

Holes

Episode 3 of the Blinking Eyes Trilogy A One-Round Living Force Adventure

by Lee Pickler

You have been invited by the Dariana, Mother of the Hiironi, to attend a celebration at Hiironi irstat commemorating the Cularin Compact. An adventure for Living Force Heroes levels 1 to 9. It is strongly recommended that this be played after "Quarters" and "Halves" (the first two parts of the Blinking Eyes trilogy).

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

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

Scoring the game for RPGA points: The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. *No-vote scoring*: The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. *No-vote scoring*: The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
3. *Partial scoring*: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player-voting sheet, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
4. *Voting*: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually require advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

A note about the text: Some of the text in the module is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text,

instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Character Earnings

At the beginning of the round, if the characters are employed, they receive their pay. No matter how much time has passed since the previous round, they receive pay for one week. Characters who are not employed but who have profession or craft skills may roll against those skills to see how much they have earned from their profession or craft in the last week. Use the method in the core rules (Craft: pg. 72 *Check result times 20 credits*; Profession: pg. 80 *Check result times 50 credits*). Note that characters may use only one of the above methods and must choose which before rolling (Employment, Craft or Profession).

Post-Scenario Paperwork

In addition to filling out a scoring packet, the Judge needs to do the following after a Living Force game:

- Sign and date each player's log sheet. Players are responsible for keeping track of their own experience points and credits.
- Sign and date any additional certificates. Be sure to put the character name in the space available.
- Sign/date/notate any metagaming certificates that require your attention. These should be evident from the metagaming certificates.

Issuing Force and Dark Side Points

Issuing Force Points: When heroes perform cinematically heroic actions, don't forget that you may issue a Force point for such activities. Because this is a heroic campaign, we expect heroism - and encourage judges to reward it. In the course of a standard Living Force event, there are many opportunities for heroism. If a Living Force hero performs in a way that is heroic, dramatic, and cinematic, then a Force Point is definitely in order. Our favorite story involved the hero at the premiere, who leapt from a moving speeder, grabbed a vine, and swung on that vine to attack someone in another moving speeder. THAT is dramatic, cinematic heroism!

Not everything will be that extreme, and you don't have to jump from a moving speeder to earn a Force Point, but if a hero does something that makes you, the judge, say, 'Wow,' then they should probably get a FP.

The core rules (pg 157) define "Dramatic Heroism" as follows:

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

- It must accomplish a significant task in the defense of good or the defeat of evil;
- It must occur at a dramatically appropriate time (usually the climax of the adventure); and

- It should require significant risk on the part of the hero.

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

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

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

General Notes to the GM

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

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

GM Overview

The chaos from the "situation" involving Governor Barnab Chistor of Gadrin and Senior Counselor Westa Impeveri of Hedrett has died down. Everyone in the two cities has returned to their normal, daily life.

In the absence of Cavin Chistor's and Dext Molay's Syndicate, a new power player has stepped in

to fill the void – Alina Impeveri, Westa Impeveri's daughter. Alina has gathered the remnants of the Syndicate, added them to the network she had already organized, and taken control. Also, she has solidified her partnership with Verkul Seimbo, a minor Filordi member of the Metatheran Cartel, and a band of pirates known as the Rock Rogues.

This pirate group attacks only merchant vessels – mainly Metatheran Cartel ships designated by Verkul – just outside of the Cularin system. The cargo is seized and, via a round about route, delivered to Alina's base of operations in the Ishkik Caverns. From there, it is sorted and transported by skiff to merchants loyal to Alina in Gadrin and Hedrett. The prices for these goods are somewhat lower than they would normally be. Specialty and illicit goods are sold on the black market.

Unfortunately for Alina, a band of Tarasin from Hiironi irstat discovered the base camp. The Tarasin bolted for home immediately to alert Dariana of the situation. Bhassi Kloor and Neebuk Garbos, Alina's two chief enforcers, and several pirates gave chase. They killed all but one of the Tarasin, who made it back to Hiironi irstat. He died soon after telling of the discovery. The Mother of the Hiironi became very disturbed at the hunter's tale of offworlders in the caverns.

Dariana decided the intruders must be dealt with. She organized a celebration and invited many beings with the hopes of finding a few heroes to help rid the Caverns of their evil presence ...

Encounter 1: Welcome to the Jungle

The encounter begins with the heroes at a celebration sponsored by Hiironi irstat. They are commemorating the signing of the Cularin Compact and the control it gave them over their world's development.

Dariana, Mother of the Hiironi, is about to start a speech when a terrible thunderstorm breaks out and a number of sclarin (raptor-like kilassin) burst into the village.

The heroes must help defeat the sclarin and save the Tarasin who live there, including Dariana.

Encounter 2: Mother of the Hiironi

After the sclarin attack, the heroes learn that Dariana wishes to meet with them. The heroes are led to a hut surrounded by heavily armed Tarasin hunters.

Dariana speaks to the heroes about why they are here. It is obvious the Mother of the Hiironi is not in good health and severe bouts of coughing overtake her several times.

She has learned that a dark presence has taken up residence in the sacred Ishkik Caverns. Through visions in the Force, she has learned it must be the heroes who

defeat this darkness. The aged Tarasin charges the heroes with finding and removing this evil infestation.

Encounter 3: Pirates and the Jungle

The heroes set out with their Tarasin guide, Slillek. The young scout is quiet and speaks to no one other than other Tarasin or beings who fought against the kilassin.

After several days have passed, the group hears the sound of blaster fire, repulsor engines and yells. A group of pirates are attacking a Tarasin hunting party. Slillek responds to the Tarasin's cries and runs into battle.

When the pirates see that the Tarasin have competent reinforcements, they run for their skiff, leading to a running fight through the jungle.

The heroes have the opportunity to take some prisoners and question them.

Encounter 4: Bounty Hunters

Two words inflict fear in most beings: Bounty hunters. The heroes have a late night encounter with a band of hunters trudging their way through the jungle. They had their ship blown out of the air and are looking for a little payback. Both groups spend a little time "interrogating" each other about what they know of the Ishkik Caverns and their current occupants.

Encounter 5: The Ishkik Caverns

The heroes arrive at the Ishkik Caverns. Exploration leads to the discovery of a number of things: a group of miners bent on finding the "big score," treacherous caverns and tunnels apt to collapse and a frenzied gundark. As the tunnels get closer to the mountain, the heroes also discover some Tarasin artifacts.

Encounter 6: The Syndicate

The heroes make their way into the caverns located under the mountain and locate the source of trouble. From previous run-ins, they know pirates are operating here. But now it seems to be larger. The Metatheran Cartel seems to be calling the shots, along with a dark haired woman. Who is she and why does she look familiar?

Important Note to Judges: There are a large number of potential fights in this event. Do not feel as though you need to run all of them, and be aware of the fact that you only have limited time for the slot. Pick and choose the battles that are most cinematically appropriate for the group you are running.

Opening Crawl

A dark time has come to the Tarasin. Faced with the failing health of Dariana, Mother of the Hiironi, the Tarasin are very concerned. Mother Dariana is concerned as well, but for other reasons. She has sensed a darkness gathering deep in the jungles of Cularin. But a new resource has presented it to her, and so she calls on the heroes of Cularin to come to the aid of the Hiironi, of the Tarasin, and of the system.

Encounter 1: Welcome to the Jungle

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes help save the Hiironi irstat from an attack by a Tarasin Wyrd. Led by Liriana, sister to Dariana, the Wyrd seeks to disrupt the celebration with a Force-conjured storm and a sclarin attack. Also, they get a glimpse of the poor health condition that Dariana is in.

This encounter begins at Hiironi irstat. The heroes have been invited here to attend a Tarasin celebration of the Cularin Compact. Each year, the natives of Cularin gather in their villages and reflect with joy on the end of offworlder encroachment on their territories. Though corporate growth has continued over the past century, it has been at a controlled pace and not tremendously disruptive to the Tarasin. On this day, they also pay their respects to those brave Tarasin who lost their lives in the Revolt.

The celebration has lasted all day and into the night. Summer thunderstorms have popped up throughout the day, as is usual on Cularin. The air is thick with humidity, and, even after the suns have descended, the temperature is high.

Allow the heroes a few minutes to mingle with others attending the celebration. There are just over three hundred Tarasin residing in Hiironi irstat and all are present. They have invited about three dozen offworlders (including Tarasin heroes from other irstat) to their village for this festival and remembrance. While most of the offworlders are polite enough, a few are a bit rough and/or shady. Heroes may feel free to wonder why such characters would be invited. The Tarasin hosts freely talk with their guests and question them extensively about themselves.

After a few minutes (no more than ten or so), read the following:

You notice your Tarasin hosts politely cease their conversations and turn as one to face a hut near the center of the village. Their skintone changes noticeably. Whereas they had been mostly white with

shades of blue or purple for most of the day, the Tarasin shift to a paler shade, with little coloration other than white.

Two Tarasin step from the hut. One is slight in form. Her scales are dull green from age. Dressed in a flowing pale blue robe, she walks with a carved staff in her right hand. Tarasin and offworlder alike bow in respect as she passes. This can only be Dariana, the Mother of the Hiironi.

The second Tarasin is much younger. Her scales have a deep green luster, though her fan is tinged slightly red. Her robe is purple, trimmed with red, and looks to be made for ease of movement. She wears a blaster pistol strapped to her hip. This is Cryalira, the Irstat-kes of Hiironi irstat.

The younger Cryalira walks beside the aged Dariana, supporting her as they make their way towards a small dais in the center of the village. Dariana stops a couple of times as fits of coughing besiege her.

Once there, Cryalira helps the Mother step onto the dais so she can look out over her people. A smile slowly forms on her face as she opens her mouth to speak.

Any heroes who are Force-sensitive should make a DC 20 Wis check at this point. Success indicates they get that “bad” feeling. Heroes making a successful DC 20 Spot check also notice a look of concern appearing on Dariana’s face just before the following:

Your only warning is the sudden winds that whip up. Small debris goes flying just as the rains begin. Hard, soaking rain that stings as it hits you begins the fall from a sky that was cloudless moments before.

With fury, creatures rush from the underbrush, ready to attack anyone in sight with terrible claws and razor-sharp teeth.

Dariana’s sister, Liriana, has decided to show her anger at today’s ceremony. The Wyrd leader feels the Tarasin showed weakness by giving in and surrendering any land and rights to offworlders with the Cularin Compact. That her sister would dare celebrate such an event has evoked the dark Tarasin’s ire.

Liriana and several members of her Wyrd have driven a number of beasts, known as sclarin, into the village. All but Liriana flee deep into the jungle after. The Wyrd leader remains to whip up a storm using her great power in the Force, and watch the chaos that ensues. Should any offworlders, or Dariana, die, well that would be just fine with her.

Liriana stays far enough outside of the village to remain undetected. She never personally attacks

anyone. Rather, she lets the sclarin and storm do her work.

The storm she summons is via the Summon Storm feat on page 19 of the *Dark Side Sourcebook*. Liriana has created an enormous storm, some 2 kilometers in diameter, so she can affect the village yet remain safely hidden outside of it. The effects of the storm are: anyone in it is given nine-tenths concealment (40% miss chance) and a –2 penalty on all attacks, skill checks and ability checks. Also, lightning does crackle, with the possibility of striking somewhere in the irstat (use for drama, like a hut bursting into flames and the heroes must rescue the Tarasin hiding in it).

The sclarin are a breed of kilassin just over two meters tall. Their scales are very fine and are a deep, dark green (almost black) with a scarlet “splotch” on their tapered snout. They move around on their hind legs and attack with a combination of two front claws and very sharp teeth. These reptiles are very aggressive and do not retreat when threatened with technological weapons.

The only difference in the tiering for this encounter is the number of sclarin appearing. (There are more than this in the village – this number is just the ones nearest to the heroes. Tarasin hunters and other offworlders will be battling the others.) Tier 1 has 2 to 4, Tier 2 has 4 to 6 and Tier 3 has 6 to 8. Choose an amount that will provide an adequate challenge to the heroes.

Sclarin: Predator 3; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural); Spd 10m; VP/WP 29/19; Atk +7 melee (1d3+4, 2 claws), +2 melee (1d4+4, bite); SQ Low-light vision, Scent, Terrifying presence (see DM Aid #1); SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ M; Rep 0; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +8, Intimidate +5, Move Silently +8, Spot +4.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Stealthy.

Several Tarasin, Cryalira included, surround and protect Dariana from the sclarin. There is ample opportunity for the heroes to shine here. Rescuing Tarasin or other offworlders (not all present are adventuring-type heroes), fighting off the mighty sclarin, pulling beings from burning huts, etc.

The storm dies out after ten minutes, just as quickly as it began. What is left behind is hardly recognizable as the village before. Several huts are burned down and there is significant damage to several others due to the winds.

If the heroes moved to defend Dariana, they notice her being escorted to an intact hut by a contingent of

Tarasin hunters. Cryalira walks behind them, eyes wary, blaster in hand. She disappears into the hut while the hunters take up position around it.

The heroes may spend a few moments surveying the damage done by the attack. It really looks worse that it is, but oh, how bad it looks.

Tarasin and offworlder alike thank the heroes for the bravery they showed during the attacks. Healing is made available from the Tarasin for any injured heroes. There are Tarasin Force Adepts who can Heal Another.

After a couple minutes, proceed to the next encounter.

Encounter 2: Mother of the Hiironi

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes meet with Dariana. She “requests” they investigate the Ishkik caverns and find out who has moved into them and why.

Once she gets settled into the hut, Dariana informs Cryalira that she wishes to see the heroes. They are the ones in her visions. The Mother of the Hiironi sends Cryalira out into the irstat to bring the heroes to her.

Cryalira stalks around the village like a katarn on the hunt looking for the heroes. She remembers each of their names from when they were introduced earlier in the day.

Cryalira, Iirstat-kes of Hiironi irstat, walks up to you, blaster still in hand. Her scales have a deep pink luster to them and her red fan is fully extended. The leader of the village is not happy.

“Greetings,” she says in Tarasinese. “Please accept my thanks for the help you provided to us earlier. It was most welcome.”

If none of the heroes speak Tarasinese, then a nearby offworlder steps up to translate. Cryalira seems somewhat irritated if none of the heroes speak Tarasinese, which reflects in her scales gaining a slight black tinge.

Any hero who moved to directly protect Dariana gets singled out by Cryalira for special thanks. She is very grateful of any offworlder who thought of the Mother before thinking of themselves. Cryalira believes aliens like that will make the bonds between Tarasin and offworlder stronger.

“The Mother of the Hiironi requests that you join her in her tent.” It seems more a demand than request.

Cryalira escorts the heroes to Dariana’s hut. As they get just outside, have each hero roll a DC 15 Listen check.

Success means they hear the following portions of a conversation going on inside the hut: “... *not natural ... evil ... Liriana, must be ... Wyrld ...*” The conversation ends with a cough and Dariana wheezing that the problem is hers and she will take care of it.

Cryalira steps into the hut, then moments later pulls the cloth door aside for the heroes to do the same.

The inside of the hut is lit by a single fusion lantern. Its soft glow adds a slight yellow cast to the room and its occupants. The air smells of unseen mold and traces of burnt wood.

A hacking cough moves your attention from the hut to a frail looking Tarasin. Dariana, the Mother of the Hiironi irstat, sits atop several thick cushions. Gray-scaled hands cover her mouth as Dariana has a coughing fit for a minute. When it is over, a young male Tarasin hands her a cup. She drinks deeply, a look of relief spreading across her aged face.

The Mother of the Hiironi hands the cup back and looks intently at you. Her brown eyes pierce you to the very core. “You are our heroes?”

Dariana will stand (with great effort) and greet each hero personally. If she has met one before, the Mother asks how they are doing and what has happened since they last met.

Looking at Cryalira as she sits back on the cushions, Dariana motions for you to sit on mats on the dirt floor.

“You have saved the Tarasin once. I need you to do so again.

“One of our hunters returned several days ago from a lengthy expedition. He was dying from many wounds and fever. This brave warrior had been part of a hunting party that ...”

Another coughing fit begins. This one lasts several minutes. Dariana doubles over and the male Tarasin and Cryalira move to her side, helping the Mother sit upright again. Tears run down Dariana’s cheeks as she collapses against Cryalira’s chest, breathing heavily. The male pours a strange orange liquid from a pitcher into the same cup and hands it to Dariana again. She drinks it and rests for a few minutes. With labored breathing, Dariana sits upright.

The heroes notice, even in the dim light, the only coloration to Dariana’s scale besides the gray is a slight tinge of yellow.

“Pardon me. Age seems to have caught up to me with a vengeance. I am not what I used to be.”

Dariana will continue her story of the hunter. He returned in a fevered condition, with infection having

already laid into his open wounds. He babbled and babbled, much of it not making sense. But he did keep talking about a great evil in the Ishkik caverns. An evil not of Cularin. He never really gave any more useful information and died several hours later. (A successful DC 18 Spot check allows the hero to notice the Tarasin male flinches slightly at this point.)

“I have used the Force to attempt to pierce the caverns. All I can sense from them is darkness and evil. Something very bad is in those caverns. I was at a loss for what to do.

“And so I again turned to the Force. I learned that only those with heroic souls could come to our aid and rid the caverns of the darkness living there. Thus came the invitations to our celebration.

“The vision only told me you would come, not who you were. But I knew I would learn your faces. And so you are here.”

Dariana stops here for the heroes to ask questions. If they do not begin asking, she will make up for that. Though she will be slightly upset they are being reluctant.

- *What would you have us do?* Travel to the Ishkik caverns, find out who has taken them over and why, and remove them.
- *Do you mean kill them?* No. Find the intruders and stop them. However, I get a very cold, and dreadful feeling whenever I try to look into the caves. I fear a great evil is there.
- *How do we get there?* (Points at the male Tarasin) Sillek will be your guide. He will take you to the valley where the caverns are located. Exploration will have to do after that. (Sillek will remain behind at the valley entrance.) Also, no vessels of any sort may be used. The jungle, and rivers, and chasms, make it impossible for most speeders to pass, and there are no landing areas where you will be going.
- *What are the Ishkik caverns?* They are a series of tunnels, caverns, and caves our people used during the Revolt. They caverns lie beneath the Coraqii valley and even run into the Mivaast mountain range, which forms the “walls” of the valley. It was discovered several years before by some offworlders looking for a place to raise on of their platform cities. When the Revolt began, the caves were unoccupied and some of the irstat moved into the tunnels. After the Revolt was over, the Tarasin moved back to their homes, and brought most of our belongings with us. Some items remain, forgotten in lost tunnels.
- *Why are the caverns important to the Tarasin?* They were our home during the revolt. They were

our shelter and our safety. With families there, Tarasin warriors did not worry when they set out on raiding missions.

- *Why were hunters from your irstat there?* Every year, two of our best hunters take would-be hunters to the valley to hunt Tassa'to. He is the only kilassin of his kind. Every year they return without him. He is mean and terrible, but teaches the hunters a few tricks to go along with their injuries and bruised egos. I do not think any Tarasin could ever kill Tassa'to. And he does not kill Tarasin. Just cuts and bruises. It is a ritual for our hunters and, heh, fun for him.
- *Where does this Tassa'to reside?* He roams a dense area of jungle in the valley. This is his home. No other kilassin ventures near it.
- *Why must we go?* My visions have shown me that only offworlders (or specific Tarasin, such as heroes) can perform this task. If any Tarasin get involved (other than above), the darkness will spread instead of being defeated.
- *Why can't we use vehicles?* There are certain events that must happen. They will only happen with a foot journey. Also, she has felt the results of using ships: pain and fire.
- *How about supplies?* We will provide for you. Food, drink, clothing, etc., is being prepared.
- *When do we begin?* At first light. The caverns are about one week's travel.
- *What's so important about these caverns?* They hid us during the revolt over a century ago. They kept our villages safe from the Trade Federation armies. We were there for a long time. The caves became very important to our culture because of that.

If asked about Liriana or Wyrd, Dariana says nothing other than it is a Tarasin matter unrelated to the problem in the caverns. The heroes notice, though, the Tarasin in the room look very uncomfortable when either name is brought up. Tarasin heroes know only the legends of the Wyrd, but Liriana means nothing to them.

Other questions will be answered appropriately. It is clear that Dariana believes the heroes are the only ones who can remove the intruders from the caverns. If asked about payment, Dariana shakes her head in disappointment and has another coughing fit. Once she recovers, the Mother tells the heroes payment can be arranged if they want.

After they have asked their questions, the heroes are escorted by Cryalira to a grouping of small huts. The interiors are spartan but comfortable – unless one is a Wookiee. One hut is provided for every two heroes.

Encounter 3: Pirates and the Jungle

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes are traveling through the jungle and encounter a pirate patrol from the caverns. This leads to a running fight through the jungle.

The heroes are woken early the next morning, just before the light of Morasil and Termadus brighten the sky. They are given some time to prepare themselves.

Dariana is waiting outside their huts with several hunters when the heroes emerge.

“Good morning.” Dariana bows her head slightly to you. She is dressed in a loose, white robe this morning and leaning heavily on her staff. “I trust you rested peacefully?”

“We have laid out a meal for you before your journey begins.” The Mother turns and starts for the center of the village.

Laid out on a large wooden table is a delicious looking meal. Fruits, berries, and juices are spread over the table.

The heroes are given seats next to Dariana and Cryalira. The meal goes without any conversation unless initiated by the heroes. There are no other offworlders present.

At its conclusion, several Tarasin appear before the heroes’ table. Each is carrying a full backpack and several canisters (canteens).

Dariana tells the heroes these have been prepared for them. They contain enough food and water to last the journey to the Ishkik Caverns. The backpacks have been made from the hide of a kilassin and are very sturdy. The Tarasin wish the heroes to have these packs as gifts, also.

Slillek stands from the table. He bows deeply to Dariana and to Cryalira. He then gathers his pack and belongings and stands waiting for the heroes.

Slillek: Male Tarasin Scout 2; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 17 (+4 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 14/10; Atk +4 ranged (3d8/crit 19-20, blaster carbine), +1 melee (1d4, dagger); SQ +4 species bonus to Fort saves against heat, -2 penalty to Bluff and Sense Motive checks, Trailblazing; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Equipment: Blaster carbine, knife, backpack, medpac, map to valley of Ishkik Caverns, Tarasin amulet necklace.

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +12, Jump +5, Knowledge (Cularin) +7, Move Silently +8, Read Tarasin, Speak Tarasin, Spot +7, Survival +10.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Survival), Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

The departure from the Hiironi irstat is muted. Dariana wishes each of the heroes well on the journey and success at its end. Then she and the rest of the Tarasin villagers silently watch the heroes disappear down the jungle trail.

The journey begins well enough. The weather holds the first day and not too much rain falls. Cularin makes up for that afterwards.

The next few days are hot and wet. The rain seems only to end when you enter the densest portions of the jungle.

You forget what it means to be dry. When the rain doesn’t soak you, the humidity does. The kilassin-skin packs provided by the Tarasin manage to keep their contents dry, but only barely.

Still, the journey is fairly uneventful. Slillek expertly guides you through the jungle without any hostile encounters. The Tarasin scout does not speak Basic, but you work out hand signals over the first couple of days.

Just after noon on the fifth day, the group is stopped for a brief rest. The rain has mostly stopped and the temperature rises even higher. A light haze begins to form.

Have each hero make a DC 12 Listen check. Success means the hero hears the distant sound of blaster fire and the whine of repulsor engines. A successful DC 18 Listen check allows the hero to know which direction it is coming from. Moments later, shouting can be heard. To those who speak Tarasinese, it sounds like that language, though not clearly enough to make out the words.

Slillek takes off through the jungle, whether or not the heroes are with him. If the heroes go after, and catch, him, Slillek can be convinced to proceed slower and with some caution.

Once the heroes decide to get a first hand look at things, read the following:

The signs of a large lightfight are all about. Jungle foliage still smokes from the impact of blaster bolts.

Through the light rainfall, you can see several forms moving about the clearing, blasters in hand. Laying on the jungle floor are more forms – Tarasin hunters by the looks of them. Only a couple of them are moving. The rest lay still.

The beings moving around are members of the Rock Rogues, a pirate band employed by Verkul Seimbo and Alina Impeveri. They discovered the Tarasin hunting party within their patrol zone and decided to silence them, partially so others wouldn't be alerted and partially for the fun of it.

Two pirates stand watch at the skiff while the others check for any live or hiding Tarasin. The pirates are a mixture of species. Feel free to be creative, if there are any species the heroes have particular problems with feel free to include them (yes, you can even toss in a Caarite, if you like!).

While the pirates are not actively searching the jungle itself (they are confident none of the Tarasin escaped the clearing), the heroes may alert them if they are not careful.

Tier 1 (average character level 1-3):

Rock Rogues (4): Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Tier 2 (average character level 4-6):

Rock Rogues (5): Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Tier 3 (average character level 7-9):

Rock Rogues (6): Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

This fight will not take long, and in fact, is not the main conflict of this encounter. The primary conflict is with the other 4-6 Rock Rogues (depending on tier) who are searching the jungle on the opposite side of the clearing from where the heroes enter, and who take off at a run as soon as their friends start getting killed. They

will fire at the heroes as they go, shouting things like, "Fire up the engines! We've got company coming! We have to get back and tell the boss!"

It will take them 5 rounds to run through the jungle to their waiting skiff; use those 5 rounds to conduct a running fight. The pirates will run for a round, then stop, using trees as cover, and fire back at the heroes. They will then run for another round. Trees provide ½ cover in this jungle environment.

They want to get back to their skiff and head for the Ishkik caverns. However, odds are that won't happen – and if it does, the heroes should be extra paranoid heading into the caverns themselves. Make sure that they capture at least one of the pirates, so that they can find out what they've gotten themselves into.

Cargo Skiff: Craft: Ubrikkian Bantha II; Class: Ground (Speeder); Size: Huge (9.5 meters); Crew: Untrained +0 (1 pilot); Passengers: 20 or cargo; Cargo Capacity: 135 metric tons; Speed: 70m (max speed 200km/h); Altitude: up to 20 meters; Defense: 10 (2 size, +2 armor; provides ¼ cover to passengers); Hull Points: 20; DR: 5.

The skiff is actually stolen, and has its owner's mark on the main panel. So while the heroes may elect to use it for the remainder of the event, it is NOT theirs to keep.

One thing that can be said for the Rock Rogues: They are tight with their information, and only the individuals who NEED to know names actually know any. Currently, the Rock Rogues work for a human woman and some Filordi, whom they believe is with the Metatheran Cartel. A couple of nasty bruisers are always around; one's a Trandosha, the other a Sullustan. They've also heard rumors of another boss being there somewhere, but have never seen him (or her).

The organization has all sorts of stuff in the caverns. It gets transferred in from the ambush sites, organized and then moved out.

This is all any captured prisoner knows. Also, if he is presented at any time with an opportunity to escape, they will.

After the chase has ended, the heroes find it getting late in the day. They may want to recover Slillek's body if they did not bring it with them and he rushed into camp without them (in which case, he was shot and killed before they arrived). Setting up camp is a good idea at this point. If they still have an intact skiff, well it's going to be a little easier getting to the valley.

Encounter 4: Bounty Hunters

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes settle down for a night's rest when three individuals walk into their camp. These bounty hunters are seeking information concerning the pirates and whether or not the heroes are part of their band.

The events of the day should have the heroes fairly tired. They may wish to examine the map from Slillek's body at this point. It is fairly crude, but includes all major landmarks needed to get there.

Any scout hero with the Trailblazing ability can analyze the route and try to shorten the trip. They will find Slillek did a pretty good job of taking the shortest route to the valley. A successful DC 25 Survival check will allow the hero scout to find one area that can cut a little more time off the journey. This would allow the heroes to arrive tomorrow evening instead of the morning after.

After they have relaxed for a while, have any hero who is awake roll a DC 15 Listen check. Success means the heroes discover someone – or something – is trying to sneak up on them. Seconds later, a group of beings steps into the camp.

Standing before you is a group of three individuals. They appear to have gotten the worst end of some deal, as they are all battered, bruised and wearing makeshift bandages.

The apparent leader, a blue-skinned alien with a set of horns sticking up from his head and another set hanging down over his chest, steps forward.

“May the oceans bring you pleasure. I am Koll Jovas. These are my companions. May we share your camp?”

Koll is a Chagrian (the same species as Mas Amedda, Chancellor Valorum's aide in *The Phantom Menace*). He stands just over 2 meters in height, but is not exceptionally bulky. His clothing, a mixture of various browns, has tears and burns all over it. Koll's left hand is bandaged. Soot streaks cover his blue-hued head.

His companions are all in similar shape, sporting a variety of injuries. They are a female human (Sina Voosha) and a male Cerean (Ran-Siij). The remainder of Koll's crew is hiding in the jungle, within earshot (20m away). That group consists of a male Twi'lek (Fir Kashal), female Rodian (Liinu Oran) and male Devaronian (Jith Zesjoo).

Koll and the two bounty hunters with him are not apparently armed beyond survival knives. Koll has a hold-out blaster hidden inside his shirt. Sina is a martial arts expert. Ran-Siij does indeed have just his knife. Koll plans on being cordial, but will shout for the rest of his team should events dictate.

The bounty hunters have been hired by one of Verkul Seimbo's rivals in the Metatheran Cartel to find out who is responsible for the pirate attacks on Cartel shipping and bring a stop to it – with all proper lessons taught.

Unfortunately, the bounty hunters ran into some trouble -- the weather and a pirate CloakShape starfighter. The bounty hunter's transport suffered systems failure when the pirate fighter hit it with a couple of concussion missiles. Crashing into the jungle, the bounty hunters climbed out of the wreckage and gathered their functioning belongings. The group is now determined to make the pirates pay.

Koll is not used to having to act in a civil manner while on a mission. His blunt and occasionally brutal nature separates him from many of his kin. However, these are not normal times. Neither Koll, nor his fellow bounty hunters, are in any shape to push a fight.

He simply wishes to discover whether or not the heroes are members of the Rock Rogues. He will not ask this directly, at least at first. Koll will ask other probing questions to find out in an indirect manner.

As to answering questions, Koll will be as vague as possible. The wounds and burn marks come from their ship crashing in the jungle. They crashed due to a severe storm. Several of their party were killed and the three of them barely escaped before the ship went completely nova.

Koll will play the You-Know-I'm-Not-Telling-The-Truth-And-I-Know-You're-Not-Telling-The-Truth game for as long as the heroes desire.

This is something to have some fun with. The hunters have no intention of attacking the heroes, but don't let on to that. Just to keep the heroes on edge, the bounty hunters will offer to help with cooking, guard duty, etc.

Koll Jovas, Bounty Hunter Leader: Male Chagrian Soldier 1/Scoundrel 4; IM +2 (+2 Dex); Def 18 (+6 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 20/12; Atk +6 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), +4 melee (1d4, knife); SQ Amphibious, low-light vision, radiation resistance, Illicit barter, Better lucky than good, Skill Emphasis (Gather Information); SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +0; SZ M; FP 2 (+1d6); DSP 1; Rep 5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 16.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, knife.

Skills: Astrogate +5, Bluff +14, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +6, Move Silently +8, Pilot +6, Read/Write Chagri, Sense Motive +2, Speak Basic, Speak Chagri, Spot +5, Treat Injury +3.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Fame, Skill Emphasis (Bluff), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Sina Voosha, Bounty Hunter: Female Human Soldier 4; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 18 (+6 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 39/14; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, crit 20, unarmed) or +5 melee (1d4+1, knife), +7 ranged; SQ none; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +0; SZ M; FP 1 (+1d6); DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Knife.

Skills: Bluff +5, Demolitions +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Republic law) +8, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +2, Treat Injury +5, Tumble +9.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Heroic Surge, Martial Artist, Persuasion, Skill Emphasis (Tumble), Weapon Finesse (Unarmed), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Ran-Siij, Bounty Hunter: Male Cerean Scout 1/Scoundrel 3; IM +3 (+2 Species, +1 Dex); Def 17 (+6 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 20/10; Atk +2 melee (1d4, knife), +3 ranged; SQ Illicit barter, Better lucky than good; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ M; FP 1 (+1d6); DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 9, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Equipment: Knife.

Skills: Astrogate +8, Bluff +4, Climb +4, Computer Use +9, Disable Device +7, Gather Information +8, Hide +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Read/Write Cerean, Repair +6, Search +8, Speak Basic, Speak Cerean, Spot +10, Survival +11.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Survival), Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

Sina does not speak too much. Ran-Siij will speak some, but is rather guarded with his words. They are content to let Koll do the talking for them.

The next morning, as everyone is getting prepared to go their own way, Koll asks the heroes if his group could have the skiff (if the heroes still have it). Should they turn him down, things get tense for a few seconds as Koll contemplates taking it. Then he relaxes and thanks the heroes for their hospitality. “*Maybe we’ll meet again,*” he says as his group disappears into the jungle.

The three remaining bounty hunters that are hiding out in the jungle are:

Fir Kashal, Bounty Hunter: Male Twi’lek Soldier 4; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 16 (+3 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 41/14; Atk +6 melee (1d4+2, knife), +7 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Low-light vision; SV Fort +7,

Ref +4, Will +0; SZ M; FP 1 (+1d6); DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Computer Use +8, Demolitions +8, Intimidate +7, Read/Write Ryl, Repair +8, Speak Basic, Speak Ryl, Treat Injury +6.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Heroic Surge, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Liinu Oran, Bounty Hunter: Female Rodian Scout 4; IM +2 (+2 Dex); Def 16 (+4 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 30/13; Atk +3 melee (1d4, knife) or +5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ +2 species bonus on Search, Spot and Listen checks, Trailblazing, Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to Defense); SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4; SZ M; FP 1 (+1d6); DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 6.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Climb +5, Demolitions +4, Gather Information +1, Hide +8, Jump +5, Knowledge (streetwise) +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Rodese, Repair +5, Search +4, Speak Basic, Speak Rodese, Spot +7, Survival +12.

Feats: Heroic Surge, Point Blank Shot, Skill Emphasis (Survival), Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

Jith Zesjoo, Bounty Hunter: Male Devaronian Fringer 1/Scoundrel 3; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 19 (+6 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 28/14; Atk +3 melee (1d4+1, knife), +5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit barter, Better lucky than good; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +0; SZ M; FP 1 (+1d6); DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Astrogate +3, Bluff +8, Climb +5, Disable Device +4, Hide +7, Pilot +9, Read/Write Devaronese, Speak Basic, Speak Devaronese, Spot +3, Tumble +9.

Feats: Quick-Draw, Weapon Focus (Blaster pistol), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

The rest of the heroes’ trip to the valley is uneventful.

Encounter 5: The Ishkik Caverns

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes finally arrive at the Ishkik caverns. There is indeed activity there. The

heroes must decide whether to go in through the direct route, or find a more subtle way into the caverns and investigate.

The encounter opens with the heroes at the mouth of the Coraqii valley where the Ishkik caverns are located. Though foliage is still present, it does not seem to be as heavy, and there are more clearings. Also, a number of boulders lie on the valley floor.

The dense jungle fades away ahead of you. The path emerges into a clearing containing mostly small plant life, a few trees and even some boulders. While you can't see the walls of the Coraqii valley from here, this is its mouth according to the map.

The heroes can proceed into the valley either on foot or in the skiff (if they have it). This is the point at which Slillek would have left the party (or will, if he lived). His intentions were to remain behind and wait for the heroes to return.

If the heroes look around, there are several paths in the area. A successful DC12 Survival check reveals that they are most likely animal trails. The ground is hard, but most of the tracks that can be discerned are definitely made by beasts.

The area of suspected activity is marked on the map. It is around the mountains, about 60 kilometers away, in an area of dense jungle. A river is about 5 kilometers to the heroes' right, which goes right up and into the jungle they are going to.

The wildlife of Cularin is as apparent in the valley as the jungle. While traveling, the heroes witness several wild kilassin (of the dense, lumbering variety) and other animals (birds, grazing animals and such).

It is unnecessary to play out the heroes' journey to the jungle. The time goes by, they are there. Once there, they do have a couple of ways of finding out what is going on.

One, they can attempt to find and enter through the main system of tunnels the invaders are using. If guards are encountered, the heroes can Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, kill, etc. to get past them. This would put them directly in the rancor's den, so to speak.

Two, they could try to find a smaller tunnel or cave to enter the caverns by and come in through the "backdoor." This should greatly decrease the number of guards encountered and allow for some scouting before confronting the enemy.

Or three, they could try a completely different approach from either above to try and catch the GM off guard. This could happen. So just wing it. Maybe have a little fun.

The group currently located in the Ishkik caverns has been here for about a year. Alina Impeveri decided she

wanted a bit more power than what her position as daughter of Hedrett's senior counselor brought. She has a way with beings (naturally and through the Force), so she decided to exploit it.

Not long after the Metatheran Cartel was expelled from the planet, she contacted one of their representatives. Not bothering to explain how she got his name, Alina laid out a plan that would make them both rather rich. A nice little side effect would be how it increased the Cartel's influence on Cularin without anyone's knowledge.

Alina's Cartel partnership was formed with a small consortium of Filordi, represented by Verkul Seimbo. The two met on Varna Biqua to iron out the details. One, they needed a base of operations on Cularin, but away from the populace. Alina had already thought about this and proposed the Ishkik caverns. They were largely unexplored and not many beings traveled there. Those that did could just ... disappear. It would only add to the caverns' legend. From the caverns, the group, now labeled by Alina as the Syndicate, would be able to direct the flow of cargo coming onto the planet. Plus, there would be ample room for storage, should the need arise.

Two, they would need influence in the commerce areas. Alina had some contacts here, but this was more of Verkul's arena. She sealed pacts with her contacts in Gadrin and Hedrett while the Filordi worked on the platform cities. The only platforms left out of the bargaining were Mikish (due to Nirama's influence there) and Soball (Thaereian military base).

Alina had also begun to look into gaining influence with key persons at Gadrin's future spaceport. What a boon it would be to have the contacts to just directly transport goods through a dirtside port without anyone the wiser! (This development began to flower a few months later when she met and began a relationship with Dext Molay. Molay was best friends, and partners, with Cavin Chistor, the son of Governor Barnab Chistor of Gadrin. The two had formed their own "Syndicate" with the intention of gaining control of the future spaceport themselves. (This is covered in the previous adventure, *Halves*)).

The Syndicate would now need the goods. Ever the greedy beings, the Filordi came up with the idea of piracy. Some of their goods would be legitimate Cartel merchandise moved through sympathetic shops on Cularin. However, profits could be raised by raiding some of the Cartel's shipping outside of the system. Not only would the Syndicate have goods to sell, thereby giving the Filordi profits, but the Cartel could also collect on the insurance payoffs due to piracy!

So with the groundwork laid, the Syndicate was born. Alina called in an old favor and was able to employ two very tough bodyguards to help watch over her interests. The Ishkik caverns became the new base

of operations for the Syndicate. With their base established, Alina and Verkul started to work.

Cartel goods came in via a few trusted smugglers and pirated goods came in through the Syndicate's hired band, the Rock Rogues. Not only did the Rogues attack and harass select Cartel shipping, they acted against independent contractors also. With those goods not getting to market, it became very easy and profitable for the Syndicate's goods to be moved.

All was going well for the Syndicate until a small band of Tarasin hunters found their base. Alina unleashed the pirates on the natives, who were completely destroyed except one. Now, the Syndicate has increased dirtside patrols and curtailed travel to their cavern base until they know who may come looking. Alina knows the Tarasin too well to think otherwise.

The Syndicate guards are on heightened alert and always know exactly who is going to show up and when. Anyone else is just an intruder.

The Direct Way

Not the best way to handle things, but it is an option. The heroes just walk right up to the "front door" (the entrance with the hidden guards watching it) and announce their presence. They can talk their way in, shoot their way in, etc.

There are only three guards outside the main entrance. They are trying to stay concealed as much as possible (roll Spot vs. Hide checks). Only three are outside so unnecessary attention will not be called to the cave.

Syndicate Guards (3): Male Human Thug 2; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/13; Atk +5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +4 melee (1d4+2, knife); SQ none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +1.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Heroic Surge, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

If they attempt this route of approach, everyone in the main cavern used by the Syndicate will be aware of them and waiting (unless commando tactics were used and the guards quieted). Regardless, go to Encounter 6.

The Indirect Way

The most likely route the heroes will take. Looking for a side, or "backdoor," entrance to investigate through. One can be easily located, though make it at least a

kilometer or more from the main entrance used by the Syndicate. You'll need a little room to play with the heroes some.

The interior of the caverns is dark. The stone that makes them look like granite, but is much less durable. The stone flakes off in pieces of various sizes frequently. (Shake the heroes up by having a large piece fall off as they are entering a cave. Should do wonders for their nerves.) Tarasin heroes, and heroes making a successful DC 14 Knowledge (Tarasin culture) check, recognize the stone. The Tarasin use it often in making various tools and for decoration.

The Ishkik caverns are made of a large network of tunnels, caves and caverns. If they are not natural, no one knows how they came to be. Getting lost in the winding tunnels is very easy. To stay on track, heroes need to make a successful DC 15 Survival check. Just have the heroes make the roll once or twice to successfully bring them around to where the Syndicate is.

Below are some random encounters you can have occur as the heroes travel through the caverns. You don't have to use them all (and shouldn't if time is running short). The only one that must happen is the heroes finding a lost stash of Tarasin artifacts.

Encounter 1: Miners

Somehow, a small group of miners has slipped the attention of the Syndicate. This small group of somewhat unbalanced Ugnights is wandering the tunnels and caves looking for the "Big Score." They are harmless, will eye the heroes suspiciously thinking they are trying to steal the Ugnights claim. They cannot provide any useful information, but may prove good for a laugh or two.

Miners (4): Male Ugnight Expert 2; Init -1; Def 10 (-1 Dex, +1 size); Spd 6m; WP/VP -/14; Atk +3 melee (1d2+2, punch), or +0 ranged; SQ none; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will +1; SZ S; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills: Appraise +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +3, Profession (miner) +3, Read/Write Ugnight, Search +1, Speak Basic, Speak Ugnight, Survival +3.

Encounter 2: Tarasin Artifacts

While exploring a dusty corridor, the heroes come across a small side room. The entrance is very narrow and they must enter sideways. Four small wooden boxes lie on the floor. They are covered in dust and do not appear to have been touched in a long while. Opening them reveals a total of eighteen small carvings. The heroes notice they are similar in style to the one Slillek wore around his neck. Tarasin heroes, or heroes with the Knowledge (Tarasin culture) skill,

recognize them as being of Tarasin origin. The wood they are carved from is very old. These carvings have most likely been here since the Tarasin Revolt and accidentally left behind when the Tarasin moved out.

Once the heroes have spent some time wandering through the caverns, they find their way to a large metal wall that has been built across the tunnel. It is made of a dark, heavy metal similar to a blast door and is unmarked. There appears to be no doors or anything on it (nope, even taking 20, you do not find a door).

The Syndicate raised the wall to block out potential intruders or curiosity seekers, and maybe a stray beast or two. With the wall securely in place, they do not keep anyone guarding the other side, as it is difficult to get through a thick metal obstacle without making a little noise.

The wall is about 15cm thick, has a Def of 4, a Hardness of 10, and 180 WP. The heroes can get past it several ways:

- A lightsaber. The best cutting tool around, and fairly quiet. Hardly a noble use for the weapon, but given the evil darkness Mother Dariana described, understandable in the circumstances.
- Explosives. Not quiet, but will do the job. Of course, that could cause a tunnel collapse.
- Blasters. Wow, how many shots would that take? The heroes could do it this way, but would probably be hip deep in empty power packs by the time it was over. Better to shoot the flaking rock beneath or around the door.
- Sheer Strength. If takes an effective Str of 40 to get it open. Army of Wookiees, anyone?
- Dig the wall out. While the wall is wedged tightly into the tunnel opening, the rock forming the tunnel is somewhat brittle. A few rounds of cutting or blasting away will clear enough of the tunnel support away that the heroes can move the wall. Oops, how about a DC 12 Ref save to jump out of the way before it lands on them (5d6 damage if the save fails).
- Move Object. Ah, the old Jedi power. The wall weighs a lot, plus the fact it is wedged in tightly. A successful DC 25 skill check must be made. Then what do you do with it?

Once the door is out of the way, the heroes are free to explore the portion of the Ishkik caverns controlled by the Syndicate.

Encounter 6: The Syndicate

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes explore the Ishkik caverns and locate the Syndicate's base of

operation. They also find out just who makes up and controls the Syndicate and why they are on Cularin.

This encounter encompasses the heroes investigating the section of the Ishkik caverns that the Syndicate occupy and control. It can begin in one of two ways:

1. the heroes have come in through the "front" door, or
2. they have infiltrated through the caverns and come in through the back.

The tunnels in this area vary in size from 2 meters wide to 6 meters wide. Height changes from just over 2 to 3 meters. This area is not dusty and most of it has clearly seen activity of some sort.

A number of smaller caves can be found all along these tunnels. Contained within these rooms are numerous crates. All have had the identifying marks burned off them so the contents cannot be determined without breaking them open. It is up to the GM to determine the exact contents should player begin opening them up. Be creative in the descriptions, but do not try to tempt the heroes into taking them. Any hero who ends up keeping anything from one of these crates, after the event ends, should (1) have been warned that this is stealing, and that stealing is wrong, and (2) awarded a dark side point if they did not return the stolen merchandise; greed is, after all, a path to the dark side.

Do not allow the heroes to linger too long searching crates. They are not here to find out what is in them. It is unimportant and can eat up valuable playing time for the scenario.

As the heroes make their way through the tunnels towards the main cavern, they may encounter a random group of Syndicate personnel (if time permits). Most of these would be either mercs or pirates, though one or two administrative-type beings could be encountered (maybe on their way to inventory stock in a certain room). To determine if they encounter anyone, roll 1d3. A roll of 1 indicates a group of 1d3 pirates. A 2 indicates a group of 1d3 mercs. A roll of 3 indicates a group of 1d2 administrative-types.

Rock Rogues: Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Syndicate Mercs: Various Thug 2; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/13; Atk +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +4 melee (1d4+2, knife);

SQ none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +1.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Heroic Surge, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Syndicate Personnel: Various Commoner; IM +0; Def 10; Spd 10m; VP/WP -10; Atk +0 melee (1d3, punch), or +0 ranged; SQ none; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Profession (bean counter) +1.

Feats: Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

If given the opportunity, the Rock Rogues and mercs will resist the heroes. The regular personnel will just surrender, as they have no weapons at all.

Once they have explored the caverns for a few minutes, and maybe dodged a patrol or two, have the heroes come upon the main cavern being used by the Syndicate. (They can also enter this cavern by taking the “direct” route of approach.)

If the heroes have not disguised themselves in any way, the Syndicate will move into action upon first seeing them. The hired goons will draw blasters and open up, trying to not hit their goods. If the Syndicate has been put on alert for some reason (heard blaster shots or the like), then Bhassi, Neebuk, Alina and Verkul are all present in the main chamber. If they are not on alert, the Bhassi and Neebuk are present, harshly directing everyone. Alina and Verkul enter from side chambers when the trouble begins.

Should a lightfight start, the mercs and Rock Rogues will take cover behind various obstacles (crates, platforms, a skiff, etc.) and open fire on the heroes. The Rock Rogues are likely to have their blasters set to kill, but the mercs could have theirs on stun (makes the encounter a little harder for the heroes). You should decide the number of mercs and Rock Rogues present at each Tier. Set a number that is challenging to the heroes, but not overwhelming. (We recommend # of heroes times tier for the total # of mercs and pirates present.) Remember, these guys are cannon fodder.

Neebuk will pull his blasters and open up at the heroes with his weapons set to kill. Bhassi is an old fashioned melee artist. He very visibly draws the ryyk blade (so any Wookiee hero can see what he is using; make sure to note the significance of a ryyk blade to any player who isn't familiar with them, since it is a Wookiee weapon that Bhassi took from a kill and carries as a trophy now) and prepare for the heroes to

close. He will challenge and taunt heroes to fight in melee, especially Jedi and Wookiees. If they do not charge him, Bhassi will use his Force Grip and/or Move Object skills on the heroes within range. He will then move against any hero who gets separated from the others.

Alina has simple tactics: get to Bhassi and Neebuk. She hired them to watch over her and act as bodyguards and that is what she expects of them. Once she gets to them, Alina will then begin using Affect Mind to sow seeds of chaos amongst them by ordering heroes to “protect her.” (Alina will concentrate this application on Soldier-type heroes. Using Affect Mind in this way has a duration of 1 round.) She will also use Energy Drain, Fear and Friendship if the heroes are within range.

Should things begin to look bad for the Syndicate, Alina will use Illusion to conjure an image of a being dressed in a concealing black robe. This figure will “walk” out from one of the side caverns and ignite a red bladed lightsaber. This is the same mysterious figure seen in both *Quarters* and *Halves*, and was created by Alina each time. Alina uses this image to draw attention from her so she can try to escape. If she makes it into a side tunnel, she will bolt as quickly as possible for safety, leaving everyone to their own. Note that if she bolts and runs, the illusion will falter, since the illusion skill requires concentration. The DC to save against her illusion is 25 (will) and the only time anyone in “combat” with the illusion gets an automatic success on a save is if they successfully hit a defense of 30 or higher (or roll a natural 20). Otherwise, they get the standard save for interacting with the illusion, which will be a challenge for them to make.

Verkul is not a combat kind of Filordi. He prefers to let other do the fighting for him. That is what he has hired the Rock Rogues for. Unless he is cornered, Verkul will not really pose a threat to the heroes. If an opportunity to escape presents itself, he will attempt it. Otherwise, Verkul will not fight unless forced to.

Tier 1 (average character level 1-3):

Rock Rogues: Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Syndicate Mercs: Various Thug 2; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -13; Atk +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +4 melee (1d4+2, knife);

SQ none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +1.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Heroic Surge, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Alina Impeveri: Female Human Noble 2/Force Adept 2; IM +1 (Dex); Def 17 (+6 Class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 26/12; Atk +3 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), +2 melee (1d3, unarmed); SQ Bonus Class Skill (Bluff), Call in a favor (1), Inspire confidence +1; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; SZ M; FP 2 (+2d6 or +3d6); DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster.

Skills: Appraise +6, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +9, Entertain (dancing) +6, Knowledge (Cularin) +4, Knowledge (streetwise - Cularin) +6, Knowledge (Tarasin culture) +6, Read/Write Basic, Sense motive +4, Speak Basic, Speak Cerean, Speak Tarasinese.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +11, Drain Energy +5, Empathy +6, Fear +5, Friendship +7, Illusion +12.

Feats: Force Sensitive, Skill Emphasis (Affect Mind), Skill Emphasis (Illusion), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Sense.

Bhassi Kloor: Male Trandoshan Soldier 3/Dark Side Marauder 1; IM +0; Def 17 (Class +6, Natural +1); Spd 10m; VP/WP 42/14; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4, crit 19-20, ryyk blade), +8 melee (1d3+4, punch), +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Darkvision 20m; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; SZ M; FP 3 (+2d6 or +3d6); DSP 4; Rep 1; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Equipment: Ryyk blade, blaster pistol, 3 grappling spike launchers.

Skills: Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +7, Read/Write Dosh, Speak Basic, Speak Dosh, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Treat Injury +6.

Force Skills: Battlemind +5, Enhance Ability +8, Heal Self +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Force Sensitive, Heroic Surge, Power Attack, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Force Feats: Control, Rage.

Neebuk Garbos: Male Sullustan Soldier 4; IM +5 (+5 Dex); Def 18 (+3 class, +5 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 38/12; Atk +9 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +5 melee (1d4+1, knife); SQ Darkvision 20m; SV Fort +5, Ref

+6, Will +1; SZ M; FP 2 (+1d6); DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Equipment: Two blaster pistols, knife.

Skills: Demolition +4, Intimidate +6, Listen +5, Profession (gunslinger) +7, Read/Write Sullustan, Speak Basic, Speak Sullustan, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodese, Spot +3.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Verkul Seimbo: Male Filordi Diplomat 4; IM +0; Def 11 (+1 class); Spd 14m (6m if bipedal); VP/WP -/12; Atk +2 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), or +2 melee (1d6, 2 pincer); SQ +4 species bonus to Listen checks, -2 species penalty to Fort saves against sonic attacks; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +9; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Equipment: Robes, hold-out blaster

Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +11, Knowledge (Metatheran Cartel) +7, Knowledge (Streetwise) +6, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Filordian, Sense Motive +6, Speak Basic, Speak Filordian, Speak Ryl.

Feats: Iron Will, Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

Tier 2 (average character level 4-6):

Rock Rogues: Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Syndicate Mercs: Various Thug 2; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -/13; Atk +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +4 melee (1d4+2, knife); SQ none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +1.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Heroic Surge, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Alina Impeveri: Female Human Noble 3/Force Adept 4; IM +1 (Dex); Def 17 (+6 Class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 46/12; Atk +6 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), +5 melee (1d3, unarmed); SQ Bonus Class Skill

(Bluff), Call in a favor (2), Inspire confidence +1; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +11; SZ M; FP 4 (+3d6 or +4d6); DSP 1; Rep 5; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster.

Skills: Appraise +6, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +11, Entertain (dancing) +9, Knowledge (Cularin) +4, Knowledge (streetwise – Cularin) +6, Knowledge (Tarasin culture) +7, Read/Write Basic, Sense motive +4, Speak Basic, Speak Cerean, Speak Tarasinese.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +16, Drain Energy +11, Empathy +6, Fear +6, Friendship +9, Illusion +16.

Feats: Force Sensitive, Iron Will, Skill Emphasis (Affect Mind), Skill Emphasis (Illusion), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Control, Sense.

Bhassi Kloor: Male Trandoshan Soldier 3/Dark Side Marauder 4; IM +0; Def 18 (Class +7, Natural +1); Spd 10m; VP/WP 72/14; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+4, crit 19-20, ryyk blade), +11/+6 melee (1d3+4, punch), +7/+2 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Darkvision 20m; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +2; SZ M; FP 5 (+3d6 or +4d6); DSP 5; Rep 3; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Equipment: Ryyk blade, blaster pistol, 3 grappling spike launchers.

Skills: Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +7, Read/Write Dosh, Speak Basic, Speak Dosh, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Treat Injury +6.

Force Skills: Battlemind +8, Enhance Ability +8, Force Grip +7, Heal Self +4, Move Object +9.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Expertise, Force Sensitive, Heroic Surge, Power Attack, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Burst of Speed, Control, Hatred, Rage.

Neebuk Garbos: Male Sullustan Soldier 7; IM +9 (+5 Dex); Def 19 (+4 class, +5 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 65/12; Atk +12/+7 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +8/+3, +8/+3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SQ Darkvision 20m; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; SZ M; FP 2 (+2d6); DSP 1; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Equipment: Two blaster pistols, knife.

Skills: Demolition +9, Intimidate +9, Listen +6, Profession (gunslinger) +7, Read/Write Sullustan, Speak Basic, Speak Sullustan, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodese, Spot +4.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Multishot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Two Weapon Fighting,

Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Verkul Seimbo: Male Filordi Diplomat 6; IM +0; Def 12 (+2 class); Spd 14m (6m if bipedal); VP/WP -12; Atk +3 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), or +3 melee (1d6, 2 pincer); SQ +4 species bonus to Listen checks, -2 species penalty to Fort saves against sonic attacks; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +10; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 1; Rep 2; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Equipment: Robes, hold-out blaster

Skills: Appraise +10, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +12, Knowledge (Metatheran Cartel) +8, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Filordian, Sense Motive +8, Speak Basic, Speak Caarimala, Speak Filordian, Speak Ryl.

Feats: Iron Will, Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

Tier 3 (average character level 7-9):

Rock Rogues: Various Thug 2; IM +1 (+1 Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -15; Atk +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +3 melee (1d4+1, knife); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Intimidate +4.

Feats: Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Syndicate Mercs: Various Thug 2; IM +3 (+3 Dex); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -13; Atk +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +4 melee (1d4+2, knife); SQ none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +1.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Heroic Surge, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Alina Impeveri: Female Human Noble 4/Force Adept 6; IM +1 (Dex); Def 18 (+7 Class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 65/12; Atk +8/+3 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), +7/+2 melee (1d3, unarmed); SQ Bonus Class Skill (Bluff), Call in a favor (2), Inspire confidence +1, Force Weapon (+1d4); SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +13; SZ M; FP 6 (+3d6 or +4d6); DSP 2; Rep 6; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster.

Skills: Appraise +8, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +13, Entertain (dancing) +10, Knowledge (Cularin) +4, Knowledge (streetwise – Cularin) +7, Knowledge (Tarasin culture) +7, Read/Write Basic,

Sense motive +4, Speak Basic, Speak Cerean, Speak Tarasinese.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +19, Drain Energy +11, Empathy +8, Fear +6, Force Stealth +6, Friendship +9, Illusion +19.

Feats: Force Sensitive, Iron Will, Skill Emphasis (Affect Mind), Skill Emphasis (Illusion), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Control, Sense, Summon Storm.

Bhassi Kloor: Male Trandoshan Soldier 3/Dark Side Marauder 7; IM +0; Def 19 (Class +8, Natural +1); Spd 10m; VP/WP 102/14; Atk +15/+10 melee (1d6+4, crit 19-20, ryyk blade), +14/+9 melee (1d6+4, crit 20, punch), +10/+5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Darkvision 20m; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +3; SZ M; FP 7 (+4d6); DSP 7; Rep 4; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Equipment: Ryyk blade, blaster pistol, 3 grappling spike launchers.

Skills: Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +7, Read/Write Dosh, Speak Basic, Speak Dosh, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Treat Injury +6.

Force Skills: Battlemind +8, Enhance Ability +9, Fear +9, Force Grip +10, Heal Self +4, Move Object +11.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Expertise, Force Sensitive, Heroic Surge, Martial Arts, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Ryyk blade), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Burst of Speed, Control, Hatred, Rage, Sense.

Neebuk Garbos: Male Sullustan Soldier 10; IM +9 (+5 Dex); Def 20 (+5 class, +5 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 92/12; Atk +15/+10 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol), +8/+3), +11/+6 melee (1d4+1, knife); SQ Darkvision 20m; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +3; SZ M; FP 3 (+2d6); DSP 1; Rep 3; Str 12, Dex 21, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Equipment: Two blaster pistols, knife.

Skills: Demolition +11, Intimidate +12, Listen +6, Profession (gunslinger) +8, Read/Write Sullustan, Speak Basic, Speak Sullustan, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodese, Spot +5.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, Multishot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick-Draw, Rapid Shot, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Verkul Seimbo: Male Filordi Diplomat 8; IM +0; Def 12 (+2 class); Spd 14m (6m if bipedal); VP/WP -/12;

Atk +4 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster), or +4 melee (1d6, 2 pincer); SQ +4 species bonus to Listen checks, -2 species penalty to Fort saves against sonic attacks; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +11; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 1; Rep 2; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Equipment: Robes, hold-out blaster

Skills: Appraise +12, Bluff +14, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +14, Knowledge (Metatheran Cartel) +9, Knowledge (Streetwise) +9, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Filordian, Sense Motive +10, Speak Basic, Speak Caarimala, Speak Filordian, Speak Ryl.

Feats: Iron Will, Skill Emphasis (Diplomacy), Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

The Syndicate will fight until things begin to look really bad. If Verkul and/or Alina succeeds in slipping away or getting captured, and either Bhassi or Neebuk goes down, the hired guns will seriously contemplate bugging out. Bhassi is rather bloodthirsty and enjoys violence for the sake of it. He will fight to the death or until rendered unconscious. Neebuk is not quite as dedicated. He will surrender if he is severely outnumbered and Alina is nowhere to be found.

Should events go badly against the heroes, have the Cartel-hired bounty hunters show up and enter the fray. The low-level goons are their targets, allowing the heroes to concentrate on the big guys. If the heroes easily take care of the Syndicate, then Koll and his band of bounty hunters walk in as the fight finishes.

Koll will identify himself as being under the employ of Ojim Srellq, a member of the Metatheran Cartel who lost quite a few shipments to the Rock Rogues. Srellq hired the hunters to discover who had stolen his cargo and get it back. Srellq also felt there may be some inside help for the pirates because they always knew where and when to hit. Koll has manifests from the Cartel inventories, and the rest of the goods in the caverns can be identified based on records in Alina's quarters.

If Alina is captured, she will not say much. If presented with the opportunity she will try to "talk" the heroes into letting her go. She is just an innocent bystander who was forced into working with that evil Verkul Seimbo.

However, incriminating evidence can be found in her quarters. Stored on various datacards is information about where the merchandise is going, who their agents on Cularin are, etc. There is also information she obtained from Dext Molay (from *Halves*) about their plans. It is almost journal-like as she has added her own notes on how to improve their organization once she has control of it. Alina also has a timetable of planned events to counter Cavin and Dext's plans and frame them (again, see *Halves*).

Verkul will plead with the heroes if he is taken prisoner. He does not want to be given over to the bounty hunters and will offer the heroes anything to keep that from happening. He has his various private notes and such in his quarters on datacards also.

Koll will not push the heroes about turning over Verkul Seimbo. He asks if they would consider it, but does not start a fight if they don't. Koll does, however, lay claim on his employer's merchandise.

Conclusion

The heroes return to the Hiironi irstat, with prisoners in tow if they so desire. Dariana is pleased to see them, though it appears her health is continuing to decline. She is definitely coughing more and more and her scales are a very dull, pasty gray.

If the heroes also returned with the Tarasin artifacts, Dariana is extremely happy (large fit of coughing). She calls for a irstat gathering to celebrate the amulets return to the Tarasin. Each of the heroes is presented with one to wear around their neck.

If the heroes captured any of the Syndicate, they may be turned over to the Office of Peace and Security in Gadrin or Hedrett. If Alina is captured and turned in, or news of her involvement gets out, her father, Senior Counselor Westa Impeveri, is speechless that his daughter has caused so much trouble on Cularin.

The Metatheran Cartel vehemently denies any involvement in the Syndicate. Thurm Loogg denounces the "rogue" faction and insists they were operating without the knowledge or approval of the Cartel. Because, of course, "The Cartel LOVES Cularin!"

Here Ends Holes

Experience Point Summary

Experience is calculated as follows for Living Force events.

1. Experience awards in the SWRPG are not made for achieving objectives, but instead for successfully completing an adventure of a given length. Thus, if the heroes survived and accomplished the primary goal of the adventure, they receive full Adventure Experience (600 xp for core LF plot scenarios, 350 for non-core LF scenarios).
2. Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-400 points). These should reward accurate character portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially. Do NOT automatically award max roleplaying XP, consider carefully how well the players stayed in-character.

This is your opportunity to reward appropriately cinematic behavior, so use it!

Adventure Experience Award:

Did the heroes locate the presence in the caverns and stop the Syndicate? If so, each hero who survived receives 600 xp.

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

Total Possible Experience:	1,000 xp
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If the heroes did not complete the scenario because of time constraints, but were "on the right track," you may award ½ adventure experience. If the heroes succeeded in finding the caverns, but not investigating them, award them ¾ adventure experience.

Loot Summary

If it's not on this list, the PCs cannot keep it. This is a house rule that overrides what they may actually acquire in the scenario. Remember, any Jedi hero who "liberates" any of the goods from *Encounter 6: The Syndicate* after learning that they are stolen, and can be identified as such based on manifests the bounty hunters have in their possession, gets a Dark Side Point.

Encounter 3: Pirates and the Jungle

- Kilassin-skin backpacks. Each hero is given one by the Tarasin of the Hiironi irstat before setting off on their journey.
- 4 to 6 blaster pistols from the Rock Rogues.
- 4 to 6 knives from the Rock Rogues.

Encounter 4: Bounty Hunters

- 1 hold-out blaster.
- 2 knives.

Encounter 5: The Ishkik Caverns

- 3 blaster pistols.
- 3 knives.

Encounter 6: The Syndicate

- 1 blaster pistol from Bhassi Kloor.
- From Bhassi Kloor - 1 ryk blade (certed) Provides a +1 equipment bonus to attack rolls, and a +1 equipment bonus to diplomacy checks while dealing with other Wookiees
- 2 blaster pistols from Neebuk Garbos.
- 1 hold-out blaster from Alina Impeveri.
- 1 hold-out blaster from Verkul Seimbo.

- Blaster pistols from the Rock Rogues and mercs.

Conclusion

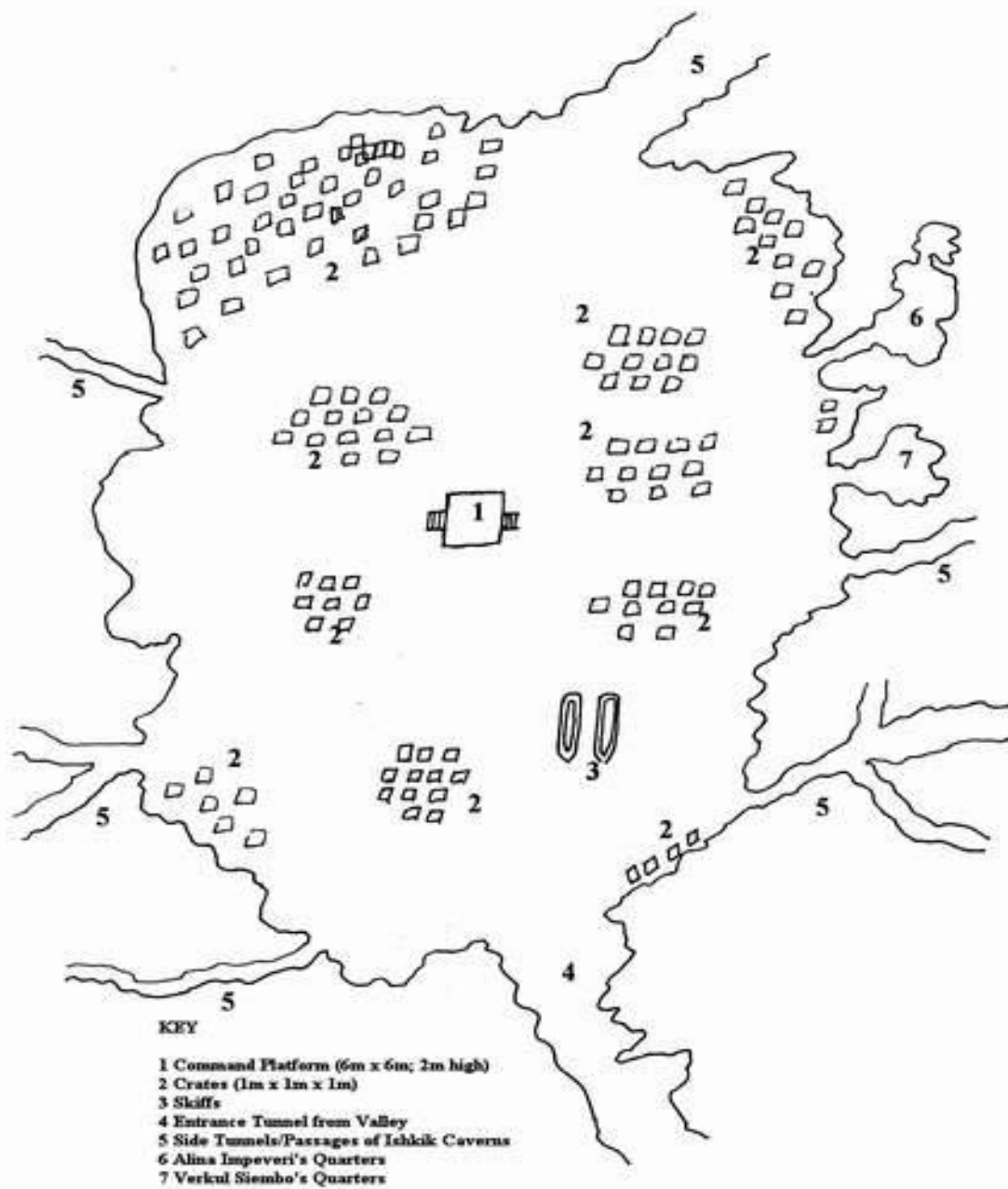
- If the heroes located the boxes of Tarasin amulets in the caves and returned them to the Hiironi irstat, Dariana expresses her gratitude by presenting one to each of the heroes.
- Tarasin Amulet: [Character Name] has been presented with this amulet by Dariana, Mother of the Hiironi. This amulet is very old and is carved from the wood of an ancient tree rumored to be among the oldest in the jungle. It provides a +1 circumstance bonus to any Diplomacy checks made when dealing with the Tarasin as long as it is visibly worn.

DM Aid #1: Terrifying Presence

*From the **Alien Anthology***

“The creature has an extremely fierce, intimidating presence – its opponents often freeze in fear. When the creature first attacks, it can make an Intimidate check as a free action to attempt to awe its opponent. The DC for this check is (15 plus the level of the opponent). If the check is successful, the opponent must make a Will save (DC 15). If the opponent fails this Will save, he may only take a move action or attack action on his next turn. If the opponent fails his save by 10 or more, he cowers. (A cowering character loses his Dexterity bonus and may not take an action on his next turn. Foes gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls for hitting cowering opponents; see the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*.) The opponent continues to cower until he makes a Will save (DC 10), which he may attempt once per round. A creature may only make one free Intimidate check in a given encounter.”

DM Aid 2: Map of the Ishkik Caverns



Critical Event Summary

Holes

Did the heroes participate in saving the Hiironi irstat during the sclarin attack?

Yes No

Did the heroes find the Tarasin amulets hidden in the Ishkik caverns?

Yes No

Did the heroes capture Alina Impeveri?

Yes No

Did the heroes capture Verkul Seimbo?

Yes No

Did the heroes locate the evidence linking Alina with the Metatheran Cartel?

Yes No

Was the rryk blade retrieved by a Wookiee?

Yes No

List the player name, character name, and RPGA # of the individual who retrieved the rryk blade from Bhassi.

Convention Coordinator:

To report these results (for events during the month of January 2002 only), you may:

- US mail them to: RPGA - Living Force, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707
- Or email to: LFPlots@rpga.net
- Or fax to: (425) 687-8287 Attention Living Force Critical Events
- Check <http://www.rpga.net/LF> for other methods.