

Who Goes Thaere?

A One-Round LIVING FORCE Tournament

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Cantina brawls, schmoozing information, battling pirates, dealing with the Thaereians, exploring hostile environments, and avoiding being eaten by - well, that would be telling. But it's all in a few days' work, for the heroes of the Cularin system. An adventure for LIVING FORCE heroes levels 1-9. This is a stand-alone scenario.

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Who Goes There? is a standard RPGA adventure. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event but the actual playing time should be about three and a half hours.

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

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

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

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

House Rules

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

Atoning for Dark Side Points

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

Dissipate Energy

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

Illusion

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

Stun

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

Hero Earnings

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

Issuing Force and Dark Side Points

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

General Notes to the GM

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

players visualize what is going on. **More than anything else, have fun.**

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

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

GM Overview

Our adventurers begin in a bar, waiting for their contact. There’s an excellent chance they’ll end up in a bar fight with some off-duty Thaerian soldiers. The heroes are hired by Sa’arli, a representative of Senator Wren, to investigate mysterious rumors of activity on the “Dark Moon” of Ostfrei. After obtaining some information, they travel to the moon and are attacked by pirates en route. Once on Ostfrei, they explore and run afoul of a natural hazard and an immature space slug. Once they discover that there is a pirate base, they may leave or attack. The heroes can also discover that there is some sort of secret Thaereian enclave on the other side of the moon.

Encounter 1: Waiting for Sa’arli

Hero opportunities include gathering information, brawling with troublemaking Thaereians, and befriending Alto Janss.

Encounter 2: Who Goes Thaere?

Briefing, negotiation, and the possibility of more legwork. If the heroes go off on this tangent, there may be a minor scuffle or two, and some more negotiation. Note that everything after the briefing is optional. Therefore, this encounter can be very short.

Encounter 3: Haven’t We Met?

Traveling to Ostfrei, the heroes encounter pirates and, briefly, a Thaereian Naval vessel.

Encounter 4: I Could Use a Slug of Something Strong, Right Now

The heroes land on Ostfrei, explore, and find a valuable mineral outcropping, a potential source of wealth. An immature space slug may find them a potential source of food.

Encounter 5: Home Again, Home Again

The heroes watch a pirate ship land. If the heroes didn't conceal their own ship, their transportation may be damaged or destroyed. This is a short, decision-point section.

Encounter 6: On a Rock And a Hard Place

The heroes may leave with their information, choose to attack the pirates, or be forced to try to obtain a ride off Ostfrei, if their ship was damaged.

Encounter 7: We've Got a Secret (Maybe)

Debriefing. May be abstracted, if you are pressed for time.

Important Note to Judges:

An important, final note, regarding timing: This scenario attempts to gratify a wide variety of player and character types. It also tries to make portions of the adventure nonlinear, to allow for player choice. For that reason, there are many options and choices in the scenario. You, the GM, must read it thoroughly before play. Options occur in:

Encounter 1. The heroes can fight or not, and can choose to gather information that would shorten Encounter 2.

Encounter 2. After briefing, the heroes can choose to gather more rumors in a variety of ways, or can choose to skip the second part of this encounter entirely.

Encounter 4. You have the option of running this as straight exploration, or of throwing in a combat encounter.

Encounter 5 (very short). Players can effectively decide to end the scenario here, or set up for another combat in Encounter 6.

There is an organizational chart at the end of the package (GM Aid #4), which may help you plan events, choices and timing.

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

challenging.

Opening Crawl

Things have changed in the Cularin System, and not for the better. Cularin's desire to become self-governing has come at the worst possible time in Republic history: the Senate and the Supreme Chancellor seem to find it necessary to exercise more and more power, and any talk of "independence" is often viewed as being Separatist, if not actual treason. Whether or not you have met Senator Wren, most people in the Cularin system agree that, if there is to be a peaceful solution to this problem, and to the increasingly militant grip of the former "peacekeepers", the Thaereians, it will be Senator Wren who spearheads that solution.

Now, she has a job for some of you, and a favor to ask from others...

Encounter 1: Waiting for Sa'arli

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes are in the "Near Vacuum" cantina, in Tolea Biqua, one of the floating cities of Genarius. Here, they meet Alto Janss and are likely to get into a bar fight with some off-duty Thaereians before meeting with their contact, Sa'arli, a representative of Senator Wren. Sa'arli is a female Tarasin, whose description can be found in Scene Two

Well, you certainly had the 50 credits, but Riboga's Barge is full for this afternoon's cruise. As it turns out, that's not a bad thing, because the message that got to you, from the Tolea Biqua starport, says that Senator Wren's representative, Sa'arli, is going to be here earlier than expected. The message suggested the Near Vacuum cantina as a meeting place, so here you all are.

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

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

The patrons are transients of every species, mostly spacers. Of course, in Tolea Biqua, "spacer" covers a

lot of categories: trader, scout, pilot-for-hire, smuggler, pirate- or that bunch that just walked in.

Encounter Details:

The cantina is shown on Player Handout 1. The “Fish Tank” runs floor to ceiling and is full of amphibians, so the poor things won’t die when it inevitably breaks.

Guns are allowed in Tolea Biqua, but nobody gets into the *Near Vacuum* with anything heavier than a blaster pistol. Hidden holdouts and vibroknives make it in without problems. No vibroblades, axes, force pikes or anything obviously scary. No grenades, or nonsense like that. It’s a cantina, even if it’s in a rough part of a rough city. Presume that most patrons have the equivalent of a regular blaster. The six staff members can grab carbines from behind the bar, if needed, but it shouldn’t be.

In addition to the heroes and the others in the cantina, there are two groups of interest. There’s a very good looking Human smuggler, named Alto Janss, with her two lieutenants, over by the bar rail. You’ll find them in the GM aid section, at the end. Also, just entering, are a group of Thaereian System Patrol crewmen, on shore leave. They feel that they are superior to all the scum in Tolea Biqua, and don’t mind throwing their weight around. They’re disparaging about the band, the clientele and just about everything. It’s Grunts’ Night Out. Your mission, GM, is to start a cantina brawl involving them and the heroes. There are a number of crewmen equal to the number of heroes plus two. The squad should have one officer, perhaps one non-commissioned officer and the rest lowly flyboys. Below is a suggested sequence, but feel free to improvise:

- The crewmen enter and split into two groups. A number equal to the players, minus one, heads over to the players and uses the old “you’re sitting at our booth(s)/table(s)” routine to roust them out of their seats. If any of the heroes is female, the all-male crewman group informs her that she can stay, and may be a bit insistent about it.
- The second group (which would be three of them) heads for the bar. It’s noisy enough that the heroes can’t hear most of the conversation, but one of them is obviously interested in Alto Janss and the other two are clearing her men away from the bar.
- If the heroes haven’t started, or been involved in, trouble by now, Alto slaps one of the crewmen at the bar. At that, he shoves her backwards and to the floor, while one of his buddies breaks a bottle over one of her lieutenants’ heads, knocking him out for the duration of the combat. One of the crewmen near the heroes says, “Let’s flatten those scum” and starts moving *toward* the bar, unless interrupted.
- If the “heroes” are trying to avoid trouble (not unreasonable, but not very heroic), one of the other

crewmen either makes a grab for any female member of the hero party, or sneers at the least-intimidating-looking hero and tries to push him off his seat, saying, “Blast off, sleemo; I want a ringside seat”

- If the heroes simply withdraw from battle, let them. The fight should not be forced on a group of absolute pacifists. Note that a clever Force User, with some lucky “Friendship”, or other, mind-affecting rolls, could also help defuse the situation. Simple Diplomacy is very difficult (say DC 20/30/40), as these folks are actively looking for trouble. Nonetheless, it **is** possible to role-play out of the fight without being cowards, and that has the same positive effects in Scene Two.

If the fight breaks out, none of the Thaereians, bar patrons or staff, draw weapons unless the heroes draw first. If the heroes draw, then bar patrons and staff shoot to stun. The Thaereians shoot to stun, unless the heroes are set on kill. In that case, the Thaereians shoot at the heroes to kill as well, and the heroes could be in a lot of trouble, regardless.

On the other hand, there are plenty of breakable objects, including the floor-to-ceiling amphibian tank, indicated on the cantina map (Player Handout 1), which could liven up the proceedings.

A non-lethal cantina fight is not really high-powered enough for Force Point awards, but if somebody really roleplays a wonderful maneuver and, perhaps, takes a shot for someone else, there could be an award. The spirit of this is that of people breaking chairs over each other, throwing bottles, throwing each other through the fish tank — you get the idea. Stick to stun damage, except in case of an accident. If the players started gunplay, they definitely get no Force Points. If they try to start on kill for no good reason, warn them that a DSP is imminent. If they proceed, award it and note it on the log sheet, in pen, at the end.

If the heroes defuse the fight, have Sa’arli arrive and move to Encounter Two. If they defeat the crewmen, the unconscious Thaereians (who may not even have been identified, although they do act like military types) are divested of their gear and dumped outside in a dumpster. If the heroes want their stuff, they have an average of 100 credits each and one regular blaster apiece, obviously of military issue and bearing the insignia of the Thaereian Navy. Local or System or Military knowledge checks (DC 10) provide background on the Thaereians. They are the Republic’s contracted system patrol for the Cularin System, and have been doing a reasonable job, as far as the public knows. Any heroes who have encountered the Thaereians before already know this.

If the players acted at a time when they would have been helping Alto Janss (whether that was intentional or not), she is grateful and offers to buy them all drinks.

Her two men are a bit bruised, but all right. (For rules lawyers: the one lieutenant just made an unlucky Fortitude save against a one wound critical by a bottle. So there.)

If the heroes are losing badly (or the fight looks to run more than 5 rounds), the six bar staff members open up on the Thaereians with carbines set on stun. Unfortunately, only the barkeep has Precise Shot and the rest simply fire into the crowd, so a lot of people could get stunned in the chaos. The clientele are used to this and just take available cover, nurse their drinks and make book on the outcome.

Shortly after the end of the fracas, Sa'arli arrives and motions to the heroes that they should come and talk with her. She is willing to wait a few minutes only; then she insists that they follow. The heroes can always continue any conversations with Alto or other bar patrons later. Move to Encounter Two.

Dealing with potential problems:

- Some players have a problem with starting *in media res* (in the middle of things). If your group knows each other, this shouldn't be an issue. If you have a bunch who have not played together before, or some new players, they may wish to have better justification for being together. So far, all they know is that it's some sort of investigation. This mission could easily start as a job advertisement, or the heroes could have been asked to meet with Senator Wren's representative by their patrons, mentors, or contacts. For example, members of the Trade Alliance would be interested in knowing of illicit shipping activity or smuggling. Members of the Spacer's Union would have been asked to find out what's up—it's not anything of which they know. The Militia would love to steal a march on the Thaereians by discovering what's going on on Ostfrei. Anyone who has to do a favor for Nirama, or who is seeking to curry favor with him, could be told that he wants to know if there's something happening on Ostfrei. Finally, some of them may have worked for the Senator before.
- Pulling guns. Well, only someone who is really into causing trouble pulls a gun in a bar fight. You could simply suggest that, although the law is unlikely to walk in, the locals also have guns, and a firefight is not likely to impress their contact much. If the group keeps at it for some reason, you can have them all stunned by a barrage of bolts from patrons and personnel and tossed outside into a dumpster—minus any guns, credit chips and other toys that they might have had. Sa'arli can find them, suggest that they might want to wear more than underwear, and relocate the meeting to either her ship, or one of the hero's ships, if they have them. Sa'arli's offer is limited to the basic offer in

Scene Two if they have been so ham-handed.

- Stretching the scene. If people think to use "Gather Info" or similar skills, even before hearing of the mission, by all means let them. You can raid Encounter 2 for "rumors", some of which might later be of use. If Sa'arli finds out that they already know some useful things, she is impressed. This takes up more scenario time, but should decrease Scene Two's time by the same amount.

A note: it would be dumb to keep the blasters of the Thaereians, if that comes up. They only sell for 75 credits apiece because they are very hot. If a hero is found with one, the blaster is confiscated; the hero is thoroughly investigated and is fined at least 500 credits as a minimum sentence. Yes, the blasters could be altered, by removing registration numbers—which would make them illegal weapons.

Encounter 2: Who Goes Thaere?

Key ideas of this encounter: Sa'arli briefs the heroes and makes her offers. This scene can be run two ways, after the initial briefing and negotiations. See Options 2a and 2b, below. There are also two recommended text intros, depending on whether the heroes are still welcome in the cantina. Select the appropriate one, from 1 or 2.

1: Use this one if the heroes are *still welcome* in the cantina.

Things have settled down; the garbage has been taken out and the band is going to play that song another eight times, sounds like. Your contact, Sa'arli, has gone into a large corner booth with the lot of you and, after having gone through polite formalities, lays out the task that Senator Wren is hoping you'll take on.

"As you are, no doubt, aware, the Senator is very concerned with questions of the Cularin system's autonomy. She is hoping that Cularin will, one day, have its own space security forces and not have to rely on the Republic to provide contracted patrols. As it stands, every time we ask the Thaereian Navy to investigate a potential problem, we give away a little more of our own. We make it easier for those who would profit from our dependence to argue against our self-governance.

"Reports have come to our office that there is some sort of activity associated with the surface of Ostfrei, the dark moon of Genarius. There should be nothing there. While the moon was, for a short time, colonised, its relative lack of valuable resources and the creation of the Genarius cloud cities caused it to be abandoned quite some time ago. There may be

pockets of valuable resources left there, but there are too many far more lucrative areas in the Cularin system for miners and corporate prospectors to be interested in Ostfrei.

“We believe that there may be smugglers trying to use Ostfrei for a base. If not that, then the Senator would like to know what is happening there. It would be a minor coup if we could steal a march on the Thaereians. Of course, we are all friends, here, and the Thaereians are the duly authorized representatives of the Republic in our space. But... it wouldn't hurt to show that we do not need to go to them for everything.

“I am authorized to pay out 800 credits to each of you, or to relevant charities, for those of you who are altruistic. If you can bring firm evidence of who, or what, is operating on Ostfrei, there will be a bonus of a further 600 credits each. There is no real time limit, but it would be good to get a report within a few weeks. Perhaps some of the locals might have some information regarding the goings-on in space, near here. You'll have ample time to inquire.

“Remember, while the Thaereians are, of course, our contracted friends and allies, we would like this investigation to be— low-key?

“We can provide a fast ship. No hyperdrive, but you shouldn't need one. And, it has a low-grade shield generator installed.”

#2: Use this one if the heroes are *no longer welcome* in the cantina because they pulled guns or did something similarly foolish. Use the suggested text, above, but *set the scene in a ship, at the starport*. The last line becomes, *“You may use this ship for your investigations. No hyperdrive, but you shouldn't need one. And, it has a low-grade shield generator installed.”* Also, Sa'arli's base offer to the heroes becomes 700 now + 500 later, as she doubts their competency after what happened in the cantina.

The ship is a stock YT-1300, with stats as per RCR p.231. It has no hyperdrive, but one beneficial modification: a shield generator, giving it 50 shield points with shield DR 5. In Ship's stores are spare filters and canisters for breath masks. There is also a pair of macrobinoculars and a portable chemical scanner with a 200-meter range. This is not the scanner from the RCR; it is just a miscellaneous piece of equipment. There is also a standard tool kit and there are a number of spare parts. Finally, there are a dozen glow rods. The heroes are expected to return everything that has not been used up; they may not keep any of this.

Encounter Details:

Customized Negotiations: The heroes might think to negotiate. Sa'arli can be convinced to up the base offer by 100 now + 100 bonus, or 0 + 300, if the heroes beat

her on an opposed Diplomacy check. Up to two heroes can aid the main negotiator, if they have convincing, roleplayed arguments. Use standard skill aid rules. Sa'arli's skill + attribute bonus is +7/+12/+17. If Sa'arli wins, she sticks to the base offer. In addition to haggling the base fee, enterprising heroes who have Starships may be wondering if such have any bearing on the mission. They may, if the heroes mention them.

Sa'arli does not *offer* extras; the players have to think of asking. If you want to be nice, you can provide a clue by having her wonder if anyone has anything that might be useful. Or, if someone mentions they'll use their own ship, she may brighten and blurt out that it would save the Senator money.

If the heroes have a ship or ships of their own, and want to take them, rather than using the ship that Sa'arli offers, she can be convinced to offer ship owners a flat 500 credits bonus for using their ship(s), plus fuelling and maintenance.

Force Adept Apprentices are treated like any other party member and offered full wages, unless the senior adept indicates that wages are not necessary. The player hero does not get the money for the Apprentice; the Apprentice does. Those funds may be used to equip the Apprentice, of course.

Jedi are not offered rewards and should not expect any, though if they simply stay silent during the briefing, credits are given to them at the end. Sa'arli presumes they'll donate to a charity.

The above was just the negotiation scene. Below are two options for legwork that the players might choose to pursue, after they finish negotiations. Following the information are two suggestions regarding how they might get it (labeled Options 2a and 2b). Remember also, that they may have some of the rumors from the first encounter.

Note also that the heroes may have absolutely no interest in doing legwork. They may simply want to jump into a ship and head off for Ostfrei. That is quite all right. Still, *it is all right to skip the rest of Encounter 2 entirely*, especially if you are pressed for time after a long bar fight, or RP session.

General Information about Ostfrei: The heroes should come up with these bits and pieces, interspersed among the other info. This all pertains directly to this scenario.

- Ostfrei was probably habitable a long time ago, but it isn't now.
- The atmosphere is mainly carbon monoxide and methane. Almost no oxygen. Even methane-breathers couldn't take the carbon monoxide and the particulate pollutants.
- Atmosphere has enough pressure that breath masks and respirators will do. It's cold, though not freezing-cold until the middle of the “night”.

- There are sporadic, short-lived volcanic eruptions.
- The Thaereians seem to find the place of interest, though they've never landed there.
- Available from databanks, with a Computer skill check (DC 10): it's known as the "Dark Moon", because its rotation puts it in Genarius's shadow 25 out of 27 hours of its "day".
- Available from databanks, with Computer skill check (DC 20), or if one has Knowledge, Profession, or skills appropriate to mining company information (GM discretion): there are two Resource Development companies that would like to lay claim to Ostfrei, but that's in dispute, at the moment. Nobody really owns the place.

Rumor/Information List: The rumors are detailed, below. They are also ranked with stars (*). One star indicates low usefulness and/or irrelevancy. Two stars mean fair and three stars mean very relevant and/or useful info. There are also comments, regarding the veracity of the rumor and the episode to which it applies. Comments in square brackets are for you, the GM, only. Note that some pieces of data would only come out with the right questions, so if you decide to random-roll them (not suggested), then substitute ones that make sense for those that don't.

- Someone from out-system has been buying up cochlera tentacle secretions like crazy. [**** True.** However, this is irrelevant to this particular trilogy, though it explains something from another module and may be *very* important in the next couple of years. Cochlera secretions are explained on page 24 of the LF Campaign Guide. The heroes do *not* know this, but the secretions can be processed into a drug that provides some resistance to Force User Mind Powers. The jellyfish-like creature lives in the atmosphere of Genarius.]
- There are a lot of new, independent "merchants" (i.e. smugglers) in the system. Tolea Biqua has been humming. [**** True, relevant to this episode.**]
- The Jedi have been nosing around Ostfrei and Tolea Biqua lately. Rumor is that a Jedi gone bad has taken up residence on the "dark moon". What better place? [*** False, although relevant to this episode as a red herring. Hero Jedi have heard nothing of this. If they can check back with Almas, it is denied.**]
- The Thaereians occasionally orbit the dark moon, but have never been seen to land on, or take off, from it. [**** True and relevant. The Thaereians have a secret base on Ostfrei, and take pains not to let anyone see them using it.**]
- Some of the merchants who have been dumping stuff on Tolea Biqua lately are out-and-out pirates.

Their stuff is stolen. [***** True and relevant; the heroes will encounter these folk and one group also has a base, of sorts, on Ostfrei.**]

- There is an assassin droid roaming Tolea Biqua and he's been asking about someone who looks a lot like (the hero with the highest Reputation score, or, failing that, the highest level or weapons skills). [*** False, though maybe in another scenario...**]
- The Thaereians are all scum and they're plotting to take over the entire system. [**** False, at least at the moment, but relevant. Most of the Thaereians do their jobs well. However, there are definitely a few corrupt ones, and the heroes will meet one in a linked scenario.**]
- There's a giant Space Slug that lairs on Ostfrei. Go near the moon and you're dead. [**** Not quite true. There's at least one very immature specimen there, and it's dangerous, but hardly an automatic death.**]
- Alto Janss is beautiful on the outside, but all treachery on the inside. Trust her and die. [**** False, though she is definitely self-motivated and willing to blackmail people, if they are the sort whom she thinks deserve it.**]
- Some Wookiees were in the city last week, buying a LOT of detonite and other explosives. One was called Roogar. He has a dark stripe of fur running down his side. [***** True.**]
- There are ways to get goods into and out of Cularin without worrying too much about the Thaereians—if you know which Thaereians to talk to. (This person doesn't know whom, but would be willing to nose around for some credits. If bribed with at least 200 credits, he leaves a message after a week in whatever manner the heroes want to arrange the drop. The message is "Alto Janss knows who it is—in fact, she's used the service.") [***** True.**] Alto is no longer around Tolea Biqua, by this time. The *Long Spoon* has headed out.
- Riboga the Hutt has only left Tolea Biqua in name. He's planning to make a big comeback, and soon. [*** False.**]

Options for gathering information:

2a: The Easy Way.

If the heroes help Alto, she leaves them a comm code that's good for three days. She has 3d4 rumors herself (or all, if you are running behind time). She can also point out likely people from the bar. In this case, you can use your favorite type of lowlife Human or alien and roleplay a little negotiation for rumors. The heroes could also try to bribe info out of Alto, if they were of less use to her. She is also not immune to charm, but charm just tends to lower the price tag of

information if she doesn't owe the person asking.

2b: The Hard Way.

Warning: use of this method is likely to take a lot of extra time. The heroes can try to force information out of Alto, or muscle it/gather it blindly from other sources. This can lead to a few mini-encounters with:

- A group of thugs trying to extort money from a fruit market owner. If the heroes intervene, the thugs could barter a rumor to be let go, or the grateful owner might have one or two rumors, if the heroes wouldn't bargain with thugs.
- A thievery gang that operates near the starport. The heroes might see them snatch something from a loading floater, and barter freedom for information. Or, if the heroes would be honor-bound to turn them in, the Spaceport officer might have one or two rumors for them.
- GM choice, along the same vein. Make sure that the encounter provides information whether or not the heroes are willing deal with "shady" people. Different groups have different scruples.

Main point: none of these mini-encounters should take very long, or pose significant threat. Typical skill modifier (total, including attribute and rank), of an NPC, for the tiers would be +2/+7/+12, with no worthwhile special abilities. The heroes should easily outclass them. This is more of a roleplaying/problem-solving piece.

Encounter 3: Haven't We Met?

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes have all sorts of new rumors to worry about, some of them even useful. Still, the direction is clear; they need to head for Ostfrei. They encounter pirates on the way. It would be nice if the pirates could be ones they may have encountered before, around Genarius ("The Price of Business" or other scenarios involving pirates). The pirates do not want to kill; they want loot. As a reinforcing pirate ship comes in, so does a Thareian Naval vessel, which attacks it and then pursues it away. This enables the heroes to either destroy or damage the first pirate vessel and get away, completing their journey to Ostfrei.

So, you've supplied yourselves, boosted into space and are off on the short hop to Ostfrei. You have a head full of information to mull over, and remember that you want to make your approach carefully and without attracted any unwanted Thareian attention.

Good thing that the ship that's screaming in toward you, on your sensors, isn't Thareian, then. It just looks like a— hmm, no transponder, weapons charging, shields— yup, that would be a pirate.

Encounter Details:

The heroes are off to Ostfrei, and ideally they are trying to do so carefully and covertly, since not even the Thareians are supposed to know that they are exploring.

Now they are about to be attacked, boarded and pillaged by the scourge of the spaceways: pirates!

Well, no. But there will be a chance to do battle.

The pirate ship stats can be found on GM Aid 1. Note that the ship is only partially tiered. As players get into the upper reaches of capability, there are not that many pirates around with their expertise. On the other hand, the pirate vessel is almost certainly better armed and shielded than the heroes' ship.

When the pirates get closer, sensor data reveals that their ship has a familiar configuration and readings. If any of the heroes have been involved in *Price of Business*, or *Clouds of Genarius*, or scenarios where they have encountered pirate gangs without wiping out the entire nest, give them to understand that this looks, by coincidence, to be members of the same group. Or is it coincidence? Maybe someone's been tracking them, and it's Payback Time!

No. It's coincidence. But don't tell them that.

The comm crackles: "Stand down and prepare to be boarded; this is your warning shot!"

Well, the shot's right at the heroes, but it's at -4 for hastiness and range. Then the battle starts in earnest, unless the heroes surrender.

Remember, if the heroes have the loaner ship, it's a stock YT-1300, with stats as per RCR p.231. It has no hyperdrive, but one beneficial modification: a shield generator, giving it 50 shield points with shield DR 5.

There are many ways that this could go. The heroes might decide that they'd like to let the pirates board and take them on. Appropriate knowledge checks (Law Enforcement (15), Cularin System (20), Criminals (15), Pirates (10) or a Scoundrel of level 4 or higher in the group, lets people know that there are likely to be 8 to 12 aboard, with no more than half boarding, and the rest behind closed airlock doors ready to disengage and either run, or vaporize the heroes' ship at point-blank range. Or both. Plus the pirates seem intent on at least damaging their ship, which would imperil the mission. In other words, try to heavily discourage this, as it takes more time.

However, should the heroes manage to turn it into a boarding action, they can capture the pirates. Then have the second ship arrive (detailed below).

Fortunately for the players, this should not be a great additional peril as the Thaereians are right behind them.

If they board, use pirate stats (from Encounter 6) appropriate to the hero tier. No automatic weapons or extra loot, beyond what is mentioned in the next paragraph.

Heroes that capture the ship can find a grand total of 500 credits of ordinary goods that can be sold as loot. This would be common equipment from the list. No guns, just ordinary gear, with no identification. There are also four medpacs.

Slicing the pirate ship's computer only provides routine data, unless someone manages to crack a secure file with Computer (25/30/35). In that case, they can discover the existence of the Pirate base on Ostfrei, and its location (see Encounter 6). They *cannot* find out about the Thaereian base from ship's computers.

The heroes may wish to simply cut and run. If they have a good enough pilot, they can do this (make opposed checks; don't forget to compare the ships' stats). If they look to be outrunning the pirates, have the second vessel, from later in this encounter, move in to cut them off, and then proceed with the Thaereian intervention.

If they choose to fight: GM, you want the fight to run basically as follows. If the players outclass the pirates, fine. Don't pull any punches for the pirates, but try not to have the pirates cripple the players' ship with a lucky shot. If it's about an even match, the same advice holds true. If the players look to be outclassed, or are losing anyway, gum them a little, but don't chew up their ship *too* badly.

If you like, you can have some space junk for the ships to maneuver around, but this is pretty much a straight-up, ship-to-ship shootout (or race).

Have the second pirate ship arrive, if the players are defeating the pirates too easily, or if the first pirate ship is seriously damaged. Also have it arrive if the players are going to have their ship damaged too severely.

Just as things are looking very bleak for [you/the pirates], the sensor alarm screams again! A second pirate ship! This isn't fair—but wait. What's that streaking in, from the opposite quadrant? It's a Thaereian Patrol ship, cannons blazing! You'll never know if the second pirate ship was reinforcing, or just running from the Thaereians, but it's sure coming about now, and your original target seems to be hesitating in indecision...

Encounter Details resume:

Well, that's their cue, of course. They can get a free shot into their original target, while the Thaereians chase off the other one. If the heroes' original target was doing too well, have the Thaereian ship blast the

pirates heavily as it roars by. There'll be a quick message commed over: ***"This is Captain Yfridian, of the TNV Vigilant. We'll deal with this scum and be back for you, whoever you are. Wait for us. Out"***

Uh-huh. If the heroes are smart, they'll finish off their opponent, or simply take advantage of the situation to make themselves scarce while the ship that attacked them limps away.

The Captain's name is pronounced "Eefridian".

Potential Force Points:

Force Points are not awarded simply for acts of self-preservation, but space battles are potentially chaotic enough that there may be dramatic possibilities for saving lives. Remember that a hero need not spend a Force Point to earn one, and that they may be awarded immediately. They do not have to wait until the end of the scenario.

Encounter 4: I Could Use a Slug of Something Strong, Right Now

Key ideas of this encounter: Arrival. Choice to conceal the ship, or not. Ostfrei the dismal beckons. Heroes can explore a bit and find signs of old habitation. The thing that attracted them there is an outcropping of metals, of the sort that can be used to make ship cannon cores. Potential hazard. Lots of use for skills. The metals can be mined and the whole outcropping is worth about 3000 credits. (About 120 kg of metals.) Could complicate with a small, immature Space Slug.

Encounter Details:

Unbeknownst to the players, the vector that they decide upon to take them to the surface of Ostfrei is a lucky one — sort of. There is a secret, hidden Thaereian military base on the other side of the moon, and the moon's bulk prevents them from being noticed on the way in. Unfortunately, another group of individuals has taken advantage of the moon's bulk. The group of space pirates that the heroes encountered also have a hidden base here, from which they monitor the Thaereians' comings and goings, so that they have a safe and entirely unsuspected haven from which to strike out, right under the Space Patrol's noses.

The heroes need to pick out a landing spot and make a safe landing. This is not easy, due the obscuring gloom that enshrouds Ostfrei. In order to pick out a good site, an Astrogate (DC 15) roll is needed. If the result is 20 or more, the Pilot may add 2 to his roll to land. If Astrogate fails, the Pilot subtracts 2 from the

landing roll. The target for a perfect landing, in the bleak, dark and jumbled landscape, is DC 25. A result of 20 sets down hard, but is nothing more than jarring (1d10 Hull Points damage, DR subtracts, shields do not help). A result of 15 allows the group to walk away, but the ship suffers 3d10 damage. Results of 10 to 14 represent a landing that does 6d10 damage to the ship. A result of less than 10 cripples it and does 2d10 damage [Fort (15) save for half] to everyone aboard.

Describe the surface of Ostfrei to the players:

“Bleak” would be far too much a compliment for this rock. You seem to have landed just at the end of its two hours of dim, smudgy daylight, which means another 25 standard hours of darkness before the next “dawn”.

It’s no surprise that not even the mining companies care much about this place: while it’s rich in minerals and metals, preliminary surveys indicated that they were all of the most common sort, more easily and economically mined where one could breathe.

There’s enough pressure that full spacesuits aren’t required, but the atmosphere is completely poisonous: carbon monoxide, methane, and enough soot, belched out by infrequent volcanic eruptions, to keep the moon under a permanent pall of shadow. Within 12 hours, it is going to be totally, pitch black out there. Breath masks and lights, certainly.

Care is needed when moving around, because the surface is cracked and broken and rolling, a tribute to thousands of years of vulcanism.

One thing, though: if this place is deserted, and completely dark and dirty, then what was the source of the odd energy discharge that attracted you to land in this area? It wasn’t machinery, or power cells, or a vehicle. And, as you descended toward the moon’s broken surface, hadn’t there been a sign of something glinting, in the last, fading light?

Encounter Details:

There are several items of interest, near the heroes’ landing-site. A rough map is given, with a key, as GM aid #3. An unlabelled version is provided as Player Handout #2.

The players were warned of Thaereian patrols, so they may wish to take some pains to conceal their vessel. While the atmosphere obscures visuals, sensors could easily pick out a ship in the open if the area was scanned. There are many slopes, outcroppings and overhangs, and heroes with Survival or Planetary Systems skills may make rolls to pick a good spot to hide the ship. 10 or better on the Survival or Planetary rolls allows a +2 to the Hide roll. The Hide is opened, and becomes the target for any future, opposed Search roll.

If the heroes have the loaner vessel, it has stores that might be useful. In Ship’s Stores are spare filters and canisters for breath masks. There is also a pair of macrobinoculars and a portable chemical scanner with a 200-meter range. This is not the scanner from the RCR; it is just a miscellaneous piece of equipment. There is also a standard tool kit and a number of spare parts. Finally, there are a dozen glow rods. The heroes are expected to return everything that has not been used up; they may not keep any of this.

The heroes need to move around with caution. Really fast transport modes, like speeders at high speed, would be suicidal; one would outrun one’s reaction time, when obstacles came into view. Technological or innate, alien night sight doesn’t help either, as the huge particle count in the atmosphere physically obscures sight. **Illumination only works out to about 15 meters, before everything becomes a hazy fog. This affects ranged weapons fire.**

From the map key:

Number 1 is an inactive, but recent, volcanic vent. All volcanic vents referred to, in these encounters, are essentially lava tubes: they are more angled horizontally, rather than being vertical shafts. It has spewed up a mass of metals and minerals, which have crystallized, as they cooled, into wonderful, fantastic “native” metallocrystalline forms. They are about waist-high to a Human, fluted and twisted sculptures of metals and minerals, alien and beautiful.

Heroes with Knowledge skills related to Geology (15/17/19) or Metallurgy (15/17/19), Mineralogy (15/17/19), Chemistry (20/22/24) or Ship’s Weapons Systems (20/22/24) recognize this conglomeration as the material from which ships’ laser cannon and turbolaser core elements are made, when it is refined. It is valuable, as well as being beautiful, and must have been spewed up last eruption. Heroes who beat the required roll by 10 can explain the energy discharge that attracted the group. The crystals act as a natural capacitor, absorbing the rare amount of light that falls to the surface, as well as geothermal energy and then discharging it, when it reaches a critical threshold. Like about—now!

The outcropping spews out a blast of energy that randomly targets a hero and anyone within 3 meters of him or her (if no-one is, then single target). The burst cannot miss, but does only 2d4-2 damage. A zero-damage hit indicates a flashy display, causing people’s hair to stand on end, but with no other effect. It does produce a sizeable amount of comm static when it goes off. It discharges about once every 5+d20 minutes.

With suitable tools from the ship, the heroes can mine the ore. It takes about 20 minutes to mine 20 kg of ore carefully, to maintain its beautiful shape. It takes

half that to mine it quickly. There are 80 kilograms of ore available for mining. Ownership of Ostfrei is in dispute, and no one could currently be said to have prospecting rights to it, so it is not illegal to mine here, yet.

Mining the ore disturbs its crystal structure enough that it still looks beautiful, but no longer discharges. Any ore that has not been mined still discharges.

Number 2 is a similar-looking vent/lava tube, angling into the ground at about a 20-degree incline. It is far older, though, and it is now the home to an immature specimen of Space Slug. If disturbed, it attacks. It is very easily disturbed. The theme of this battle is “scare the heck out of them, even though they are in little true danger, if they use their brains”. The Slug has a great many hit points, but is too sluggish and ponderous to target the smaller, faster heroes effectively. Nonetheless, if it gets lucky, it can do terrible crushing damage and, at the middle and highest tier, is capable of engulfing man-sized characters (yes, Wookiees too). It only strikes out of its vent, keeping its lower body inside. It does not leave its vent unless there is obvious, dead food awaiting it. That is why the stats include an “effective radius” for its attack, which consists of lashing forward elastically, trying to bite someone, and then snapping back. Part of its AC and DR are natural, part are due to its concealment in rock.

Once the heroes realize that it doesn’t leave its lair, they can simply leave it alone. If they decide that it must die, then they risk being seriously hurt or killed.

If the heroes simply devise a way of sniping at it (remember, **range weapons are only effective to 15 meters**; they cannot see to sight on targets, beyond that), it withdraws into the vent and just around a dogleg— and waits, about a meter from the corner.

Potential Force Points:

If a hero is attempting to save the life of another, especially if the other hero has been engulfed or is in similar real danger of death, then a Force Point could be awarded for exceptional derring-do that puts the hero at risk. Remember that a hero need not spend a Force Point to earn one, and that they may be awarded immediately.

Number 3 is a site of obvious, though ancient, habitation. Either rock, or a rocklike substance, had been shaped into support beams and wall materials, with a faint remaining hint of interior design and room walls. The rooms are not symmetrical. Tantalizing for Archaeologist and Historians, but under these conditions, impossible to analyze quickly. The ruins are very old. Those who know Ostfrei’s history [Local Knowledge (25/27/29), Planetary Systems (20/22/24), Cularin System (15/17/19), Galactic History (20/22/24), and similar], or who researched it in Encounters 1 or 2, recall that Ostfrei would have been quite habitable,

before the titanic collisions and explosions which formed Cularin System’s asteroid belt. Were these indigenous builders, visitors, or...?

Let the heroes play with the environment, mine some ore (with tools from the ship), play with the Space Slug and explore as much as they like and you have time for. Then, look, up in the sky, it’s— well, it’s really, really dark, but that looks like a spaceship coming in very low.

Encounter 5: Home Again, Home Again

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes observe the return of the pirate vessel that attacked them. It may or may not go for their ship, depending upon whether they hid it earlier. If not, it heads for the pirate base. The heroes can just decamp with the info, or can try to take the pirates themselves. They may have to go after the pirates if their own ship has been damaged beyond repair. The pirates have a small, crevice base, on the opposite side of the moon from the secret, Thaereian base.

Look, up in the sky, it’s— well, it’s really, really dark, but that looks like a spaceship coming in very low. We remembered to hide the ship, right?

Encounter Details:

The second pirate ship is coming in— really, really low, as they want to avoid any chance of detection from the base on the other side.

If the heroes hid their vessel, the pirates, who are not really looking (but are concentrating on making a safe landing) have a Search score total of 10/15/20 to compare to the heroes’ Hide roll.

If they detect the ship, they make one pass over it, firing their cannons at the drive section. Any hit is a glancing hit, and the ship adds 4d10 damage to any that it may already have. Ignore a critical by the pirates, unless the ship would have been destroyed anyway. GM, suit the damage to the situation. If the ship was unscathed or could have been repaired before, leave it repairable. If a terrible space battle and/or a blown landing made it a junker, feel free to finish it off. Please do not destroy a ship gratuitously. If it is destroyed, useful gear aboard survives; the hull took the brunt of the damage.

Once the pirates pass, they head to their base, either to go to ground, if they didn’t spot the ship, or to send out a recon party.

If the ship was hit and the heroes go to check it, consider its total damage and decide how long it is likely to take to repair it, or jury-rig it, enough to make

it spaceworthy. An abstracted system for doing this is mentioned in the next encounter.

It's decision time.

If the heroes decide to leave and their ship is flight-worthy, they can get away. Go to Encounter 7; Encounter 6 does not occur. This is also something that you may wish to allow/suggest, if there is little time remaining.

Otherwise, proceed to Encounter 6.

Encounter 6: On a Rock And a Hard Place

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes now have two options. Escape from Ostfrei, if they can, with their gathered information, or they could make an assault on the pirate base. Gee whiz, I know which one I'd pick. If the heroes are successful, the pirates may even barter their knowledge of the Thaereian base in return for concessions. Since this Encounter is skipped if they decided to leave, read or paraphrase:

Well, it seems that you either repair your ship and boost out of here, or you'll have to deal with the pirates somehow.

Fortunately, for those of you who like to sport military-grade gear, this is a chunk of rock under a concealing shroud of darkness, and you don't see any local law enforcement around.

For those of you who are more pacifistic, you're starting to worry that it's Senseless Violence Hour. There must be a way to do this more cleverly.

Encounter Details:

If they need to repair their vessel, there are details, below, of an encounter with a pirate reconnaissance group,

Repairing the ship should be evaluated per the Repair rules in the *RCR* and *Starships of the Galaxy*. Alternatively, you may abstract this process, to save convention slot play time, and simply let them make assisted Repair rolls. Difficulty would be 20, if the ship has less than 50% hull point damage, or 25, if it has more than 50%. This represents temporary repairs and jury-rigging. Appropriate equipment bonuses and class special abilities (Fringer Jury-Rigging), and related Feats, apply. This jury-rigging does not repair any critical system damage; it simply makes the ship capable of escaping. This process takes just long enough to allow the pirate recon group to encounter the heroes. After that, they can elect to boost and get away, if they wish. **If the heroes get away and report what they have learned, the Senator sees to it that their ship gets properly repaired later.** Go to Encounter 7.

If they decide to go after the pirates, either because their own ship is junk or because they want to, go to the next part of the encounter description. They are able to locate the pirates' destination by one of several methods:

- If their ship's sensors work, they can passively scan the location before the pirate ship shuts down (automatic success);
- If they use the man-portable scanning apparatus from the ship, or have their own, they can follow the trail of ionized methyl and carbonyl ions (automatic success);
- They can come up with a really clever idea of which you approve. That it sounds *Star Wars* and would look good on film is more important than if it's realistic (assign a Difficulty number or assume success);

Otherwise, they have to make Search rolls, with a base target DC of 30. However, every ten minutes spent Searching (since they know the correct direction) allows a new roll at a cumulative +2 bonus. Go to the next Encounter.

The pirate base is mapped out on GM aid #4. It includes a key. Player Handout #3 is an unkeyed version. There is only one ship, the one which was chased by the Thaereian Navy vessel, but which apparently got away.

Note that within the atmosphere shield of the base, conditions are much clearer, although the pirates do not turn on external lighting unless trouble breaks out. The soot is scrubbed out, so visual and combat ranges are normal, up to the limit of the base area.

A computer with useful information is located only in the Quonset "quarters" building, nearest the pirate ship. The storage buildings have a variety of boxed and crated goods, none labeled. The goods are irrelevant, at the moment, but see the Loot list at the end.

There are only (number of heroes) times two pirates at the base, but they are decently equipped, with regular blasters and blaster rifles (and one Light Repeating Blaster Rifle). They do not have very good armor.

Case 1: The pirates did not detect the heroes' ship on the way in.

If their vessel did not detect and fire on the heroes' ship, they are not expecting trouble and clever heroes can achieve surprise. The down side is that the full pirate complement is in one place, unless the heroes can split them up. The pirate ship would take about three full minutes to ready for flight, and there are only two pirates aboard it, at the moment. They only try to boost if it is obvious that all is lost.

Note, also, that the heroes might find the base and then simply retreat to make a report. This is fine; let

them get away and go to Encounter 7, if this is their choice.

Case 2: the pirates detected the heroes.

If the pirates detected and fired on the heroes' ship, then there could be two situations.

- If the heroes headed directly for the pirate base, without taking too much game time up in other matters, then the pirates are just about to send out a recon group in two speeders, to check out the vehicle. It is equal in size to the hero group. The pirates are wary, expecting that there are people on the surface. They hope to catch them back at their vehicle. The players can take the pirates on all at once, or wait until one group leaves and be able to deal with less pirates—but don't suggest that to them.
- If the heroes took a while to decide what to do, or looked around some more, or are hard at work repairing their vessel, then they encounter the pirate recon group. This is either as the heroes are heading for the base, or when the pirates get to the heroes' ship, if they are repairing it. You have to judge whether the heroes are taking sufficient precautions against surprise. The pirates definitely fire on the heroes. Each speeder has a vehicular weapon, with no fire control bonus, which does 4d6 damage. The speeders provide the pirates with partial cover and 3 points worth of armor bonus, which adds to any armor they wear, unless the person attacking them is in the speeder or above the level of the seats. The pirates actually use guns set to stun unless the heroes use weapons set to kill. The pirates would like to find out what the heroes know, and whether they've already reported the base. However, once "red bolts" start flying, they use kill settings, too, though they do not "finish off" unconscious foes. If more than half of them are defeated, the others try to make it back to the base. It is to be hoped that the heroes stop them from getting away.

The pirates' stats are detailed on GM Aid 1. Due to the atmospheric conditions and the darkness, *no weapon has an effective sighting range beyond 15 meters*. And no, the methane atmosphere won't ignite; there isn't enough oxygen.

Resolution:

- If the heroes are defeated, things are grim. If the pirates could be *sure* that their base location wasn't blown, they'd kill the heroes to keep the secret safe. But, since they cannot be sure, they dismantle the base, steal the heroes' equipment (and ship, if it's quickly repairable) and allow the heroes to ransom themselves: 2000 credits per hero. This is

not something that can be played out. If the heroes want to get away, they have to pay up; the pirates are experienced at this. In the unlikely event that your team cannot come up with the ransom, the pirates settle for any equipment they captured, plus all the liquid cash the party has. Amazingly, they do not keep the ship: since they aren't going to kill the heroes, a ship is too traceable and identifiable. They leave it wherever the heroes are left.

In this case, the scenario effectively ends here and you can skip the debriefing. It is simply assumed that the heroes reported what happened and the Thareian Navy is informed that they should be on the lookout for the pirates. Heroes get the fees agreed upon, but no "Favors".

- But that's not going to happen, we hope! Instead, the victorious heroes have to decide what to do with the pirates. Loot is discussed at the end of the scenario. However, one of the pirates wants to barter a piece of "top secret information" that would be "worth a lot of credits to the right party". Also, he has iron-clad proof that it's true. Initially, the pirate demands that they all be released for it. There are ways around this. A Jedi could use mind powers, someone could intimidate the pirates into thinking they'd be killed, or a very good diplomat could convince the pirates that turning over the info would get them a good word at their trial. You have to be the judge, GM (heh). The pirates do not give the info away for nothing, unless it's tricked out of them.

If the players get the data, it's this: the Thareian Navy has a secret base on the exact opposite side of Ostfrei from the pirate base. That's why the pirate ship comes in so low; it was avoiding sensor detection from the far side. Even so, they have to plan their coming and going carefully, because the Thareians patrol and occasionally orbit the planet, and they vaporized one vessel without even challenging it first. That last bit is just at the pirates' word, but they have sensor logs and plenty of evidence of the Thareians' existence here. They had to gather the data to be able to survive, here. Still, while it lasted, it was a perfect base—no one came near Ostfrei, and the Thareians were their protection, never dreaming that any pirates would be audacious enough to be on the same moon!

(Note: this information is **not** stored aboard the pirates' ships, though it is hidden, encrypted, in a base computer. See below.)

The Thareian Navy has not cleared the existence of this base with anyone in the Cularin system, least of all Senator Wren, as it turns out. Some well-traveled heroes realize that this seems to be a trend...

There is one other way that the heroes can learn of the Thareian base. The pirates have a computer in the

Quonset, “quarters” building nearest their ship. As well as easily downloadable navigational data for the space around Ostfrei, it has the coordinates of the Thaereian base buried in it. Computer skill check (DC 25/30/35) to find it, though; it’s encrypted.

The heroes can load what they can, and take off. With the data captured from the pirates’ data banks, they can easily pick a flight path that keeps the hidden Thaereian base from detecting them. Any of the heroes should realize that trespassing near that secret, military base would be a speedy form of suicide; feel free to tell them that if they actually contemplate going there.

Force Point Potential:

Force points are not awarded simply for acts of self-preservation, but the situations against the pirates are fluid enough that there may be dramatic possibilities for saving lives. Also, if the Judge and player really ham up the drama of a Slicer attempt at the encrypted information, it could even be appropriate there, as the mission, and even the eventual sovereignty of Cularin, could hinge on the information. Remember that a hero need not spend a Force Point to earn one, and that they may be awarded immediately. They do not have to wait until the end of the scenario.

Encounter 7: We’ve Got a Secret (Maybe)

Key ideas of this encounter: Debriefing, rewards. Possible brief meeting with Thaereian Patrol Captain Yfridian, from Encounter 3.

Well, you’ve made it back safely to Cularin, ready to debrief with Sa’arli. It’s certainly good to be back to civilization, after the bleak and forbidding moonscape of Ostfrei—and what awaited you there.

Encounter Details:

GM, you may not have time to play this out. However, Sa’arli’s reaction is essentially the same, regardless of the level of information, or success that the heroes have achieved.

She thanks them for undertaking the mission. If they left, after learning of the pirates, that is helpful, although it means asking the Thaereians for help once more. If they captured/neutralized the pirates, she indicates that the Senator is going to be well-pleased that they have shown that Cularin’s own can take care of Cularin.

If Sa’arli is informed of the illicit Thaereian base, a strange mixture of emotions washes over her face. She seems pleased and almost triumphant or hopeful, for a moment. Then, something very uncharacteristic appears

for a moment— indecision.

She is very resistant to Empathy, even in this state, but it doesn’t take a genius or a Jedi to know that she is conflicted about something. However, she isn’t willing to reveal it.

If any of the heroes inquire about Senator Wren, Sa’arli will inform them that the Senator would have congratulated them herself, but she has a very busy schedule at the moment. Sense Motive (DC 20) reveals that that is quite true, but that there is another undercurrent. Do not allow the heroes to pursue this right now, however. Interrupt them with the announcement, by the receptionist, that the next appointment is due to start.

Whether you need to interrupt the heroes or not, before they leave Sa’arli’s next appointment is be announced. It is a Thaereian Naval Captain, whose name will only be familiar to the heroes if they communicated with the Naval vessel from Encounter 3 -- it’s Captain Yfridian. There is a quick description of Captain Yfridian in GM Aid #1. However, as the heroes are on the way out, they should be little time for more than a brief word or two, if anything. If the heroes had informed Sa’arli of the base, then her look to them is very plain to interpret: “Not a word”. There is almost an element of pleading to the expression.

If you feel comfortable in roleplaying the emotion and expression of this scene—and have the time—please do, GM. You have not been informed of the reason for the tension, but it foreshadows a future trilogy.

Conclusion

Secrets discovered: some revealed, some not. A web of strange events seems to be surrounding both you and Senator Wren. Your job has been successful, but it is obvious that you have not heard the last of these events. You have, as usual, become of interest to a great many people. It’s nice that at least one of them is a potential friend.

Or...?

Here Ends *Who Goes Thaere?*

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 determine that there was a secret *Thaereian* Base on Ostfrei, and report it to Sa'arli? If so, each hero who survived receives 350 XP.

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

Total Possible Experience:	650 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 stopping the release of the virus but did not learn of the fund transfer, award them ¾ adventure experience.

Loot Summary

If it's not on this list, the heroes cannot keep it. This is a house rule that overrides what they may actually encounter in the scenario.

Encounter 2

Heroes get the base fee negotiated, plus any bonuses as appropriate to the encounter. If the heroes had a ship and it took damage, it is repaired if they cannot do so themselves.

Encounter 3

Heroes that capture the ship can find a grand total of 500 credits of ordinary goods that can be sold as loot. This would be common equipment from the list. No guns, just ordinary gear, with no identification. There are also four medpacs.

Encounter 4

If the heroes take the time to do any mining, they can come away with their own lumps of crystalline metal: (Possibly one per hero)

Crystalline Metal: This is a 20 kg mass of native crystalline metal and mineral complexes. In undamaged,

original form, it refracts light in a beautiful, scintillating pattern. This material can be refined into the constituents of ships' laser cannon and turbolaser core elements. Either for their aesthetic value, or as refined material, the metallic crystals are worth 500 credits. If it was mined quickly, it is still as valuable, but not beautiful

(3 total)

Space Slug Fang: This massive fang was harvested on Ostfrei from a small specimen of the legendary Space Slug. It is a great souvenir, and incidentally is wickedly sharp. It could be fashioned into a weapon appropriate for anyone who uses Primitive Weapons. Force Adepts sense a feeling of old strength if they touch it. The tooth is almost impervious to ordinary, physical damage, though a lightsaber would destroy it. This can be fashioned into a weapon suitable for Force Adepts to imbue. Indicate which size was harvested:

Low Tier: 30 cm long, 1d8 piercing damage.

Mid Tier: 50 cm long, 1d10 piercing damage.

High Tier: 70 cm long, 2d8 piercing damage.

Encounter 6

Any pirate goods retrieved in Encounter 6 are stolen property and/or contraband. They must be turned in, but the heroes are offered a finder's fee by the state and insurance companies. If they just picked up some gear, it's one third of the book value. If they effectively looted the base and brought the ship back, too, it can go to a maximum of 1000 credits per hero. Scoundrel heroes, or those who do a decent job of playing "heroes with gray morals", may manage to abscond with goods worth an extra 300. GM judgment. This is not intended to reward simple greed, but rather good roleplaying of a roguish character, in a quick and abstract manner. One hopes that the players of more "virtuous" heroes can refrain from whining. There is also a cert for an illegal weapon, the Light Repeating Blaster Rifle, from the pirates. The cert does not make it legal; it is simply proof of existence. If a player chooses this cert, it is presumed that his or her hero is hiding the weapon from the authorities— and maybe the other heroes? A Jedi should have no interest in breaking the law, and should be warned about earning a DSP for taking this weapon, unless it is to turn it in to authorities or destroy it. If a hero claims the item just to turn it in, issue a 50 XP bonus, which *may* pierce the limit. If the group as a whole elects to turn it in, they each get the bonus. No, this isn't policy, but once in a while it's nice to reward altruism, even though we shouldn't have to.

One for each hero:

Gratitude of the Army of the Republic: The Army of the Republic is grateful for the assistance of the hero named above, and will offer whatever consideration

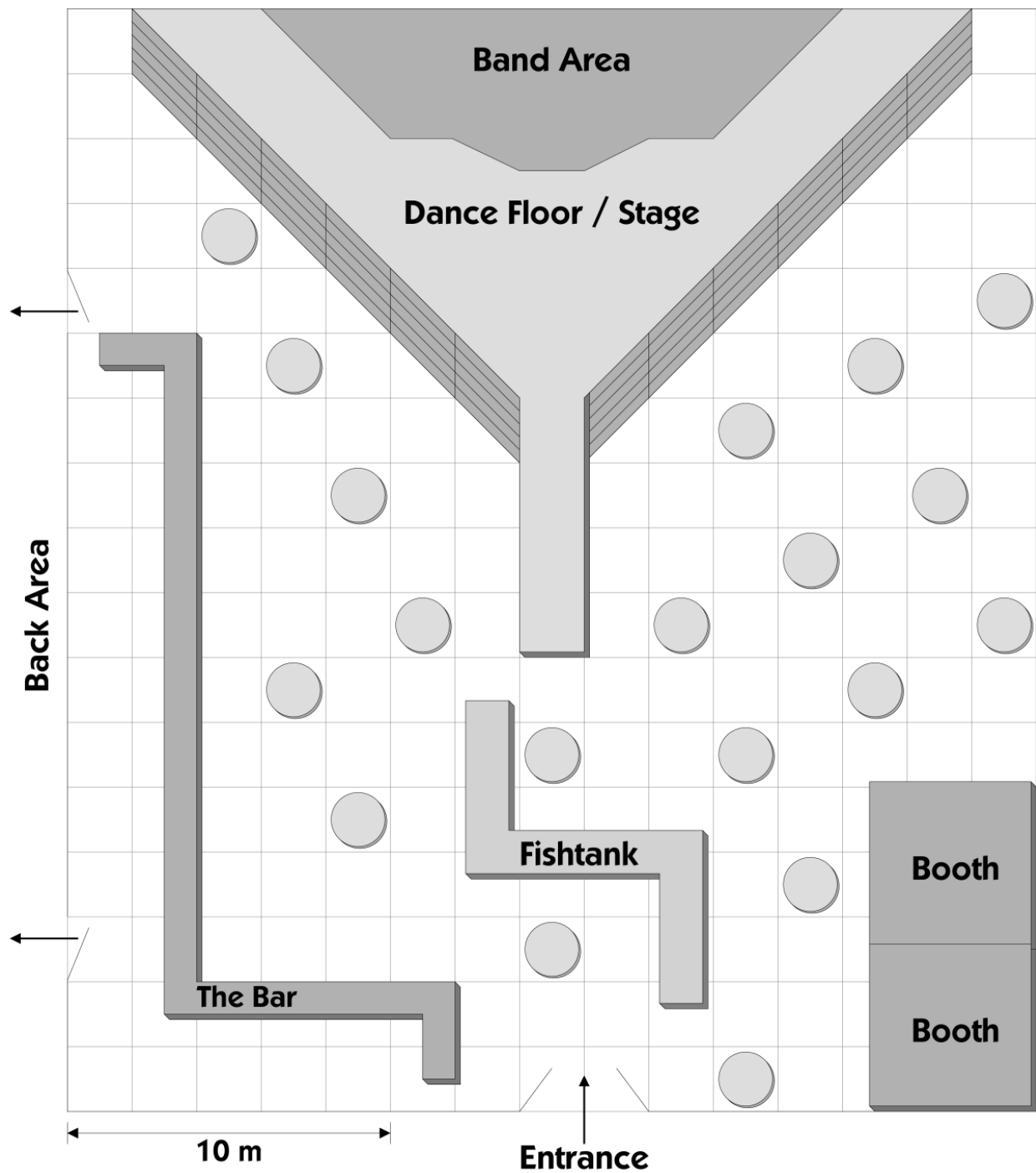
they can (and find appropriate) in the future.(Collect three of these and staple them together to serve as a permit to carry one of the restricted items listed below. When three are collected, check the item the permit is for.)___ Heavy blaster pistol ___ Blaster carbine ___ Blaster rifle ___ Vibro-ax ___ Security Kit

One only:

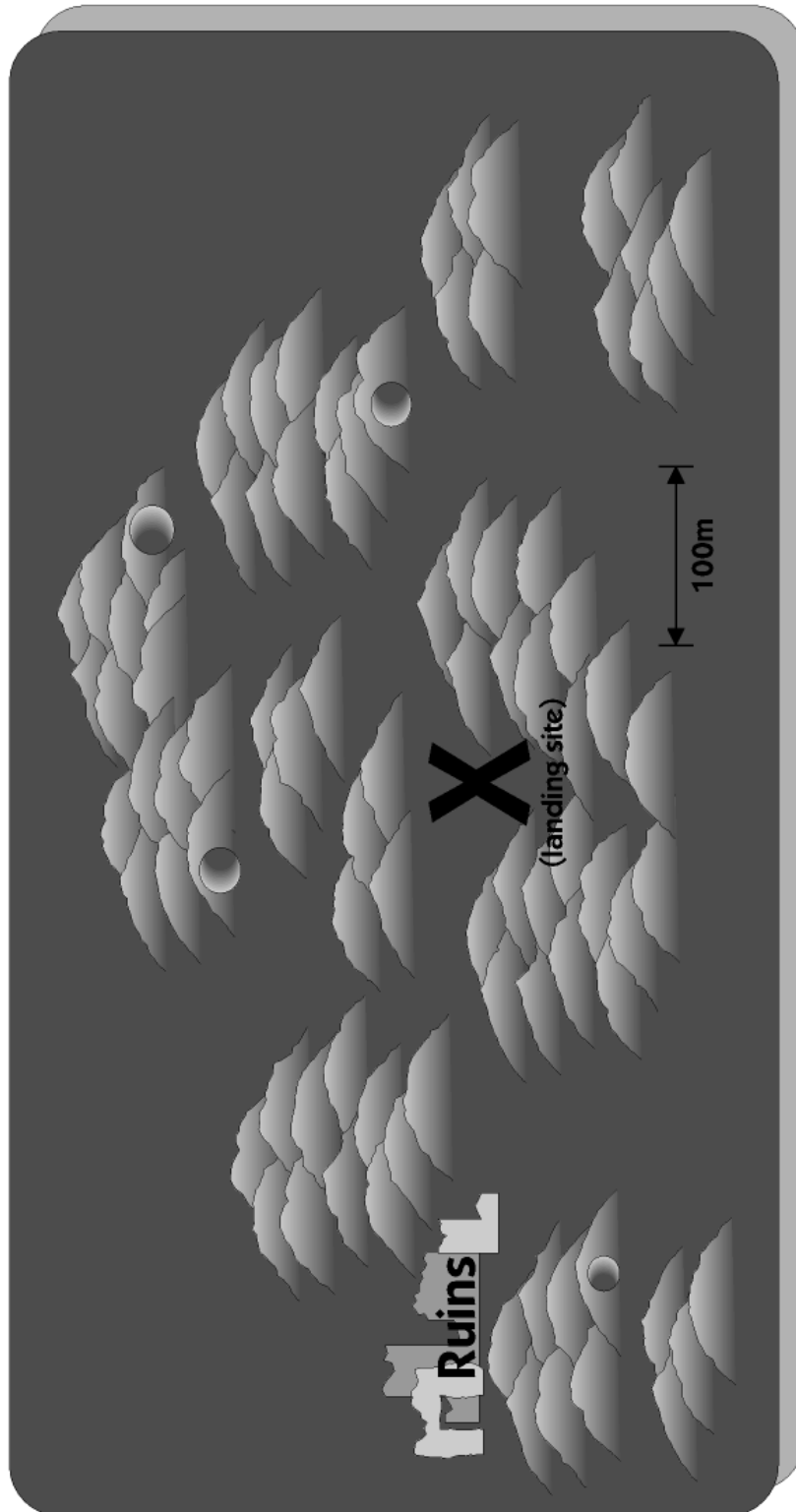
BlasTech T-21 Light Repeating Blaster Rifle; Weapon Type: Light repeating blaster; Proficiency Group: Blaster Rifles; Damage 3d8; Range Increment: 40 m; Type: Energy; Multifire/Autofire: M/A only; Hardness:5; WP: 10; Break DC: 20; Cost: 2000; Critical: 19-20; Weight: 4.5 kg; Size: Large; Special: Autofire puts this weapon under severe stress. In each subsequent round of continuous autofire after the first, roll 1d20 and add +1 to the die roll for each additional round after the first. A result of 10 or higher means the weapon becomes inoperative for 1d6 rounds.

The archetypical light repeating blaster, this weapon is identifiable by its two sets of focusing coils, one next to the targeting sensor and one at the muzzle itself. The T-21 uses a standard power pack, which has enough energy for 30 shots. The weapon is susceptible to the extreme heat of autofire. Internal cooling units keep the downtime to a minimum, but the weapon is not made for long-term firefights.

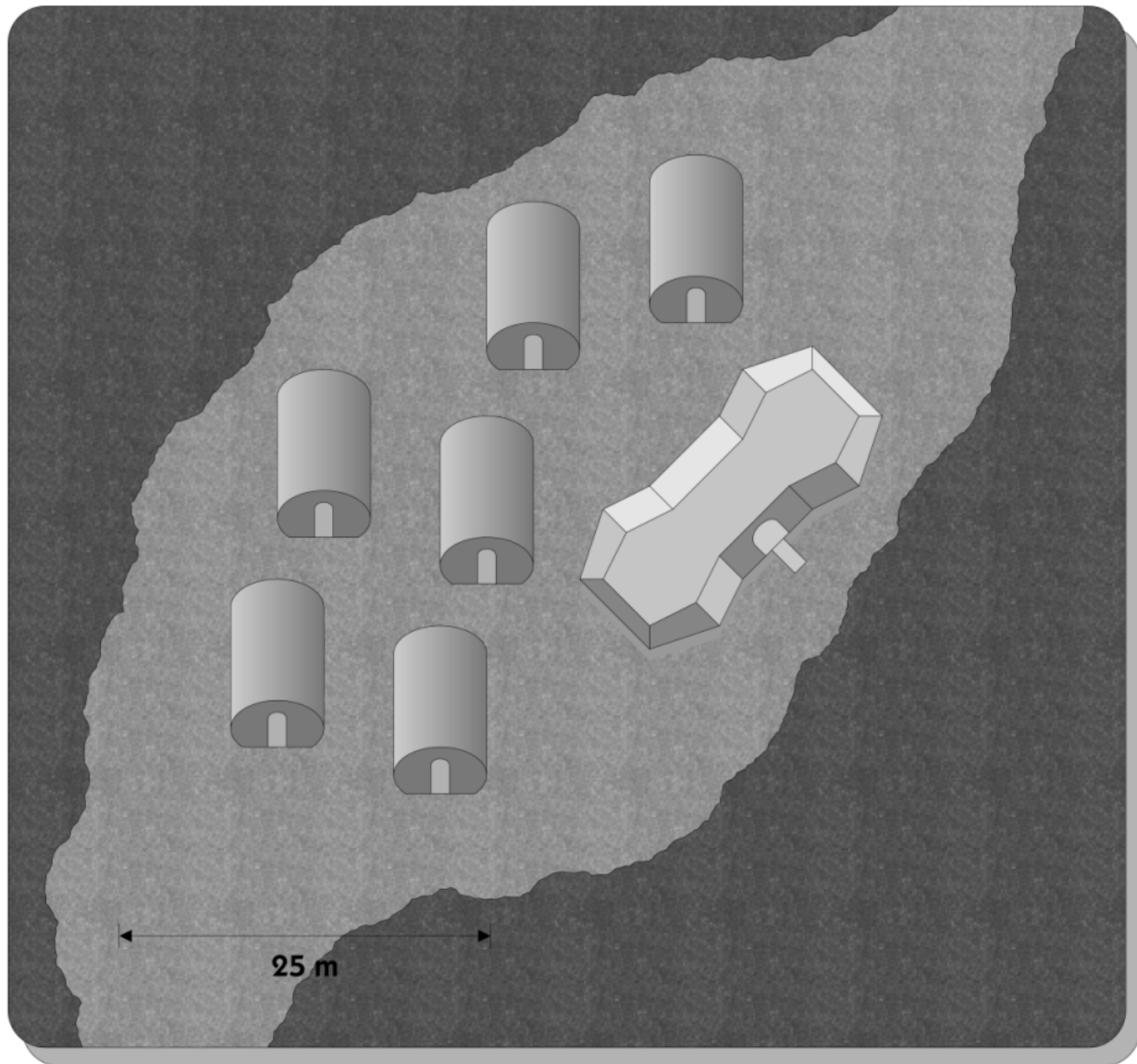
Player Handout 1: Map of the “Near Vacuum” Bar, Tolea Biqua



Player Handout 2: Map of the Ostfrei Landing Site.



Player Handout 3: Map of the Pirate Base.



GM Aid #1: Combat Statistics

Encounter 1: Waiting for Sa'arli

Untiered

Alto Janss, Human female smuggler and leader, Scout 3/ Scoundrel 4; Init +1; Def 15; Spd 10m; VP/WP 36/10; Atk +5 melee; +6 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day, Precise attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Knowledge: (streetwise) Cularin System Criminal Subculture, Trailblazing, Heart +1; SZ med; FP 5; DSP:1; Rep +1; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills: Appraise +8, Astrogate +4, Bluff +9, Computer Use +9, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +7, Forgery +6, Gather information +11, Hide +3, Knowledge: Cularin System Criminal Subculture +9, Knowledge: Spacer Lore +6, Knowledge: Business +8, Knowledge: Bureaucracy +7, Knowledge: Politics +4, Knowledge: Cularin System +12, Knowledge: World Lore +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +2, Pilot +6, Profession: (Smuggler) +6, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7, Gamble +2, Spoken Languages: Basic, Sullustese, Huttese, Bothese, Shyriiwook, Durese, Read/Write Language: Basic, Sullustese, Bothese. Other Language: Lekku.

Feats: Weapon proficiencies: blaster rifles, blaster pistols, simple weapons, Starship Operation (space transports), Skill Emphasis: Diplomacy, Skill Emphasis: Knowledge: Cularin System, Trustworthy, Sharp Eyed.

Equipment: Nothing the heroes can get. If you need an item for “window-dressing”, equip it.

Human Bar Patrons Thug 1; Init +1; Def 11; Spd 10m; VP/WP /12; Atk +2 melee, +2 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +3; SQ Because of their drunken rowdiness, these patrons either drop automatically when hit, or surrender and take no further part in the combat; they do not go into negative hit points. SZ Medium; FP 0; DSP: 0; Rep 0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12

Skills: Knowledge: Streetwise +2, Knowledge: (Tolea Biqua) +2, Intimidate +3, Pilot +2.

Feats: Weapon group proficiency: simple weapons, blaster pistols, Toughness, Iron will.

Equipment: None, or a bottle (+2 stun damage) or chair (+4 stun damage).

Notes to GM: These are incidental patrons that can get involved in the fight, either against the Thaereians or the heroes, or even against each other, for atmosphere. They are all based on Humans, but feel free to describe some as humanoid aliens. It is not

intended that any die or be seriously injured, though if some get badly bruised or cut, it allows a hero with medical skills to help as part of roleplay, after the fight.

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

Thaereian Military, various Human Thug 1/Scout 1; Init +2; Defense 16; Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/15; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, baton) or +4 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ DR 2; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

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

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

Equipment: Blaster pistol (field issue).

Middle tier (levels 4-6)

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

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

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot

Equipment: Nothing the heroes can get. If you need an item for “window-dressing”, equip it.

Thaereian Military, various Human Thug 4/Scout 1; Init +2; Defense 16; Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/15; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, baton) or +7 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ DR 2; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

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

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

Equipment: Blaster pistol (field issue).

High Tier (levels 7-9)

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

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

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

Equipment: Nothing the heroes can get. If you need an item for “window-dressing”, equip it.

Thaereian Military, various Human Thug 6/Scout 1; Init +2; Defense 17; Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/18; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, baton) or +7 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

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

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

Equipment: blaster pistol (field issue).

Encounter 3 – Don’t I Know You?

Pirate Ship Name: Full House; Class: Transport; Cost: estimated 1.55 million; Crew: see below; Hyperdrive: x2 Backup: x 8-9; Size: Medium; Size modifier: +0; Max Speed: Attack speed; Length: 88.3 meters; Mass: 322 metric tons; Consumables: 6 months; Cargo capacity: 823 metric tons; Initiative modifier: +0; Base Defense: 20; DR: 15; Armor: 10; Shield Points: 175; Hull Points: 285; Maneuver Checks: Average; Weapon 1) Ion Cannon (2)-Fire linked; Attack bonus: *See below Damage: special; Range: medium; Arc: Forward; Weapon 2) Quad laser cannons (2); Attack bonus: *See below; Damage: 6D10x2; Range: short; Arc: Turret; Weapon 3) Tractor Beam; Attack bonus: *See below; Damage: Special; Range: Short; * Attack bonus= +0 (size)+crew (see below) +4 (fire control);

Pirate Crew: Low Tier: “Green”/untrained

Check Modifier -4 Attack bonus -1

Pirate Crew: Middle Tier: Experienced

Check Modifier +4 Attack bonus +3

Pirate Crew: High Tier:

Check Modifier +7 Attack bonus +4

Encounter 4: I Could Use a Slug of Something Strong, Right Now

The Space Slug

Note that all modifiers are factored into stats given; they are final numbers.

Equipment (all tiers): Great big gnashing teeth, some of which may be extracted as souvenirs, if it is killed. See the Loot List and certs.

Description: The Slug can lash out of the cave mouth up to 10 meters at tier one and two sizes (huge) and up to 15 meters at tier three size (gargantuan). This is the effective radius of its melee bite attack. Note that the Slug has Reach, for purposes of attacks of opportunity. Also note that, due to Ostfrei’s lighting and atmospheric conditions, the heroes’ ranged weapons have a maximum effective range of 15 meters. Its Def values are not affected by being surprised, in the unlikely event that it happens (note Tremorsense/Scent).

Swallowing Whole: on a confirmed critical melee hit, the Slug does no damage, but has swallowed the character whole. Every subsequent round, the character takes 1d4+2 points of Vitality damage, until Vitality is gone, then 1 point of Wound damage, until all wounds are gone and the character is dead. There is no protection from this damage. Remember to make a Fort save, every time a character takes a Wound; they may lapse unconscious. The character may only make an attack with a hand blaster or a lightsaber, and only on the first round. After that, the internal tissues and secretions of the Slug immobilize the character. Also, its secretions temporarily short out their weapons (Repair-10 to fix them, if they get out). On the plus side, if they have such a weapon to hand, for the first round the weapon is automatically presumed to hit and do Wound damage to the inside of the Slug. It’s kind of hard to miss the thing from the inside. The Slug’s silicon tissues prevent exterior damage from reaching the character(s) swallowed (appropriate knowledge (15/18/21), so those on the outside can try to kill it, to get them back. Once it’s dead, it relaxes and trapped characters that are conscious can crawl out. Unconscious ones could be cut free.

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

Baby Space Slug /Huge+ Gnashing Monster (Aberration) (1); Init -4; Def 14; Spd 0 m (see description); VP/WP 90/20; DR (all) 5; Atk (Bite) -4 melee; Dmg 5d4; SA none; SV Fort +10, Ref -2, Will +4 (due to alien thought processes); SQ Blindsight, Tremorsense (treat as Scent, but depends on vibrations), silicon-based metabolism, Reach (see description); SZ huge; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: Listen (to vibrations) +6 (note Tremorsense); Spot +4.

Feats (all tiers): Great Fortitude, Sunder, Toughness.

Mid Tier (levels 4-6)

Immature Space Slug /Huge+ Gnashing Monster (Aberration) (1); Init -2; Def 17; Spd 0 m (see description); VP/WP 120/22; DR (all) 10; Atk (Bite) +0 melee; Dmg 8d4; SA swallow whole; SV Fort +12, Ref -2, Will +4 (due to alien thought processes); SQ Blindsight, Tremorsense (treat as Scent, but depends on vibrations), silicon-based metabolism, Reach (see description); SZ huge; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 22, Dex 8, Con 22, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: Listen (to vibrations) +8 (note Tremorsense); Spot +6.

Feats (all tiers): Great Fortitude, Sunder, Toughness.

High Tier (levels 7-9)

Immature Space Slug /Huge+ Gnashing Monster (Aberration) (1); IM +0; Def 20; Spd 0 m (see description); VP/WP 150/24; DR (all) 10; Atk (Bite) +4 melee; Dmg 11d4; SA swallow whole; SV Fort +14, Ref -2, Will +4 (due to alien thought processes); SQ Blindsight, Tremorsense (treat as Scent, but depends on vibrations), silicon-based metabolism, Reach (see description); SZ gargantuan; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 24, Dex 6, Con 24, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: Listen (to vibrations) +10 (note Tremorsense); Spot +8.

Feats (all tiers): Great Fortitude, Sunder, Toughness.

Encounter 6: A Rock And A Hard Place

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

Space Pirates, Scoundrel 2 (number of heroes x2); Init +7; Def 15; Spd 10m; VP/WP 12/12; Atk +2 melee; +4 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +1; SQ

Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day; SZ med; FP 2; DSP: 0; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

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

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot

Equipment: Blaster Pistol, Blaster Carbine, Breath mask/respirators.

Description/Group equipment: There is one medpac per two pirates, which, if they are not used, the heroes may add to their stores. The Low Tier group of pirates does not have a Light Repeating Blaster Rifle with them, as no one can use it effectively. It is among their loot at their camp, however.

Mid Tier (levels 4-6)

Space Pirates, Scoundrel 4 (number of heroes x2); IM +7; Def 16; Spd 10m; VP/WP 21/12; Atk +4melee; +7 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Tumble; SZ med; FP 4; DSP: 0; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +8, Demolitions +7, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Knowledge: streetwise +5, Move Silently +9, Pilot +6, Profession (Space Pirate) +4, Listen +7, Spot +7, Tumble +12.

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

Equipment: Blaster Pistol, Blaster Carbine.

Description/Group equipment: There is one medpac per two pirates, which, if they are not used, the heroes may add to their stores. The entire group of Pirates has one Light Repeating Blaster Rifle. The pirate using it has the following feats, **instead** of the three above: Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Multishot. He may therefore elect, with one Full Action, to take 3 shots at+3/+3/+3, or 4 shots at +1/+1/+1/+1. His DEX modifier is included.

High Tier (levels 7-9)

Space Pirates, Soldier 2/Scoundrel 6 (number of heroes x2); Init +7; Def 18; Spd 10m; VP/WP 21/13; Atk +6/+1melee; +8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +3; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Tumble; SZ med; FP 4; DSP: 0; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +8, Demolitions +9, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Knowledge: streetwise

+5, Move Silently +10, Pilot +6, Profession (Space Pirate) +5, Listen +8, Spot +8, Tumble +12.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Precise Shot.

Equipment: Blaster Pistol, Blaster Carbine.

Description/Group equipment: There is one medpac per two pirates, which, if they are not used, the heroes may add to their stores. The entire group of Pirates has one Light Repeating Blaster Rifle. The pirate using it has the following feats, **instead** of the four above: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Multishot. He may therefore elect, with one Full Action, to take 4 shots at +5/+5/+5/+0, or 5 shots at +3/+3/+3/+3/-2. His DEX modifier is included.

Encounter 7 – We’ve Got a Secret (Maybe)

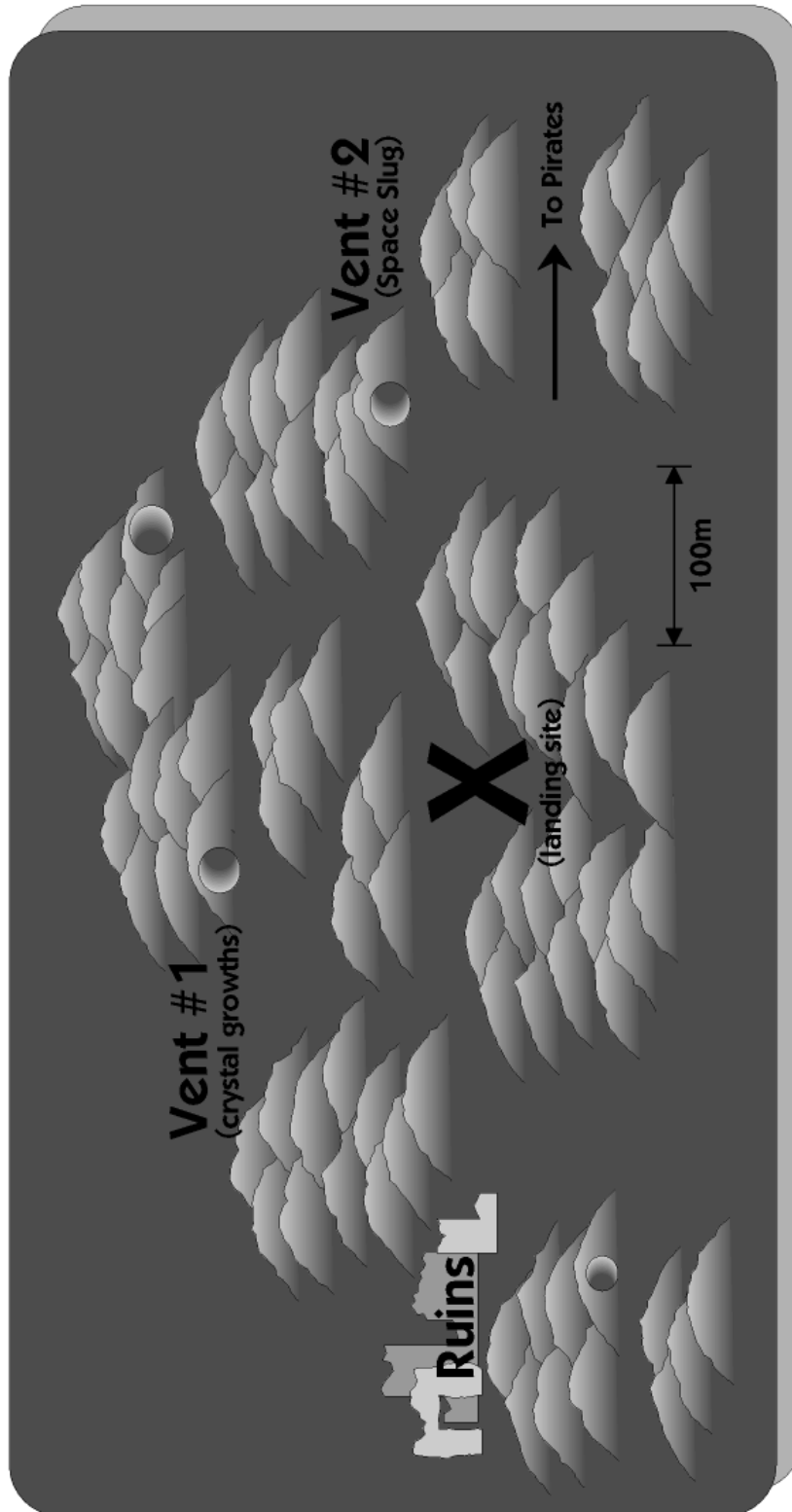
Captain Baltor Yfridian, Human Captain in the Thaereian Navy.

This description is here to enable uniformity of roleplay. No stats are included, as the heroes should not be allowed to attack Yfridian, read his mind, or anything similar. Moreover, it is not the intent that the heroes get to interact with him for more than a minute or two. Their appointment was over; his was just about to start.

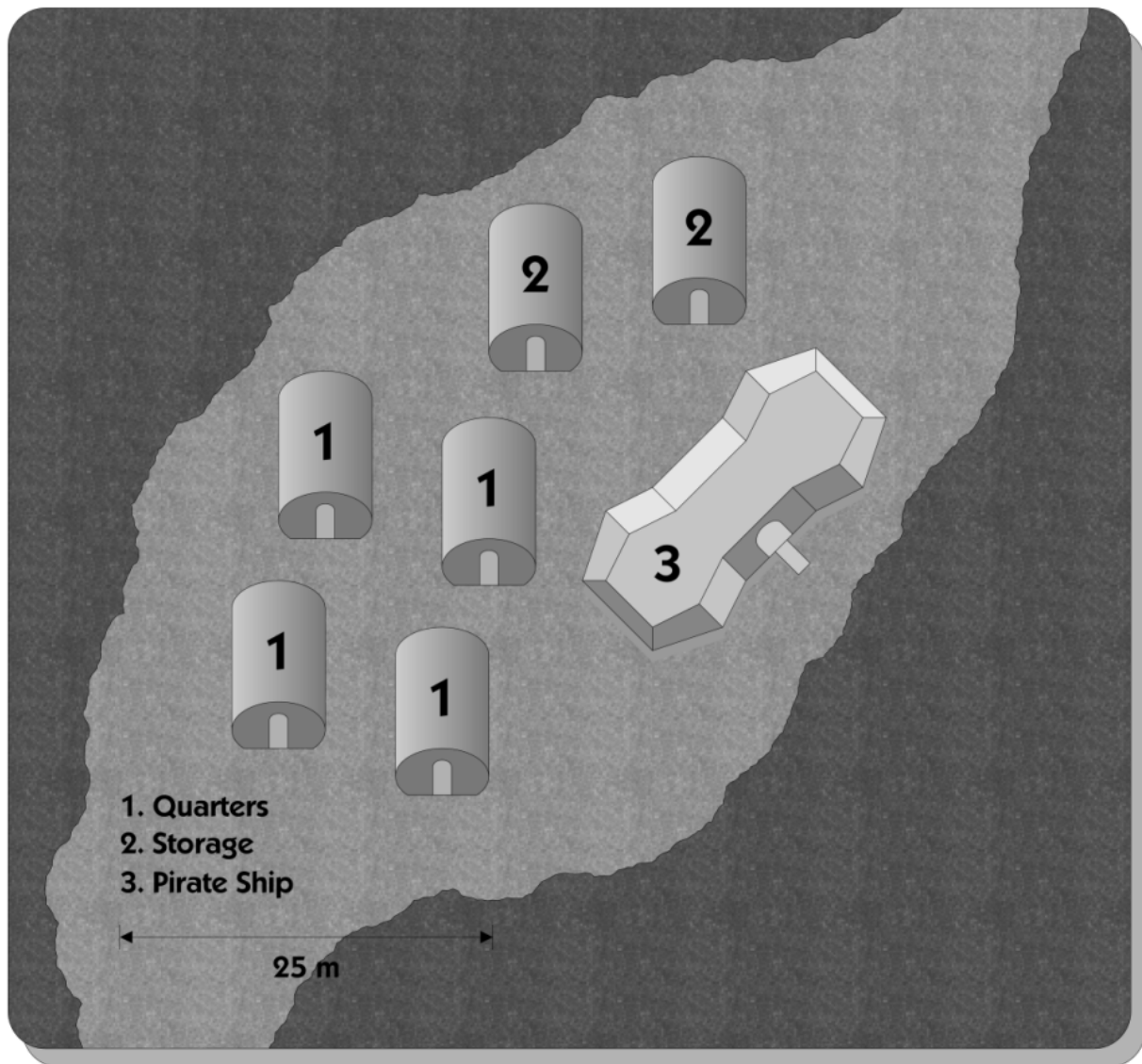
He is a middle-aged Human, black hair graying at the temples. He has grey eyes. He is wise enough in diplomacy to act graciously, if the heroes have been of assistance with pirates or if any of them has a reputation as a hero of Cularin. He is respectful to Jedi. He will make pleasant, irrelevant comments or conversation, ending with something like, “I hope that we will meet again.” If you wish to convey an undertone of well-disguised menace, go right ahead, but no hand wringing.

GM knowledge only: Yfridian is good at what he does and he despises the Cularin Militia. He has his own agenda concerning shipping within Cularin, and concerning the independence movement. None of that can come out now, however.

GM Aid #2: Map of the Ostfrei Landing Site, with Key.



GM Aid #3: Map of the Pirate Base, with Key.



GM Aid #4: Organizational Notes for “Who Goes Thaere?”

Places where time can become an issue.	Solution.
Encounter One: RP and Cantina Brawl.	Limit the brawl to 5 rounds of fighting, and then end it by having the cantina personnel stun people.
Encounter Two: Legwork. This can turn into a mini-scenario, if not handled quickly, especially if they decided to negotiate with Sa’arli.	Simply feed the heroes the required Ostfrei information via Gather Info in Encounter One, or from a grateful Alto Janss, or by Computer use, or from Sa’arli. Do not allow the “muscle it out of locals” approach; that takes a lot of time.
Encounter Three: Boarding Party. If the heroes turn this encounter into a shipboard fight, it can drag on, plus they’ll want to search the ship.	Discourage a boarding strategy, per the Encounter description. Or, keep any boarding fight very brief and relate the encounter with the second ship and the Thaereians as flavor text. Then move them straight to the landing (Encounter 4). Again, whether in space or on a ship, no more than 5 rounds of fighting. This is not a “main battle”.
Encounter Four: Overlong exploration.	Not every site need be visited, as stated in the Encounter. For a combat-oriented team, you could eliminate the ruins. For a research/roleplay team, you could shorten the Slug fight (the 5 round max, then it simply retreats) or let them see the Slug from a distance, and decide not to fight. Note that some rewards are eliminated if sites 1 or 2 are missed.
Encounter Five: decisions. The main possibilities are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heroes’ ship was seen and damaged. The heroes can elect to leave immediately (safe), to do repairs (pirate scout group attacks) or to immediately head for the pirate base (meet scout group on the way). Two of these options bring them into conflict with part of the pirate group. Ship not seen. The heroes can elect to leave (safe), or to find the Pirate base (very likely a conflict, unless they decide to leave to report). 	Remember: the number of pirates is limited. If the heroes are attacked during repairs, or en route to the Base, these pirates are subtracted from the total. There should be no more than one significant pirate fight. If the heroes split the pirates into two groups, shorten the second fight (5 rounds maximum). Also, if you are running out of time, the heroes can simply leave, even if you must allow repairs not normally possible.
Encounter Six: Pirate Base.	This, nominally, is the “big fight scene”. If you have enough time, run it normally. If not, run it for 5 rounds and then evaluate the pirates’ morale. If the heroes are doing very well, have them surrender. If the heroes are not doing well, the pirates can escape. If that would strand the heroes, have them picked up, either by Alto Janss (if they helped her; she was near and caught the energy displays on sensors) or by the Thaereians, who will impound everything at the pirate base but escort the heroes away to Encounter 7.