

Excursion

**Episode II of the Belted In Trilogy
A One-Round LIVING FORCE Tournament**

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Several ships have gone missing lately in the Asteroid Belt, including one containing a number of your friends. A rescue mission is planned - but what are those strange, ship-like shadows that keep being spotted in the Belt? An adventure for LIVING FORCE heroes levels 1-9. This scenario should be played after "*Incursion*" and before "*Recursion*" (Episodes I and III of the "*Belted In*" trilogy.)

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

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

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

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

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

House Rules

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

Atoning for Dark Side Points

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

Dissipate Energy

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

Illusion

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

Stun

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

Hero Earnings

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

Issuing Force and Dark Side Points

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

General Notes to the GM

When running this adventure, or any *Star Wars*

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

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

This is an adventure for 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

It began as a mission for Nirama (*Incursion*), delivering supplies to a Militia base in the Asteroid Belt. The heroes thought that the big obstacle would be the Thareian blockade – but instead they found the base deserted, with no sign of how the people there departed.

In the interval, Nirama has had groups – probably including the heroes – out searching for the missing Militia members. There’s been no success thus far, and now additional groups have gone missing, including friends of the heroes.

As the heroes search the Asteroid Belt, they discover that others have disappeared: from the base, from a ship and from a mining asteroid, to name a few. A Thareian patrol ship is filled with dead soldiers.

As the heroes search, they uncover some disturbing indications that the missing people are still there, but somehow out of phase. The shadow creatures, survivors – after a fashion – of the cataclysm that destroyed a planet and created the Asteroid Belt, have been attempting to communicate with the beings they keep stumbling across. Unfortunately, these attempts have resulted in the beings being shifted into a shadow of existence.

At the Thareian ship, the shadow creatures attempted to communicate by possessing a living being,

with disastrous consequences among the already paranoid Thaereians. Believing that they were being invaded, they turned upon one another.

At a hidden, unauthorized Cartel mining complex, the shadow creatures find a new way to attempt communication – animating the dead.

Making contact, at last, with the heroes, the shadow creatures try to undo the damage they've done. If the heroes can figure out the puzzle, they can return everyone who's been lost (except the Thaereians).

Encounter 1: Missing In Action

The heroes gather at the base for a briefing, and to search it one more time. Again, Veneziano Haas is their liaison from Nirama. Haas sums up what he knows, and that a search ship containing friends of the heroes has now gone missing. In addition, one of Nirama's vessels, the *Jackpot*, has lost contact.

Encounter 2: Back to Basics

(Optional encounter.) The heroes may want to search the Militia base in hopes of uncovering more clues as to what became of the crew. If they want to get out into space, make sure they get the information in Encounter 1.

Encounter 3: Survivor

Searching near the coordinates for the *Jackpot*, the heroes find it adrift and deserted but for a single survivor, Sullustan Captain Jander Bibbbi, who describes horrific shadow creatures devouring his companions one by one.

Encounter 4: Bits and Pieces

As the heroes travel to their next destination, they discover that small items are disappearing. They have the opportunity to learn more about the shadow creatures from Jander Bibbbi.

Encounters 3 and 4 may blend together, depending upon what the heroes do.

Encounter 5: Old Enemies

The heroes locate, board, and search the Thaereian customs cruiser *Stark Wing*. Unlike most such excursions, this time the meeting with the Thaereians is completely peaceful. Of course, Thaereians are all *dead*, having killed one another before the heroes arrived. More small items disappear as they find out what happened and where the Thaereians have been (most recent stop, an asteroid mine deeper in the belt.)

Encounter 6: The Mine's Eye

Arriving at the Cartel's mining facility, the heroes discover that the Caarites have all been slaughtered – not

by one another, but by Thaereian troops. Among the dead is at least one Caarite the heroes may recognize from prior adventuring, Sgt. Dregz. Perhaps more interesting (at least for now) is the fact that all the items the heroes have noticed going missing over the course of the event are found in a trail leading deep into the mine.

Encounter 7: Möbius Trip

The heroes encounter a reanimated Sergeant Dregz, who struggles to communicate with them. As he finally manages to make contact, the heroes are drawn into an alternate reality where they must deal with both dark and light to find their missing friends.

Important Note to Judges:

Before the scenario begins, have each player list 3-5 other heroes (not at their table) that their hero considers to be friends. Use these names to compose the party of "missing friends".

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, but should still be able to enjoy the role playing opportunities.

Opening Crawl

In the wake of the discovery of a mysteriously abandoned Militia base, citizens of Cularin began to scour the Asteroid Belt for the missing militia members. Ships swept the belt, quadrant by quadrant, turning up nothing. Some began to say that there might be nothing at all to be found - but nothing might be the greatest danger of all, among the asteroids...

Encounter 1: Missing In Action

Key ideas of this encounter: Get the heroes involved; recap the conclusions from Incursion; establish that friends of the heroes, part of the search, have disappeared as well.

NOTES TO GM: Before you begin, determine which (if any) of the heroes have been engaged in the search for the missing Militia members. They've been too busy to work at a profession or a job (meaning they

don't make income rolls), but Nirama has paid them 500 credits (which they may add to their funds now). You may need to paraphrase for heroes who didn't play *Incursion*. In addition, before you get under way have each player list 3-5 other heroes (not at their table) that their hero considers to be friends. Use these names to compose the party of "missing friends".

It began as a mission for Nirama, delivering supplies to a Militia base in the Asteroid Belt. Everyone expected that the big obstacle would be the Thaereian blockade, but that turned out to be relatively simple. No, the problem turned out to be that the Militia base was deserted, with no sign of how the people there departed. In the intervening time an exhaustive search has been mounted – to no avail. Now, you've been summoned to the abandoned base. As you enter the deserted mess hall, you're pretty confident that whatever the news is, it isn't good.

Let the heroes introduce themselves. Veneziano Haas (who hired the heroes in *Incursion*) is, again, somewhat tardy. As soon as they've had a chance to connect and start to wonder what's up, Haas arrives. When you play him, he is charming and flamboyant, a rakish scoundrel to the core, with thick black hair and a very impressive moustache. He is collegial to the males and flirts with the females (of any species).

As always, paraphrase as appropriate.

Thank you for your prompt response. I shall get straight to the point. You may be aware that the search for the missing Militia members has been, thus far, unfruitful. Unfortunately, it's worse than that – we seem, now, to have lost one of the search teams as well.

Who's missing? *Ah, well, that's the reason I asked for you in particular. [List of 4-6 heroes from the names provided by the players at the beginning of the scenario.] Since they're friends of yours, we thought you'd want to be the ones to look for them.*

Where were they last seen? *I have coordinates right here, from the last transmission we received. Long range sensors from nearby search teams don't even find debris, much less a ship.*

What resources can you provide for us? *What do you need? Anything within reason, I can provide, but I do believe that it would be best to move quickly. [As always, if the heroes need a ship and/or a pilot, Haas can provide either or both. See the handouts for the Fortune's Favor and Haas' statistics, if they should need him as a pilot.]*

How long ago did you lose track of them? *Haas checks the time. "As of now, it's been 3 hours and 27 minutes since the nearest teams confirmed that they'd lost the trace."*

What about the shadows – ghosts? *Haas shakes his head. "I haven't seen them; neither did the team we've had examining the place. Although..." Haas frowns, considering. "We have been getting reports from some of the search teams about large, ship-sized objects with no lights and no transponder signals."*

Where have those been seen? *[Haas produces a datamap with half a dozen notations on it; he's not sure, though, if people are really seeing things or just getting carried away. They do appear to indicate a rough direction, deep into the Asteroid Belt, and the times of the sightings form a rough line, with the latest item being the Jackpot, Nirama's missing ship.]*

Has anyone else disappeared? *Lord Nirama's controller reports that they've lost touch with the Jackpot, an inbound transport. Long range scanning suggests the ship is there, but we haven't been able to raise them.*

Was it anywhere near where our friends disappeared? *Here are the coordinates. It's not in the same sector, but... if you combine it with the shadow ship sightings and your missing friends, we do seem to have a pattern here. [Most probably the players have come to this conclusion themselves; only hammer them with a clue-by-four if it doesn't occur to anyone.]*

Improvise as needed based on the information you, as GM have. The goal, at this point, is to encourage them to get back out into space to find the derelict ship (Encounter 3). If they want to search the base, move them along to Encounter 2. If, however, they are anxious to get into space go ahead to Encounter 3. Just make sure that Haas provides the information from Encounter 2.

Encounter 2: Back to Basics

Key ideas of this encounter: Search the base and files to discover more information about the shadow lurkers. This is an optional encounter – if the heroes are anxious to get going, just make sure that they get the information from Haas as part of Encounter 1.

A map of the base is available as Player Handout 2.

- There was some kind of significant energy discharge, as the lights were blown out, and images

burned into the computer screens.

- Whatever happened, it happened very quickly.
- Pretty much every power source on the base has been drained. Even the main power plant reserves are unnaturally low.
- It doesn't appear that the people were killed, at least not here. There's no sign of a struggle, no remains, no residue.
- Everywhere there are signs that people disappeared in the midst of activities – weights on the floor of the recreation area, dishes on the tables in the dining room, soap on the floor in the shower, etc.
- There is no liquid, anywhere on the base. Even sealed containers are bone dry.
- If the heroes restore power to the main computer (Repair check DC 18/23/28), they can listen to a conversation between an incoming starfighter and the base. The pilot reports having seen a large, dark, ship-shaped object. It had no running lights and didn't respond to his hail. The transmission ends abruptly in static, as if the power had suddenly been cut.
- Power systems on the base started failing about 5 minutes after the pilot landed.
- **Farseeing Results:** If any of the heroes succeed in a Farseeing attempt (DC 20, cannot be used untrained), here is a sample vision. Adapt as needed.

A female Human Militia member in garrison uniform (black trimmed with emerald green) works at one of the computer terminals. A humanoid shadow oozes from the corner, looming beside her. She glances over her other shoulder, not seeing the shadow, but clearly aware of something. The shadow touches her shoulder and she whips around, reaching for her blaster. The shadow envelops the blaster and you can see, through the shadowy hand, the indicator dropping to zero. The woman screams as the shadow flows over her, and fades from sight. Others rush into the room, finding nothing but the drained blaster.

Encounter 3: Survivor

Key idea of this encounter: Find the missing smuggler's ship; rescue the Sullustan sole survivor (now mostly insane with fear). He can tell the heroes how his shipmates disappeared one by one and give them more information about the shadow creatures.

You arrived at the Jackpot's coordinates half an hour ago, and have been searching since. At last, your

sensors pick up the transponder code for the transport. The signal is very faint, and the power level on the ship is barely above emergency minimum. Except, that is, for one "hot spot", which seems to be the focus of the majority of the ship's remaining energy.

Docking with the drifting ship is simple enough that you can begin with it already accomplished, as well as any security measures the heroes wish to take. Some of the heroes may remember from earlier scenarios that the shadow lurkers are sensitive to light. They have the equipment they need to set up anything within reason. The ships can use a docking ring, so the heroes won't need EVA suits, though most ships have them if they want to take that approach.

The *Jackpot*'s power plant is dangerously low, and the ship is adrift. It's only a matter of time before it collides with an asteroid and is damaged beyond repair. With the power plant failing, about the best they can hope to do is repair it sufficiently to limp to one of the larger asteroids and land it until they can get a replacement power plant. The heroes need to make a Repair check DC (15/20/25) to run the bypasses to get the *Jackpot* minimally functional.

Note to GM: Some heroes have ships large enough to hold the *Jackpot* (a YT-1300); this is certainly a viable option. Characters wishing to claim it as salvage need to be reminded that there is an owner of record (Jander Bibbbi), and that Lord Nirama holds the papers on it.

The *Jackpot* is a ghost ship -- or nearly so. The atmosphere is creepy – emphasize this in your descriptions for the heroes. Some suggested text is below – paraphrase or replace as needed.

The corridors of the Jackpot are eerily quiet. You don't think about the constant, almost subliminal thrum of engines – unless it's missing. Your footsteps echo too loudly in the silence. Most of the lights are out; the few that remain flicker dimly and spark unexpectedly. Far off, you can hear the wet, hollow echo of something dripping. A faint rime of frost is beginning to form on metal surfaces. The air is cold and completely still, a sign that the air exchangers are off-line as well.

The Jackpot bears an unpleasant resemblance to the Militia base. Everywhere is evidence that people disappeared in mid-action. You catch the occasional sense of something moving out of the corner of your eye, but when you try to focus on it, it disappears.

On a cursory search, the ship seems to be abandoned. It's not – Jander Bibbbi, the Sullustan captain of the ship, has hidden in the concealed hold with every fusion

lantern he could find. What he's seen – his shipmates disappearing one at a time, in plain view – was too much for him, and at this point he's in a state of gibbering terror.

The heroes can find him in a number of ways. There's no need to drag the search out – lay on the atmosphere, but we want the heroes to find Bibbbi.

- Track power emanations – the fusion lamps are the only significant power output on the ship.
- Listen -- a good Listen check (DC 18/23/28) detects Bibbbi mumbling to himself in his hidey-hole. "No shadows, need light, can't stand the light, safe in the light..." over and over.
- Search – if the heroes take 20 on a Search check
- Anything else that makes sense and would look good on film.

When the heroes find him, Bibbbi gibbers hysterically and fights removal from his "safe" hole. For the purposes of Diplomacy checks, consider him "hostile", though he isn't trying to harm the heroes. He can be calmed, though, and reward compassion and creative thinking.

When role-playing Bibbi, keep in mind that he's been frightened beyond what a normal individual can accept. Ordinarily he's a competent and intelligent (if easygoing) captain, used to dealing with the various challenges facing a smuggler in wartime. Now, however, he's mortally afraid that whatever got his crew is going to get him too.

What Jander Bibbbi can tell them (although perhaps not this coherently):

- *While evading a Thaereian customs cruiser, they thought they saw a ship – a big, black ship, with no identification or lights, coming from deeper in the Belt.*
- *They lost sight of the object. Not long after, the power started failing.*
- *He lost contact with the crew woman working on the power plant, grabbed a fusion lantern, and went back to check on her. As he entered the engineering section, he saw her struggling with what looked like her shadow – and then it enveloped her. Eyes begging him for help, she faded away into shadow.*
- *When he shined the light on the shadow, it flinched away.*
- *He tried to let the rest of his crew know to get the fusion lanterns, but he was too late. He gathered as many lanterns as he could find and locked himself in the hidden hold with them.*
- *His lights are failing, and he wants to get out of here, away from them. And into the light. Lots*

and lots of light.

- *They come from the shadows. You'll only be safe if there are no shadows at all.*

Assuming some power can be provided to the ship's systems, the navigational logs lead deeper into the Belt, and into the area where their friends disappeared.

The heroes should take Bibbbi onto their ship; anything else condemns him to slow death as his ship's power fails. Again, the mechanics of transferring him can be glossed over – reward creativity and move along.

Encounter 4: Bits and Pieces

Key ideas of this encounter: Ratchet up the tension. The heroes' ship begins to exhibit odd symptoms – power fluctuations and small items disappearing. The Sullustan grows hysterical, insisting on bright lights and that "they're here!"

This is a bridging piece, building dramatic tension as the heroes travel on searching for their missing friends.

If you're running under tournament time constraints, this encounter can be shortened.

The shadows have realized that none of their attempts to communicate are working as desired, and they want to avoid further damage. They've figured out what they've done, and have an idea how to undo the disappearances – but first they have to lure the heroes to one of their hiding places. They're somewhat hampered by their inability to understand alien minds, however.

In order to pique the heroes' interest, they begin taking small items. Run the disappearances pseudo-randomly. Have an idea of what kinds of things are going to disappear. As the heroes interact with Bibbbi and go about the tasks of trying to find their friends, have them make Spot checks (DC 15/20/25) to notice that something small has changed. Something is no longer where it was and can't be found.

Lights flicker without explanation, and small, unattended objects disappear. Do NOT take anything in the possession of the heroes. Now, this is not to say that if a hero puts something down – a datapad or a blaster pistol or whatnot – that it can't disappear. But DON'T OVER-DO IT. The shadow lurkers don't want to make the heroes MAD; they want to get their attention. They're trying very hard to communicate. If it just doesn't seem to be sinking in that maybe these things that are disappearing are doing so for a reason, then maybe the heroes just need to be nudged and made to realize that it isn't just a series of figments of their collective imagination, that things really **are** disappearing.

Things should disappear every 3-4 minutes (real time) during this encounter – more often if you need to move the scenario along more quickly.

Wherever they've put him, Bibbbi begins to shriek hysterically. "They're here, they're here – turn on all the lights or they'll get us too!"

It may well be that the heroes decide that there's someone else here, and they have to conduct a thorough search and sensor-scan of the entire ship. They don't find anything.

Or, to put it a different way – don't let them waste too much time searching. There's no one else here, and the things they've seen are just gone.

Besides – there's a Thaereian customs cruiser on a collision course with them, so they have other things to think about!

Encounter 5: Old Enemies

Key idea of this encounter: the heroes locate and search a Thaereian customs cruiser, the Stark Wing, only to find that the crew are all dead – and everything seems to indicate that they killed one another

This encounter is a combination of exploration, investigation, and attention. The environment aboard the *Stark Wing* should be very constant – after all, there's nothing alive here. Things do change, though. Small things disappear, and it takes a trained eye to recognize that things are changing.

Pay attention to the small details; draw the "eyes" of the heroes to things like broken datapads, hydrosplanners, power cells, circuits, gears, knick-knacks, bits of cord and wire, tape that was being used to jury-rig the ship's systems – paint the picture. Show them the chaos, let them experience it.

Disappearances

As in the previous encounter, small items continue to disappear. Don't make a big issue of it, but the phenomenon continues aboard the *Stark Wing*. After you describe a section of the *Stark Wing* that the heroes are searching, let them do what they want to do and then give them Spot checks (DC 15/20/25) to notice that something small has changed. Something – be it a sliver of glass, a hydrosplanner, or whatever – is no longer where it was.

A Bunch of Corpses

The *Stark Wing* had a crew of 60. Even if the ship were operational, the heroes wouldn't be able to crew it. Fortunately, the ship isn't operational. Its sublight engines seem (DC 13/15/17 Repair or 18/20/23 Demolitions) to have been obliterated, perhaps with thermal detonators. Its hyperdrive has been removed and (apparently) jettisoned, and it really can't do much

aside from drift until it runs into something bigger than it is. Or, to put it a different way: NO, THE HEROES CANNOT KEEP THIS SHIP.

Life support systems still work, though climate control is set at a very low temperature (this is something the heroes also find in encounter 6). But, rather than tell you everything that's going on here, we can just show you a little of what the heroes see.

You dock with the Stark Wing without much effort. The derelict vessel floats between two asteroids, apparently suspended in their weak gravitational fields. When the airlock opens, you're greeted with a hiss of air cold enough that you can suddenly see your own breath in front of your face. The air stinks of copper and char.

Things are pretty gruesome here. The crew of the *Stark Wing* are splayed all over the floor, sprawled across and underneath furniture, dead. Most of them have been shot with blasters, though some of them died of stab wounds and even strangulation. The majority of the dead have blasters either in their hands, or nearby. Every weapon has been drained, and the process seems to have damaged the circuitry.

There are two primary sources of information the heroes may be able to access about what occurred here.

The first are security camera recordings; the second is the captain's log. We'll deal specifically with the captain (Jans Tolen) and his quarters shortly.

Security Camera Recordings. The security cameras on board the ship recorded everything; there's no audio, but the video is quite telling. Accessing it requires a Computer Use check, DC 17/22/27.

If this check is successful, the heroes see images of Thaereians shooting one another. There is clearly fear in their eyes, and on more than one occasion two soldiers go from shooting at a common enemy, to turning on one another. Try not to get too graphic; this is a low-quality security system, so the heroes are seeing grainy black-and-white images. There aren't fountains of blood or anything like that – just a lot of people killing one another, for no apparent reason. They might be insane, there might have been some kind of attempt at mutiny, or there might have been some other issue entirely. The closest thing they get to answers is going to be found in the captain's log.

The Captain's Quarters. Captain Jans Tolen was a career officer in the Thaereian Navy. Having achieved the rank of Captain and his own ship, he'd expected a long and glorious career in the service of his home system. Didn't quite work out that way.

On finding the captain's quarters, the heroes see Tolen, in his dress uniform, seated against the wall on

his bunk. (Note that the medals on his uniform are fine things to “disappear” over the course of the search, and the ones that don’t disappear aren’t certified – and let’s be honest, taking medals from a corpse, even a Thaereian corpse, isn’t a particularly heroic thing to do, but that’s a separate issue.) He’s quite dead, having applied a blaster pistol to the underside of his chin after recording the final entry in his log and deleting all the prior entries. When the heroes attempt to access his terminal, read or paraphrase the following.

What must be the face of the dead man on the bunk appears on the screen in front of you. “This is Captain Jans Tolen, of the Stark Wing. This is my final log entry as captain of this vessel. We have come under attack from an enemy that we cannot see, and which I have come to believe takes up residence inside a living host. After Corporal Bennings began to speak of evacuating Cularin, a certain paranoia set in. Then others, both enlisted and officers, began to behave strangely. No one knew whom to trust. Trust is a tough thing to come by, these days. I am uncertain when the fighting began, but the certainty that some of us were not who we appeared caused the initial firefight. It sustained itself despite all efforts on my part, and those of others, to stop it.

“I will not let whatever this is take me over. My command is doomed, but I will not allow something else to lead this ship onto a path inconsistent with the goals of the Thaereian Navy. All pertinent data have been transferred to Thaereian High Command; I will wipe the memory of my systems and leave only this log behind, to warn those who might find the Stark Wing. Leave this ship now. It’s your only hope.”

And the screen goes black.

Other Important Information

While the captain wiped his logs and most of the pertinent files on the ship’s main computer, he failed to clear the navcomp’s memory. Here the heroes can find the coordinates of the Thaereians’ last stop – an asteroid mine even deeper into the Belt. If the heroes compare the coordinates to the sightings and disappearances, it’s in a direct line.

This should lead the heroes to Encounter 6. If they don’t think to look for the information, however, the general data plot they’ve been following should take them to the mine, regardless.

The energy weapons have all been fused and drained (by the shadow lurkers, trying to undo the lethal effect of the panic they inspired), unfortunately not soon enough to prevent the slaughter. In fact, the evidence suggests that once the weapons were drained, the Thaereians used any means at hand to kill each other.

Encounter 6: Mine’s Eye

Key ideas of this encounter: the heroes arrive at the Cartel’s mining facility and find themselves faced with another slaughter (it’s not been a good year for Caarites); they also find the various objects that have been disappearing over the course of the event

Thus far, things have been dark. Now, they get darker. The coordinates found in Encounter 5 lead to a secret Cartel mining facility – yet ANOTHER secret Cartel base within Cularin – that has suffered a fate similar to the base beneath Tilnes. Every Caarite who worked or was stationed here is dead.

When the heroes arrive, allow the individual who is operating the sensors a Computer Use check (DC 10/13/16) to notice that what looks like background noise from a distance of more than one kilometer is actually a low-frequency generator, which was probably set up to mask the other signals that are only detectable once the heroes have landed. A scan of the full range of signals operating under the masking noise shows that the station possesses life support systems, multiple computer arrays, and a basic security system. If the heroes exceed the check DC above by 10 or more, they identify one of the low-end Cartel encryption schemes as well.

For all the activity they may notice once they’re docked within the asteroid, though, there are no signs of life, or even other ships.

Docking your ship within one of the larger caverns that dot the surface of the asteroid, you disembark to a thin, cold, breathable atmosphere. The cavern floor shimmers in places – which you quickly identify as patches of ice. Patches on the walls and ceiling shimmer as well, and your breath comes in a fine cloud of icy mist. A tunnel twists down and to the right, leading into darkness.

Keep the atmosphere cold and dark. The tunnel to the right is the only way the heroes can go (you may, of course, add extra tunnels that dead-end if you have copious free time), and after the first couple of turns, small, recessed light fixtures begin to appear in the ceiling. A little further along, the heroes may (DC 15 Spot) notice cameras mounted near the ceiling. These are tied into the Cartel’s security system, but are no longer active; a Repair check (DC 12/15/18) reveals that their power cells have been drained.

A hundred meters from the tunnel’s entrance, the heroes find the first of the Caarite bodies. If you (or the players) are in a dice-rolling mood, the Spot check DC to notice the body is 13.

Half-in and half-out of a long shadow lies a small

form. The Caarite still wears a distinctive Cartel grin, even in death. A blackened blaster wound covers its entire chest. Someone evidently wanted to make certain he was dead, for a something sharp across the throat has nearly severed his neck.

Treat Injury (DC 15/18/21) allows a hero to determine that the chest wound was definitely made by a heavy blaster of some kind; a wound made by a standard blaster would be significantly smaller, and a hold-out blaster, smaller still.

Knowledge (Cularin, Metatheran Cartel, or anything else appropriate), DC 18, is sufficient for the heroes to realize that Caarites do not generally use heavy blasters, due to the size of their species. Thus, the Caarites likely did not kill one another. (In fact, there are no heavy weapons to be found anywhere in the mine.) If no one has an appropriate Knowledge skill, you have our permission to just resort to Intelligence checks (same DC) to allow heroes to realize that the Caarites definitely did not shoot one another.

Further searching reveals the following (you may expand on this with such description as is suitable to your group; if you've got a mature group, the descriptions can be more graphic, while if you've got a younger or more sensitive group, keep the descriptions relatively sparse).

- There are three primary chambers to be found. The mine has an overall control room, a security center, and a combination mess/living quarters.
- The facility seems to have housed about three dozen Caarites.
- All the Caarites are dead.
- All the Caarites still have their weapons, both blaster pistols and vibroblades; the power cells in all of the weapons have exploded, causing irreparable damage.
- All the station's systems are operating at reduced power. Climate control systems are not working at all, which is why it's so cold.
- While the security cameras are not currently working, they were when the attack came. Retrieving the recordings and playing them back requires a Computer Use (DC 20/24/28) check. A successful check allows the heroes to see that the Caarites were slaughtered by the same Thareians whose ship the heroes recently searched.
- Someone tried to execute an emergency system wipe, but it was only partially successful. What's left is mostly routine bookkeeping and security logs.
- At least two Cartel guard squads apparently tried to defend the Caarites against their attackers. They,

like everyone else, were slaughtered.

- Whatever the Caarites have been mining here, it's not a large operation. What little the heroes can find suggests that it might be some kind of crystal.

All of the above should be considered to be relatively easy to find. There are a few things, however, that only turn up if the heroes succeed at a more difficult Search check. Because there is a timeline proceeding (see Encounter 7), they cannot take 10 or 20 on this check.

DC	Results of the Search
5	Dead Caarites everywhere! Oh, the humanity! (Please see bullets above.)
10	The Caarites put up a fight. Many of them have weapons in hand, but there's no sign of them having killed any of their attackers.
15	There's a door camouflaged in the wall of the mess/living quarters opposite where the heroes entered. If it weren't standing part-way open, it might be easy to miss.
20	One of the Caarites in the second guard squad has the name "Dregz" on his uniform. (Heroes who have participated in LIVING FORCE scenarios going back to year one may have encountered Sergeant Dregz back when he was only a Corporal, in the event "A Cularin Presence" and later in "Tilnes Rising". Dregz and his squad were slaughtered in the living quarters, having barricaded themselves behind several overturned beds.
25	Down that partially-hidden corridor, there's a region of particularly thick shadow. It looks like something has been stored there.

When the heroes explore down the half-open "secret" door, read the following.

The door leads to what might have been a storage area, at one time. It seems to have been fairly thoroughly tossed, but in the center of the rubble and broken datapads, stacked very neatly, are a few of the things that have disappeared on you in the past several hours. You can see, a little ways further down, a rough corridor and another of the missing objects. But how did they get here? And where is the trail leading?

Encounter 7: Möbius Trip

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes find themselves face-to-face with a suddenly animate Sergeant Dregz, who is clearly not "alive" in the standard sense. Dregz attempts to communicate, but because he is animated by a shadow lurker, he doesn't

actually speak any language the heroes know. He resorts to touching one of the heroes, bringing about a shift that allows them to find their lost friends and experiencing, for a moment, the feeling of having been lost themselves.

This encounter may leave the heroes a little confused. Satisfied, on a basic level, but confused. This goes for the players as well – things are going to get strange – and maybe for you, the judge. The way things occur is described, but largely not explained (for reasons that may become clear if you get to play “Recursion”). To lay out the basics of the action in this scene, consider the following.

In the previous encounter, the heroes came across a number of Caarite bodies, including that of Sergeant Dregz. These Caarites were unmistakably dead. The heroes also discovered the animated remains of a creature that died in the mines some time ago, and a combat likely ensued. Now, as they finish their exploration of the area they’re currently in and prepare to leave to search for another way to find their missing friends, Sergeant Dregz arrives. He’s still dead – but now he’s walking.

The tunnel ends in a blank wall. As you turn to head back, you hear a shuffling in the dark. Within moments, Sergeant Dregz shuffles into view. His eyes are open and glassy, the wound on his neck gaping like a second grin. Except that he’s lacking the standard, ubiquitous Caarite smile. His mouth moves, thin lips twitching. He takes another jerky step toward you, raising his arms.

There are a number of ways the heroes can choose to deal with the animated Dregz. These include (but are not necessarily limited to) shooting him (or otherwise attacking), attempting to talk to him, and attempting to trap him. Dregz’s body is serving as host for one of the shadow lurkers, but the lurker can’t maintain its hold on it for long. As soon as the last of the electrical current fades from Dregz’s cells the lurker will have no more way to hold onto the body. It’s trying to communicate, but isn’t doing a spectacular job because its language in life no longer exists and this body doesn’t seem to have the capability. Thus, even if one or more heroes have a way to understand its vocalizations (for example, the 7th-level Force Adept class ability, “Comprehend Speech”), the full message does not come through.

Animated Dregz has one goal. He wants to touch one of the heroes – any of them – and bring the group into the shadows, where their friends are stuck. Whatever else is going on – attacking, talking, trapping, or something else of the clever group’s own devising – Dregz is saying the same thing, over and over, in the dead language of the shadow lurkers. “I can help you

find your friends.” He’s saying it softly, though (you would too, if most of your throat had been destroyed), so you may need to give Listen checks with significant modifiers, based on how many people are shooting at him.

Note that there **is** only one way out. If the heroes plan on leaving, they have to either go past or through Dregz. If they elude him (dice are funny things, sometimes), he tracks them down and touches one of them. It doesn’t matter when or where, ultimately. But for the heroes to find their friends and get back, they have to go into the shadows, then make it back. Proceed to Dregz’s Message below.

Attacking

Sergeant Dregz’s “animated” stats are included in GM Aid 1. Ignore his combat-related statistics, except for his melee attack bonus. He’s attempting a melee touch attack on the closest hero; doing this shifts every living creature present into the shadows.

In a combat situation, you may need to fudge a little. Dregz is tough, but it’s possible that the heroes (particularly those higher-level types) may manage to take him down before he succeeds in touching any of them. If so, revert to the classic horror movie shtick – he’s lying in the middle of the corridor down which they must leave, so when they get close enough for him to do it, he reaches out and grabs onto someone’s ankle (or whatever other body part is handy, within acceptable limits). At this point, proceed to Dregz’s Message below.

Talking

Dregz looks horrifying, but not hostile, so groups may elect to try talking with him. Sure, he’s coming at them with his arms outstretched, and he’s dead – but that doesn’t mean he wants to hurt them. Right?

Oh, who are we kidding? It’s unlikely that they’ll try talking to him, especially since there are only two ways they can understand what he’s saying.

First, they could have a 7th-level Force Adept in the party. The Force Adept’s “Comprehend Speech” ability is enough for them to make out the meaning of what Dregz is saying. Unfortunately, they can’t talk back to him, since they don’t actually know the language.

Second, they could do a hack-and-scramble on the circuits of a translator droid. While this isn’t a language any droid (even C-3PO) would know, there are dialects of languages from portions of the Outer Rim that have minor similarities. This reprogramming requires a DC 20/25/30 Computer Use check, as well as a DC 18/22/26 Repair check (these need not be done by the same hero) to get the hardware configured. The droid, once reprogrammed, can understand the basics of what is being said. However, it cannot send back

information in a way that the shadow lurker can understand. (The actual message is much more complicated than “I can help you find your friends,” but that’s all that comes through based on vocalizations.)

If the heroes manage to understand that Dregz is trying to help, they can allow him to touch them. At this point, proceed to Dregz’s Message below.

Trapping Dregz

We have no idea how the heroes would do this, since they’re in a tunnel with only one exit and no random gadgets lying around. The most obvious traps involve Silly Liquid Cable Tricks; please refer to our earlier notes if Dregz gets trapped. He eventually frees himself and manages to touch one of the heroes. At this point, proceed to Dregz’s Message below.

Dregz’s Message

As the creature’s small, pink hand comes in contact with [hero’s] flesh, you all feel a lurching, a tugging at your gut. Shadows that had been short become long, creeping up the walls. Then, everything is silent and black. Slowly, black turns to grey and you see that your entire group is there – and so is another group. Your friends! All of you are standing on a ledge above a pit that seems to go down forever. Two walkways, each a meter wide, lead off from the ledge. To the right is a walkway that glistens like obsidian. To the left, a walkway that looks to be made of diamond.

Where they are, though, there is no sound. It’s still silent, even when they can see again. This is a problem the shadow lurkers hadn’t anticipated when they began working on a way to bring those who are still living into the shadowy realm created when the darkstaff destroyed their world. They exist without sound, and have done so for thousands of years. Let the heroes know, as soon as they start trying to talk, that it’s impossible. Nothing makes sound here, including their voices.

One other thing is worth noting: Any droids who were with the group are not any longer. The transferral only affects living creatures. Droids who are left behind are temporarily drained of power by the shadow lurkers, and have no recollection of their masters ever being gone, once the heroes return. No lasting damage is done to the droids; when their masters re-appear, they simply seem to have been switched off.

Now, here’s the kicker: The other group believes that **they** are here to rescue the heroes. This won’t become clear until everyone is back in a world with sound, but as excited as the heroes are to see the others, the others are just as excited to see the heroes. Both groups have had the **exact same** experiences while

searching for the other group. Have fun with this.

The problem remains, though – how do the heroes get out? They have two choices – the obsidian path, and the diamond path. When they get within two meters of the obsidian path, they become uncomfortable. Force-sensitive heroes recognize the feeling of the dark side. The diamond path offers no ill feelings at all, and both resonate of the Force. These walkways are here both for metaphoric and practical reasons, by the design of the shadow lurkers. The metaphoric we’ll get into more in the finale to the trilogy, but practically, the reason is this: The heroes must walk one path out over the chasm to reach the other, which leads back to the ledge – upside down. The way out is almost directly beneath the heroes’ feet, but they can’t get to it without taking a path in which the light side leads to the dark side, or vice versa.

Odds are, most groups should start out with the light side path. If not, modify the following text appropriately.

You start down the path. The ledge from which you began recedes into darkness. Your meter-wide path narrows to a half-meter. Above you, below you, all around you – darkness. The only light comes from the path, and whatever light sources you’ve got handy.

The path feels as though it may be tilting slightly, but the sensation passes. Gravity, at least, is consistent in this place. Whatever it is. Then you get a tightening in your stomach and notice something disturbing. Up ahead, the color of the path has begun to change. It’s getting... darker.

Yes, the diamond path is turning into obsidian. Or, if the heroes started out on the obsidian path, replace “darker” with “lighter”, since the obsidian path also turns into the diamond path. The two paths lead one into the other, and what the heroes probably won’t realize is that in the course of their walking, they’ve actually turned upside-down and started walking the opposite direction from where they started. The path has been long, and the changes have been very gradual. It’s felt as though they were walking more or less straight ahead the entire time.

The image of the Möbius loop was a hint as to the nature of reality in this place. The dark path and the light path – like the dark side and the light side – are not truly different. They’re just different ways of approaching the same thing. (We also recognize that the path the heroes are on is not a true Möbius, since such an object is technically a single surface which connects back to itself, whereas these paths both connect to the ledge from which they started. It’s a metaphor – it’s not perfect!)

But to get out, the heroes must traverse both the light and the dark, moving from one into the other on

the path. If they prove utterly unable or unwilling to do this, just have one of the handy NPC “friends of the party” wander off and do it first. If nothing else, most heroes should be inclined to follow their friend to make sure the friend wasn’t killed wherever s/he went.

Once they proceed from one “color” path onto the other, they walk a while and then you should read or paraphrase the following.

Ahead of you a shape emerges in the dark. Slowly, it takes on a recognizable form. It’s a ledge, with another path leading off from it – and you seem to be approaching it on the same side from which you left the original ledge.

Once the first hero steps onto this ledge (and not before), read the following.

You feel a sensation of vertigo. The shadows close in around you. You’re tossed and twisted and feel as though you’re going to be turned inside-out –

And then it stops. You open your eyes and you’re back in the cavern with Dregz’s body. Your missing friends are with you.

Now is the time when you get to play with the heroes’ heads. We’ve already outlined the basics of what you need to know, but since it’s particularly relevant once they’re back where they started and can actually **talk**, here’s what the “lost” individuals know. Remember: All their experiences have been virtually identical to those of the heroes in the completion of this module.

- We’re really glad to see you – we thought we’d never find you.
- It’s been hours since you were lost!
- We were afraid you were dead – or worse.
- We’d almost given up on finding you until the dead Caarite touched us, and sent us to where you were.

And so on. In the end, just have some fun with this. It’s a role-playing opportunity, and while it may leave some of the heroes scratching their heads, they have, in fact, accomplished their goal and found the people who were lost.

Conclusion

The heroes and their friends make their way back to the landing bay, past the now-inert Caarite bodies. The friends’ ship is, somewhat mysteriously, parked next to the heroes’ ship.

If Haas is not with them, he calls one of the heroes (and one of the friends simultaneously) on their comlink with wonderful news – the Militia crew has reappeared at the base, and the crew of the Jackpot has

returned as well. If Haas is with them, he receives the call.

The returned people are confused and somewhat in shock. They variously report sensations of falling, of being trapped, and of being in an enormous explosion. The last real thing any of them remembers is a humanoid shadow touching them.

Haas congratulates them, and tells them that Lord Nirama is extremely pleased – to the tune of 2000 credits each. In addition, he is favorably inclined toward them (see Favor of Nirama in the Loot section), even if he began the adventure greatly displeased with them (Nirama’s Disfavor).

The Militia is happy as well, and also grants a favor to the heroes (good toward a restricted item report.)

Once you have reached the conclusion to the event, please make sure to provide the players with Player Handout 3: Aftermath. The text is reproduced below:

Part of this is in-character information, and part of it is out-of-character. You have now experienced “Excursion”, but the heroes your group rescued may not have done so yet. Before attempting detailed in-character conversations with those you rescued, make sure that the player has had a chance to play the event. In other words, please don’t spoil the surprise. That’s the out-of-character request we have for you. Oh, and remember – your hero is also fair game for being “rescued” by any other group!

In-character, you have no reason to doubt that it was, in fact, your group that did the rescuing. Most likely, something happened to the others that warped their minds while they were in the “other” place. Medical treatment, or perhaps a nice vacation, might help them cope.

The lost are found, friends are reunited and for now, it seems the problem is resolved, despite a number of unanswered questions. Who are the shadow lurkers, what were they doing, why did they stop, and what does the future hold? Important questions, but ones that have to wait for another day. For now, the heroes of Cularin can take a well-earned rest.

Here Ends, “Excursion”

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 rescue the captain of the Jackpot and their friends at the Caarite minig facility? If so, each hero who survived receives 350 xp.

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

Total Possible Experience: 650 xp

If the heroes did not complete the scenario because of time constraints, but were "on the right track," you may award ½ adventure experience.

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 1 – From Nirama

500 credits

Conclusion - From Nirama

2000 credits for each hero

Favor of Nirama: Lord Nirama appreciates the efforts of the hero named above in rescuing the crew of the Jackpot. Nirama will allow this favor for one of the following: to upgrade the hero's ship (if that ship was used in the adventure), or as a tool to influence someone into giving them what they want.

Choose one of the below at the time it is used:

- ☐ Ship Upgrade [The ship upgrade grants a +2 equipment bonus to piloting rolls. Each time the ship needs to be repaired the equipment must be recalibrated, adding 10% to the repair cost. One upgrade of this type per ship.]
- ☐ Influence Used [In game mechanics terms, this is a one-time +10 bonus to intimidate or bluff. The use should be roleplayed, and the box checked to indicate the influence was used.]

Conclusion - From the Militia

Favor of the Cularin Militia: The Cularin Militia 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. May be combined with "Gratitude of the Army of the Republic".)

☐ Heavy blaster pistol ☐ Blaster carbine ☐ Blaster rifle ☐ Vibro-ax ☐ Security Kit

Player Handout 1: *Fortune's Favor* – Wayfarer Class Transport

By Christopher West with J.D. Wiker, Illustration by Jeff Carlisle; Published in *Dungeon/Polyhedron* June 2003 pp 20-21

The *Wayfarer*-class medium transport is constructed with a detachable portside section originally intended for modular reconfiguration. Kuat Systems Engineering (a now-folded subsidiary of Kuat Drive Yards) designed the *Wayfarer* so that it could load a passenger section, a hangar bay, or cargo module. Production costs forced KSE to scale back their plans and create only the hangar bay module, which, for most owners (who generally didn't store fighter craft, anyway), serves as cargo space. A few prototypes and custom builds of other modules exist, but are hard to find, limited primarily to bulk commerce corporate shipping operations centered on well-developed metropolitan planets like Coruscant.

The ship's detachable portside half (areas 1-6) fits into an armature extending from the other half (area 7 is connected to areas 8-16 by this armature). The versatility offered by the detachable section was initially exciting, until it was revealed that the design could not accept standard cargo containers. This, combined with a high price tag, ensured the demise of the ship's production and ultimately the entire company. Despite the flaws that kept the *Wayfarer* from becoming a huge commercial success, the ship's versatility makes it a well-rounded vessel for any buyer.

Compartment Key

1. **Forward Cargo Hold.** The forward cargo hold serves as a staging area for loading and unloading. It holds 25 tons of the ship's cargo capacity when full, but any more than about 10 tons means that fighter craft in the hangar bay cannot pass.
2. **Hangar Bay.** Though most owners use this compartment as a cargo hold, it is outfitted as a miniature hangar bay capable of carrying two Tiny ships comfortably. When not used as hangar space, it holds 160 tons of cargo. Each Tiny ship kept here reduces that total by 40 tons.
3. **Speeder Pool.** This is another case of a compartment generally used for something other than the intended design. The speeder pool can comfortably store two Large vehicles (or five speeder bikes) and one other Large vehicle if the ceiling clamps are employed. Otherwise, this area accounts for 15 tons of storage space.
4. **Secret Cargo Hold.** This 5-ton storage hold wasn't originally designed as a secret compartment, but the hatches are so easily disguised as blank bulkhead that it seems like the designers had that purpose in mind all along.
5. **Aft Cargo Hold.** The aft cargo hold can store up to 25 tons, but that leaves precious little room for anyone to move through the compartment without crawling (Escape Artist check, DC 10).
6. **Portside Corridor.** The portside corridor is meant to provide easy access to the hangar bay when the aft cargo hold is completely full. It is jokingly referred to as "Lover's Lane," because it is so isolated.
7. **Gunnery Station.** When the hangar bay is detached, a

Kuat Systems Engineering

Wayfarer-class Medium Transport

Class: Space Transport

Size: Medium-sized (82 meters)

Hyperdrive: x2, x14 backup

Passengers: 6

Cargo Capacity: 220 metric tons

Consumables: 3 months

Cost: 202,500 (new), 130,000 (used)

Crew: 10 (Normal +2)

Initiative: +2 (+2 crew)

Maneuver: +2 (+2 crew)

Defense: 20 (+10 armor)

Shield Points: 60 (DR 15)

Hull Points: 160 (DR 15)

Maximum Speed in Space: Attack (6 squares/action)

Atmospheric Speed: 830 (14 squares/action)

Weapon: Laser cannon; **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack**

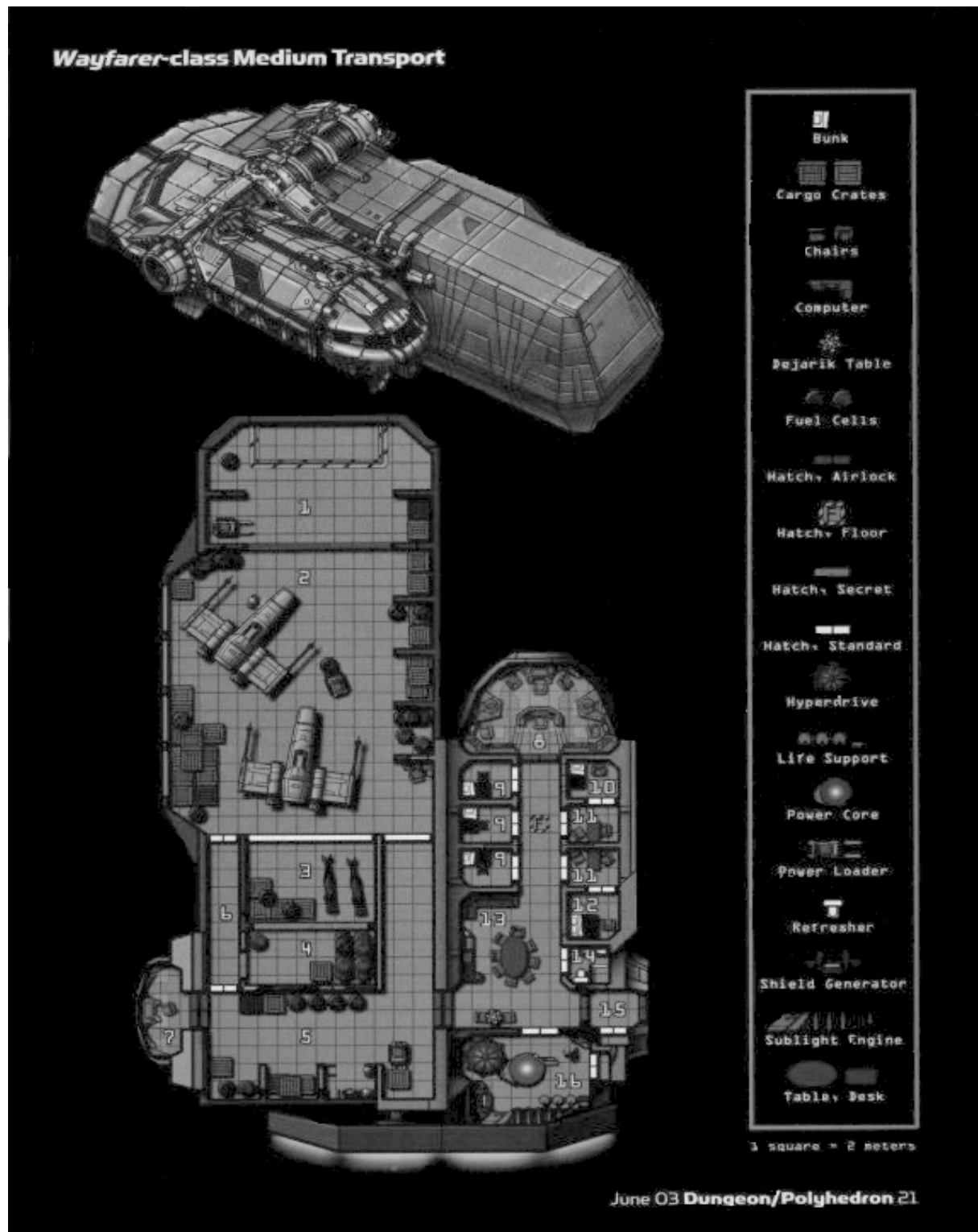
Bonus: +4 (+2 fire control, +2 crew); **Damage:** 4d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +4, S +2, M/L n/a.

Weapon: Quad laser cannon; **Fire Arc:** Left; **Attack**

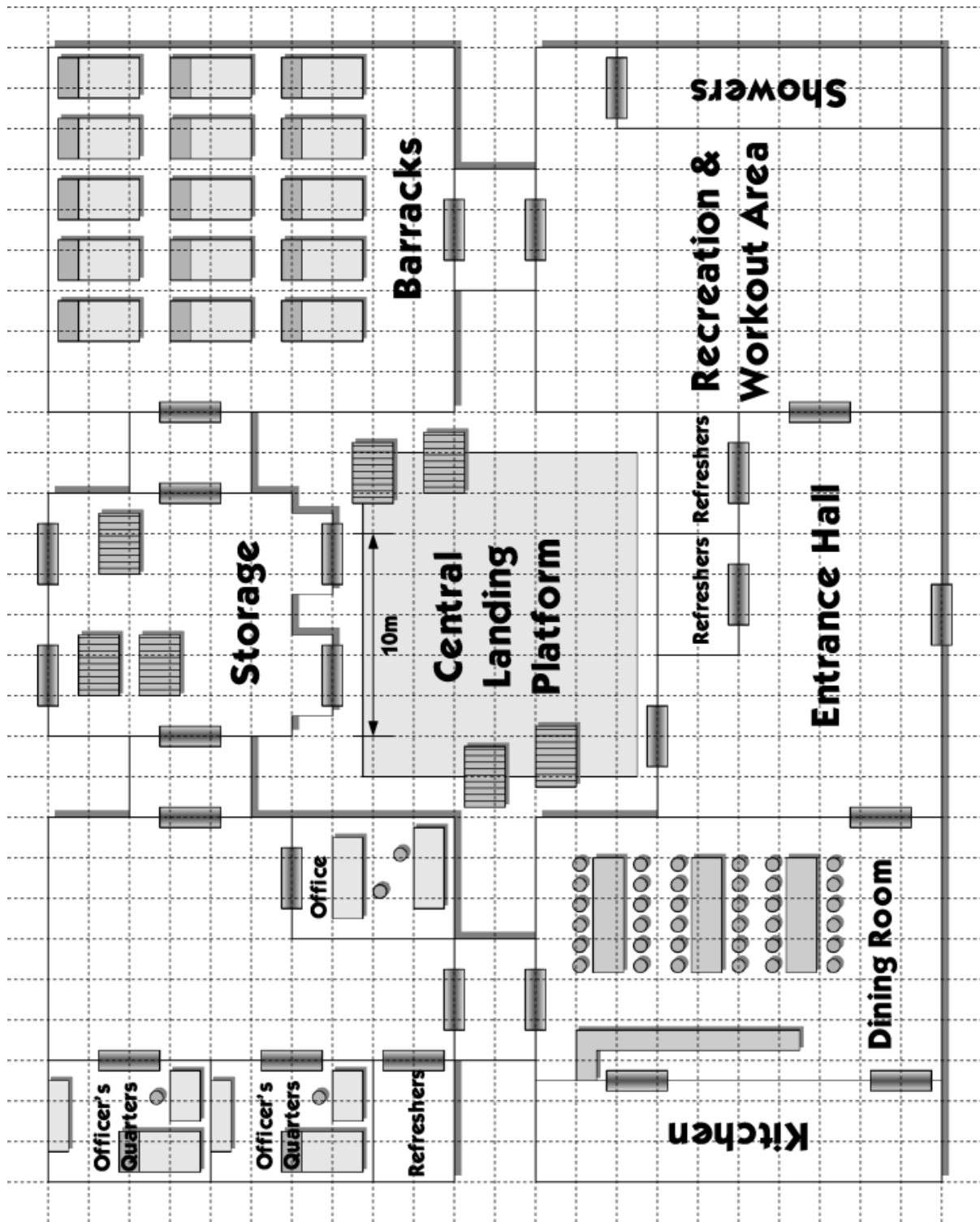
Bonus: +4 (+2 fire control, +2 crew); **Damage:** 6d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +4, S +2, M/L n/a.

- crewmans inside the gunnery station can also detach the station, allowing it to be maneuvered by small directional jets into position on the main hull on the module docking clamps. It also serves as a three-person escape pod (one seated, two in crash webbing), and has enough power to keep passengers alive for up to 12 hours -- or about enough power to fire the attached quad laser once.
8. **Bridge.** The six-station bridge can be crewed by one person for short periods. It also controls the main gun, a laser cannon fixed in position atop the hull.
9. **Crew Cabins.** Each crew cabin has sleeping space for two crewmembers, with separate lockers for up to three crewmembers.
10. **First Mate's Cabin.** Can serve as a temporary passenger cabin.
11. **Offices.** Includes a desk and two chairs.
12. **Captain's Cabin.** Can serve as a temporary passenger cabin.
13. **Crew Lounge.** The spacious crew lounge includes the galley and a conference table, along with a nominal entertainment center.
14. **Refresher.** Cabinets here hold first aid supplies.
15. **Airlock.** The starboard airlock includes a small storage compartment containing three environmental suits.
16. **Drive Chamber.** The drive chamber includes a small closet for storing two environmental suits and a tool chest.

Player Handout 1: *Fortune's Favor* – Wayfarer Class Transport



Player Handout 2: Map of the Militia Base



Player Handout 3: Aftermath

Part of this is in-character information, and part of it is out-of-character. You have now experienced “Excursion”, but the heroes your group rescued may not have done so yet. Before attempting detailed in-character conversations with those you rescued, make sure that the player has had a chance to play the event. In other words, please don’t spoil the surprise. That’s the out-of-character request we have for you. Oh, and remember – your hero is also fair game for being “rescued” by any other group!

In-character, you have no reason to doubt that it was, in fact, your group that did the rescuing. Most likely, something happened to the others that warped their minds while they were in the “other” place. Medical treatment, or perhaps a nice vacation, might help them cope.

GM Aid #1: NPC Statistics

Encounter 1: Missing in Action

Veneziano Haas, Human Scoundrel 4/Scout 4;

Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 16 (+4 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 34/10; Atk +5/+0 Melee (1d3-1, unarmed) or +8/+3 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit barter; lucky (1/day), precise attack +1; trailblazing, heart +1; uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to defense); SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +4; FP 2; DSP 0; Rep +2; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15

Equipment: Blaster pistol, holdout blaster, multichannel comlink, credits

Skills: Appraise +7, Astrogate +13, Bluff +11, Computer Use +9, Forgery +8, Gather Information +8, Hide +10, Knowledge (Business) +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Pilot +13, Repair +13, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Survival +8

Attitudes and Motivations: Veneziano Haas is high enough in Nirama's organization to be trusted with seeing that the right people are hired to get the job done. He is friendly and collegial with the males and flirtatious with the females, whatever their species.

Encounter 7 - All Tiers

Animated Sergeant Dregz: Caarite Soldier 9; Init +0 (+2 Dex); Defense 20 (+7 class, +2 Dex, +1 Size); Spd 6 m; VP/WP 92/14; Atk +14/+9 melee (1d6+2, baton) or +14/+9 ranged (3d8 or DC 18 stun, blaster rifle); Special Qualities: Can only be affected by Force skills/abilities that would affect droids or inanimate objects; DR 5; not subject to critical hits; Frightful Presence; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +11; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep +2; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Equipment: burned out blaster rifle

Skills: Climb +2, Computer Use +3, Demolitions +7, Hide +4, Intimidate +2, Listen +0, Repair +5, Spot +1, Survival +3, Treat Injury +2

Feats: Armor Proficiency (Light), Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Heroic Surge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (Blaster Rifle), Weapon Group Proficiency (Blaster Pistols, Blaster Rifles, Heavy Weapons, Simple Weapons, Vibro Weapons)

(Dregz has been modified by the "animated" template. Email lfplots@living-force.net if you'd like a copy of the template.)

Critical Event Summary

Excursion

1. Did the heroes report the state of the Thaereian ship to anyone?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- If so, to whom? (check all that apply)

☐ Militia ☐ Jedi Academy ☐ Thaere ☐ Nirama ☐ Senator Wren

Other (please specify) _____

GM Name, RPGA#: _____

GM Email Address: _____

Convention Name/Date _____

Convention Coordinator:

To report these results (for events during the month of December 2003 and January 2004 only), you may US mail them to: RPGA - LIVING FORCE, P.O. Box 707 Renton, WA 98047-0707

Or email to: rpgahq@wizards.com

Or fax to: (425) 687-8287 Attention LIVING FORCE Critical Events