corona Limited luxury groundspeeder by comlink, along with two smaller landspeeders (treat as SoroSuub X-34 landspeeders; see page 176 of the Saga Edition core rulebook) as additional protection, to arrive and whisk the scientist away.

The area in front of the laboratory is a street front 20 squares wide by 20 squares long, with the southernmost 4 squares being the street itself. Once the heroes begin their assault, the field officer and three of the agents form a shield around Narubo and move as quickly as possible to the Corona groundspeeder, which is driverless. The other four Imperials find cover and attack the heroes.



THE ESCAPE

If the heroes manage to snatch Narubo alive from the Imperials and board a groundspeeder, they must flee their pursuers through the twisting, crowded roadways of Taris. If any Imperials are left alive with functioning vehicles, they give chase. Otherwise, a secondary team of reinforcements with the same numbers (an officer and seven agents) arrives to pursue the heroes.

SKILL CHALLENGE: FLEEING THE IMPERIALS

In this skill challenge, the heroes attempt to shake off the Imperials that are in hot pursuit of them after their successful kidnapping of the neurobiologist Saludos Narubo.

CL 6

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (galactic lore) [DC 25 or 21]: The heroes can try to use their knowledge of Taris and the city's winding streets to figure out the best way to elude their pursuers. The DC is reduced to 21 for heroes who are familiar with the area.

Perception [DC 23]: The heroes can attempt to travel along unexpected routes or enter locations where the Imperials are unlikely to follow.

Pilot [DC 18 or *Opposed DC*]: The heroes can pilot their groundspeeder along the fastest routes, dodge debris and obstacles, and find other ways to elude the Imperials. If the Imperials get too close to the heroes' vehicle, the Imperials become able to make Pilot checks to set the DC for this skill.

Stealth [Opposed DC]: The heroes can head into traffic to throw off their pursuers, hiding within the flow of other vehicles. This check is opposed by the Imperials' Perception check (+10).

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Opposed DC: Certain skills in this challenge can be opposed by the Imperials in pursuit.

Restricted Skills: The following skills cannot be used in this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, Swim, and Treat Injury.

Success: The heroes manage to shake off their pursuers and reach the spaceport without further incident.

Failure: The Imperials catch up to the heroes and corner them, engaging in a firefight. Local law enforcement officials show up in large enough numbers that the Imperials withdraw. Later, the field officer uses bribes and threats to have Narubo released into Imperial custody while the heroes are sent to prison.

ENCOUNTER: UNEXPECTED VISITOR

Challenge Level 8

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Eye on the Prize," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

The heroes have managed to escape with Narubo, who is extremely grateful for their help. They reach the Taris Spaceport and must board the freighter awaiting them—a Corellian YT-1300 left at the dock by the Alliance exclusively for their mission. The ship has no crew, so the heroes must pilot the freighter using the coordinates encrypted in its navicomputer.

There is one hitch, however. Karvas Toll, an Imperial agent, had been sent to monitor the transfer of Narubo from afar and act as a failsafe in case something goes wrong. Toll watched the abduction from his speeder bike and followed the heroes at a distance, avoiding being spotted by the characters or the other Imperials. He trailed the heroes to the YT-1300 at the spaceport. Once there, he manages to sneak aboard the ship unseen.

Toll intends to prevent the heroes from taking off until his backup arrives. If that proves impossible, he plans to take Narubo hostage and force the heroes to fly to an Imperial cruiser outside the system.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the heroes get inside their transport and prepare to take off, read the following text aloud:

Just as you begin preparations to take off, you hear a loud pop, and the lights of the ship suddenly go out. In the gloom, a shadowy figure moves with alarming speed. "Not so fast, Rebel scum," says a male voice. "I'm here to claim our prize back."

KARVAS TOLL

Karvas Toll grew up in the slums of Taris, where his future was limited to joining a gang or being a victim of one. After watching an Imperial propaganda program on the HoloNet, Toll realized that the Empire was the best way to break out of his situation and joined up. Amazingly, instead of shipping Toll off to some distant warfront, the Imperials realized that he was a natural as a spy and surveillance expert, as well as deadly with a blaster and a vibroblade. After a training stint offworld, Toll returned to Taris to assist Imperial Intelligence cells there, using his knowledge of the planet to carry out clandestine acts on behalf of the Empire.

Toll considers himself a patriot and believes that the Empire has the galaxy's best interests at heart. Quiet, observant, and stealthy, Toll is often used by his handlers to clean up after missions gone awry or to step in when further assistance is needed. He dresses like a native of Taris, but his demeanor makes it clear that he is dangerous, and most citizens give him a wide berth on the streets.

Karvas Toll (K)

CL 8

Medium Human scoundrel 5/scout 3

Dark Side 8

Init +7; Senses Perception +16

Languages Basic, Givin, Huttese

Defenses Ref 24 (flat-footed 20), Fort 20, Will 21; Dodge, Mobility hp 58; Threshold 20

Speed 6 squares

Melee vibroblade +8 (2d6+4)

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +8 (3d8+4) or

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +6 (4d8+4) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +5; Grp +8

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Sneak Attack +1d6

Special Actions Knack, Shake It Off

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

Talents Hidden Movement, Improved Stealth, Knack, Skirmisher, Sneak Attack +1d6

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Perception, Stealth), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Deception +11, Perception +16, Pilot +12, Stealth +17 (can reroll, keeping the second result), Use Computer +11

Possessions heavy blaster pistol, snare pistol, vibroblade, encrypted comlink, Aratech 74-Z speeder bike

Karvas Toll's Tactics

Toll excels at sneaking into locations unnoticed and waiting for just the right moment to strike from the shadows. Once on board the heroes' ship, he cuts a secondary power circuit and plunges the YT-1300 into darkness. An expert at close combat, Toll uses his vibroblade to engage the heroes in melee after targeting them with a few blaster shots. He tries to move as swiftly as possible to get close to Narubo and use the neurobiologist as a shield, buying time until his reinforcements arrive. As a loyal Imperial agent, Toll knows the penalty for failure and fights to the death. If he is close to being taken down, Toll turns his blaster or vibroblade against Narubo to deny the Rebels the prize.

CONCLUSION

If the heroes defeat Toll, the ship's navicomputer reveals that the Alliance has a Corellian corvette waiting on the far fringes of the system. The YT-1300 is programmed to fly the heroes and Narubo directly to the other vessel. Once there, Narubo is whisked away for debriefing, presumably to inform the Alliance about the new strain of contagion he was developing for the Empire's biological warfare program.

If Toll recaptures Narubo, he uses the Givin as a shield to keep himself from harm. If the heroes do not manage to get the YT-1300 off the ground, Imperial reinforcements eventually arrive in large numbers, along with local law enforcement. The heroes are taken to a Taris prison on charges of kidnapping, conspiracy, and property damage (along with murder, if applicable).

If Toll recaptures Narubo but the YT-1300 takes off, the Imperial agent orders the heroes to enter new coordinates into the navicomputer—coordinates that take them to a Star Destroyer on the fringes of the Taris System. Once there, the heroes are taken into custody and later shipped to a prison colony, where they are interrogated until they reveal whatever Alliance secrets they possess.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The flight deck of the Corellian YT-1300 transport has the following features:

Illumination: Because Toll cuts the primary power, the ship is mostly dark, providing concealment to all characters.

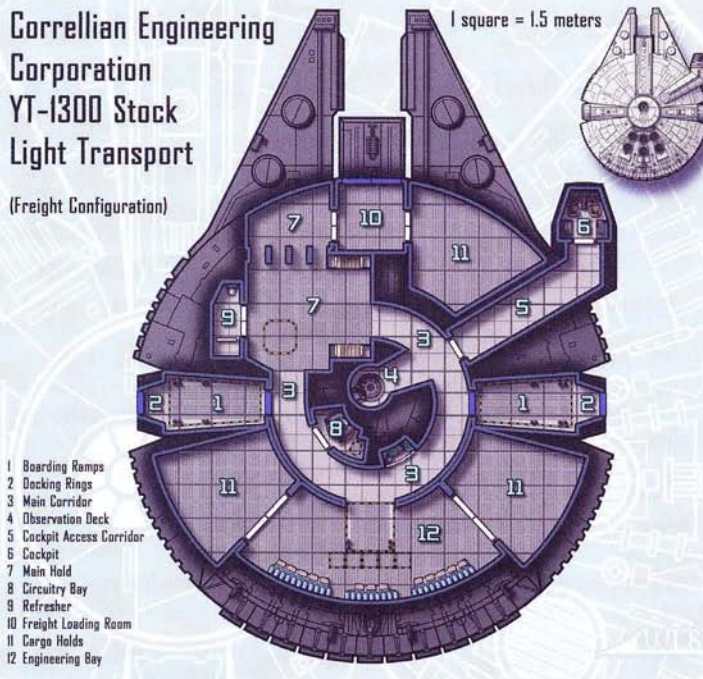
Bridge: The blast doors leading to the bridge have DR 15 and 80 hit points. Because the power is shut off, they can be opened by hand with a DC 20 Strength check.

Cover: The landing pad is full of places for the heroes to find cover. In some cases (such as a character sitting inside the loading vehicle), the Gamemaster can rule that the target has improved cover.

Refresher: The refresher contains a medpac.

Correllian Engineering Corporation YT-1300 Stock Light Transport

(Freight Configuration)



MINI-ADVENTURE #5: MY ENEMY'S ENEMY

"My Enemy's Enemy" is a mini-adventure designed for 8th-level heroes. In this scenario, the characters work for a Mon Calamari ambassador who is in deep negotiations to mend ties with the Quarren. A failed attempt on the ambassador's life reveals a similar plot to kill the Quarren ambassador.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The heroes work as bodyguards and assistants for Nuukol, the Mon Calamari ambassador in charge of brokering a compromise with the Quarren. Groups on both sides have attempted to disrupt the negotiations, stirring up hatred and misunderstanding to muddy the waters.

After months of discourse, the Quarren have finally agreed to send their own ambassador, Tsillog, to Coruscant to meet with Nuukol and hammer out an accord. However, in an unprecedented move, Tsillog has also scheduled a press conference outside the Quarren embassy to lay out the proposal to the people—a move that the Mon Calamari consider inflammatory. To change

the tone back in their favor, Nuukol has arranged his own press conference in front of the Mon Calamari embassy a day beforehand. He hopes that by having the voices of both parties heard, public opinion will remain stable enough for the negotiations to begin in earnest.

While other members of his staff arrange for the press conference, Nuukol asks the heroes to remain vigilant, since threats have been made against him and his delegation. Although tensions are high, the ambassador makes it clear that he wants the heroes to maintain a low profile. To show suspicion is to show weakness, which is something that he and the Mon Calamari cannot afford at the moment.

SHOWTIME

On the day of Nuukol's press conference, throngs of supporters, detractors, and reporters gather outside the Mon Calamarian embassy. The ambassador rehearses his speech in an antechamber inside the main lobby of the embassy. The lobby swarms with dignitaries and support staff, all moving with great anticipation. However, unknown to everyone, two Mon Calamari radicals have infiltrated the embassy and plan to kill the ambassador inside the main lobby.

Tasked with Nuukol's protection, the heroes can decide how to arrange themselves to best survey the area for threats. The main lobby is a open space 15 squares by 15 squares, with a ceiling several dozen meters high. The main doors (2 squares wide) are on the north end of the area. Four identical antechambers (each 4 squares by 4 squares) are evenly spaced along the sides of the main lobby. At any given time, there are a dozen support staff personnel in the lobby (treat as unarmed Rebel Troopers; see page 280 of the Saga Edition core rulebook); if violence erupts, they duck for cover or cower on the ground.

Have any heroes watching the main lobby for trouble make a Perception check against the radicals' Deception check (+13). If the heroes succeed, they notice that four bureaucrats seem to be milling about longer than usual. Two of them are innocent bystanders waiting to see the ambassador up close, but the other two are radicals intent on killing Nuukol. If the heroes succeed at the Perception check by 5 or more, they notice that the two radicals have concealed weapons. If the heroes approach them for questioning, the radicals stall for a round while the ambassador leaves the antechamber and heads toward the front door of the embassy.

READ-ALoud TEXT

The action begins when Ambassador Nuukol reaches the center of the lobby. The two radicals approach him from either side with weapons drawn (and possibly with the heroes in hot pursuit). Read the following text aloud:

Ambassador Nuukol leaves the antechamber and walks toward the middle of the lobby, consulting a datapad containing the speech he is about to give. The bureaucrats and embassy workers in the lobby move out of his way. Then an angry voice fills the vast chamber. "Traitor!" screams one of the bureaucrats as he rushes toward Nuukol. "You cannot negotiate with these monsters! For Mon Calamari!"



A MON CALAMARI ATTEMPTS ASSASSINATION.

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

When combat begins, one of the radicals should be within 4 squares of Nuukol. As soon as possible, he activates the thermal detonator in his hand, hoping to vaporize the ambassador while serving as a martyr for the cause. However, the detonator is faulty; when it explodes, it releases a spray of shrapnel instead of a blast. Anyone caught in the explosion takes half damage (piercing). Five bystanders are wounded and fall to 0 hit points each. The radicals' blaster pistols are also faulty and can fire only one shot each before they fuse shut.

Regardless of the actions of the heroes, Nuukol is severely wounded by the shrapnel, caught in the crossfire, or otherwise injured and reduced to 0 hit points.

Mon Calamari Radicals (2)

CL 5

Medium Mon Calamari scoundrel 5

Dark Side 3

Init +13; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +13

Languages Basic, Mon Calamarian, 1 unassigned

Defenses Ref 18 (flat-footed 17), Fort 15, Will 17
hp 32; **Threshold** 15

Speed 6 squares (swim 4 squares)

Melee unarmed +3 (1d4+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +4 (3d6+2)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Sneak Attack +2d6

Special Actions Disruptive

Abilities Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13

Special Qualities breathe underwater, expert swimmer

Talents Disruptive, Sneak Attack +2d6

Feats Grazing Shot, Master of Disguise, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Deception, Initiative, Perception), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +13, Gather Information +8, Initiative +13, Perception +13, Stealth +8

Possessions blaster pistol (one shot only), thermal detonator (faulty)

THE FAILED MARTYR

After the assassination attempt, medical droids and additional security personnel arrive in 1d4 rounds to tend to the wounded. Critically injured, ambassador Nuukol is rushed to the embassy's medical facilities. Several minutes after the blast, an attaché informs the crowd outside about the assassination attempt and cancels the press conference. The confused and shocked audience begins shouting and rushing the door of the embassy, held in check by the security personnel (and the heroes, if they want to assist). If any radicals survived, they ask to talk to the heroes.

READ-ALoud TEXT

If the heroes interrogate the radicals, at an appropriate point during the questioning, read the following text aloud:

The Mon Calamari stands up straight and squares his shoulders. "None of this matters, you realize," he says. "Ours was just one part in the plan to prevent negotiations. The Quarren scum is supposed to be speaking tomorrow to spread even more lies about how his people want peace. We're going to make sure that won't happen, either, despite the failure today."

INTERROGATION

The heroes can interrogate the radicals to learn their purpose. Interrogation reveals that they are part of a cell of Mon Calamari who object to peaceful coexistence with the Quarren. They point to past events to show that every attempt at harmony has failed. If asked, the radicals say that their leader is an individual known as "Avreet" (the Mon Cal word for "comrade"), although they have never met him or her.

The radicals also reveal that an assassin hired by another cell intends to kill the Quarren ambassador when he gives his speech the next day. The radical knows nothing about the assassin other than to say, "He's not one of us."

If the heroes ask why the radicals' weapons were faulty, have the characters make another Persuasion check. If they succeed, the radicals look angry and complain that they picked up their weapons from a drop point in a seedy hotel. They have no idea why the weapons malfunctioned, although now they suspect that perhaps they were set up to fail.

DESPERATE DIPLOMACY

When Nuukol regains consciousness, he sends a nurse to summon the heroes to his bedside. Despite the attempt on his life, the ambassador tells the heroes that the negotiations must continue as scheduled. He stresses that the assault will only make matters worse as the Mon Calamari citizens harden their stance toward the Quarren. He asks the heroes what they learned from the radicals, and after hearing of the threat on Tsillog, he tells the characters to warn the Quarren delegation. If the other ambassador is attacked, war will almost certainly break out between the two species.

If the heroes try to contact Ambassador Tsillog (either via comlink or by traveling to the Quarren embassy), have them make a DC 25 Persuasion check. Success means they are allowed to talk to him (on screen or in person), although he proves to be unfriendly, brusque, and highly suspicious. If the heroes fail their Persuasion check, a lesser Quarren dignitary relays the message. Regardless, the ambassador's point is clear—although he is saddened at the attempt on Nuukol's life, he sees no reason to fear another attack and will hold his press conference as intended. Tsillog then excuses himself and either has the heroes escorted to the door or cuts off the transmission. All other attempts to contact the ambassador fail.

ENCOUNTER: HUNT FOR THE ASSASSIN

Challenge Level 9

SETUP: This encounter serves as the conclusion of "My Enemy's Enemy," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

As planned, the Quarren ambassador sets the stage for a press conference in front of his embassy. The setup is similar to the conference arranged at the Mon Calamari embassy, with a podium, holovid cameras, and the like, but the crowd is considerably larger than the one yesterday.

On orders from Ambassador Nuukol, the heroes must attend the press conference and try to locate and stop the assassin before he can kill Tsillog. The Quarren ambassador has only minimal security, supporting his profession of disbelief in the heroes' claim.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the heroes arrive at the plaza and begin hunting for the assassin, read the following text aloud:

The plaza in front of the embassy is filled with all manner of sentients—mostly Quarren, but also including dozens of other species. The mood is tense as the crowd awaits the ambassador. The plaza is large and far away from other buildings, making it unlikely that a hidden sniper could shoot Tsillog. You believe that anyone who wanted to kill the ambassador would have to get relatively close to him.

SKILL CHALLENGE: SPOTTING THE KILLER

The heroes must search for the assassin in a mob of sentients that includes plenty of Quarren, a host of other species, and a few Mon Calamari engaging in heated political debates with other members of the crowd. Tensions are running high. The heroes engage in a skill challenge to spot the assassin, a Rodian named Loodux, before he attacks.

CL 9

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (social sciences) [DC 30]: The heroes can try to study the body language of members of the crowd to determine which individuals seem out of place or suspicious.

Knowledge (tactics) [DC 20]: The heroes can attempt to identify the most likely locations from which an assassin would have a clear line of approach to Tsillog.

Perception [Opposed DC]: The heroes can spot Loodux drawing his weapon as he prepares to fire at the ambassador or spot him as he throws down his smoke grenade. The check is opposed by Loodux's Stealth check (+18).

Persuasion [DC 25]: The heroes can question members of the crowd to learn whether they have seen any suspicious individuals or anyone that seems to be carrying a weapon.

Stealth [Opposed DC]: The heroes can move unobtrusively through the crowd looking for suspicious characters or can catch Loodux unaware as he prepares his attack. The check is opposed by Loodux's Stealth check (+18).

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Opposed DC: Certain skills in this skill challenge can be opposed by Loodux.

Restricted Skills: The following skills cannot be used in this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, Swim, and Treat Injury.

Success: The heroes spot Loodux before he attacks. As a result, the combat does not begin with a surprise round.

Failure: The heroes fail to spot Loodux before he tosses down his smoke grenade and attacks. As a result, they cannot act during the surprise round.

LOODUX

Other members of the Mon Calamari radical group hired Loodux, a Rodian assassin, to kill the Quarren ambassador. Loodux is well known for his pistol work and his penchant for bold showmanship. The radicals want a spectacle and believe that a lone assassin killing Tsillog up close and personal would serve their cause effectively. Loodux is a perfect fit. Although his primary motivation is the payment he will receive, he has also come to share the radicals' distrust of the peace accord. In addition, the Rodian is more than a little insane.

Loodux has bland features, which he uses to his advantage to blend in with the crowd outside the embassy. He wears typical garb in muted tones, making him look like an average sentient waiting to hear the ambassador speak.

Loodux (L)

CL 9

Medium Rodian scoundrel 5/soldier 2/gunslinger 2

Dark Side 8

Init +18; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +9

Languages Basic, Mon Calamarian, Quarren, Rodese

Defenses Ref 27 (flat-footed 23), Fort 21, Will 21

hp 56; **Threshold** 21

Speed 6 squares

Melee stun baton +7 (1d6+4)

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +12 (3d8+7) or

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +10 (4d8+7) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +11

Atk Options Dastardly Strike, Deceptive Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Sneak Attack +2d6

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13

Talents Dastardly Strike, Deceptive Shot, Sneak Attack +2d6, Weapon Specialization (pistols)

Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Deception, Initiative, Stealth, Survival), Skill Training (Survival), Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Deception +15, Initiative +18, Perception +9 (can reroll, keeping the second result), Pilot +13, Stealth +18, Survival +14

Possessions heavy blaster pistol with targeting scope, smoke grenade, stun baton, breath mask, concealed holster, encrypted comlink, SoroSuub JG-8 luxury landspeeder (see page 71)

Loodux's Tactics

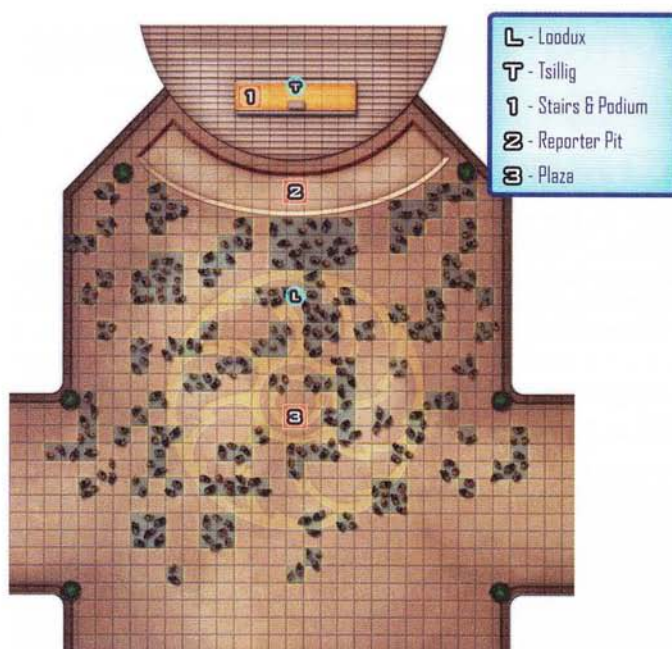
Loodux's plan is simple and brash. He intends to blend in with the crowd until Ambassador Tsillog comes out to speak. When the crowd begins to cheer or boo as Tsillog steps up to the podium, Loodux will be close to the front, where he will release a smoke grenade to cause panic. In the chaos, he will line up his shot, kill the ambassador, and trigger his comlink to summon the driver of his landspeeder. As the speeder carves a path through the crowd, Loodux will leap on board, shooting at anything and anyone that gets in his way.

CONCLUSION

If the heroes stop Loodux before he kills Tsillog, they are approached by the grateful ambassador once the chaos dies down. He apologizes for doubting them and promises to go forward with the negotiations as planned. In addition, Tsillog offers each hero a reward of 5,000 credits, along with the possibility of additional diplomatic favors.

If the heroes manage to capture Loodux alive and interrogate him, they realize that he is somewhat insane. However, the Rodian's confusing answers to their questions provide clues that help the heroes determine the identity of "Avreet," the leader of the radicals that set up the assassination attempts. If the heroes follow through on this information, they eventually discover that Avreet is Ambassador Nuukol.

If the heroes confront Nuukol, he confesses and admits that the attempt on his own life did not go as planned. The thermal detonator was not supposed to work at all, and he expected the two radicals to be killed. Nuukol thought that an attempt on his life would sway public opinion in his favor. On the other hand, he fully intended for Tsillog to be killed, because then the Quarren would assign a new ambassador, perhaps one who truly wanted peace between the two species. Nuukol is later sent to a prison colony on one of Mon Calamari's moons.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area in front of the Quarren embassy has the following features:

Illumination: The battle takes place during the day, with no penalties for low light.

Crowded Plaza: The plaza in front of the embassy is packed with sentients. Each blank square is assumed to have a single being in it. The areas indicated on the map are considered difficult terrain and impose a -5 penalty to Perception checks to locate a specific individual (such as Loodux). When combat begins, creatures knocked prone are trampled by the panicking crowd and take 1d6 points of damage per turn until they can stand up again.

Cover: Except for the area immediately in front of the podium, there are enough beings in the plaza that all creatures are considered to have cover.

Reporter Pit: The area immediately in front of the podium is filled with dozens of reporters and holovid cameras.

Smoke: When Loodux activates his smoke grenade, it fills a 2-square burst radius with smoke, providing concealment. Creatures without protective gear that remain within the burst radius suffer the effects of smoke (see page 256 of the Saga Edition core rulebook).

MINI-ADVENTURE #6: OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

"Opportunity Knocks" is a mini-adventure designed for 9th-level heroes. In this scenario of political espionage, the heroes intercept a coded transmission that promises the opportunity of a lifetime.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For many, it has been a long New Order. The Rebel Alliance has tried many avenues but has yet to strike a major blow against the Empire. Fear causes many defiant sorts to stay on the outskirts of the galaxy and wait for the right opportunity. That very chance just might have presented itself.

While on a far less important mission, the heroes intercept a coded transmission. After decoding it, they discover that Emperor Palpatine is slated to visit one of the floating domed cities of Duro regarding a new line of starships to be built for himself and his enforcer, Darth Vader. If the heroes negotiate with a Duro government official who has shown sympathy for the Rebellion in the past, they might be able to place themselves in the right position to assassinate Emperor Palpatine. Secretly, however, the transmission is a trap baited for the Alliance.

DECODING THE TRANSMISSION (CL 5)

When the heroes realize that they have intercepted the transmission, first they must make a DC 27 Knowledge (technology) check to record it to their ship's computer before the message disappears. Next, they must make a DC 35 Use Computer check to find the advanced algorithm necessary to decode the transmission. If they succeed, they learn the details of the Emperor's upcoming trip to Duro—a rare type of trip for him. Apparently, Emperor Palpatine plans to meet with Duro officials in the auditorium of a government building that will be cleared to maintain security.

The heroes might suspect the authenticity of the message and try to verify it. A DC 22 Knowledge (bureaucracy) check reveals that, as far as they can tell, the business procedures mentioned in the transmission seem to be accurate and normal. A DC 22 Knowledge (galactic lore) check allows the heroes to recall details about Duro that match the information in the message, providing further authentication.

SKILL CHALLENGE: ARRANGING THE ASSASSINATION

The heroes travel to Duro. Once they arrive in orbit around the planet, they can contact an ally of the Rebel Alliance in the Duro corporate government. The heroes engage in a skill challenge to talk the official into aiding their attempt on the Emperor's life.

CL 9

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Deception [Opposed DC]: The heroes fabricate evidence that Emperor Palpatine is a direct threat to the Duros or that he has no intentions of honoring his contract. The argument might convince the official to give in to the heroes' request.

Knowledge [galactic lore] [DC 23]: The heroes recall something they know of the Duro official, perhaps his past assistance to the Rebel Alliance, that they can use as leverage.

Knowledge [social sciences] [DC 28]: The heroes put forth a point of philosophy, well known on Duro, that speaks to the official and convinces him that their plan is a necessary course of action.

Persuasion [Opposed DC]: The heroes plead for the official to give them aid, using reason and promises of justice for the Emperor's dark deeds.

Use the Force [Opposed DC]: The heroes attempt to detect the mood and surface thoughts of the official, which might help them avoid upsetting or offending him during the negotiation.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Opposed DC: Skills used against the Duro government official, including Deception, Persuasion, and Use the Force, target the official's Will Defense of 27.

Recovery: Since the official has a history of aiding the Alliance, he is willing to listen despite his fear of being discovered. Any hero who succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more can forfeit that success in exchange for removing one failure.

Success: The heroes convince the official to give them special access to the building where Emperor Palpatine will negotiate the new capital ship contract.

Failure: The official decides that the risks outweigh the potential benefit and refuses to help. The heroes must find their own way into the building. In addition, the official might warn his staff that intruders are expected.

AFTERMATH

When the heroes begin their assassination attempt, use the "Assassination Ambush" encounter on the following page.

If the heroes escape the government building alive, they still must get out of the domed city. The Imperials pursue them on foot through the streets, but in what seems like a stroke of luck, the heroes manage to get away and reach their ship. Secretly, a homing beacon has been hidden aboard the vessel. The Emperor hopes that the heroes will lead his forces to a Rebel Alliance base.

After the heroes board their ship and begin the preflight sequence, a message from the Duro capital orders them to stand down and warns that their ship is not cleared for takeoff. However, the heroes are able to blast off without incident.

If the first Duro official aided the heroes earlier, he contacts them again. "This doesn't make any sense," he tells them. "I think they're allowing you to leave. Be safe, and may the Force be with you." If the heroes ask why he did not warn them about the ambush, he says that he had no knowledge of it (which is true) but that he is glad they survived. He is impressed with their skills and offers to aid them again if they ever need help.

SKILL CHALLENGE: DISABLE THE TRACKING DEVICE

As the heroes leave the Duro System, they might breathe a sigh of relief, or they might search their ship to see if the Imperials have hidden a tracking device on board. If the heroes locate the tracking device near the ship's engines, they can attempt to disable it. However, they realize that the device is rigged with explosive charges that could detonate if they try to remove or deactivate it. A DC 18 Knowledge (technology) check reveals that such an explosion at this location could destroy a significant portion of the ship—perhaps the whole vessel.

CL 9

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Use Computer [DC 28]: The heroes use the ship's computer to try to link to the tracking device and slice into its programming.

Knowledge (technology) [DC 28]: The heroes recall whatever information they know about the proper way to disable tracking devices or explosives.

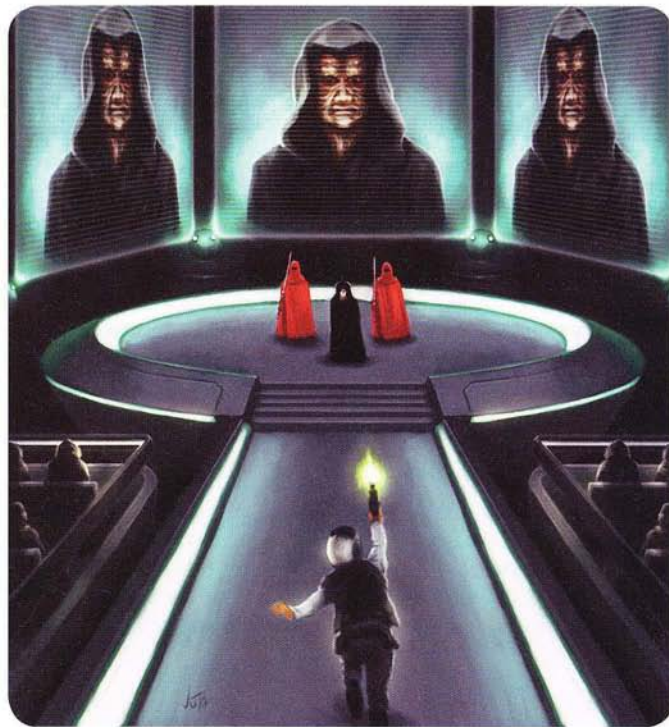
Mechanics [DC 30]: The heroes use the Disable Device application of the Mechanics skill (which requires a security kit) and manage to disable part of it.

Challenge Effects: The following is a suggested challenge effect for this skill challenge:

Catastrophic Failure: Disarming the rigged device is a delicate task with dire consequences. Any hero who fails a skill check by 10 or more accrues two failures instead of one.

Success: The heroes fully disarm the explosives and disable the tracking device.

Failure: The heroes cannot remove the demolitions safely. Roll a d20 and add the total number of successes earned during the skill challenge. If the result meets or beats DC 15, the heroes are unable to disarm the device, but it does not explode. If the result does not meet or beat DC 15, the device explodes, dealing 10d6 points of damage to the ship's engine room. (For rules on explosives, see pages 130–131 of the Saga Edition core rulebook.)



ASSAULTING THE FALSE EMPEROR

ENCOUNTER: ASSASSINATION AMBUSH

Challenge Level 9

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Opportunity Knocks," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

The start of this encounter depends on whether the heroes were able to enlist the aid of the Duro corporate official. If they did, they can slip into the government building without trouble. The official has seen to it that his security force believes the characters to be part of a special additional unit. He has also provided the heroes with special all-access credentials and will keep the auditorium balcony clear, since it is a good hiding place.

If the heroes were unable to garner the official's aid, they must infiltrate the building by traditional means. The security guards are not high level, so this task should not be too difficult for most 9th-level characters. Gamemasters can expand the infiltration portion of the encounter, if desired, to make it more challenging.

ONE FOR THE REBELLION

After the heroes enter the building, they have some time before the Emperor's arrival. The structure is mostly empty, and there are not many places to hide. The balcony seems like the best bet—no security and plenty of room. A few alcoves are located below the balcony, but these alcoves are near doors that might receive foot traffic.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the Emperor and his guards arrive, read the following text aloud:

A door near the stage opens, and two Duros officials enter. They are followed by a member of the Emperor's Royal Guard, Emperor Palpatine himself, and another elite guardsman. The entourage steps onto the stage, and Emperor Palpatine and the Duros sit around a table to begin the contract negotiation. The guards take their places to either side of the Emperor, force pikes in hand.

THE TRAP

This "Emperor" is an impostor, a target for any Rebels who intercepted the transmission and took the bait. He puts on a good show and negotiates convincingly with the Duros. The heroes have plenty of time to prepare, aim, and take the best shot they can muster. The DC to hit the false Emperor is 16. If the attack is successful, the impostor slumps forward onto the table, dead.

Regardless of whether the heroes kill the impostor, as soon as they make their presence known, the Empire springs its trap. The Royal Guards leap to attention with their force pikes. Both Duros officials—really Corporate Security agents—draw their sidearms. Through each of the four doors come two heavy stormtroopers and an Imperial officer (see pages 279–280 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). Chaos erupts.

In this encounter, it is in the heroes' best interests to flee rather than fight, but some combat is necessary to escape from the ambush. Each doorway is blocked by two heavy stormtroopers and an officer. Their purpose is to slow down the heroes while the others open fire. The two Royal Guards (see pages 173–174 of *The Force Unleashed Campaign Guide*) move into melee to engage the heroes with their force pikes.

The Empire's ultimate plan is to let some of the heroes escape so they can be followed back to a Rebel base. Thus, the Imperials put up a realistic struggle to capture or kill the heroes but make sure to let at least one or two get away.

DUROS OFFICIALS (CORPORATE SECURITY AGENTS)

Although the two Duros wear noble attire and appear to be government officials, they actually belong to a special unit of Duros Corporate Security. They are fully aware of the details of the ruse and are cooperating with the Empire.

Duros Officials (2)

CL 7

Medium Duros soldier 5/noble 2

Force 3

Init +17; Senses Perception +9

Languages Basic, Bocce, Durese, High Galactic, 1 unassigned

Defenses Ref 22 (flat-footed 18), Fort 19, Will 20

hp 62; Threshold 19

Speed 6 squares

Melee stun baton +7 (1d6+4) or

Melee stun baton +7 (2d6+4 stun)

Ranged blaster pistol +11 (3d6+5) or

Ranged blaster pistol +11 (2d6+5 stun) or

Ranged blaster pistol +9 (4d6+5) with Rapid Shot or

Ranged blaster pistol +9 (3d6+5 stun) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +6; Grp +10

Atk Options Devastating Attack, Penetrating Attack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Special Actions Bolster Ally

Abilities Str 13, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 14

Talents Bolster Ally, Devastating Attack, Penetrating Attack, Weapon Specialization (pistols)

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Initiative), Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +17, Knowledge (tactics) +9, Perception +9, Mechanics +9

Possessions stun baton, blaster pistol, noble's clothing, 1,300 credits

CONCLUSION

After this encounter ends, the heroes need to escape. However, a tracking device planted on their ship could lead the Empire back to their allies. See the "Aftermath" section on page 177.

If the heroes fail to find the tracking device, or if they find it and fail to remove it but survive, they come under the scrutiny of the Imperial Service Bureau (ISB). From this point forward, ISB agents track their movements and might show up at inopportune times. Gamemasters are encouraged to expand on this development as desired. If the heroes later realize that they are being tracked, they can attempt the preceding skill challenges again.

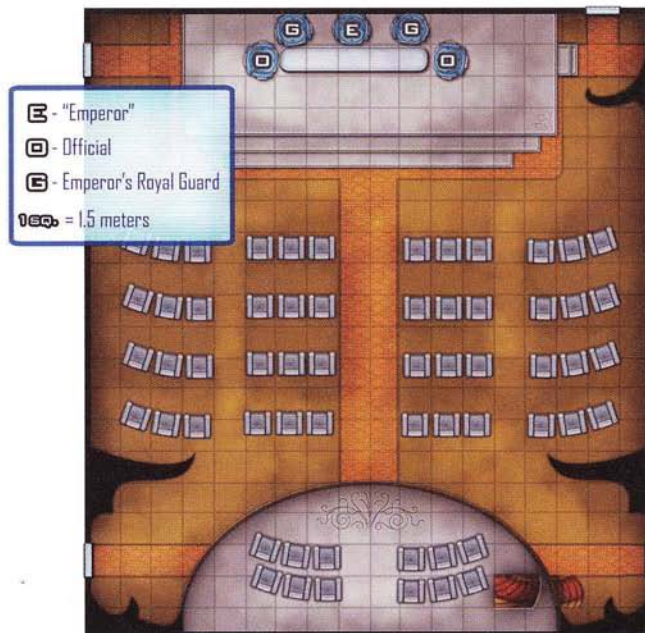
If the heroes find and remove the tracking device, they escape the Imperials without a hitch. The Empire loses their trail, and somewhere, two Duros security agents and some Imperial officers suffer in the Force grip of Darth Vader.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The auditorium has the following features:

Illumination: The battle takes place indoors, but the auditorium is fairly well lit, with no penalties for low light.

Cover: The auditorium is full of places where the heroes can find cover, including numerous rows of seats, the balcony, and some alcoves.



MINI-ADVENTURE #7: DOUBLE DOWN

"Double Down" is a mini-adventure designed for 10th-level heroes. In this scenario, the heroes are part of a Republic Intelligence team attempting to disrupt the movement of weapons to the Separatists in the Colu System, but a betrayal derails the mission.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The heroes work for Republic Intelligence, tasked with monitoring clandestine activity by the Separatists as the war effort gets underway. They are part of an undercover team on the planet Clak'dor VII, the homeworld of the Bith, and send reports to their superiors on Coruscant. After the recent death of their superior, they are now under the command of Special Agent Mocen Gundross, a serious and dedicated intelligence officer known for his aggressive techniques in the field. So as not to arouse suspicion or draw the ire of the independence-minded Bith, Republic Intelligence maintains a low profile on Clak'dor VII, basing its operations out of a dummy corporation in the capital of the planet.

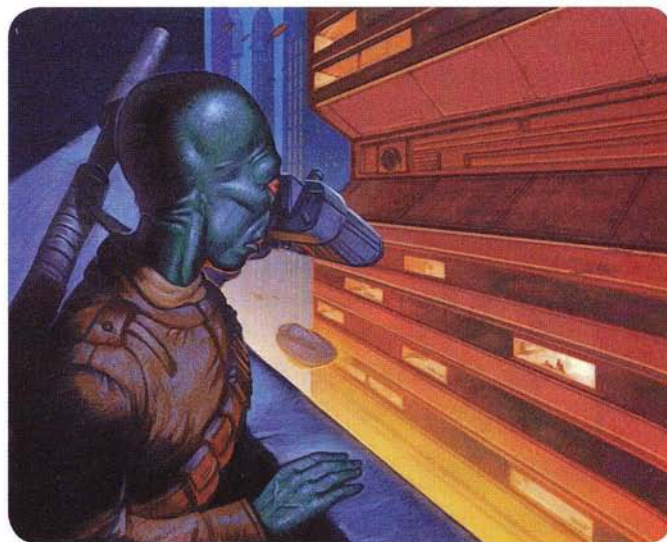
The heroes receive a message from Gundross that they are to break into a suspected Separatist safe house in a seedy part of town and plant listening devices to overhear vital information. The safe house is located in a hotel known as a place primarily for transients and ship crews looking for a cheap place to stay for extended periods of time. An Aqualish named Bander Ootka, on leave from a Techno Union vessel docked for repairs, is currently staying in the room used as the safe house. However, the safe house serves as a general meeting place, so other Separatists could show up as well.

Gundross orders the heroes to perform surveillance on the location, request any special equipment needed to break into the room, and plant the bugs, all without leaving a trace. Once the devices are in place, the heroes are to listen to any conversations that occur in the room and pass the information back to Gundross, who will decide what to do with it.

If the heroes pull off this job, Gundross will put in the paperwork for hazardous duty pay of 100,000 credits.

SURVEILLANCE

To determine the best time to break into the hotel room, the heroes need to spend a couple of days monitoring the activity there. If they try to rent a room adjacent to or across the hall from the safe house, they discover that those rooms have already been rented out. A DC 20 Persuasion check and 1,000 credits bribes the hotel clerk to kick out the current tenants and let the heroes have the room instead; succeeding at the check by 5 or more



lowers the bribery cost to 500 credits. The room rents for 100 credits per day, and the heroes can make two DC 20 Perception checks for each day of surveillance. After five successful checks, the heroes determine the best time to enter the room and plant the listening devices.

INFILTRATION

When the heroes are ready, they need to figure out the best way to enter the room without raising suspicion. The Separatists have bribed the hotel staff to prevent anyone from gaining access to their safe house, but credits speak loudly. If the heroes make a DC 30 Persuasion check and offer 3,000 credits in bribes, a staff member gives them a passkey to the Separatists' room. If the heroes fail the check, they still must pay the 3,000 credits to keep the hotel employee quiet about the bribe attempt, or find some other way to keep him from talking. If combat breaks out, treat hotel employees as Rebel Troopers (see page 280 of the Saga Edition core rulebook).

Alternatively, the heroes can try to find the hotel concierge (treat him as an Elite Rebel Trooper without weapons or armor; see page 281 of the Saga Edition core rulebook) and pick his pocket to obtain a passkey. Doing so requires a Stealth check opposed by the concierge's Perception check (+8). The heroes might also use violence against the concierge to get a passkey.

Once the heroes get inside the Separatists' room, they must plant three listening devices that were given to them by Gundross. Each device is of Fine size and camouflaged to blend into the background, requiring a DC 35 Perception check to notice. The room contains two beds, a refresher, a holoivid monitor, a desk with a chair, and a computer panel with basic (DC 15) encryption. A large bay window overlooks the trash-filled alley below and a windowless factory 6 squares away.

SECURITY MEASURES

Although the Separatists feel relatively confident about the secrecy of their safe house, they have installed a few electronic security measures. If the heroes successfully survey the room beforehand, they are aware that the room contains a surveillance detector (see page 67). It also contains a silence bubble generator, which creates an energy sphere that dampens sound waves in a 2x2 square area; the DC of Perception checks to hear sounds within the sphere is increased by 10. The heroes must tamper with both devices (DC 25 Mechanics check for each) so that they appear functional but allow the characters to listen in on conversations in the room. If the tampering is successful, the surveillance detector continually registers a negative result, and the silence bubble generator works as normal except that the heroes can tune their listening devices to a specific frequency that pierces the energy sphere.

The Separatists have also modified the door leading into the room. Slicing through the door's lock requires a DC 30 Mechanics check (reduced to DC 25 if the heroes have a hotel passkey). Failure by 5 or more sends a message to the room's surveillance detector; erasing the event from the detector's memory requires a DC 25 Use Computer check.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR (CL 7)

While the heroes plant the bugs and alter the security measures, a tough-looking Human bounty hunter (use the statistics on page 283 of the Saga Edition core rulebook, but replace Survival with Mechanics) enters the hotel and heads to the safe house. He knocks on the door, intending to talk to the Separatists about a bounty that is unrelated to the heroes' task.

The heroes can use the room's camera system to see who is immediately in front of the door. The bounty hunter begins banging on the door, demanding to be let in. If the heroes open the door, the bounty hunter pauses for a moment and asks the whereabouts of Ootka. The heroes can attempt a Deception check opposed by the bounty hunter's Perception check (+14) to convince him that they are compatriots of Ootka. If they succeed at the check by 5 or more, the bounty hunter leaves after a terse comment that Ootka had better pay up for the job.

If the Deception check fails, the bounty hunter suspects something is amiss, draws his blaster carbine, and demands to know who the heroes are. An opposed Persuasion check (against +24 this time) convinces the bounty hunter not to ask any more questions, and he leaves without trouble. Otherwise, he begins shooting at the heroes; the hotel is used to such violence, and the staff ignores the noise.

If the heroes do not open the door, the bounty hunter tries to pick the lock to get inside. If he succeeds, he comes in with his weapon drawn (and might trigger the surveillance detector, as described in the Security Measures sidebar). The heroes can calm him down by making an opposed Persuasion check against +24; otherwise, he initiates combat.

THE MEETING

If the heroes successfully plant the devices and modify the security measures, they can return to their own room and begin to monitor the Separatists. Shortly after the heroes leave the safe house, Bandor Ootka returns to the room, locks the door, and spends the next few hours asleep. Over the course of the next 24 hours, two other people arrive to speak to Ootka. The first is a female Human, an ally of the bounty hunter who confronted the heroes. She asks if her friend came by yet to collect the overdue payment. Things quickly get heated as Ootka insists that no one came to see him, and the woman leaves cursing and angry.

A few hours later, a male Duros knocks on the safe house door and is admitted. He is a weapon smuggler named Doon Gorot who works as a go-between for a crime lord under contract to the Separatists. The heroes eavesdrop as Ootka and Gorot discuss a large shipment of weapons ready for the Separatists to pick up on Mezhra Station, an enormous space station in orbit around Clak'dor VII.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the heroes overhear the conversation, read the following text aloud:

Although the transmission is filled with static, you manage to overhear the conversation between the Separatist spy and the Duros that entered into the room. "Everything is going according to plan," says the Duros. "The weapons that you requested are ready for pickup in Bay 6-AT4 on Mezhra Station. I have several of my crew waiting up there to keep things safe until you arrive. They'll expect you to give them the second half of the payment immediately. But now, let's talk about the first half of the payment. Where are my credits?" You overhear Ootka moving around the room, then the distinct sound of two credit chips making contact. "There," says Ootka. "Half a mil transferred. Not bad for two days' work, eh? My contacts will meet your crew tomorrow at 1200 hours for the pickup. Nice doing business with you."

Gorot leaves the room, and Ootka makes a call on his personal comlink. He informs a minion that the plan is in motion and repeats the same information that the heroes overheard. Shortly thereafter, the Aqualish leaves the safe house and no longer plays a part in the mini-adventure. (If the heroes want to detain or interrogate Ootka, remind them that their mission involves surveillance, not interception.)

THE REAL SITUATION

In reality, the conversation that the heroes overhear between Ootka and Gorot is part of a plot by Special Agent Mocen Gundross. The intelligence officer sold his loyalties to the Separatists and promised to give them some Republic Intelligence agents who could be interrogated for secrets or used as bargaining chips. Gundross set up the heroes, hoping to lure them into a trap so they could be captured more easily.

ENCOUNTER: DEAL GONE BAD

Challenge Level 10

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Double Down," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

After the heroes relay the results of their surveillance to Gundross, he contemplates the situation for a few minutes. Then he tells the heroes that another agent, a Bith named Ananah Kragana, will shuttle them up to Mezhra Station and use her existing cover to get them inside Bay 6-AT4 without any problems. The heroes are to observe the transaction between the weapon smugglers and the Separatists before stepping in and capturing (or killing) everyone involved.

Gundross orders the heroes to go straight to the city's main spaceport and board a ship called the *Verdant Song*, piloted by Ananah. They find the vessel and the Bith waiting when they arrive, and she flies them to the space station. Ananah docks the ship immediately adjacent to Bay 6-AT4, giving the heroes a quick escape in case of trouble. She explains that Gundross has ordered her to accompany the heroes and lend her support to the mission. Her cover is as a maintenance worker on the station, so she knows how to override the bay's security and use service tunnels to get inside without being noticed.

In truth, Ananah is another part of the double-cross. Gundross has told her to help the heroes get into the bay, then betray them at a prearranged signal.

DOUBLE-CROSS

After the heroes have disembarked, Ananah steps up to the wall adjacent to Bay 6-AT4 and reveals a panel to a service tunnel that leads into the bay. Depending on how early the heroes arrive, they might have to find cover and wait for the smugglers and the Separatists to arrive, or they might show up just as the transaction is taking place. The bay is filled with crates and equipment, providing plenty of places for the heroes to hide.

Eventually, a small freighter arrives, gliding through the force screen and setting down on the pad. A minute later, two Human males enter through the main bay door and approach the ship. Two other Humans carrying a heavy-looking crate disembark from the freighter. The parties begin haggling, and soon the Humans from the ship open the crate and pull out several blaster rifles to show the goods.

When this happens, the hero closest to Ananah hears her say, "And there we go. Sorry. It's just business." She draws her blaster carbine and begins firing at the heroes, at which point the four Humans (use the assassin statistics on page 282 of the Saga Edition core rulebook) turn and fire at them as well, using the blaster rifles from the crate. The four are Separatists who have come to the station not to pick up weapons but to capture the heroes. They do not fire at Ananah during combat.

ANANAH KRAGANA

At one time, Ananah considered herself a loyal member of the Republic, but years of work in the field and proximity to the Separatists made her susceptible to conversion. Special Agent Gundross turned double agent as well, and the two of them have worked secretly with the Separatists for months, turning over Republic agents and other valuable commodities. Gundross and Ananah set up this elaborate ruse to lure the heroes into a position where they could be captured and sent to a Separatist world as prisoners.

Ananah Kragana

CL 10

Medium Bith noble 3/scoundrel 5/soldier 2

Dark Side 4

Init +12; **Senses** Perception +11

Languages Basic, Bith, Bothese, Durese, Hutttese, Skakoan, 1 unassigned

Defenses Ref 25 (flat-footed 23), Fort 21, Will 23; Dodge hp 48; **Threshold** 21

Speed 6 squares

Melee vibrodagger +7 (2d4+5)

Ranged blaster carbine +10 (3d8+5) or

Ranged blaster carbine +8 (4d8+5) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Coordinated Attack, Dastardly Strike, Disruptive, Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Special Actions Born Leader, Combat Reflexes, Coordinate

Abilities Str 10, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 16

Special Qualities meditative trance, microscopic vision, scent

Talents Born Leader, Coordinate, Dastardly Strike, Disruptive, Indomitable, Sneak Attack +1d6

Feats Coordinated Attack, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Deception, Mechanics), Weapon Focus (rifles), Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +18, Gather Information +13, Initiative +12, Mechanics +17, Perception +11, Pilot +12, Stealth +12, Treat Injury +11

Possessions blaster carbine, vibrodagger, 2 medpacs

Meditative Trance—Bith can enter into a trance that lasts for four consecutive hours. At the end of the trance, they gain the benefits of having rested for eight consecutive hours.

Scent—Bith have an extremely strong sense of smell. At close range (within 10 squares), Bith ignore concealment and cover for the purpose of Perception checks, and they take no penalty for poor visibility when tracking (see Survival, page 73 of the Saga Edition core rulebook).

Ananah's Tactics

Since she begins the combat close to the heroes, Ananah tries to blast as many of them as she can before diving for cover behind a crate, using her position to help flank them. She uses Born Leader, Coordinate, and Coordinated Attack to give her allies additional bonuses as needed. Because her mission is to take the heroes alive, she tries to knock them unconscious or to force them to surrender.

Separatists' Tactics

The four Separatists take cover as soon as possible and strive to keep in line of sight with Ananah so they can benefit from her feats and talents. If Ananah orders them to stop firing at the heroes, they do so immediately.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has the following features:

Illumination: The interior of the docking bay is brightly lit.

Cover: The docking bay is full of places for the heroes to find cover. In some cases (such as a character sitting in the loading vehicle), the Gamemaster can rule that the target has improved cover.

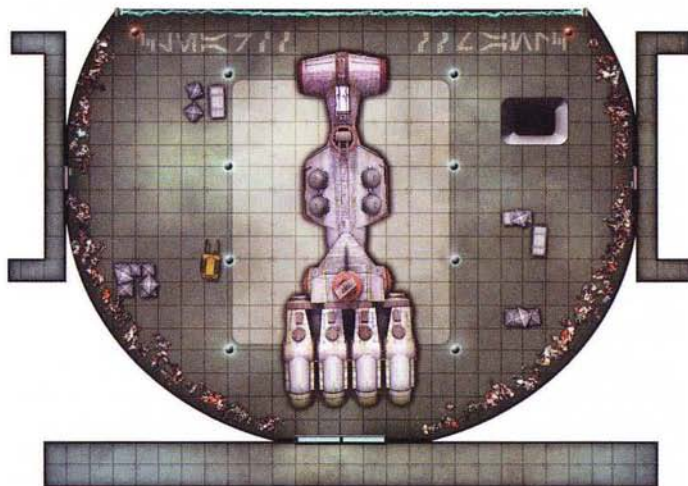
Force Field: A powerful force field seals the bay from the vacuum of space. Anyone adjacent to the panel can shut off power to the field. The air immediately starts flowing out of the bay in a forceful manner. All characters must make a DC 20 Strength check to prevent being knocked over and dragged 4 squares toward the exit. A character adjacent to a solid piece of equipment (such as the ship or the machinery indicated on the map) can make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to grab on and resist being sucked into space. Characters sucked into space take damage from vacuum (see page 253 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). The force field reactivates after 1 round.

Access Panels and Service Tunnels: The heroes enter the docking bay through an access panel on the west edge of the map (an identical panel and tunnel are found on the opposite wall of the bay). If the heroes put the panel back into place after coming through, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice that the panel seems a bit loose. The tunnels behind the walls are 2 meters tall.

Loading Vehicle: The loading vehicle is turned off and does not have the key required to operate it. The vehicle serves as cover.

Crates: The docking bay is filled with crates of goods. These range from 2 to 5 meters in height and provide cover.

Service Pit: The service pit on the eastern side of the bay serves as an elevator for gear. The elevator is currently retracted, meaning that anyone who falls or is pushed into the pit falls 10 meters and takes normal falling damage.



CONCLUSION

If the Separatists are successful, they bundle the heroes into the freighter and throw them in the brig. The freighter travels to the planet Skako, where the heroes are used as bargaining chips with the Republic or trotted out as examples of the Republic's lies and corruption.

If the heroes defeat the Separatists and capture Ananah or any of the four Humans alive, the prisoners eventually reveal that the double-cross was initiated by Special Agent Gundross. The intelligence officer was in league with the Separatists from the start. He was ordered by his superiors to capture Republic agents alive so the Separatists could extract their secrets or use them as examples in the ongoing propaganda war. Republic Intelligence makes good on the bonus promised by Gundross and gives the heroes a 100,000-credit reward for revealing the presence of two double agents in their midst.

MINI-ADVENTURE #8: EXTRACTING ALEECE

"Extracting Aleece" is a mini-adventure designed for 12th-level heroes. In this scenario, the heroes are sent to extract a deep-level spy who believes she is about to be discovered.

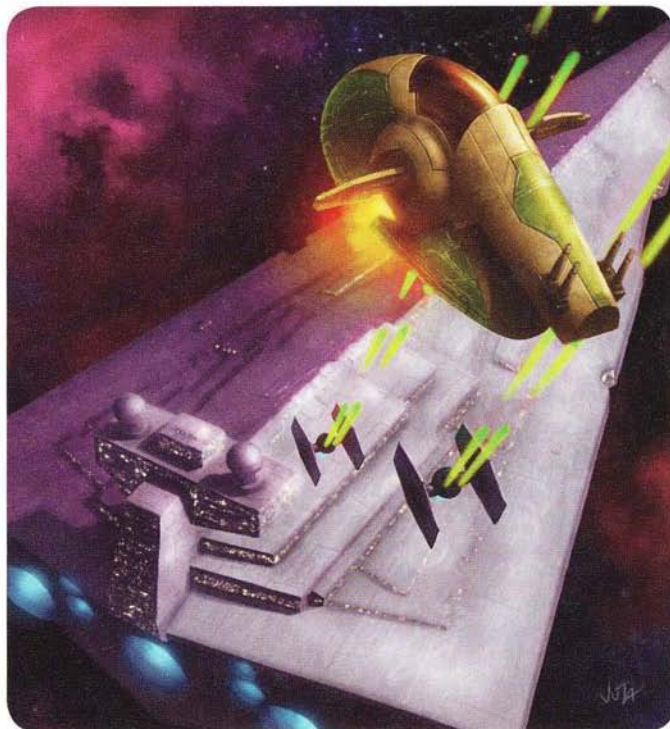
ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Agent Tehlan Aleece is a well-placed Rebel spy within the Empire. She is, in fact, the niece of Moff Venram Krax, who is temporarily located on Corellia. Throughout her longstanding secret association with the Rebel Alliance, she has provided vital information on Imperial procedures and activities. Recently, through her spy network, she contacted General Airen Cracken with potentially grave news. She believes that someone has become suspicious of her and that her cover soon might be blown. Cracken seems certain that Aleece would not have contacted him unless she were in real trouble. Time is of the essence.

The heroes are asked to undertake what might end up being a suicide mission. Few agent retrievals go as planned, especially behind Imperial lines. However, General Cracken believes that the importance of rescuing Agent Aleece is worth the risk.

Before they travel to Corellia, the heroes are outfitted with the necessary tools. An intelligence agent provides each hero with a security uniform, along with forged identification that includes ship and weapon licenses. The group is also loaned a standard-issue Firespray-31 Patrol Craft (see page 84 of *Starships of the Galaxy*). Finally, the intelligence agent gives the heroes an Imperial security code that is supposed to get them to Corellia without incident. The heroes are ordered to retrieve undercover agent Aleece and bring her back by any means necessary.

AVOIDING IMPERIAL CAPTURE WHILE EXTRACTING ALEECE



THE ARRIVAL

When the heroes arrive in orbit around Corellia, they are immediately spotted by a small fleet led by an *Imperial I-class Star Destroyer*. A flight officer aboard the Star Destroyer contacts the heroes, requesting their destination and purpose. The heroes must make a Deception check opposed by the officer's Perception skill (+15) to attempt a bluff. They might tell the officer that they are on assignment for the Corellian Security Force. Regardless, the officer requests an Imperial security code before allowing the heroes to enter Corellian space. If they present the code supplied by Rebel Intelligence, there is a pause as they wait. When the officer returns on screen, he tells the heroes, "It's an older code, but it checks out. Proceed to Docking Bay 49. Do not deviate from your present course or you will be fired upon."

If the heroes failed the Deception check to bluff the flight officer, he notifies his commander that he suspects something is off kilter. As a result, the docking bay will have extra security to keep an eye on the heroes.

MAKING CONTACT

The heroes need to make contact with Tehlan Aleece at the predetermined rendezvous point. She informs them that she cannot leave Corellia until after the birthday and dinner party for her uncle, Moff Krax, planned for that evening. If she were absent, suspicions would rise, and armed guards would be sent to find her. She tells the heroes that a Human named Snaeb Fronk is her escort for the party. Aleece believes that he knows of her espionage activities and might report her. She asks the heroes to pose as her personal security guards to protect her from Fronk and her uncle's guards.

ALMOST CAUGHT

The heroes stand guard outside Aleece's quarters as she readies for her uncle's party. Her escort for the night, Snaeb Fronk, arrives and soon reveals his suspicions, asking her several heated questions. Read the following text aloud:

While keeping watch, you listen through the door as Aleece greets her guest. The couple's meeting seems full of pleasantries. Suddenly, Fronk's voice turns hard, and he says that he knows what she's really up to.

"Oh? And what is that?" she replies.

"Don't play naive with me! I've seen you—I've been watching you," he says. "You and your little network of spies—" You hear a slap. "You're a feisty one," Fronk continues. "But no matter. It's too late for you. I've informed your uncle of your treasonous ways. You'll be in the spice mines of Kessel before this is done."

To prevent the situation from escalating further, the heroes can enter Aleece's quarters to silence Fronk or otherwise detain him—a relatively easy task for 12th-level characters. A successful Persuasion check to intimidate Fronk against his Will Defense of 13 causes him to back down from the confrontation.

The heroes might try to question Fronk, although he is antagonistic and loyal to the Empire to a fault. With another successful Persuasion check to intimidate him, the heroes learn that Fronk has not actually revealed his suspicions about Aleece to Moff Krax or the Moff's guards—he was bluffing to frighten her. However, Fronk did share his doubts with a few Imperial officers over a round of drinks at the cantina last night.

SKILL CHALLENGE: THE PURSUIT OF FREEDOM

This skill challenge represents the heroes' attempt to outrun Imperial forces and local Corellian security as they extract Agent Tehlan Aleece. The challenge begins when they leave the dinner party. Even if they reach the spaceport and board Moff Krax's personal shuttle, Imperial TIE fighters pursue them, turning the foot chase into a space chase.

CL 12

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge [galactic lore] [DC 35 or 30]: The heroes can try to remember what they know about Corellia and this city to find shortcuts and secret routes. This DC is reduced to 30 for heroes who are familiar with the city.

Perception [DC 26]: The heroes can try to find the best path to stay ahead of the forces on their tail.

Stealth [Opposed DC]: The heroes can try to sneak off, hiding from their pursuers as long as they remain unnoticed. This check is opposed by the pursuers' Perception skill.

Treat Injury [DC 15 or 25]: Since keeping Aleece alive is part of the challenge, the heroes might need to treat her injuries if she is shot by their pursuers. To attempt to heal her, a hero must have a medpac; having a medical kit grants a +2 equipment bonus to the check. Making a DC 15 check allows a hero to administer first aid. Making a DC 25 check allows a hero to revivify Aleece if she has died within 1 round.

Pilot [DC 26 or Opposed DC]: Once the heroes commandeer a ship, they can pilot it along the fastest routes, avoiding obstacles and other ships flying around the spaceport. If the heroes are engaged by Imperial TIE fighters, the pursuers become able to make Pilot checks for dogfight maneuvers, which set the DC for this skill.

Use Computer [DC 31]: Once the heroes commandeer a ship, they can use its computers to try to find the best flight path to avoid their pursuers. In addition, they can use this skill for astrogation (requires 1 minute of computer use before making the check). For the Astrogation DC modifiers, see page 237 of the Saga Edition core rulebook.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Degenerating: This skill challenge does not end when the heroes accrue three failures. Instead, the general difficulty category for skill checks increases by one step for each failure accrued. (For more information, see Degenerating on page 45.)

Initiative: Since the heroes are engaged in combat, they must act in order of initiative during the skill challenge.

Restricted Skills: The following skills cannot be used in this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, and Swim. Pilot and Use Computer can be used only after the heroes commandeer a ship.

Success: The heroes escape from Corellia with Aleece.

Failure: The heroes are killed or captured, or Aleece is killed.

ENCOUNTER: DINE AND DASH

Challenge Level 12

SETUP: This encounter serves as the climax of "Extracting Aleece," the mini-adventure introduced on the previous two pages.

The birthday and dinner party for Moff Venram Krax seems like the perfect gala, everything a Moff could want—fine clothes, fancy desserts, rich foods, and the smell of perfumes permeating the air. A live synthtone band plays in one corner as dancers spin across the floor. The heroes continue playing their roles as security guards while the nobles hobnob, eat, and dance. Aleece does an excellent job of pretending that nothing is wrong, going about her usual business of meeting and greeting other nobles, dancing with men of standing, and flirting when necessary.

READ-ALoud TEXT

At an appropriate point during the party, read the following text aloud:

After what seems like hours of lingering in the doorways, you notice something suspicious—an officer goes over to Moff Krax and whispers something in his ear. At first, Krax appears to try to shoo him away, but the officer seems too intent to be brushed off.

Tehlan Aleece notices the situation, too. Perhaps out of desperation, she signals one of the male heroes over to her and begins dancing with him. When the music slows, she pulls him close and whispers in his ear to get ready to run.

Suddenly, Aleece slaps him hard across the face. "How dare you!" she yells. "I told you to behave once already! Men are such vornskrs!" She starts to cry real tears, putting on a show of sobbing as she storms out of the dinner party.

BACK TO THE SHIP

When Aleece leaves the party, the heroes are likely to follow her out the door and begin their trek to the Firespray-31. Two guards stand just outside the door. The heroes must make a Deception check against the guards' Perception check (+15) to determine whether their guises continue to be successful. If the heroes succeed at the check, the guards nod at them but otherwise do nothing. If the heroes fail the check, they can try to do or say something to ease the guards' suspicions by making a DC 26 Knowledge (bureaucracy) check. If that check also fails, the guards sound the alarm and try to apprehend the heroes.

When the heroes are close to their ship, they realize that their docking bay (number 49) is swarming with Imperial heavy stormtroopers. Aleece suggests that they take her uncle's personal shuttle instead, which is docked in bay 46. She claims to have the access codes and some experience flying the shuttle that she gained while taking trips with her uncle.

Gamemasters should feel free to increase the number of Imperial troops as necessary. More are likely to arrive on the scene once the alarm sounds, especially if the heroes failed the Deception check when they first entered orbit around Corellia.

Once the heroes commandeered a ship, they are chased by three Imperial TIE fighters. The TIE fighter pilots attempt dogfight maneuvers and make opposed Pilot checks against the heroes.

TEHLAN ALEECE

The niece of Moff Venram Krax from Corellia, Tehlan Aleece is also an undercover agent for the Rebel Alliance. Behind her uncle's back, she has been reporting information to General Airen Cracken through a spy network. She is also an experienced pilot.

Tehlan Aleece

CL 7

Medium Human noble 7

Force 4

Init +10; Senses Perception +14

Languages Basic, Bocce, Bothese, High Galactic, 2 unassigned

Defenses Ref 22 (flat-footed 19), Fort 19, Will 21; Dodge, Mobility hp 47; Threshold 19

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +5 (1d4+3)

Ranged blaster pistol +7 (3d6+3)

Base Atk +5; Grp +7

Atk Options Running Attack

Special Actions Bolster Ally, Ignite Fervor, Inspire Confidence

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 17

Talents Bolster Ally, Educated, Ignite Fervor, Inspire Confidence

Feats Dodge, Improved Defenses, Linguist, Mobility, Running Attack,

Skill Focus (Deception, Gather Information, Perception),

Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +16, Gather Information +16, Initiative +10, Knowledge

(bureaucracy) +10, Knowledge (galactic lore) +10, Perception +14,

Persuasion +11, Pilot +10, Use Computer +10

Possessions blaster pistol, noble's clothing, 2,200 credits

LAMBDA-CLASS SHUTTLE

This modified *Lambda*-class shuttle belongs to Moff Venram Krax, who enjoys having his personal ship updated and improved. Krax has increased its speed, maneuverability, and shield technology. For more details on *Lambda*-class shuttles, see page 106 of *Starships of the Galaxy*.

Modified Sienar Fleet Systems *Lambda*-class Shuttle

CL 13

Colossal space transport

Init -1; Senses Perception +6

Defense Ref 15 (flat-footed 12), Fort 26; +12 armor, Vehicular Combat hp 120; DR 15; SR 35; Threshold 76

Speed fly 12 squares (max. velocity 920 km/h), fly 4 squares (starship scale)

Ranged blaster cannon battery +6 (see below) and blaster cannon +4 (see below) and twin laser cannons +6 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total Base Atk +2; **Grp** +38

Atk Options autofire (blaster cannon, twin laser cannons)

Abilities Str 42, Dex 16, Con —, Int 16

Skills Initiative -1, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot -1, Use Computer +6

Crew 6 (skilled); **Passengers** 20

Cargo 80 tons; **Consumables** 2 months; **Carried Craft** none

[Designer omitted the hyperdrive line. In case this was an accident, I've included it below in red. Delete the line if the exclusion was intentional (if the modifications described in text removed the hyperdrive).]

Hyperdrive x1 (backup x10), navicomputer

Availability Unique; **Cost** not available for sale (likely valued at 300,000)

Blaster cannon battery (2 gunners)

Atk +6 (+1 autofire), Dmg 5d10x2

Blaster cannon (copilot)

Atk +4 (-1 autofire), Dmg 5d10x2

Twin laser cannons (pilot)

Atk +6 (+1 autofire), Dmg 2d10x2

CONCLUSION

If the heroes escape with Tehlan Aleece and jump to lightspeed, they earn General Airen Cracken's respect for extracting the undercover agent. Most likely, they receive medals and possibly promotions if they choose to continue helping Rebel Intelligence. Moff Venram Krax ends up believing that his niece was kidnapped and forced by the Rebels to steal his shuttle. He puts a bounty on the kidnappers and offers a reward for the safe return of his beloved niece. Perhaps he suspects the true nature of the kidnapping but chooses this scenario both for his mental comfort and to save his neck if his superiors discover what really happened.

If the heroes escape but Tehlan Aleece died or was captured, they earn nothing from the Rebel Alliance. In fact, the Alliance might be wary of sending them on another difficult assignment. General Airen Cracken is saddened by the news. The only bright spot in the botched operation is that Moff Krax must explain to Grand Moff Tarkin that his niece had been a Rebel spy right under his nose. Ironically, Tarkin does not know that his own niece Rivoche Tarkin is playing the same game. Nevertheless, Tarkin demotes Krax for this disgrace.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has the following features:

Illumination: The foot chase through the city and into the spaceport takes place during the day, with no penalties for low light.

Cover: The landing pad is full of places that provide cover.

Civilians: The city streets are full of civilians. The spaceport is less crowded, but several civilians are present around the docking bays and the computer terminal.

Computer Terminal: This item provides cover.

Crates: Several crates around the docking bays provide cover.

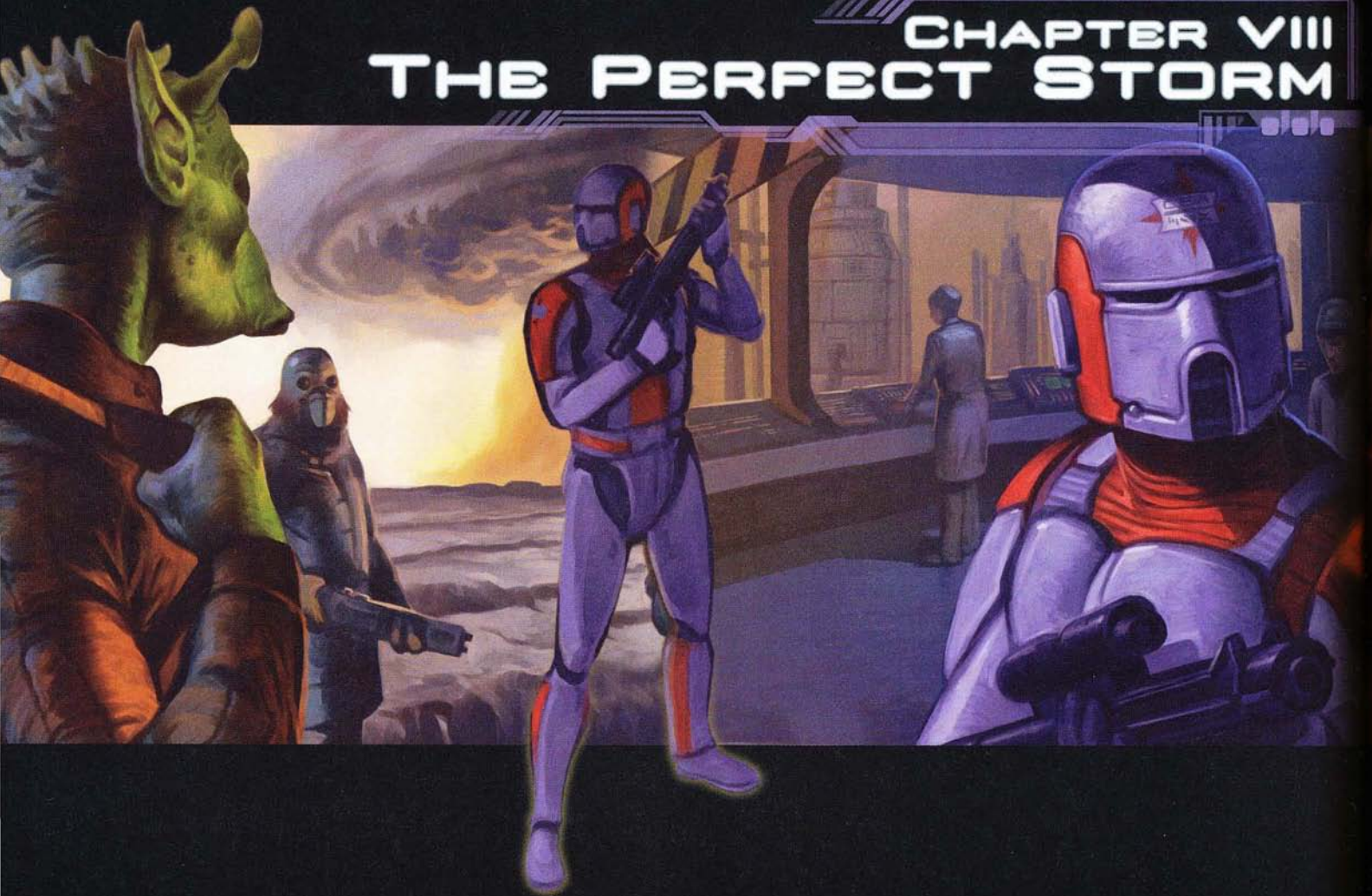
Docking Bay 46: In this bay, Moff Krax's Lambda-class shuttle is docked.

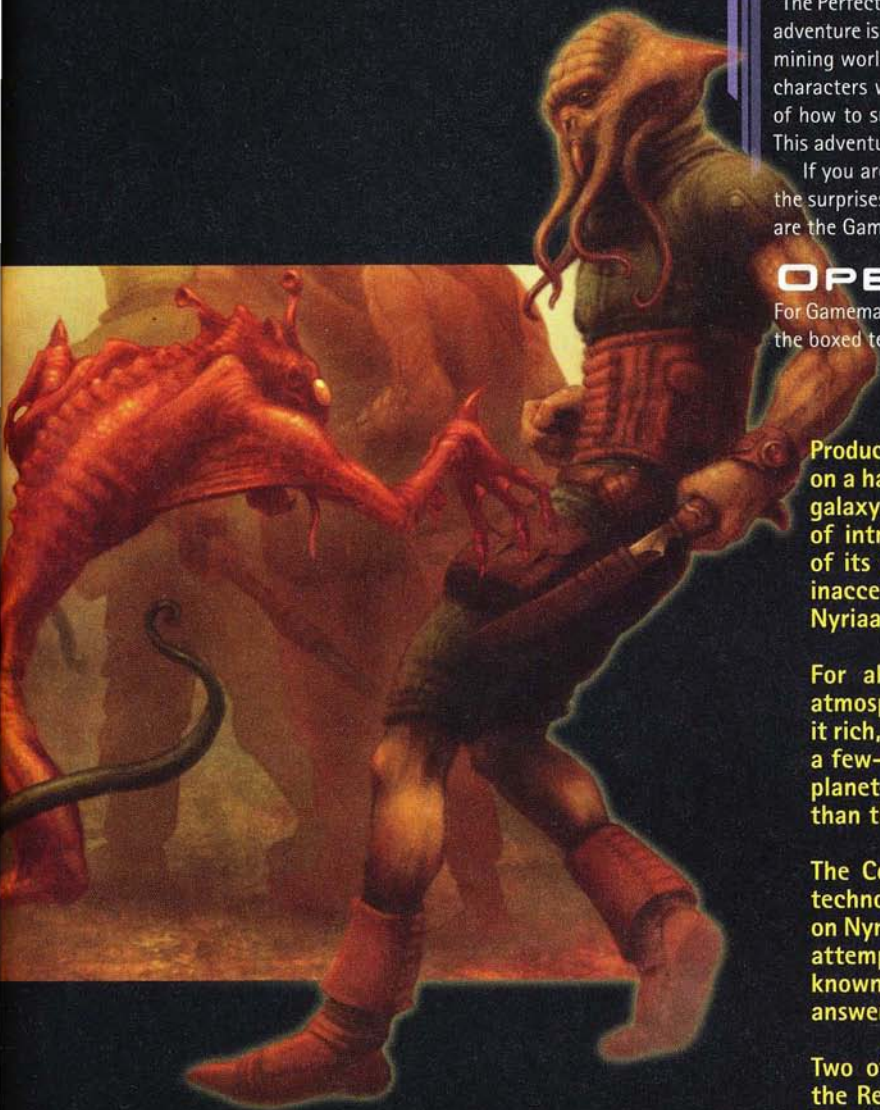
Docking Bay 47: This bay is empty.

Docking Bay 48: This bay is empty.

Docking Bay 49: In this bay, the heroes' Firespray-31 is docked.

CHAPTER VIII THE PERFECT STORM





"The Perfect Storm" is an adventure for the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game. This adventure is designed for a group of four heroes and focuses on the contested mining world of Nyriaan. Heroes can come from any background, although characters with espionage experience, interpersonal skills, and knowledge of how to survive in harsh environments are likely to be more successful. This adventure can be set during any era of the Gamemaster's choosing.

If you are a player, you should stop reading now so that you don't spoil the surprises that "The Perfect Storm" has in store for you. Of course, if you are the Gamemaster, continue reading.

OPENING CRAWL

For Gamemasters who prefer to have an opening crawl before their adventure, the boxed text below introduces players to "The Perfect Storm":

Star Wars: The Perfect Storm

Production of madilon, a rare and valuable alloy, depends on a handful of mining worlds scattered throughout the galaxy. One such world, Nyriaan, has long been a hotbed of intrigue, where numerous factions vie for control of its profitable mines. Covered in roiling clouds and inaccessible to all but specially equipped spacecraft, Nyriaan is at the center of a growing conflict.

For all those who risk Nyriaan's dark and humid atmosphere in exchange for the opportunity to strike it rich, the bottom line is of utmost importance. Yet for a few—specifically the largest mining interests on the planet—the potential for profit is far more important than the possibility of a vast planetary disaster.

The Corporate Sector Authority seeks to exploit its technological capabilities in an effort to make mining on Nyriaan a simpler affair. The form of the CSA's latest attempt to take control of the planet is not completely known, and Republic agents who have gone looking for answers have never been heard from again.

Two of these agents, the best and the brightest of the Republic, have recently vanished without a trace. Despite their impeccable records, one or both agents appear to have been compromised by the very power they were sent to work against.

With the Republic's spies dead or, worse, turned to aid the Corporate Sector Authority, new heroes must arise to ensure that Nyriaan does not become another planetary casualty of corporate greed and avarice ...

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The Republic has long been interested in maintaining neutrality on the planet of Nyriaan, both to preserve the native population of the planet as well as to allow a free market, of sorts. Despite legal rulings on the subject, the Corporate Sector Authority has long held to the belief that Nyriaan is its planet to do with as it pleases. Given the expense of mining madilon on Nyriaan, the CSA is constantly looking for more profitable ways to exploit the world's valuable resources.

One plan posited by the CSA's scientists suggests that if the moisture in Nyriaan's atmosphere were somehow to be condensed, it would nullify the storms in the volatile ionosphere as well as flood the planet's surface. In addition to forming a number of vast seas on Nyriaan's surface, such an act would also allow the light of Luire, the system's star, to penetrate the planet's atmosphere for the first time in millions of years. The impact on the planet's diverse ecosystems and settlements would be catastrophic, but the loss of plant and animal life is insignificant to the CSA when compared to the increase in profits that would result when the communications and navigational obstacles presented by Nyriaan's atmosphere are removed.

After decades of research into such an endeavor, the CSA has brought its project to a critical phase of development. Known as the Deluge Experiment, the operation is a well-kept CSA secret. By design, not even the Corporate Sector's highest-ranking members officially know of its existence, giving them freedom from prosecution if the experiment goes horribly wrong or leads to an unacceptable loss of life. CSA physicists and meteorologists assume that the effects of the Deluge Experiment will be gradual, requiring months to flood the planet's surface and ostensibly allowing time for any necessary evacuations. However, some in the Corporate Sector's scientific community believe, perhaps correctly, that the Deluge will take the form of a single catastrophic tempest that will cause widespread death and destruction. Despite such warnings, the Deluge Experiment nears its final phase. A massive device—similar to a vaporator, only thousands of times more powerful—has been constructed near a CSA mining facility on one of Nyriaan's vast mud plains.

The Republic receives intelligence concerning the Deluge Experiment, but until recently, it was not aware of the magnitude of the experiment's scope. Several agents are dispatched to Nyriaan to determine how close the project is to completion and to locate the site of the experiment. In their last report,

A NOTE ABOUT FACTIONS

In the event that you desire more diversity or would like to tailor "The Perfect Storm" to your own campaign, the factions referenced in this adventure (specifically the Republic and the Corporate Sector Authority) can be easily exchanged for any other factions of your choosing. If you intend this adventure to take place during the Rebellion era, replace the Republic with either the Rebel Alliance or the Empire. Either works in this scenario, although the Empire's motivations are likely to be less than altruistic.

two of the Republic's top agents on Nyriaan claim to be close to discovering this information. However, neither has reported back to their handlers in some time. Prior to their disappearances, each agent insinuates that the other's loyalty might be compromised by the CSA, although no evidence to substantiate either claim is provided.

Unable to wait for the agents to report back, the Republic's top intelligence officials order a new team, disguised as independent miners, to be assembled and sent to Nyriaan at once. Team members must be free from suspicion of any prior collusion with the Corporate Sector Authority, and furthermore, their loyalty to the Republic must be above doubt. Mercenaries and other contractors are considered, but only those who have proven themselves to be reliable. Given the short time available to the Republic, the selection of agents is rushed and fraught with risk.

So enter the heroes: loyal citizens and/or servants of the Republic, who might come from any walk of life. Their success can mean the difference between life and death for hundreds of thousands of beings on Nyriaan.

THE TRUTH

Yrssk is a traitor to the Republic, having accepted a number of bribes from the Corporate Sector Authority to impede Republic investigation of the Deluge Experiment and to fabricate evidence against Klieri, the loyal agent, making her appear complicit in aiding the CSA's efforts. Klieri learns the specifics of the Deluge Experiment's location and scheduled completion. She becomes too great a liability and is killed by a CSA assassin droid. Meanwhile, Yrssk is instructed by his CSA masters to pose as a loyal Republic agent in case other Republic lackeys are sent to investigate.

"DON'T WORRY; THE REPUBLIC WON'T INTERFERE. I'VE GOT SOMEONE READY TO TAKE THE FALL."

-YRSSK

Yrssk has since planted misleading information on a datacard in Klieri's datapad—located in her apartment—and retreated to a location in the wilderness to await his prey. Hoping that the heroes will be waylaid before they reach him, Yrssk has arranged a number of distractions. Once the Deluge Experiment is initiated, Yrssk intends to return to Locus, gather his ill-gotten wealth, and retreat into the Outer Rim territories.

The Deluge Experiment is scheduled to proceed two days after the heroes arrive on Nyriaan. This event is, of course, adjustable depending on your players and the pace at which they proceed through the adventure. Be flexible, and use the impending experiment's schedule to raise the level of tension whenever necessary.

PART 1: BEFORE THE STORM

In this section of the adventure, the heroes are recruited, learn of their mission objective, and make their way to Nyriaan by whatever conveyance makes most sense. After they arrive in the Luire system, they must find a way to Nyriaan's surface, perhaps by renting laser transport array equipment and contracting with the Navigator's Guild to make planetfall in Locus, Nyriaan's capital. Of course, nothing ever goes as planned. In the most critical of situations, the LTA projector on the planet is sabotaged midflight, and the bonded navigator they hire becomes a liability.

MISSING PERSONS

The players are contacted, either individually or as a group, and invited to participate in an important, albeit sensitive, mission on behalf of the Republic. Once the group is assembled, they are instructed to meet with their Republic contact, a Human male they know as Ghurn.

Ghurn is, it seems, a high-ranking Republic official, although he never specifies which arm of the Republic he works for. Nevertheless, he has been trustworthy and he pays well, two facts that endear him to most heroes right off the bat. Ghurn appears to be a middle-aged Human male with tanned skin, white hair peppered with black, and steely gray eyes. He dresses in conservative silver-gray suits. Although handsome, he is also somewhat aloof.

When meeting the heroes, Ghurn requests that they join him at a lower-class pub or social club in a metropolis on whatever planet the heroes happen to be on at the moment. When they arrive, he requests a private room from the establishment's managerial staff and ushers the heroes in. Once Ghurn is alone with the heroes, he greets each of them personally, looking each in the eye and shaking that hero's hand as he compliments a piece of attire, a recent accomplishment, or the like.

* Once the pleasantries are out of the way, Ghurn gives the following briefing:

"I'm glad you've all decided to lend me your talents today. Something has arisen that has my superiors in a bind, and given the short notice, I'm surprised that we've managed to assemble a group that is as skilled and knowledgeable as you are."

"All compliments aside, what we need now is a group that is ready, willing, and able to track down two of our missing agents on a hostile mining world in the Mid Rim. The world, Nyriaan, is a curious place, mostly because of its unique and volatile atmosphere that, when combined with its unusually strong magnetic field, makes landing on the planet a most hazardous endeavor."

"The two missing agents were working toward the same goal in separate capacities. It seems that the Corporate Sector Authority has been developing a device that can, if it performs as expected, condense all the moisture in Nyriaan's atmosphere into a single, catastrophic rainfall. While such an event might neutralize the planet's strong ionosphere, it would have the side effect of laying waste to much of the planet's surface, as well as killing most of the indigenous animal and plant species."

"We are not in the business of allowing such egregious experiments to proceed, regardless of the long-term benefit to our own mining efforts on Nyriaan. Therefore, we must stop the CSA from carrying out this project."

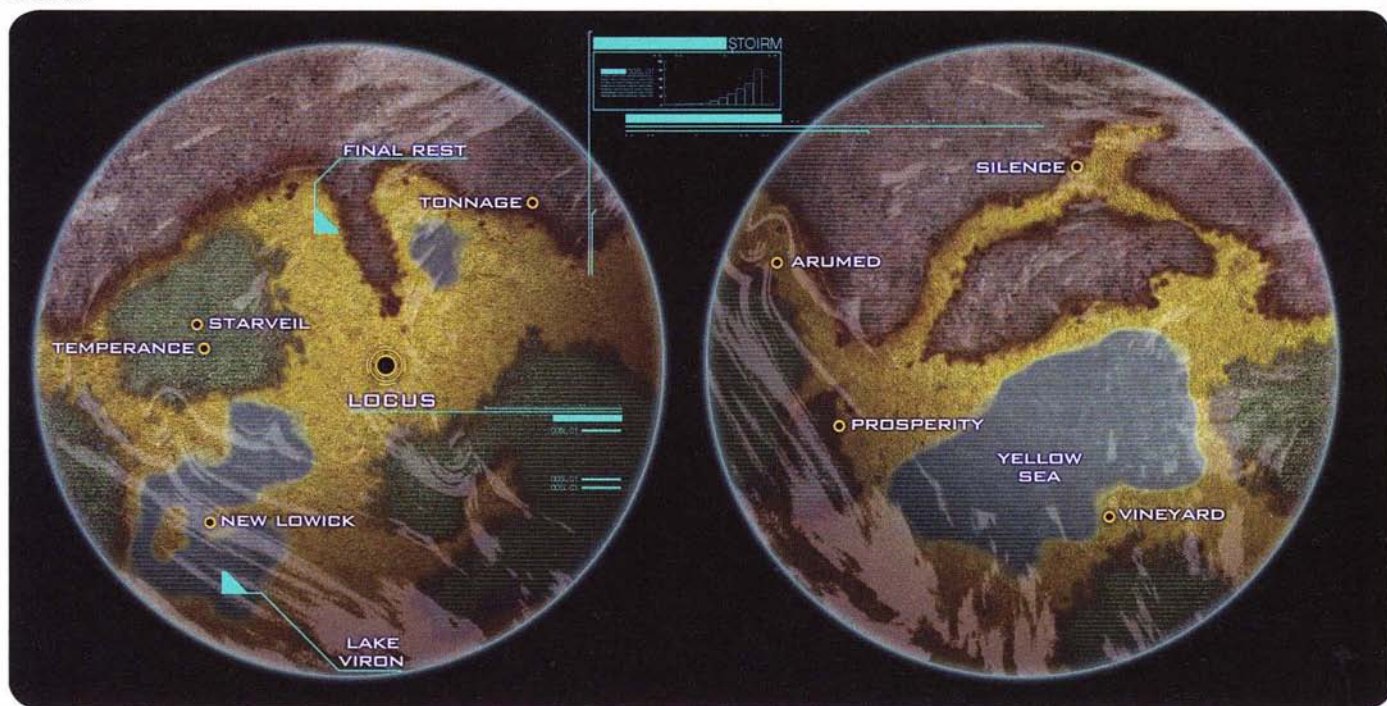
"So, in brief, this is your assignment. Proceed to Nyriaan in the guise of independent miners. Locate our missing agents in Locus, the sprawling planetary capital of Nyriaan. Determine the location of the CSA's experimental device, and sabotage or, preferably, destroy it. If you are able to find comprehensive plans for the experimental device, I will happily provide a cash bonus for them."

"I understand that this sounds like a simple mission, but there have been ... complications. It seems that one or both of our agents might have been turned by the Corporate Sector. In their last reports to us, each agent claimed that the other was compromised by the enemy, so you must take care when dealing with either of them."

"Any questions?"

Once the briefing is concluded, Ghurn gladly answers any questions posed by the players. He provides the following information about the agents. The first agent is known as Klieri, a Human female from Coruscant, operating on Nyriaan for the past four months. Displays of her show that she is a female in her mid to late twenties, with short brown hair and brown eyes. The second agent is a male Trandoshan named Yrssk. He is middle-aged, with yellow-brown scales, blood red eyes, and a jagged scar along the left side of his head. Both agents were posing as freelance mining personnel at the time of their disappearance. Neither has ever given any indication of disloyalty to the Republic, which makes the possibility of their betrayal that much more disturbing.

Ghurn also provides the agents' last known addresses, both of which are for cheap apartments in the Neutral Zone of Locus.



Compensation for the mission is negotiable, but it should not be the focus of any long or involved discussion with Ghurn. The basic fee is a lump sum of 12,000 credits, with a bonus of an additional 8,000 credits if the heroes can procure plans for the CSA's experimental device.

LOOKS LIKE STORMY WEATHER

The heroes are responsible for securing their own passage to Nyriaan. Flying their own starship to the Luire system is obviously the cheapest and most reliable method of transport available. Lacking their own ship, the heroes can charter a ship to the Luire system. However, charter is expensive, given the Luire system's isolation. Getting a charter pilot to voluntarily land a starship on the planet's surface might also be difficult. Unfortunately, Ghurn cannot provide the heroes with a ship. Given the critical status of the mission, however, he might be able to pull some strings at the Gamemaster's option. If a ship is provided, the heroes' fee should be reduced by at least one quarter.

To keep their cover as independent mining contractors, the heroes should take time to procure or purchase basic mining gear prior to leaving for Nyriaan. Depending on what they know about Nyriaan through the proper

Knowledge (galactic lore) check, they should also purchase items that might be of use in the dim and sultry conditions on the planet's surface.

Whatever their method of travel, after the heroes drop out of hyperspace in the Luire system and begin their approach toward Nyriaan, read the following aloud:

As you approach the planet, you see that Nyriaan is simultaneously ugly and incredibly beautiful. The roiling clouds of the planet are thick, dark, and forbidding, yet they are punctuated by flashes of purple lightning that arc through the turbulent atmosphere.

A number of small stations and platforms orbit Nyriaan, and countless ships and shuttles move between them in a constant ballet. The stations and ships maintain a distance far enough away from the planet to remain unaffected by the numerous magnetic belts that surround it.

Suddenly your communications console crackles. "Attention unidentified vessel. Please state your purpose in the Luire system so that I can properly direct you."

The heroes are being contacted by a member of the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild, both to direct them to a relevant platform or station in Nyriaan's orbit, as well as to offer them a mandatory Guild contract should they want to land upon the planet's surface. Reckless heroes might want to land upon the planet on their own, but such efforts are likely to end in tragedy (which should be stressed). If the heroes manage to land on their own, they are subject to arrest for violation of the Senate mandate that all landings on Nyriaan be overseen by members of the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild.

When the heroes announce their intention to land in Locus, the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild offers them a special rate for both the rental and installation of a laser transport array and the services of a bonded navigator. For light freighters, the service charges total 1,000 credits for each take-off and each landing. For a special rate of 1,500 credits, the heroes can reserve both landing and take-off services ahead of time at a substantial savings. They'd be fools to refuse.

Heroes who accept the services of the guild are given clearance and directed to dock with Platform Trill 92. When the heroes dock, Hyperspace Navigator's Guild technicians board their vessel to install a portable LTA system. Installation requires external attachment of the LTA sensor system, as well as connection of a universal control station inside the ship's cockpit by the bonded navigator who is sent to accompany the heroes.

The navigator, a nervous Snivvian named Tevlun, arrives with little fanfare and introduces himself to the heroes. He shows his credentials prior to installing his universal control station, and he answers any questions the heroes pose. If asked why he is nervous, Tevlun shrugs it off and insist that he is fine. The truth is that he is a relatively inexperienced LTA operator with only three prior landings on Nyriaan. Astute heroes might come to this conclusion by succeeding on a DC 12 Perception check, but less trusting heroes might suspect foul play on Tevlun's part.

Unless the heroes want to disembark and explore Platform Trill 92 (an unexciting orbital facility that is equipped with only marginal services—a cramped cantina with attached hotel, limited repair facilities, and an overpriced general store), they can arrange to land in Locus when the LTA system is fully installed.

TEVLUN

Tevlun is a tense Snivvian who has recently been accepted into the Hyperspace Navigator's Guild as a bonded navigator. He has made only a few landings on Nyriaan, so he is still somewhat put off by the procedure. Nevertheless, it is decent money, and he has a wife and several children to support back on Cadomai Prime.

Although he is dressed in the uniform of a bonded navigator, the Snivvian acts somewhat wet behind the ears. He drums his fingers nervously as he works, oblivious to the fact that you can sense his discomfort.

Tevlun

CL 1

Small Snivvian nonheroic 4

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +3

Languages Basic, Snivvian, Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 11 (flat-footed 11), Fort 10, Will 11

hp 10; **Threshold** 10

Speed 4 squares

Melee unarmed +3 (1d3)

Ranged blaster pistol +3 (3d6)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** -2

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10

Special Qualities observant

Feats Skill Focus (Knowledge [physical sciences]), Skill Training (Pilot, Use Computer), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

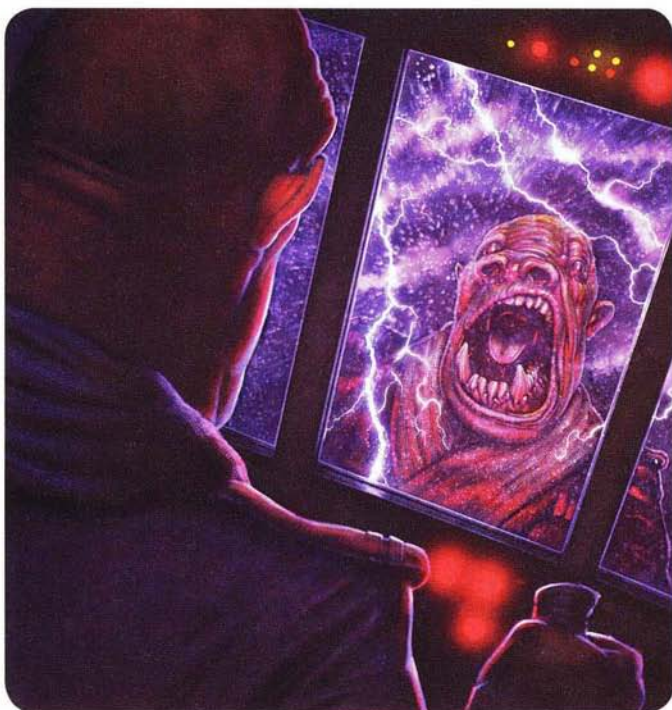
Skills Knowledge (bureaucracy) +9, Knowledge (galactic lore) +9, Knowledge (physical sciences) +14, Perception +3, Pilot +7, Use Computer +9

Possessions navigator's uniform, bonded navigator's credentials, blaster pistol, laser transport array console

Tevlun's Tactics

On the off chance that Tevlun is involved in combat with or near the heroes, he defends himself as best as he can. He is not a soldier and does not take unreasonable chances for strangers.

"WE'RE GOING TO DIE!"



PLANETFALL

Once the heroes' ship is outfitted with LTA equipment and Tevlun, the bonded navigator, is aboard, they can make planetfall on Nyriaan. The operation starts out simply enough, but soon the situation spirals out of control.

Read the following text aloud when the heroes begin their descent:

The sickly clouds swirling around the planet below begin to darken as your ship slowly approaches them. Tevlun, the navigator, sits at the pilot's station, his stubby fingers picking nervously at keys and switches as he monitors the ship's descent.

"We are within fifty kilometers of breaching the ionosphere," he reports. "I will now be shutting down all unnecessary systems until we touch down."

As if on cue, the interior lighting dims, and the omnipresent sound of the air scrubber is replaced by the faint thrumming of the sublight engines. The ship seems strangely quiet, and looking through the cockpit viewport you have the sudden impression that you are falling toward the planet—an impression that is not entirely wrong.

"Orbital laser telemetry acquired. Surface laser telemetry acquired," Tevlun continues, as if speaking to himself. "Adjusting course to maintain synchronization. Entering atmosphere in 3 ... 2 ... 1."

The view beyond the cockpit suddenly goes dark and the sublight engines begin to sputter. Tevlun flips a switch, compensating for the burst of intense ionization that the ship has suddenly been exposed to. The engine noise subsides somewhat.

Suddenly, a light on Tevlun's console blinks an angry red, and an accompanying alarm sounds shrilly in the confines of the cockpit. "Uh oh ..." Tevlun stammers in a panic. "I've lost surface laser telemetry!"

Concerned heroes are likely to ask Tevlun something along the lines of, "What does that mean?"

What it means, in lay terms, is that the laser guiding the ship to the ground has been deactivated, and aside from the orbital laser, the heroes are flying blind toward the surface of Nyriaan. Granted, the orbital laser provides an indication of the direction they should be flying, but the wisdom of flying in such a manner is questionable.

At this juncture, the heroes must make a choice. First, they can attempt to return to Platform Trill 92 and take stock of the situation, attempting to land on Nyriaan at a later time. This is the option that Tevlun would suggest if he weren't hyperventilating. Returning to the platform requires one of the heroes to take control of Tevlun's navigation console and succeed in a DC 20 Pilot check.

The second option is to continue the landing as planned, using only the orbital laser telemetry as a guide. Unfortunately, Tevlun is not trained for such a maneuver. Neither are the heroes, but that is beside the point. Heroes wanting to take this gamble are obliged to complete the "Landing on Nyriaan with Orbital Laser Telemetry Only" skill challenge to make planetfall safely.

If the heroes' ship crashes, it is damaged as indicated on Table 10-3: Collision Damage on page 173 of the Saga Edition core rulebook, with the size of the colliding vehicle or hazard being equal to the size of the heroes' ship.

PART 2: DOWN IN IT

Now that the heroes have landed (or crashed) upon Nyriaan, they can go about the business of locating the two missing Republic agents. If events have gone as planned and they are able to land safely, their ship ends up in one of the Neutral Zone's docking bays. Fees for starship storage, service, and the like are 10% higher on Nyriaan than elsewhere.

The layout of Locus is similar to that of most colonial cities. Structures are built low to the ground. Dim, flickering illuminators are placed at even intervals along streets to compensate for the lack of natural light. The air has a stale, musty odor. Areas of high foot and vehicle traffic have less fungal growth, but practically all surfaces in the Neutral Zone—walls, streets, sidewalks—are covered in a thick layer of phosphorescent fungus. The private sectors of the city, including the Corporate City Sector and the Republic Sector, are well secured and nearly impossible to enter without proper authorization.

SKILL CHALLENGE: LANDING ON NYRIAAN WITH ORBITAL LASER TELEMETRY ONLY

In this skill challenge, the heroes attempt to land a starship on Nyriaan using only one of two standard laser arrays for guidance. Normally, two laser arrays—one located on the ground and one located in orbit—are employed to give pilots and navigators a precise fix on their location, altitude, and relative speed. With only the orbital array to guide them, the heroes can only guess at these figures. As failures are accrued, the heroes' ship spins further out of control.

CL 5

Complexity: 1 (5 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (galactic lore) [DC 24]: The heroes can use their knowledge of Nyriaan's atmospheric qualities, as well as its geography, to judge their altitude and bearing.

Mechanics [DC 22]: The heroes can attempt to jury-rig their sublight engines or other ship systems to generate more power.

Perception [DC 20]: The heroes can use their senses to judge distances and notice obstacles and ground features as they plummet through the thick clouds.

Pilot [DC 20]: Heroes can buckle their restraints and trust in their reflexes and piloting skills to survive the disaster.

Use Computer [DC 23]: The heroes can attempt to adjust the ship's sensors to overcome the interference from the planet's ionosphere and magnetic fields.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Restricted Skills: The Mechanics and Use Computer skills can only be attempted once each during this skill challenge. In addition, the following skills are not applicable in this challenge: Acrobatics, Climb, Deception, Gather Information, Jump, Persuasion, Stealth, Swim, and Treat Injury.

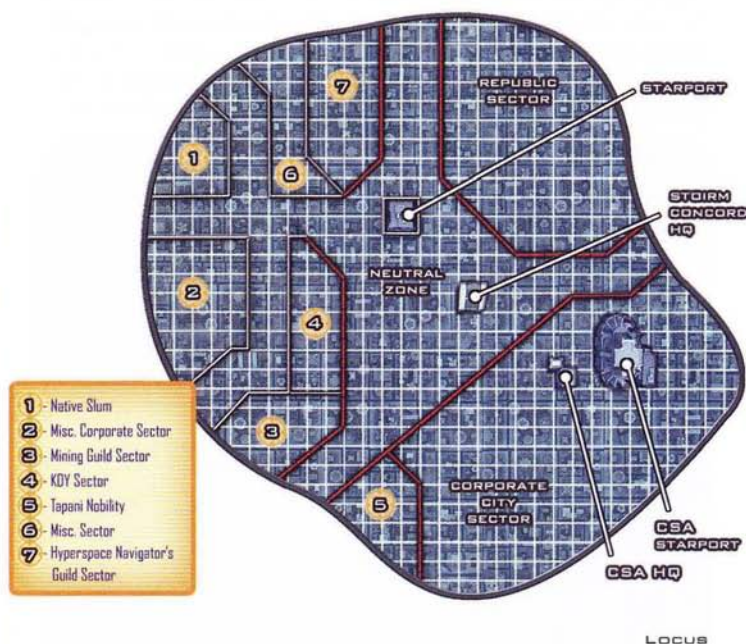
Second Effort: A hero who fails a skill check can instead choose to move the starship -1 step on the condition track to make that failure count as a success.

Success: The heroes successfully land on Nyriaan, although they might not end up exactly where they expected to be.

Failure: The heroes crash-land on Nyriaan, damaging the starship and possibly injuring themselves and others.

Heroes in Locus can travel on foot, but the easiest way to get around is either to rent a vehicle, such as a landspeeder, or to hail one of the taxis in the vicinity of the Neutral Zone's spaceport. The city is laid out in a rough grid, with different sectors—such as Corporate City Sector and the Republic Sector—cordoned off by fire zones, high walls, energy fences, and armed guards.

The heroes have two obvious choices at first, and both involve checking in at the last known locations of the two missing agents. Adventurous players might want to explore the city a little bit. Let them take a short detour, but their immediate focus should be on Yrskk and Klieri, the missing agents. In either case, the next encounter might be a good way to get them back on track.

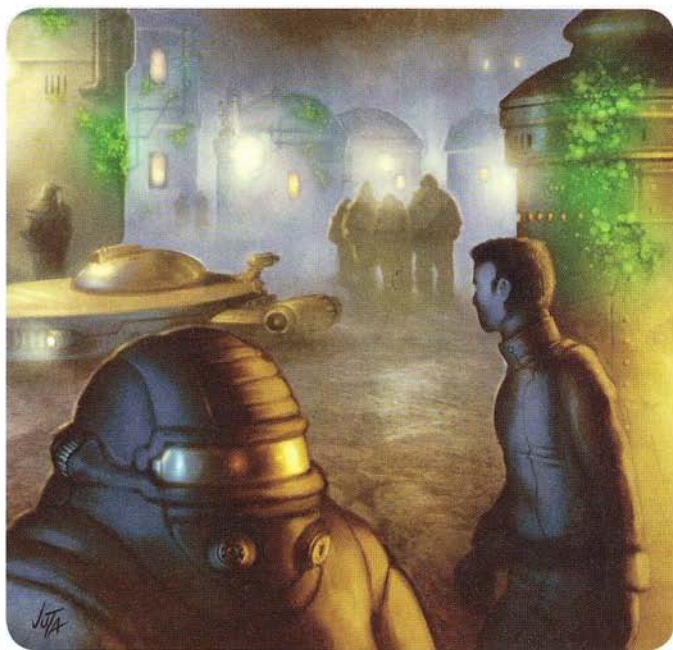


A LUKEWARM RECEPTION

The heroes immediately attract attention from a pair of plainclothes Corporate Sector assassins. Given the activity of the previous few days, the Corporate Sector Authority expects that the Republic will send personnel to Nyriaan to investigate the disappearances of the two agents. The Republic is not infallible, either, and word of the heroes' appearance and modus operandi has spread to the CSA's intelligence units on Nyriaan.

The two CSA assassins are responsible for the malfunction of the surface laser telemetry that the heroes experienced during their descent. Since their sabotage did not have the desired effect, the assassins are to follow the heroes and keep an eye on them as they make their way through Locus in search of the missing Republic spies. If the heroes locate one or both of the spies, the CSA assassins are authorized to use deadly force against them. Regardless of which lead the heroes follow up on first, the two CSA assassins spring an attack when the heroes gain entry to Klieri's apartment (see "Klieri's Apartment," below) if the assassins are still active at that time.

The CSA assassins have access to ground transport. If the heroes decide to travel on foot, one CSA assassin follows on foot at a distance while the other drives the speeder, just out of sight. If the heroes prefer to drive their own vehicle, both assassins pursue in theirs. Their immediate goal is observation, not attack. If the heroes detect them, the assassins attempt to break contact. Barring that, they fight to the death and try to avoid capture if possible.



SOMEONE'S WATCHING.

If the heroes notice the assassins tailing them and combat ensues, refer to the "Main Street Firefight" encounter on page 206 for details. If the encounter turns into a speeder chase, then refer to the "Locus Street Chase" skill challenge below to resolve it. If the heroes lack a speeder, they are unable to pursue their enemies. If the chase ends with the heroes tangling with the assassins, the "Main Street Firefight" encounter can still be used.

KLIERI'S APARTMENT

The agent named Klieri was last known to be living in an apartment at the far southern end of the Neutral Zone of Locus. The heroes can find her apartment easily enough by any number of methods: checking maps, asking for directions, or checking public terminals for information. The neighborhood is on the lower end of the social scale, and depending on the time of day—which, given the constant darkness, might seem irrelevant—any number of rough-looking characters might be hanging out in the street, talking, joking, and making spectacles of themselves.

Klieri's apartment is in a sprawling three-story building. Her unit is on the second floor, near the western end of the structure, conveniently located next to an emergency stairwell. The halls of the building are clean, for the most part, with only occasional old stains or small patches of slow-growing phosphorescent fungus on the floors and walls. A steady stream of tenant traffic flows through the halls during the day cycle, including a tired-looking security guard who sits at a station near the building's front entrance.

The apartment door is closed and sealed with a simple electronic lock (DC 20 Mechanics check to unlock). If the heroes knock or ring the bell, no one answers, and no sound can be detected within the apartment. Once inside, the heroes find a series of unlit rooms and signs of a struggle. Furniture has been upended and small objects and fragments of glass and ceramic litter the floor.

Klieri is dead in the apartment bedroom. She has been there for at least a couple of days, and the cause of her death appears to be a series of blaster shots to her chest and abdomen. Her placid face is bruised, and her brown hair is matted with dried blood. A datapad rests on the blood-stained bed next to Klieri's outstretched hand, but a single strike from a sharp object (probably a vibroblade or vibrodagger) has rendered it little more than a pile of electronic junk. Heroes who succeed on a DC 15 Perception check can determine that Klieri was likely shot in the living room, but crawled into her bedroom to die.

Technically apt heroes might want to repair the datapad. It is far too damaged to be made functional again. However, the encrypted datacard within the datapad is undamaged and can be accessed on a functional datapad or portable computer. The encryption can be broken only after improving the datacard's attitude from unfriendly to friendly by using the Improve Access application of the Use Computer skill (see page 76 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). Once this is accomplished, the information on the card can be accessed.

SKILL CHALLENGE: LOCUS STREET CHASE

In this skill challenge, the players must pursue a pair of Corporate Sector assassins through the gloomy streets of Locus in a landspeeder chase. During the chase, the heroes travel through different parts of the city's Neutral Zone, attempting to force their enemies to a halt so that they can be confronted. As the heroes accrue failures, the assassins slip further away, potentially shaking pursuit altogether.

CL 4

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (galactic lore) [DC 28 or 23]: The heroes can try to remember what they have heard about Locus to find shortcuts and secret routes. This DC is reduced to 23 for heroes who are familiar with the city.

Perception [DC 25]: The heroes can use Perception to find the best path to keep pace with the Corporate Sector assassins, or to notice any indicators of where the assassins are headed next.

Pilot [DC 18 or Opposed]: The heroes can pilot their landspeeder along the fastest route, avoid debris and obstacles, and find other ways to close the gap with the Corporate Sector assassins. If the heroes get close to the assassins, the driving assassin can make Pilot checks to set the DC for this skill.

Stealth [Opposed]: The heroes can sneak along alternative routes, cutting the assassins off if they remain unnoticed. This check is opposed by the assassins' Perception skills. The heroes receive a +2 bonus to Stealth checks due to the gloomy nature of the city.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Containment: The heroes accrue failures only in rounds when no one earns a success, since they need only keep the target in sight of one person to maintain the chase.

Opposed DC: Certain skills in this skill challenge can be opposed by the assassins.

Restricted Skills: Certain skills are not applicable in this challenge: Gather Information, Survival, Swim, and Treat Injury.

Success: The heroes manage to force the assassins into a location where they can no longer escape by piloting their speeder. The Corporate Sector Authority assassins must leave their vehicle behind and either fight the heroes or flee on foot.

Failure: The Corporate Sector Authority assassins manage to give the heroes the slip, disappearing into the darkened streets of Locus.

Outside of a number of obviously mundane files that have been placed on the datacard as decoys, one file, titled "FLOOD," contains a small amount of useful information. According to timestamps, the FLOOD file was the last one to be accessed, just over 48 hours ago—likely around the same time that Klieri was killed. Along with a set of surface coordinates, the file also contains the following phrase: "Lrn 2 swim. Data recd from Babil. Tst successful. Final phase in 4 dys." The coordinates correspond to a location northeast of Locus, south of a geologically active region known as the Steamfields.

Development: If the heroes search the apartment, they can find several items, depending on the result of their Perception checks. If the heroes succeed on a DC 10 Perception check, they find 3 blank datacards, 4 ration packs, a breath mask with 1 filter, and a glow rod. Success on a DC 15 Perception check enables them to find the items above and also 2 energy cells, a medpac, and a short range comlink. Success on a DC 20 Perception check additionally reveals a hold-out blaster pistol, a medium-sized pair of combat gloves, and a pocket scrambler. Success on a DC 30 Perception enables the heroes to also find an explosive charge with timer.

The Monster Under the Bed

Klieri was killed by an assassin droid: a MRD-39B murderer, to be specific. The droid hides beneath Klieri's bed, where it waits quietly until it detects someone entering the apartment. When this occurs, it attempts to contact the two Corporate Sector assassins from the "Main Street Firefight" encounter. If the two assassins have not been captured or killed, they respond, ordering the droid to continue to monitor the situation while they gain access to the apartment building. Once the assassins are in position outside Klieri's apartment, they cause a distraction that should allow the droid to attack the heroes undetected from the rear. See the "Klieri's Apartment" encounter on page 208.

The MRD-39B is poised to attack the moment it is discovered. If a hero in the bedroom succeeds at a Perception check opposed by the droid's Stealth (+13), he or she finds the assassin droid, and it attacks. If the droid cannot contact the two CSA assassins and if no hero detects it, the droid waits for an opportune moment to attack the heroes by itself. In either case, refer to the "Klieri's Apartment" encounter on page 208.

"TARGET ACQUIRED.
PROCEEDING TO
PHASE TWO OF
ASSASSINATION
PROTOCOLS."

-MRD-39B

YRSSK'S APARTMENT

Yrssk, the second of the missing Republic Agents, lives in a small apartment above a repulsorlift garage just north of the spaceport. As with Klieri's apartment, the heroes should be able to locate his residence easily. If approached during the day, the garage is open and the mechanics within are working on a number of repulsorlift vehicles. In the evening, the garage is closed, its entrances locked.

The apartment is accessed by a set of slimy permacrete stairs that run up the side of the building. The door to the apartment is sealed by a complicated electronic lock connected to a silent alarm system (DC 25 Mechanics check to disable). If triggered, the alarm alerts the owner of the repulsorlift garage who arrives within 2d10+5 minutes with two friends (use the statistics for generic Thugs on page 284 of the Saga Edition core rulebook for all three).

Yrssk's small apartment, which has a faint reptilian odor, is well organized, yet austere. It contains little furniture, and the kitchenette area is stocked with only a few nonperishable items—as if the person who lives here is rarely present for long. If the heroes search the premises, success on a DC 10 Perception check reveals the following items throughout the apartment: a pair of electrobinoculars, a liquid cable dispenser, and a standard targeting scope. If the heroes succeed on a DC 15 Perception check, they find those items and also 3 power packs. Succeeding on a DC 20 Perception check enables the heroes also to find a holorecorder with 2 datacards, and if they succeed on a DC 25 Perception check, the heroes also find a credit chip loaded with 5,000 Corporate Sector credits.

One of the datacards with the holorecorder holds several clandestine recordings of a Human female, who appears to be Klieri, interacting with a number of other individuals. One holo shows Klieri and a well dressed male. He passes her something that appears to be a credit chip. If the holo is further analyzed with a computer, a DC 25 Use Computer check or DC 30 Perception check reveals that this last recording is a skilled forgery cobbled together from portions of other holorecordings.

Other than the above items, little else of interest can be discovered in the apartment. Yrssk is obviously not home, and does not appear to have been there for some time. If questioned about him, the owner or any employee of the repulsorlift garage tell the heroes that the Trandoshan has not been around for two or three days.

INTO THE WILDERNESS

The only way for the heroes to reach the coordinates found on Klieri's datacard is to venture into Nyriaan's dark wilderness. Navigation on Nyriaan is a tricky affair since the satellite navigation aids so common on other worlds are completely ineffective on Nyriaan. The only way to travel reliably is by using maps and other low-tech navigational aids for guidance. Methods of travel are also restricted to moving on foot and low-altitude speeders or conventional vehicles. Airspeeders are out of the question, because they suffer the same malfunctions in Nyriaan's atmosphere that starships do.

THE WILDERNESS OF NYRIAAN IS NO PLACE FOR THE UNPREPARED.



The heroes have the option to hire a guide to take them into the wilderness. Native laborers looking for work can be found at the northern edge of the Neutral Zone in Locus, and many of them are knowledgeable enough of Nyriaan's natural hazards and geography to make a tidy sum from offworld visitors, tourists, and hunters looking to go on safari. One guide for hire is known as Finvarra, and she is recommended to the heroes if they ask strangers or acquaintances for advice on the subject. She prefers to travel on foot but is also happy to direct her employers from the relative safety of a speeder. Heroes who venture into the wilderness need a map and a compass. Vast areas of treacherous swamp are inhabited by dangerous amphibious creatures and forested with tall, thick-stemmed fungal trees. In the darkness of Nyriaan, getting lost is easier than one might think.

Basic survival on Nyriaan requires a daily DC 15 Survival check to avoid natural hazards in the wild if the character making the check is familiar with the planet's unusual wilderness (see page 73 of the Saga Edition core rulebook). About a week of living in the wilderness of Nyriaan is required to become familiar with the specific dangers and pitfalls of Nyriaan's back country, so until then, a character new to Nyriaan's wilderness suffers a -5 penalty to Survival checks. In addition, determining cardinal directions

on Nyriaan using the Know Direction application of the Survival skill is far more difficult, considering that no stars are visible. Using the Know Direction application requires a DC 20 Survival check, even for natives.

Beasts of Prey

As the heroes travel through the wilderness, with or without a guide, they occasionally attract the attention of indigenous wildlife. In this instance, a hunting party of chlovi cats descend upon the heroes at an inopportune moment—when they are camping, exploring on foot, or attempting to navigate through the thick chlovi corpses that are so common in Nyriaan's wilderness. For details, refer to the "Crimson and Chlovi" encounter on page 210.

THE NATIVES ARE RESTLESS

Predators are not the only danger in the wilds of Nyriaan. Native clans also patrol the wilderness. A group of Nyriaanan scouts lays in wait for intruders just south of the Steamfields. The natives are tipped off about potential intruders by Yrskk, who contacted the clan just prior to his disappearance. In his years on Nyriaan, Yrskk cultivates a number of disparate allies and

associates, including members of the Malvina clan. The Malvina are not particularly warlike, but when they hear rumors that miners want to desecrate their territory, they become rightfully displeased.

Yrskk capitalizes on the Malvina clan's hostility and informs them that a group of miners are coming through their lands to scout a location for a new mine. Although the Malvina are willing to listen to Yrskk—he has never steered them wrong before—the clan leaders are not entirely taken in by the Trandoshan's story. Instead of mobilizing a war band, as Yrskk suggests, they instead dispatch several small scout groups to monitor any incursions onto their land.

The native scouts do not fire first and ask questions afterward; they plan to observe, analyze, and, if necessary, attack in defense of their birthright. As the heroes travel closer to their destination, they come across a line of Meadlin's trees—massive fungal growths that can grow to up to sixty meters tall in the planet's unsettled regions. In addition to their extraordinary height, the trees also weave together to form seemingly impenetrable barriers that can be passed through only by those who know how to navigate them.

FINVARRA, NATIVE GUIDE

Finvarra is a young native who has spent most of her life living in the wilderness surrounding Locus. She does not trust offworlders, but she sees them as an easy source of income and hires herself out as a guide. Most of the time she keeps her employers alive, not counting the odd occasion when the situation turns sour on the trail.

Although she is only sixteen years old, Finvarra tries to act much older. She appears boyish when dressed for the field, but takes offense if she is mistaken as such. Her standard fee for guiding offworlders is 50 credits per day, and she does not hesitate to double the price if circumstances become dangerous. She speaks fluent Basic with a noticeable Nyriaanan accent.

Finvarra is young, but she not stupid or naive. Even if the heroes try to ply her with tales of the Corporate Sector Authority's greed, she likely dismisses them as stupid offworlders with delusions of grandeur. She knows that the CSA is evil, but this is not exactly news. If the heroes convince her that her planet and her clan are in danger of being destroyed, she might be willing to do more than just guide them to where they want to go.

You almost mistake this teenage girl for a young boy. The scars on her face and the calluses on her hands are testimony to the hard life she's lived. Her dark hair is slicked back with sweat and tied with piece of red wire, and her green eyes peer at you suspiciously.

Finvarra's Tactics

Finvarra is a survivor, so she rarely stands and fights unless she has no other choice. Her initial reaction is to run from danger, but she uses any

of her employers as shields if she can. When she does fight, Finvarra pulls no punches. She sees enemies as obstacles to life and kills with little hesitation if the choice is between her life or an enemy's.

Finvarra

CL 3

Medium Human (Nyriaanan) scout 3

Force 3

Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8

Languages Basic, Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 16), Fort 17, Will 16; Dodge, Mobility
hp 39; Threshold 17

Speed 8 squares

Melee unarmed +3 (1d4+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +3 (3d6+1)

Base Atk +2; Grp +3

Special Actions Shake It Off

Abilities Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10

Talents Fringe Savant, Long Stride

Feats Dodge, Improved Defenses, Mobility, Shake It Off, Skill Focus
(Survival), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Climb +7, Endurance +8, Perception +8, Stealth +7, Survival +13,
Swim +7

Possessions blaster pistol, survival knife, native garb, all-temperature
cloak, field kit

The Malvina clan scouts are positioned along the thick tree line, scanning the southern horizon for intruders. When the heroes arrive, the natives move quietly and carefully to intercept them before they reach the trees. The makeup of the heroes' party determines, in large part, how the scouts respond. A heavily armed party is treated with respect, given their obvious firepower, but a party of lightly armed heroes is considered less of a threat. If the heroes are carrying any obvious mining gear, Yrsk's story starts to carry more weight with the Malvina scouts. With thick mist rising from the wet earth, visibility is low, so the heroes are relatively close before the natives make their move.

This encounter does not necessarily develop into a firefight. Give the heroes every chance to avoid combat unless they initiate violence. If the heroes have a native guide, such as Finvarra, they likely have an advantage when negotiating with the Malvina scouts. Of course, if shots are fired and any of the native scouts are killed, all wagers are off.

For more details, refer to the "Native Hospitality" encounter on page 212.

FEAR OF THE DARK

Yrsk's final ploy awaits the heroes at the center of the geologically active Steamfields. To continue onward to the coordinates found on the datacard, the heroes must leave any vehicles behind because the Meadlin's trees are too dense to allow vehicles to pass. The heroes might be able to take the vehicles in a circuitous path around the trees, but at the expense of precious time. Getting through the Meadlin's trees on foot requires some effort, as well, unless the heroes have a native guide or are able to make peace with the Malvina clan scouts. Nevertheless, heroes who insist on retaining their vehicles should be allowed to do so if they want to make the effort.

The Steamfields are a swampy region of hot springs, geysers, and natural vents that spew scalding steam and sulfurous fumes. Some of Nyriaan's hardest fungus species live in these boiling pools, their phosphorescent light mixing with the steam and mist to lend an eerie countenance to the entire area. Areas of relatively dry ground weave around and through the seething mud and water, but the way is twisting and mazelike. Geysers send unpredictable scalding fountains skyward, sometimes across the more navigable paths.

The heroes must take care to avoid being boiled alive. If they still have their vehicles, especially landspeeders or speeder bikes, they can easily traverse the Steamfields by hovering over the boiling hazards that would impede them if they were on foot. Wheeled vehicles, however, are useless because they become mired in the blistering mud.

Yrsk's Ambush

In addition to his allies among Nyriaan's native clans, Yrsk also finds and maintains contact with one of Nyriaan's darkest secrets—a clan of Sith who descended from the crew of the ill-fated *Dying Sun* during the years of the Old Republic. Twisted and inbred, the Sith descendants are little better than

cunning animals. Yrsk plies them over the years with trinkets and sacrificial victims. Although they have no loyalty to the Trandoshan, the Sith are interested in getting their hands on additional victims.

The Sith descendants have constructed an altar of native stone at the center of the Steamfields. The coordinates found on Klieri's datacard lead the heroes directly to it. As the heroes approach to investigate the location, they are set upon by Yrsk's Sith allies. Yrsk, safely hidden behind a nearby rock formation, observes the struggle. If the Sith seem to be becoming overwhelmed, he begins to snipe at the heroes. For details, see the "Children of the Tempest" encounter on page 214.

Ideally, the heroes capture Yrsk alive. In fact, even if Yrsk is mortally wounded, allow him to remain alive if possible. Given his Trandoshan physiology, even the loss of a limb, although initially disabling, does not have severe long-term effects for him. Your best bet is to grant Yrsk a bit of script immunity. However, even if he does not survive the fight, Yrsk conveniently has the location of the Deluge Experiment on a datacard in his possession.

If Yrsk is captured by the heroes, he comes clean and reveals his part in the proceedings. Although Yrsk didn't kill Klieri, the heroes might feel that he is indirectly responsible for her death at the hands of the CSA assassins. They might want to take him back to the Republic to face justice, or they might even want to administer justice on their own. Whatever the case is, Yrsk saves the best information for last.

Read the following text aloud:

The Trandoshan clears his throat and looks at you pointedly. "I know things," he rasps, his reptilian tongue playing quickly over his scaly lips. "It ain't too late to save this karking planet from what the CSA's got planned."

Yrsk lets that sink in before continuing.

"Look, you ain't got any real reason to keep me around. You caught me fair and square, but I reckon we can still strike a bargain. You let me go, and I'll tell you where the Corporate Sector Authority's got its big guns. They won't be expecting a crew like you to come along, so you'll have an easy time kriffing up their plans."

"What do you say? Is that worth letting me go, or isn't it?"

The decision is up to the heroes at this point. In any event, if they decide to keep Yrsk around, he becomes a constantly complaining annoyance who takes any opportunity to expose his captors to their enemies. Yrsk hopes that the heroes might leave him behind if he makes enough trouble. The truth is, he might be correct.



PART 3: THE COMING FLOOD

The final portion of "The Perfect Storm" involves the heroes' infiltration and destruction of the Deluge Experiment facility. Whether the true location of the facility is revealed by the datacard the heroes find on Yrskk's body, or by Yrskk himself in exchange for his freedom, is unimportant. The location is nearly a hundred kilometers north of Locus, upon a flat, narrow plateau known as Final Rest.

Final Rest is considered Corporate Sector Authority territory on Nyriaan, and the CSA has several mining facilities in the region. It is one of the highest spots on the surface of Nyriaan, which is one reason that the CSA picked it for the Deluge Experiment's location. After all, if the planet is going to flood, the facility that causes the flooding ought to be above the new planetary sea level.

Getting to the facility would be the easy part, except for one minor snag: The Deluge Experiment has already begun, and it is wreaking havoc with Nyriaan's weather patterns. Several small but violent tempests have been stirred up in the atmosphere around Final Rest, causing massive cyclones and heavy rainfall. The shift in climate should provide a sense of urgency and danger to the proceedings, giving the heroes a clear indication that the Corporate Sector Authority means business.

RIDING THE STORM OUT

The closer the heroes get to Final Rest, the worse the weather becomes. Warm, drizzling rain develops into a hot and steaming torrential downpour by the time that Final Rest is in sight. Nyriaan's omnipresent surface mist and low-lying cloud cover are mysteriously absent, replaced by the severe inclement weather. Lightning arcs down from the sky in purple lancets, and peals of thunder roar across the landscape.

Read the following text aloud:

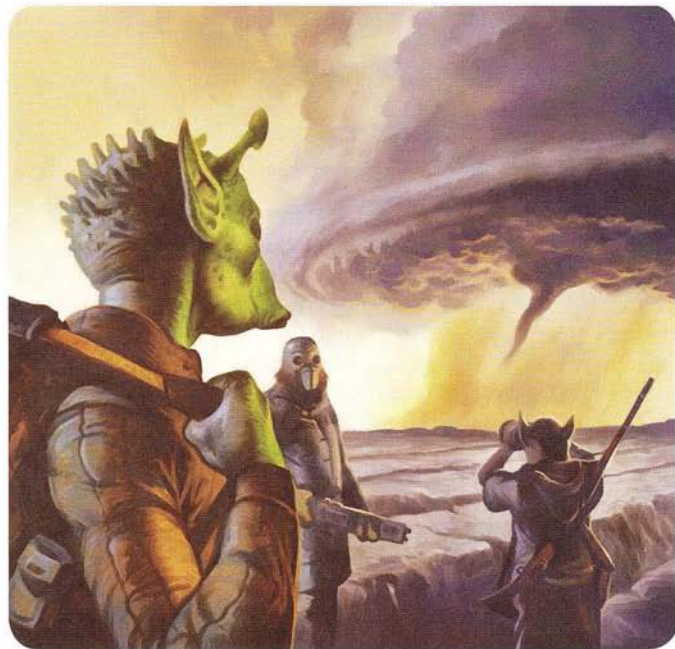
Howling like a living creature, the wind screams a frightening chorus that rises in undulating waves above the constant thud of the heavy rain. The cyclonic tempest, suddenly visible in the flashes of purple lightning, is far enough away to pose no threat, but close enough that you can hardly take your eyes from it.

Rain continues to pour from the skies in hot sheets, soaking your clothes and restricting your visibility. The land begins to rise as you draw closer to Final Rest, and torrents of water flow down from the highlands in small streams and rivers that gradually grow more violent.

Suddenly, out of the gloom, a metal fence comes into view. The fence stretches off to the left and right, its terminus at either end concealed by the violently falling rain. You see, written in Aurebesh on a single metal sign crusted with fungal growth and oxidation, "Final Rest Mine, Shafts 1A through 5K. No trespassing! Intruders will be shot!"

You seem to have finally arrived at your destination.

The fence is mundane in form and function, so the heroes can scale it, cut through it, or batter it down. Beyond the fence is a flat plain accented at intervals by rocky projections and hillocks. A muddy road, its ruts filling with steaming rainwater, stretches toward the largest of the hills.



THE ACTIVE DELUGE DEVICE WREAKS HAVOC IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

Following the muddy road leads to a mine entrance that is unstaffed and unguarded. Two battered transport speeders are parked near the tunnel, their interiors already filled with sweltering rain water. Within the tunnel, which leads into the hill at a slight downward slope, a series of illumination bulbs swing, suspended by thick cords from the tunnel's ceiling.

GOING UNDERGROUND

The interior of the mine entrance is well lit, but it offers little in the way of relief from the sweltering heat and humidity with the coursing rainwater that continuously streams in. Apart from a few discarded mining tools and piles of rubble and refuse scattered about, the tunnel appears vacant.

After about thirty meters, the tunnel ends in an elevator room. However, it is no high-speed turbolift. A single open shaft, into which the coursing water is pouring, is visible at the far end of the chamber. A generator quietly hums nearby, and a simple elevator call button glows on the framework surrounding the shaft. If the heroes press the button, the elevator platform rises noisily up from the depths of Nyriaan. The platform, enclosed on all sides by a metallic safety cage, is empty when it arrives. The heroes can fit into the safety cage easily, and the elevator controls are simple and clearly labeled.

A small digital readout near the controls indicates "Shaft 4B, 26 meters; R&D Access, 39 meters; Shaft 4C, 102 meters." As the elevator cage descends, the readout shows the current depth beneath the ground. Shafts 4B and 4C allow the heroes to access sections of the Final Rest Mine, but the path to the tunnel complex and the research station is at 39 meters.

If the heroes stop at a depth of 39 meters, the elevator comes to a halt at the entrance to a small hallway that hooks to the left. Light and voices from around the corner indicate that the heroes are no longer alone.

Read the following text aloud:

The elevator grinds to a halt, its cacophony replaced by the sounds of Human voices. A narrow hall leads away from the elevator platform, making a sudden left turn after only a few meters. Light and shadows play across the wall, indicating the presence of at least two individuals around the corner.

The voices are those of two Corporate Sector Authority mine guards. They sound bored as they discuss mundane topics: sports, families, rain, and how long until their contracts on Nyriaan expire.

These two guards are only the tip of the iceberg. Other guards and mine personnel are also nearby. The heroes can proceed cautiously, taking prisoners and attempting to maintain a degree of stealth, or they can barge in with blasters blazing. For details, see the "Sixteen Tons" encounter on page 216.



CUTTING THE WIRE

If the heroes make it through the mine and access the tunnels that lead to Deluge Control, read the following text aloud:

The lights in this section of the mine flicker as if their power has a slight drain. Signs indicate that the research and development facility is nearby. Rounding a corner as you leave the mining tunnels behind, you are confronted by a large blast door. Stenciled upon the wall are the words "Deluge Control—Authorized Persons Only."

The panel on the wall next to the blast door indicates that it is sealed from the inside.

This blast door is the last barrier between the heroes and the Deluge Experiment's control room. Like most such doors, it has 750 hit points, DR 10, and a damage threshold of 40, making any attempt to force the door open difficult, if not impossible. The simplest way to gain access to the control room is to hack the door panel, which requires a DC 25 Mechanics check as well as a security kit.

The panel also includes an intercom system, so savvy heroes might attempt to fast-talk their way into the control room by contacting whomever might be on the other side of the door. In this case, a Deluge Facility guard (Perception +11, Will Defense 12) is guarding the blast door from the inside.

Once inside the control room, the heroes must disable or destroy the Deluge Device by completing the "Disabling the Deluge Device" skill challenge, below. For details, see "The End of the World" encounter on page 218.

As put forth by Ghurn, the heroes can earn a bonus if they are able somehow to gain the plans for the Deluge Device. This complicated undertaking requires computer savvy heroes to access the Deluge mainframe, break through its security, sift through reams of information, and isolate the precise elements that they want. Since the contents of the entire system are considered secret, the heroes need only improve the mainframe's attitude from Unfriendly to Friendly and locate a piece of specific data—the plans. A datacard or other form of media is required to store the plans.

If everything goes as planned, the Deluge Device is well on its way to being destroyed as the heroes retrace their steps through the mine tunnels. They are likely to encounter other Corporate Sector Authority employees on their way out, including miners, technicians, guards, and soldiers. However, they offer no organized resistance amid the chaos caused by the Deluge Device. Fleeing CSA personnel assume that the heroes are also employees trying to escape the dying facility and pay them little mind.

Once outside, the heroes can locate their vehicles and make their way back to Locust.

"HEY! YOU'RE
GOING THE WRONG
WAY! THE CSA
HAS ORDERED
AN IMMEDIATE
EVACUATION OF THE
MINES."

-UNKNOWN CSA
REPRESENTATIVE

SKILL CHALLENGE: DISABLING THE DELUGE DEVICE

The Deluge Device is a huge, complicated machine that might well bring about an end to Nyriaan as the galaxy has known it. Deactivating it is not just a simple matter of finding and pushing the right button. Complicated protocols must be followed to reverse the device's effect on the local environment. To do so, the heroes must succeed at this skill challenge, likely while CSA guards are breathing down their necks. Once the device is safely neutralized, destroying it is a simple matter of initiating an overload of its power generator.

If they lack the patience to undertake the lengthy process of neutralizing it, the heroes can destroy the Deluge Device outright. However, the heroes are not likely to possess the explosive firepower required to do so. Even if they do, an onslaught of Corporate Sector Authority troops do everything they can to prevent such an event.

CL 6

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Suggested Skills: The following are suggested primary skills for this skill challenge:

Knowledge (physical sciences) [DC 25]: With enough knowledge about meteorology, weather, and the principles behind vaporator function, heroes should be able to determine how best to reverse the effect of the Deluge Device.

Knowledge (technology) [DC 23]: The heroes, if properly aware of how different types of advanced technology function together, should be able to determine which systems to shut down, and in which order.

Mechanics [DC 24]: The mechanical elements of the Deluge Device are plainly visible. Heroes with the Mechanics skill can attempt to disable some of the device's physical components.

Persuasion [DC 12]: If any Deluge Device technicians are alive, the heroes can attempt to intimidate them into helping to shut down the

device. Failure results in a technician either doing nothing, which wastes valuable time, or botching the demanded job on purpose.

Use Computer [DC 20]: Much of the Deluge Device is controlled by computer systems. Heroes trained in Use Computer can more easily navigate the software that controls the device, allowing them to neutralize specific components of the machine in the proper order.

Challenge Effects: The following are suggested challenge effects for this skill challenge:

Catastrophic Failure: The tolerances on the Deluge Device are so tight that even small mistakes can cause dire consequences and disaster. If a skill check is failed by 10 or more, the heroes accrue two failures instead of one.

Initiative: Under normal circumstances, the heroes are likely to attempt to disable the Deluge Device while enemies are attacking them. During this skill challenge, each hero must make an Initiative check and act in order.

Recovery: Although circumstances are indeed dire, heroes can rectify problems they have caused with their previous failures. Any time a hero succeeds on a skill check by 5 or more, that hero can choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Restricted Skills: Certain skills are not applicable in this challenge: Acrobatics, Climb, Gather Information, Jump, Pilot, Ride, Stealth, Swim, and Treat Injury.

Success: The heroes shut down the Deluge Device with no grave environmental repercussions. With the device now neutralized, heroes can attempt a DC 20 Use Computer check to set its generators to overload, causing an explosion that destroys the device.

Failure: The heroes' meddling causes the Deluge Device to go into overdrive. Weather conditions outside worsen, and the device's delicate software safeguards cause the controls to seize up. The device might eventually destroy itself, but not before the climate of Nyriaan has been irreversibly altered.

BAD WINNERS, EVEN POORER LOSERS

The Corporate Sector Authority does not take kindly to anyone who meddles in their important, not to mention costly, affairs. The heroes, regardless of whether they are successful in their efforts, are now known to the Corporate Sector Authority, as many of the CSA's valued employees and other resources have been laid to waste by the heroes' efforts.

So the heroes are probably not surprised when they are ambushed on their way off the planet. The situation might be further complicated, depending on how the heroes performed during the attempt to destroy the device (see "Part 4: Aftermath," below). Almost as an afterthought on the part of the CSA, a squad of Corporate Sector commandos are dispatched to kill the heroes before they can leave Nyriaan. The commandos assault the heroes as they arrive at their docking bay in the starport facility in the Neutral Zone of Locus.

For details, see the "Corporate Wrath" encounter on page 220.

PART 4: AFTERMATH

Depending on the outcome of the previous encounters and related skill challenges, one of the following two scenarios plays out:

The Deluge Device Has Been Deactivated

Through challenges and difficulties, the heroes persevere and save Nyriaan, at least for the time being. They might even be carrying the Deluge Device's schematics for the Republic for additional rewards once they can reunite with Ghurn.

Since the Deluge Device was active for only a relatively short time before it was deactivated, little damage has been done to Nyriaan's climate. No one in orbit, not even the Tempest Observation Bureau, has a clue as to why there was a sudden boost in tempest activity surrounding the Final Rest plateau. Nevertheless, the anomaly is logged and will be analyzed by physicists and meteorologists for years to come.

Of course, the CSA knows exactly what happened. Although years of work and billions of credits are lost in a single instant, the Corporate Sector Authority doubtless continues its research into permanently altering Nyriaan's atmosphere. In the meantime, several high-level CSA employees find their positions, as well as their lives, terminated.

The Deluge Device Has Not Been Deactivated

If the heroes are unable to deactivate the Deluge Device, then Nyriaan's atmosphere is irrevocably changed. The initial effect manifests slowly, during nearly a week of constant rains and receding clouds. Planetary flooding is disastrous, both to native communities as well as to colonists and mining facilities. Local wildlife, although mostly amphibious, is eventually driven to extinction by the vast influx of standing water on Nyriaan's surface. Full-scale evacuations begin shortly after the planetary scope of the disaster becomes obvious.

Ghurn welcomes the heroes back, but he is not happy with the results. The heroes are allowed to keep any retainer they managed to negotiate, but Ghurn does not pay them any bonus unless they have a copy of the Deluge Device's schematics and plans. If they do, it is the heroes' one saving grace. Using the schematics, the Republic initiates a project to reverse the effect, using knowledge of how the Deluge Device operated. Nyriaan might be saved, eventually, but not before hundreds of thousands of lives are lost.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Since this adventure deals with possibly extensive changes to the planet Nyriaan, the heroes might find themselves embroiled in even more adventures on the planet. The following adventure hooks can serve as a jumping-off point for a continuing campaign on Nyriaan. One of the hooks is outcome-neutral, but the other two rely on one of the two outcomes of this adventure.

A New Master: Regardless of the heroes' success or failure on Nyriaan, they have come to the attention of the powerful noble house currently sitting on the Council. The heroes are approached by a representative of the house with an offer of employment. If they are willing to leave the employ of the Republic, the house promises them a regular retainer and employment as agents of the house. However, the heroes soon discover that the nobles have dangerous work in mind. The noble house wants the heroes to seize control of one of Nyriaan's orbital space platforms currently controlled by the Corporate Sector Authority and to then destroy the platform, planting evidence that the act of sabotage was the work of Republic Intelligence.

Power Grab: If the heroes succeeded in deactivating the Deluge Device, they find themselves with powerful enemies in the Corporate Sector Authority. After assassins try to eliminate the heroes, they discover that the Corporate Sector's permanent seat on the ruling Council is in jeopardy and that the assassination attempt was a play to keep the heroes from interfering in Council business. One of the other seats on the Council has learned of the heroes' actions in deactivating the device, and is planning on putting forward one of the heroes as a candidate for replacing the CSA representative. The heroes have a chance to put one of their own on Nyriaan's Council or to put someone else of their choice there, instead.

The Madilon Rush: If the heroes failed to deactivate the Deluge Device, Nyriaan's ecosystem is radically altered for years, if not forever. This leads to a short-term influx of outside factions and madilon miners who, without the cloud layer to interfere with landing, have started a "Madilon Rush." As miners and others come to Nyriaan without the Council's permission, the resources of the world are being rapidly depleted, and the power of the Council becomes destabilized. The heroes are hired by Nyriaan's Council to stage a starship crash, sabotaging an independent mining vessel as it descends onto the planet. The Council plans to release a bogus scientific report in the wake of the crash, declaring that "ambient ionic energy" lingers over Nyriaan, making it unsafe to land. The heroes must decide whether to go through with the plan, slowing the drain on the planet's resources but resulting in a major loss of life, or to reveal the Council's plan to the galaxy.

ENCOUNTER 1: MAIN STREET FIREFIGHT

Challenge Level 3

SETUP: Depending on how the heroes arrived at this juncture—by spotting one of the Corporate Sector Authority assassins shadowing the heroes on foot, by spotting both assassins in their speeder following the heroes on the street, or by successfully chasing the assassins—the setup is somewhat different.

If the heroes notice one of the assassins shadowing them on foot, position the assassin as marked on the map (A1). The second assassin is on the adjoining street in a landspeeder (A2). The heroes can set up anywhere along the western border of the map, preferably in the areas designated as sidewalks.

If the heroes are driving in a speeder or riding in a taxi when they spot the assassins shadowing them in their own speeder, place the heroes' speeder on the street in the western quarter of the map (HSpeeder1). The assassins' speeder should be placed, following them, on the eastern quarter of the map (ASpeeder1).

If the assassins have been successfully chased to a standstill by the heroes, place their speeder (ASpeeder2) in the alley as marked, with the heroes' speeder blocking them in (HSpeeder2).

In any case, several bystanders linger about (marked as B on the map). The bystanders do not become involved in the combat except to flee, but the assassins are not above taking innocent hostages or using them for cover if the situation allows.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the time comes for the heroes to confront the Corporate Sector assassins, read one of the following descriptions aloud, depending on the circumstances.

If an assassin is spotted on foot, read the following aloud:

As you walk along the dimly lit street, you notice a humanoid following your progress a little too closely. He is dressed too heavily, considering the warmth and humidity, and his eyes betray that his true interest is you.

If the assassins are spotted in their speeder, read the following aloud:

Despite the traffic, you can plainly see an unmarked speeder following your vehicle's every move. When your speeder turns, it turns to follow. When your speeder changes speed, it changes speed to compensate. In the dim illumination of streetlamps and headlights you can tell that at least two humanoids are riding in the speeder.

If the assassins are cornered in the alley after a speeder chase, read the following aloud:

Cornered after the chase, the two humanoid occupants of the speeder emerge from their vehicle with blasters in their hands. They take cover behind their vehicle and prepare to open fire.

CORPORATE SECTOR ASSASSINS (2)

These assassins are trained killers in the employ of the Corporate Sector Authority, although they carry no identification that marks them as such. They have been authorized by their CSA handlers to kill the heroes if they learn too much. Until that time comes, however, they plan to follow at a distance and observe the heroes as they move through the dismal city of Locus.

Both Humans move like professionals, with an economy of motion. They wear utilitarian clothing that is inappropriate for the relative warmth of the climate, as if to conceal something.

Corporate Sector Assassin

Medium Human scoundrel 5

Dark Side 2

Init +5; Senses Perception +9

Languages Basic, Bocce

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 17), Fort 15, Will 18

hp 32; Threshold 15

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +2 (1d6+1) or

Melee vibrodagger +2 (2d4+1)

Ranged blaster pistol +6 (3d6+2) or

Ranged hold-out blaster +6 (3d4+2)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skirmisher, Sneak Attack +2d6

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12

Talents Skirmisher, Sneak Attack +2d6

Feats Combat Reflexes, Coordinated Attack, Martial Arts I, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +8, Gather Information +8, Mechanics +8, Perception +9, Pilot +10, Stealth +10

Possessions blaster pistol, hold-out blaster, vibrodagger, comlink

Corporate Sector Assassin Tactics

The Corporate Sector assassins shoot to kill and attempt to evade capture if they are outmatched. They cover one another systematically, and if one is killed the other leaves by the quickest route possible. If offered an opportunity to surrender, they instead prefer to take a more aggressive route. After all, if they survive an interrogation, they will undoubtedly be liquidated by their CSA masters.

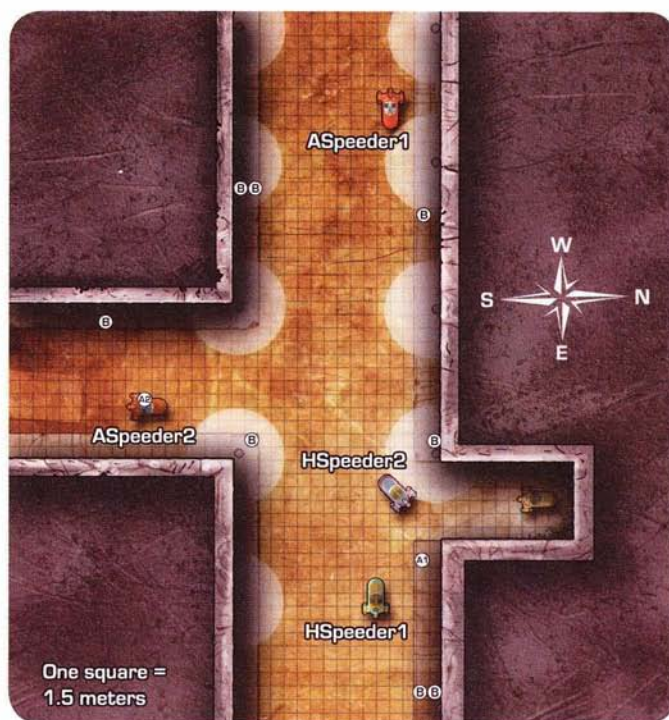
If the assassins successfully escape a confrontation, they attempt to reacquire the heroes at the next available opportunity.

CONCLUSION

If one or both of the assassins are killed, the heroes find their equipment and little else. Their weapons are unmarked, with no serial numbers or other indicators to distinguish them. Their identification indicates that they are normal citizens with no reason to be shooting at anyone. If the heroes investigate the storage compartments of the assassins' speeder, they find a security kit and a tool kit.

If either or both assassins survive the encounter to be captured by the heroes, they attempt to resist interrogation. If the heroes break their will to resist, they reveal only that they work for the Corporate Sector Authority and were told to monitor the heroes and kill them if they entered Klieri's apartment. They know nothing more of the Deluge Experiment.

CL 5



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Other than the bystanders in the area (marked on the map as B), the area has little else of interest. The alleyway contains piles of fungus-covered refuse (considered difficult terrain), and the sidewalks are slimy with moisture, making footing treacherous.

ENCOUNTER 2: KLERI'S APARTMENT

Challenge Level 2 (Droid Only), Challenge Level 5 (Droid plus CSA assassins)

SETUP: The heroes can place themselves anywhere inside Klieri's apartment.

Klieri's apartment is small. The front door is the only way in or out, and the apartment has no windows. When the encounter begins, the MRD-39B assassin droid is under Klieri's bed.

If the Corporate Sector assassins are still active, they attempt to gain access to Klieri's apartment through the front door. Place them in the hall as indicated on map.

READ-ALoud TEXT

This encounter can start under one of two sets of circumstances. In the first set, the MRD-39B assassin droid contacts the surviving Corporate Sector assassins from Encounter 1, and they are en route to attack the heroes and cause a diversion. In this case, read the following text aloud:

The sound of blaster fire comes from the hall, and the building's residents begin to shout and scream.

If, on the other hand, the Corporate Sector assassins have been eliminated by the heroes, or if the heroes have detected the assassin droid, the MRD-39B has no choice but to attack the heroes by itself. In this instance, read the following text aloud:

A high-pitched humming suddenly fills the bedroom. In a flurry of motion, a spiderlike droid bursts out from under Klieri's bed. It moves straight toward the nearest of you, its front legs swinging in dangerous arcs.

MRD-39B ASSASSIN DROID

The MRD-39B is originally conceived as a disposable assassin droid by Corporate Sector Authority designers. Unfortunately, the design becomes overly complicated and prohibitively expensive. Although still a valuable piece of equipment, the MRD-39B is no longer considered an expendable asset; in fact, the CSA considers organic units to be more expendable than an assassin droid.

Equipped with a pair of vibrodaggers for silent incursions and an integrated hold-out blaster for ranged strikes, the MRD-39B is a highly efficient killing machine.

The black spiderlike droid consists of a single, oblong body, flanked on either side by a total of six multi-jointed legs that operate independently of one another. Each leg is tipped with a different type of weapon or tool.

MRD-39B Assassin Droid (D)

CL 6

Small droid (4th-degree) soldier 6

Init +18; **Senses** darkvision, low-light vision; **Perception** +12

Languages Binary

Defenses Ref 23 (flat-footed 18), Fort 19, Will 18

hp 57; **Threshold** 19

Immune droid traits

Speed 4 squares (walking), climb 2 squares

Melee vibrodagger claws +8 (2d4+7) or

Melee vibrodagger claws +6 (3d4+7) with Rapid Strike

Ranged integrated hold-out blaster +11 (3d4+3)

Fighting Space 1 square; **Reach** 1 square

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +11

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Devastating Attack, Rapid Strike

Abilities Str 12, Dex 20, Con —, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

Talents Devastating Attack (vibrodagger claws), Melee Smash, Weapon Specialization (vibrodagger claws)

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Combat Reflexes, Rapid Strike (vibrodagger claws), Skill Focus (Initiative), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (vibrodagger claws), Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Climb +4, Initiative +18, Mechanics +8, Perception +12, Stealth +13 (untrained)

Systems 2 claw appendages, climbing claws, darkvision, heuristic processor, improved sensor package, internal comlink, locked access, secondary battery, self-destruct system (4d6 damage, 2-square splash), walking locomotion with 6 legs (+5 stability bonus on checks to resist attempts to knock the droid prone)

Possessions 2 vibrodagger claws, integrated hold-out blaster

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 20,270 credits

MRD-39B Tactics

The MRD-39B attacks one target at a time in a stubborn, single-minded fashion. When its current target is killed or disabled, it picks the next nearest target and continues its assault. Unwilling to risk capture, an MRD-39B that is reduced to 10 or fewer hit points initiates its self-destruct system in an attempt to destroy itself and eliminate more of its enemies.

CORPORATE SECTOR ASSASSINS (2)

These assassins are trained killers in the employ of the Corporate Sector Authority, although they carry no identification that marks them as such. They have been authorized by their CSA handlers to kill the heroes if they learn too much. Until that time comes, however, they plan to follow at a distance and observe the heroes as they move through the dismal city of Locus.

Both Humans move like professionals, with an economy of motion. They wear utilitarian clothing that is inappropriate for the relative warmth of the climate, as if to conceal something.

Corporate Sector Assassin (A)

CL 5

Medium Human scoundrel 5

Dark Side 2

Init +5; Senses Perception +9

Languages Basic, Bocce

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 17), Fort 15, Will 18

hp 32; Threshold 15

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +2 (1d6+1) or

Melee vibrodagger +2 (2d4+1)

Ranged blaster pistol +6 (3d6+2) or

Ranged hold-out blaster +6 (3d4+2)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skirmisher, Sneak Attack +2d6

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12

Talents Skirmisher, Sneak Attack +2d6

Feats Combat Reflexes, Coordinated Attack, Martial Arts I, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +8, Gather Information +8, Mechanics +8, Perception +9, Pilot +10, Stealth +10

Possessions blaster pistol, hold-out blaster, vibrodagger, comlink

Corporate Sector Assassin Tactics

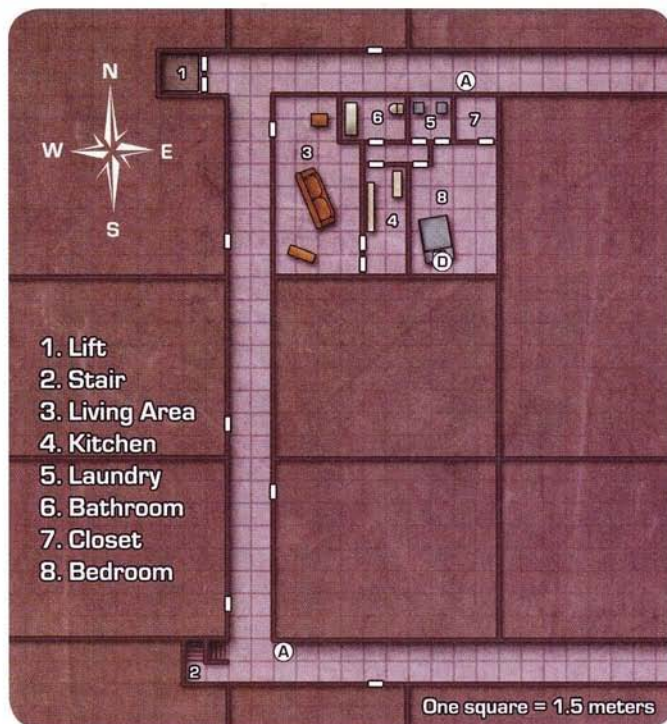
The Corporate Sector assassins shoot to kill and attempt to evade capture if they are outmatched. They cover one another systematically, and if one is killed the other leaves by the quickest route possible. If offered an opportunity to surrender, they instead prefer to take a more aggressive route. After all, if they survive an interrogation, they will undoubtedly be liquidated by their CSA masters.

CONCLUSION

When the dust settles, the screams and shouts of other apartment residents resound through the building. Neighbors meekly emerge to take stock of the damage, while others contact the authorities in an attempt to reestablish some kind of order. If the heroes hope to escape without undue attention from the local law enforcers, they had best do so in a hurry.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Klieri's apartment is a mess, given the struggle she put up prior to her death. Areas that contain furniture are considered difficult terrain.



ENCOUNTER 3: CRIMSON AND CHLOVI

Challenge Level 6

SETUP: The map represents a section of Nyriaan wilderness, with a rough path winding from north to south. The open area near the center can serve as an impromptu campsite if the heroes are looking for a place to rest. To either side of the path are rocky protrusions and growths of chlovi fungus.

The chlovi cats that are stalking the heroes should be placed as indicated on the map. The heroes should be placed along the path, not more than two squares away from the central clearing.

READ-ALoud TEXT

A hero who succeeds at a DC 26 Perception check detects one or more chlovi cats moving through the fungal underbrush. Any heroes who fail the check are unable to act during the surprise round, and any who succeed can act normally.

When the chlovi cats are detected, or when they attack, read the following text aloud:

A small creature, about the size of a panthac, leaps from the underbrush in a flash of claws and teeth. As it strikes, it gurgles low in its throat.

CHLOVI CATS (4)

Chlovi cats, which are not feline at all, reside at the top of Nyriaan's food chain. They have been responsible for hundreds of deaths in mining towns across the planet. Settlers on Nyriaan shoot chlovi cats on sight rather than risking the danger that they represent. Unfortunately for Nyriaan's colonists, chlovi cats have learned to predict the movements of their prey and attack from ambush rather than attempting direct assaults.

This amphibian is the size of a large dog and has a long, sinewy body. Its skin glistens with a slimy coating and changes color as the chlovi cat creeps through the fungal underbrush.

Chlovi Cat (C)

CL 5

Small Beast 6

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision; **Perception** +6

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 14), Fort 12, Will 14

hp 33; **Threshold** 12

Speed 8 squares

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d3+3) and

bite +4 (1d4+3) or

Melee 2 claws +2 (2d3+3) with Rapid Strike

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +2

Atk Options Rapid Strike

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

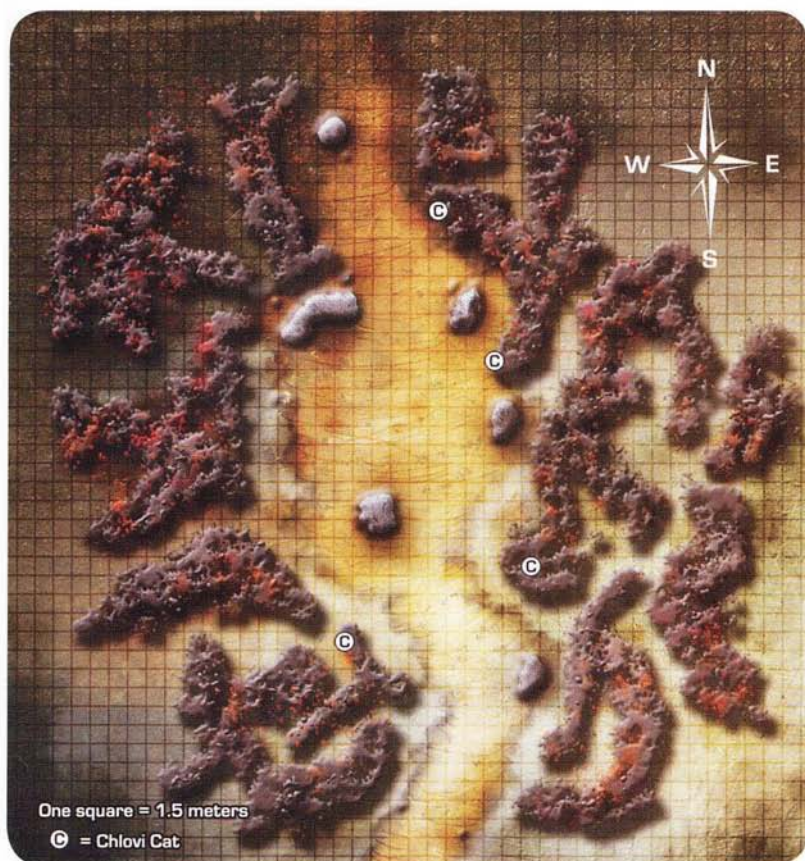
Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 16, Cha 8

Feats Coordinated Attack, Improved Defenses, Rapid Strike (claws)

Skills Stealth +16

Chlovi Cat Tactics

Chlovi cats use pack tactics, communicating with their pack mates through a combination of bioluminescent displays and croaking calls. They swarm over targets in groups of three or more, biting and clawing in an attempt to disable their prey. Once the prey is disabled, the rest of the pack converges on the victim.



CONCLUSION

The chlovi cats stick around only if they have the advantage. If the heroes gain the upper hand, the cats retreat into the underbrush. Any heroes who fall as a result of the cats' attacks are unceremoniously dragged into the chlovi bushes unless the heroes manage to prevent their comrades from being snatched. The chlovi cats do not devour dead heroes immediately, instead saving them for some time later. Any heroes snatched in this manner can later be rescued, but such an encounter is beyond the scope of this adventure. The Gamemaster should feel free to create a new encounter involving the chlovi cat lair in order for heroes to stage a rescue attempt for their fallen allies.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Chlovi growths are medium to large growths of fungus that develop in interlocking spiral formations. They grant cover to anyone who uses them as such, and are the equivalent of wood (DR 5, 50 hit points). The chlovi growths and underbrush are considered difficult terrain.

ENCOUNTER 4: NATIVE HOSPITALITY

Challenge Level 6

SETUP: The north edge of the map consists of thick growths of Meadlin's trees. The Clan Malvina scouts are positioned as indicated within the trees. The heroes approach the tree line from the south, and can position themselves anywhere south of the trees.

READ-ALoud TEXT

The scouts can engage the heroes in whatever way they deem appropriate depending on the size, makeup, and condition of the heroes' party. Typically, one of the scouts fires a warning shot over the heroes' heads, attracting their attention and attempting to scare them off.

When the heroes are within range of the scouts, read the following text aloud:

As you trudge toward the thick line of fungal trees, a burst of energy—likely from a sporting blaster rifle—bursts from the copse of Meadlin's trees ahead of you. It arcs over your heads before exploding against a rock formation well to your rear. You know where the shot came from, but the dark shadows of the Meadlin's trees might conceal any number of hidden attackers.

MALVINA CLAN SCOUT (6)

These native scouts are members of the Malvina clan, a territorial group of Nyriaanan natives who consider the land surrounding this copse of Meadlin's trees to be their territory. They are warned by Yrskk, an associate of theirs, to expect a group of prospectors. Unwilling to allow offworlders to defile their home, the clan sends out scouts to verify Yrskk's story.

The dark skin of this native Nyriaanan sets him apart from others you've seen. His clothing, which is of native design, is well made and functional. Despite the heat and humidity, he shows no sign of discomfort. The native carries a large chopping knife in a sheath on his thigh, as well as a highly decorated sporting blaster carbine in his hands.

Malvina Clan Scout (S)

CL 3

Medium Human (Nyriaanan) scout 3

Force 3

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +9 (can reroll)

Languages Basic, Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 15), Fort 16, Will 16

hp 39; **Threshold** 16

Speed 6 squares

Melee machete +3 (1d6+2)

Ranged sporting blaster rifle +4 (3d6+1)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3

Atk Options Pin

Special Actions Shake It Off

Abilities Str 12, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 6

Talents Acute Senses, Improved Stealth

Feats Pin, Shake It Off, Skill Focus (Stealth, Survival), Weapon Focus (rifles), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

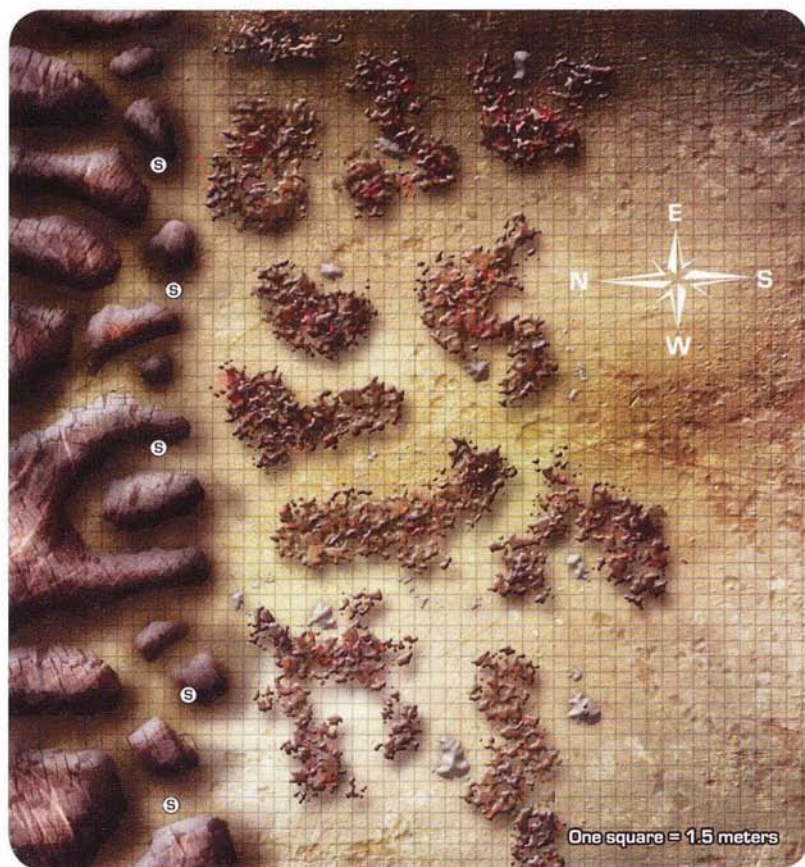
Skills Climb +7, Endurance +8, Initiative +7, Perception +9 (can reroll), Stealth +12 (can reroll), Survival +14

Possessions native garb, machete, sporting blaster carbine, rations

Malvina Clan Scout Tactics

The scouts are not homicidal. They prefer to scare the heroes away rather than facing off in a prolonged firefight. If the heroes return fire, the scouts defend themselves as best as they can in an attempt to repel the invaders. If more than a third of their number is killed or wounded, they withdraw into the trees and attack again later from a different vantage point.

If the heroes attempt to parley with the scouts, however, the natives send a representative forward to discuss terms.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

The thick, twisted trunks of the Meadlin's trees provide improved cover to the scouts hiding within them. A number of sparse chlovi growths, indicated on the map, can provide cover for the heroes as they advance north.

CONCLUSION

If the heroes initiate a fight with the natives, they must wipe them all out to avoid any retaliatory encounters later on. Native scouts who survive such an encounter do their best to track the heroes, picking them off one at a time, if necessary, before returning to their clansmen.

On the other hand, if the heroes speak with the natives and convince them of the importance of the heroes' mission, they can learn valuable information. The natives know Yrsk—he warned them about a group of offworlders headed their way—but they are not so naive that they trust everything Yrsk says without checking the facts for themselves. They also know that Yrsk is headed north, toward the Steamfields.

ENCOUNTER 5: CHILDREN OF THE TEMPEST

Challenge Level 5

SETUP: The Sith Descendants conceal themselves near the altar at the left center of the map, while Yrsk is granted total cover by the rocky formation he hides behind. The heroes enter the area from the south, traveling along one of the indicated dry areas. Any water or liquid in the area is extremely hot and is therefore impassable terrain (see "Features of the Area" for details).

READ-ALoud TEXT

Any hero who succeeds at a DC 19 Perception check detects one or more of the hidden Sith Descendants. Yrsk is more camouflaged, requiring a DC 28 Perception check to discern him amid the rock and billowing steam of the surrounding hot springs. Force-sensitive heroes can sense the dark side emanating from the altar from a kilometer away.

When the heroes enter the area from the south, read the following text aloud:

The outline of a sculpture can be discerned through the thick mist and steam that hangs heavily in the air here. It appears to be a rough statue of a humanoid set atop a raised stone platform. The stone steps leading to the statue are rust colored, as if bloodstained.

YRSSK

Yrsk is a self-serving, self-centered, and unscrupulous Trandoshan who originally signs on with the Republic's intelligence services to avoid his debts. After years on Nyriaan, he is tired of the charade and now desires only to make his fortune and escape from the horrible planet.

The Trandoshan is heavily scarred, with a particularly livid scar running along the side of his face, barely missing one of his blood-red eyes. He wears clothes that appear to be made by native Nyriaanans, even though his species sets him apart from Nyriaan's indigenous population. His emotional state is difficult to gauge, but he seems somewhat agitated.

Yrsk (Y)

Medium Trandoshan scoundrel 2/scout 3

Force 3; Dark Side 1

Init +3; Senses darkvision; Perception +9 (can reroll)

Languages Basic, Dosh, Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 19 (flat-footed 18), Fort 18, Will 18

hp 45; Threshold 18

Speed 6 squares

Melee knife +7 (1d4+6)

Ranged blaster carbine +4 (3d8+2) or

Ranged blaster carbine +2 (4d8+2) with Rapid Shot

Base Atk +3; Grp +7

Atk Options autofire, Dastardly Strike, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 9

Talents Acute Senses, Dastardly Strike, Expert Tracker

Feats Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Training (Stealth, Survival), Toughness, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +6, Gather Information +6, Mechanics +8,

Perception +9 (can reroll), Stealth +8, Survival +9, Use Computer +8

Possessions native clothing, knife, blaster carbine, 2 frag grenades, hidden datacard (DC 18 Perception check to locate)

Yrsk's Tactics

Yrsk hides until the heroes appear to be overcoming his Sith dupes. If the tide is turning in favor of the heroes, he pops his head up and fires with his carbine. Even though the shots reveal his position, his cover should work to his advantage. If wounded—even slightly—he surrenders and attempts to buy his freedom with the information he possesses.

SITH DESCENDANT (6)

After thousands of years of inbreeding, the descendants of the original Sith who crashed on Nyriaan have become twisted and subhuman. Caring only for satisfying their immediate desires, the Sith are not particularly subtle. They stink of corruption, a smell that is only partly physical and thoroughly spiritual.

Although Human in form, these wretched beings are twisted and deformed in ways that confound the imagination. Wearing makeshift robes and homespun clothing, they reek of filth and physical corruption. They howl like beasts, wave their spears threateningly, and growl in a tongue that sounds as evil as they look.

CL 5

Sith Descendant (S)

Medium Human (Nyriaanan) nonheroic 3/scout 1

Dark Side 12

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Use the Force +8

Languages Nyriaanan

Defenses Ref 15 (flat-footed 13), Fort 13, Will 13; Dodge

hp 35; **Threshold** 13

Speed 6 squares

Melee spear +1 (1d8-1)

Ranged pulse wave pistol +4 (2d6)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4

Force Powers Known (Use the Force +8): *dark rage, Force thrust, surge*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13

Talents Surefooted

Feats Dodge, Force Sensitivity, Force Training, Skill Training (Use the Force), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Survival +9, Use the Force +8

Possessions dirty robes, beads and bones, spear, pulse wave pistol

Sith Descendant Tactics

Not ones for subtlety, the Sith descendants attack as soon as they are noticed by the heroes, using dark rage and surge to the best effect. They fight only as individuals and use their Force powers to push the heroes into pools of boiling water and mud. They do not flee the fight under any circumstances.

CONCLUSION

With the Sith descendants defeated, Yrskk surrenders, hoping that he can buy his freedom with the information he possesses. If Yrskk is killed, the information can be found on a datacard he carries. Other than Yrskk's possessions and the Sith altar, little of interest is here.

CL 2

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Areas marked as rocky on the map are considered difficult terrain. Areas of liquid are filled with boiling, mineral-rich water or mud, one to two meters deep. If a character enters into or passes through a space filled with boiling water, make an attack roll (1d20+5) against the target's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target takes 2d6 points of damage. If the attack fails, the target takes half damage. Any damage taken is considered fire damage, although it cannot set a character on fire.



ENCOUNTER 6: SIXTEEN TONS

Challenge Level 5

SETUP: Upon exiting the elevator cage, the heroes should be placed in the hall, anywhere out of sight of the guards in the next room.

Corporate Sector mine guards are positioned as indicated on the map. Any guards not within line of sight of the heroes should not be placed until they are seen or otherwise detected. The guards patrol the mines in pairs, with a single pair stationed near the corridor that leads to the elevator. In addition to the guards, six miners are hard at work in the mine corridors. Like the guards, the miners should be revealed only when they are seen.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the heroes peer around the corner into the guard room, read the following text aloud:

The room is well lit by hanging fusion lanterns. The light reveals smooth stone walls festooned with Corporate Sector Authority logos and motivational posters. Sitting on alloy crates, two CSA guards in combat jumpsuits chat with one another. Their weapons, although not currently held, are close at hand.

CORPORATE SECTOR MINE GUARDS (8)

These mine guards represent the standard level of security for CSA mine complexes on Nyriaan. Although competent, they are by no means infallible. Most guards are bored, at least until a disturbance attracts their attention. They communicate openly over their comlinks, and grow suspicious if any guards fail to respond.

If captured, they know little of the Deluge Experiment. Sure, they have heard of it, but it's way beyond their security clearance.

The gray combat jumpsuits worn by these guards indicate that they are employed by Corporate Sector Authority. They appear to be well equipped to put down minor resistance, but you doubt that they have the ability to do much more than that.

Corporate Sector Mine Guard (G)

CL 2

Medium Human nonheroic 6

Init +5; Senses Perception +10

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 14), Fort 11, Will 12

hp 21; Threshold 11

Speed 6 squares

Melee stun baton +6 (1d6+2)

Ranged blaster carbine +6 (3d8) or

Ranged blaster carbine +1 (3d8) with autofire

Base Atk +4; Grp +6

Atk Options autofire, Pin, Point Blank Shot, Running Attack

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Pin, Point Blank Shot, Running Attack,

Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Perception +10, Pilot +10

Possessions combat jumpsuit, stun baton, blaster pistol, blaster carbine, comlink

Corporate Sector Mine Guard Tactics

The mine guards work in pairs to keep the mine secure. For the most part, they behave like trained combat troops and do not fight to the death. If the situation warrants, they retreat farther into the facility, calling for backup or enlisting miners for aid in repelling the heroes.

CORPORATE SECTOR MINERS (6)

Six miners are currently extracting ore samples from various locations in the mine tunnels. The miners work alone or in pairs, using their tools to extract bits of madilon for later analysis and recording their progress on datapads.

The Human in the tunnel is dressed in overalls that are stained with dirt and sweat. The tools in his hands identify him as a miner; other than his mining equipment, he appears to be completely unarmed.

Corporate Sector Miner (M)

Medium Human nonheroic 3

Init +1; Senses Perception +1

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 10 (flat-footed 10), Fort 12, Will 10

hp 13; Threshold 12

Speed 6 squares

Melee club +2* (1d6+6) or

Melee club +4 (2d6+4) with Mighty Swing

Ranged by weapon +2

Base Atk +2; Grp +4

Atk Options Bantha Rush, Mighty Swing, Power Attack

Abilities Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Bantha Rush, Mighty Swing, Power Attack, Skill Training (Endurance), Skill Training (Mechanics), Weapon Proficiency (simple weapons)

Skills Climb +8, Endurance +8, Mechanics +6

Possessions mining equipment, tools, satchel for ore samples, datapad, glowrod

* Includes 2 points of Power Attack

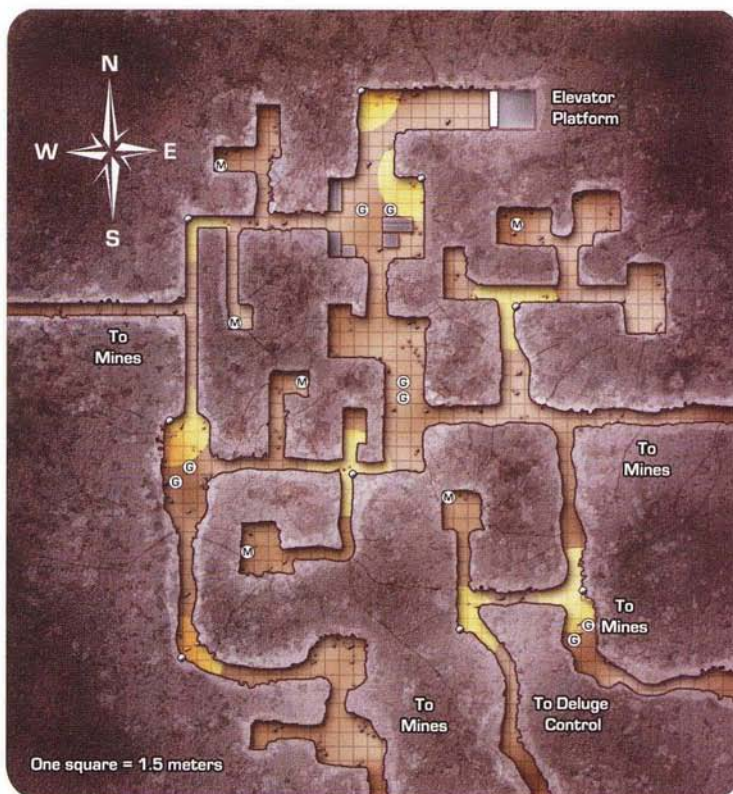
Corporate Sector Miner Tactics

The miners are not soldiers. They surrender if offered a choice, but they will risk their lives for their comrades if necessary. They are loyal Corporate Sector Authority employees, however, and if approached by CSA guards and asked to help, they do so to the best of their ability.

CONCLUSION

When all guards and miners are neutralized, the heroes can proceed to the control room. Surviving CSA employees in this area can point the heroes in the correct direction if properly motivated, although failure of Deception or Persuasion checks by the heroes is liable to result in misinformation. If the heroes go the wrong direction—taking any path that is not indicated on the map as the actual route to the control room—they become lost for 1d10 minutes. In that time, unsupervised guards or miners attempt to enlist help elsewhere.

CL 1



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Piles of rubble and rock are considered difficult terrain, and fusion lanterns are marked on the map to indicate how much light they shed. Alloy crates in the guard room are filled with ore samples and can provide cover.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE END OF THE WORLD

Challenge Level 6

SETUP: The Deluge Device control room is circular, with alloy walls and a slew of computer terminals and monitoring stations placed as indicated on the map. Four technicians are each at individual stations proceeding with the experiment. Six deluge facility guards are also present in the room.

The heroes begin the encounter at the southern edge of the map, behind the twin blast doors, which are likely to be opened when the encounter begins. If the heroes open the blast doors by hacking the outside control panel, they should have a single surprise round before the deluge facility guards and technicians can respond to their presence—that is, if the guards are not warned by the CSA employees in the previous encounter.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the doors open, either because the heroes hacked the control panel or because they managed to con the guards into opening them, read the following text aloud:

The doors open to reveal a large control room staffed with both technicians and armed and armored guards. The far wall is a large transparisteel window, beyond which can be seen a huge cavern wherein a complicated device shimmers with energy.

DELUGE FACILITY GUARDS (6)

The best guards available in the deluge facility, these six individuals are all Humans—male and female. They are well armed, armored, and bored enough that a fight is a pleasant diversion from watching the deluge technicians go about their work.

The gray battle armor worn by these guards is emblazoned with the emblem of the Corporate Sector Authority. Each is armed with a stun baton and a blaster rifle with a collapsible stock.

Deluge Facility Guard (G)

Medium Human nonheroic 6/soldier 1

Init +10; Senses low-light vision; Perception +11

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 19), Fort 17, Will 12

hp 34; Threshold 17

Speed 4 squares

Melee stun baton +7 (1d6+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +7 (3d6) or

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (4d6) with Rapid Shot or

Ranged blaster rifle +7 (3d8) or

Ranged blaster rifle +5 (4d8) with Rapid Shot or

Base Atk +5; Grp +7

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Special Actions Indomitable

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Talents Indomitable

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Training (Pilot), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +10, Perception +11, Pilot +10

Possessions battle armor with helmet package, stun baton, blaster rifle, blaster pistol

Deluge Facility Guard Tactics

The deluge facility guards have standing orders to repel any intruders, but truth be told, they are not expecting any. Even if surprised, they put up a professional fight and attempt to drive the heroes off or kill them outright. They are aware of the sensitive nature of the equipment that surrounds them, so they do not risk damaging it.

DELUGE FACILITY TECHNICIANS (4)

Although they are technically noncombatants, the deluge facility technicians are expected to resist any attempts by outsiders to impede their work. The technicians are Humans, male and female, and they wear blue lab jackets. They are unarmed, but if ignored or underestimated they might pose some degree of threat.

The Humans wear blue lab jackets and tool belts. Although unarmed, the look in the technicians' eyes tells you that they aren't to be trusted.

Deluge Facility Technician (T)

Medium Human nonheroic 4

Init +3; Senses Perception +9

Languages Basic, Binary, High Galactic, Sullustese

Defenses Ref 11 (flat-footed 10), Fort 9, Will 12; Dodge

hp 6; Threshold 9

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +3 (1d4)

Ranged by weapon +4

Base Atk +3; Grp +4

Abilities Str 10, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12

Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Knowledge [technology], Mechanics), Skill Training (Treat Injury), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Knowledge (physical sciences) +10, Knowledge (technology) +15, Mechanics +15, Perception +9, Treat Injury +9, Use Computer +10

Possessions coveralls, tools

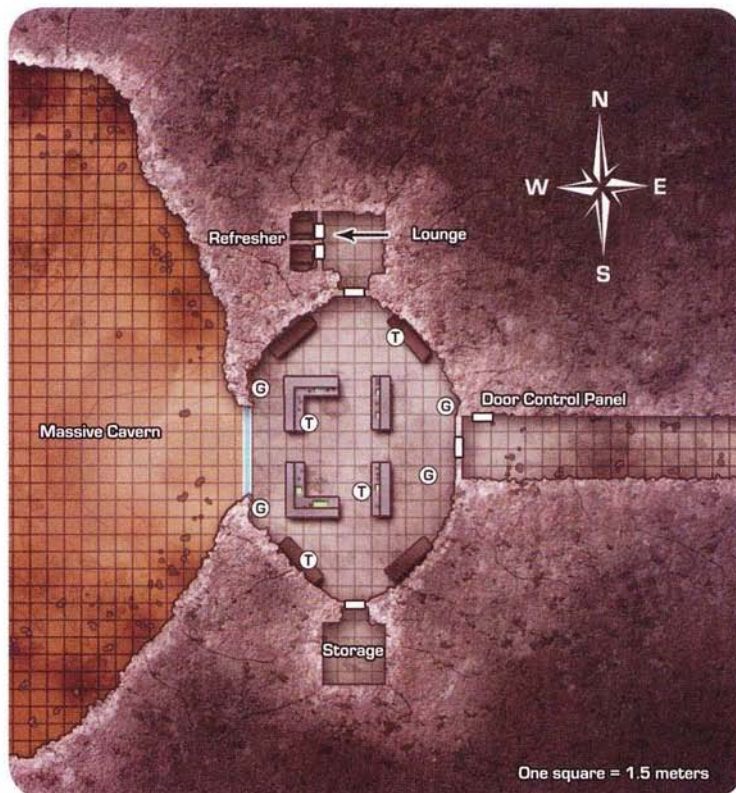
CL 1

Deluge Facility Technician Tactics

The deluge facility technicians rely on their guards to fend off any attacks. They hide as best they can until the blaster fire stops, at which point they might poke up their heads to see who the winning side is. Although they are not trained for combat, they defend themselves if necessary. If one or more of the technicians think they can gain the advantage by attacking one of the heroes, they do so.

CONCLUSION

Once the guards are dealt with, any technicians who remain alive follow almost any orders given to them by the heroes. They are shifty and deceptive, however, and do not provide direct aid to the heroes unless they are forced to do so. Even with the guards dead and the technicians at gunpoint, the heroes are not completely safe.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

The control panels and computer terminals in the control room provide cover, but any that are damaged will impede the skill challenge necessary to shut down the Deluge Device. For each damaged control panel or terminal, increase the DCs of any Mechanics checks and Use Computer checks made during the "Disabling the Deluge Device" skill challenge by 1. Each terminal has DR 5, 15 hit points, and a damage threshold of 10.

ENCOUNTER 8: CORPORATE WRATH

Challenge Level 5

SETUP: This encounter takes place in the docking bay where the heroes' ship has been stored since their arrival on Nyriaan. If they crashed on the planet, then their ship—or what is left of it—is transported to this docking bay for repair. Regardless of the specific circumstances, Corporate Sector Authority commandos are positioned offsite, observing the docking bay for the heroes' arrival. When the heroes show up, the commandos wait for them to enter the docking bay proper before moving to the indicated locations. At the start of the encounter, the heroes can be anywhere within the confines of the docking bay.

READ-ALoud TEXT

As soon as the heroes are in the docking bay and going about the business of getting into their starship, allow them to make DC 13 Perception checks. Any heroes who succeed are privy to the information in the read-aloud text below, and they are not considered surprised during the impending surprise round of combat. Any who fail their Perception checks are considered surprised and flat-footed.

Read the following aloud:

A flash of motion near the entrance to the docking bay catches your eye. You glance up in time to see at least four armed humanoids dressed in dark battle armor storming into the docking bay. Their features are hidden behind closed helmets, but their movements communicate their violent intentions.

CORPORATE SECTOR COMMANDOS (4)

The CSA commandos in this encounter are highly trained Corporate Sector Authority warriors. They are likely to be the most capable enemies that the heroes have yet faced. Each is dressed in blackened battle armor and wields a blaster rifle with skilled precision. Their orders are to eradicate the heroes in short order and recover any stolen information that they might possess.

The humanoid in the blackened battle armor moves carefully, firing as he advances toward you. The visor of his helmet emits a dim green light, and if not for his fluid movements you might think he was some kind of droid.

Corporate Sector Commando

CL 4

Medium Human soldier 4

Init +10; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +9

Languages Basic, Nyriaanan, Sullustese

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 19), Fort 20, Will 14

hp 54; **Threshold** 25

Speed 4 squares

Melee knife +5 (1d4+3)

Ranged blaster pistol +7 (3d6+2) or

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (4d6+2) or [\$TC: is this missing something?]

Ranged blaster rifle +8 (3d8+4) or

Ranged blaster rifle +6 (4d8+4) with Rapid Shot or

Ranged frag grenade +7 (4d6+2, 2-square burst) or

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Charging Fire, Devastating Attack (rifles), Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Abilities Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8

Talents Devastating Attack (rifles), Weapon Specialization (rifles)

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Charging Fire, Improved Damage Threshold, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (rifles), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +10, Knowledge (tactics) +9, Mechanics +9, Perception +9, Pilot +10, Treat Injury +7

Possessions blaster rifle, blaster pistol, battle armor with helmet package, 2 frag grenades, medkit, datapad

Corporate Sector Authority Commando Tactics

Take no prisoners! Upon entering the docking bay, the first two commandos lob frag grenades at the heroes, while the other two provide suppressing fire. After the grenades detonate, the commandos advance to finish the job. They fight intelligently, using cover to their best advantage, providing each other with cover fire when appropriate, and aiding one another when necessary.

If two or more commandos are killed, the others lob more grenades before attempting a tactical retreat to a waiting assault speeder. Once aboard, they flee the area, heading for the Corporate City Sector.

CONCLUSION

Each commando possesses a simple datapad loaded with the images and vital statistics of the heroes. The images are recent, apparently taken by surveillance cameras in locations that the heroes visited on Nyriaan.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

The docking bay is open to the elements, but it is well maintained and relatively free of clinging fungus. The ground, however, is wet and slippery. As is typical for Nyriaan, lighting is dim. Fusion lanterns are positioned as indicated on the map, but they are easily destroyed by exploding grenades.

INDEX

- A7-E3P0 "Aysev" 101
 Adaptable Talent (feat) 25
 Advanced Planning (talent) 20
 adventures, designing 90
 Airen Cracken 117
 Ander Rendrake 117
 Antagonist (challenge effect) 44
 antitoxin patch 66
 Arani Korden 109
 Assured Skill (talent) 21
 atmosphere and
 weather, Nyriaan 128
 Attract Superior Minion (talent) 25
 Belindi Kalenda 117
 Bith 10
 Bomb Thrower (talent) 21
 Bone Crusher (feat) 25
 Brilliant Defense (feat) 25
 bundar root 65
 campaign arcs 84
 campaign elements 80
 Catastrophic Failure
 (challenge effect) 44
 Changing Objectives
 (challenge effect) 44
 Channel Rage (feat) 25
 Chewbacca 113
 chlovi fungus 142
 chuba poison 65
 Clip (talent) 24
 Close Call (challenge effect) 44
 comlink, earbud 66
 componentization 68
 Containment (challenge effect) 45
 Contingency Plan (talent) 25
 contingency plans 89
 Coordinated Effort (talent) 23
 Critical Skill Success (talent) 21
 Crowd Control (talent) 23
 Cut the Red Tape (feat) 27
 Da'Gara 119
 Damaging Disarm (talent) 25
 darter 64
 Dedicated Guardian (talent) 24
 Dedicated Protector (talent) 24
 Defel 11
 Degenerating (challenge effect) 45
 Degrees of Failure
 (challenge effect) 45
 Degrees of Success
 (challenge effect) 45
 Demoralizing Strike (feat) 27
 Detective (talent) 24
 Devaronian blood-poison 65
 Disarm and Engage (talent) 23
 Disturbing Presence (feat) 27
 Domina Tagge 120
 Done It All (talent) 20
 E'thinaa 119
 ecology, Nyriaan 140
 Electronic Trail (talent) 24
 Elomin 133
 Entangler (talent) 23
 Exceptional Skill (talent) 21
 Expert Briber (feat) 27
 Extreme Success
 (challenge effect) 46
 Fade Out (talent) 22
 failure conditions,
 skill challenge 48
 False Kadann 111
 Falsin's rot 142
 Filli Bitters 113
 Finis Valorum 99
 flash suppressor/silencer 66
 Flèche (feat) 27
 For the Cause (talent) 21
 Forceful Recovery (feat) 27
 Fosh 12
 Galen Marek 113
 gathering heroes 78
 geography, Nyriaan 128
 Get into Position (talent) 20
 Given 13
 gondolas 137
 Gotal 14
 government, Nyriaan 13
 Grazing Shot (feat) 27
 Gregar Typho 114
 Guaranteed Boon (talent) 20
 Haanen Felean 111
 Han Solo 113
 Herglic 15
 Hobbling Strike (feat) 28
 holo converter 66
 Improved Opportunistic
 Trickery (feat) 28
 Individual Effort
 (challenge effect) 46
 Indomitable Personality (feat) 28
 Initiative (challenge effect) 46
 irksh poison 65
 Isolder, Prince 107
 Jacen Solo/Darth Caedus 105
 Jan Ors/Jan Strange 117
 Jar Jar Binks 114
 Jayshon Korden, Jedi Master 109
 Jent Koush 113
 Jolor Oron 101
 Keep Together (talent) 22
 Kiyir Gir-sku 101
 laser transport arrays 137
 law enforcement, Nyriaan 143
 Leading Skill (talent) 20
 Learn from Mistakes (talent) 20
 Madilon 127
 Make an Example (talent) 22
 Master Defender (talent) 24
 Master Manipulator (talent) 20
 Master of Disguise (feat) 28
 Meadlin's tree 142
 Meat Shield (feat) 28
 mines, madilon 133
 MrIssi 16
 Neimoidian 17
 Nom Anor 119
 Nym 114
 Nyriaan native/Nyriaanan 144
 Nyriaan spice 142
 Octavian Grant,
 Grand Admiral 123
 Opportunistic Trickery (feat) 28
 Opposed DC
 (challenge effect) 46
 Pa'lowick 131
 Padmé Naberrie/Queen Amidala 115
 Panaka, Captain 115
 panic ring 66
 Pistol Duelist (talent) 25
 Prudent Escape (talent) 22
 quongoosh essence 65
 Reactive Stealth (talent) 22
 Recovery (challenge effect) 46
 Recurring Success (feat) 28
 redirection crystal 67
 Reliable Boon (talent) 21
 Resolute Stance (feat) 28
 Restricted Skills
 (challenge effect) 47
 Retaliation (talent) 20
 Revealing Secrets (talent) 25
 Reverse Strength (talent) 23

Revolutionary Rhetoric (talent) 22
 Ric Olié 115
 Rivoche Tarkin 117
 Rodin Baem 110
 Roos Tarpals 115
 Rugor Nass 115
 Sadistic Strike (feat) 28
 Salporin 113
 Second Effort
 (challenge effect) 47
 settlements, Nyriaan 129
 Arumed 129
 Locus 130
 New Lowick 130
 Prosperity 131
 Silence 131
 Starveil 132
 Temperance 132
 Tonnage 132
 Tor'Oront 132
 Vineyard 133
 shield cage 67
 shielding stations 138
 Shunt Damage (talent) 24
 Silas Tagge 121
 Silver Tongue (feat) 29
 Sio Bibble 115
 Sizing Up (talent) 23
 Skill Boon (talent) 21
 Skill Challenge: Catastrophic
 Avoidance (feat) 29
 Skill Challenge: Last Resort
 (feat) 29
 Skill Challenge: Recovery (feat) 29
 Skill Confidence (talent) 21
 Skillful Recovery (talent) 21
 snare pistol 64
 Stand Tall (feat) 29
 surface conditions, Nyriaan 128
 surveillance detector 67
 surveillance tagger 67
 T-215 "Toowon" 101
 Ta'a Chume, Queen Mother 105
 Tarzen Tagge 121
 Tavin Korden, Prince 109
 Tempest's blessing 143
 Ten Dorne 110
 Tessala Corvae 103
 Thrackan Sal-Solo 99
 Timed Challenge
 (challenge effect) 47
 timeline, Nyriaan 134
 toxin detector 67
 trihexalon 65
 Tru'eb Cholakk 116
 Try Your Luck (talent) 20
 Umbaran 18
 veridicator 67
 vid-vox scrambler 67
 villain, creating 87
 villain, removing 89
 Wookiee Grip (feat) 29
 wrist blaster 64
 Yomin Carr 119
 Ysanne Isard 111
 Zerrol nightstinger 64

GALAXY OF INTRIGUE

Character	CL	Page	Creature	CL	Page
Amar Cros	10	149	Chlovi cat	5	141
Ananah Kragana	10	182	Lluma	7	140
Assassin (male Zabrak)	4	166	Pherin	3	141
Corporate Sector					
assassin	5	207	Droid	CL	Page
Corporate Sector			3D-4 administrative		
commando	4	220	droid	0	73
Corporate Sector			5-BT threat analysis		
mine guard	2	216	droid	1	72
Corporate Sector miner	1	217	B4J4 security droid	2	75
Deluge facility guard	3	218	BL-Series battle		
Deluge facility technician	1	219	legionnaire	3	75
Duros officials/			FIII footman droid	9	74
CSA agents	7	178	M4-Series messenger		
Finvarra	3	199	droid	1	73
Frizz	2	162	MRD-39B assassin droid	6	208
Ghia Preyssola	6	148	NR-1100 slicer droid	3	72
Joruba Consortium			Starship	CL	Page
technician	0	159	Corona Limited		
Joruba Consortium			luxury groundspeeder	4	71
troubleshooter	2	159	<i>Ferret</i> -class		
Kal Jorek	3	162	reconnaissance vessel	12	69
Karvas Toll	8	170	Incom A-24 sleuth		
Koon Odan	4	166	(modified)	10	68
Loodux	9	174	<i>Lambda</i> -class shuttle		
Malvina clan scout	3	212	(modified)	13	186
Mon Calamari radical	5	173	<i>Prowler</i> -class		
Sith descendant	2	215	reconnaissance vessel	12	70
Tehlan Aleece	7	186	PVT-2100 incarcerator	16	68
Tevlun	1	193	Sabaoth frigate spy ship	11	71
Yrssk	5	214	SoroSuub JG-8 luxury		
Zerik	8	151	landspeeder	2	71

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