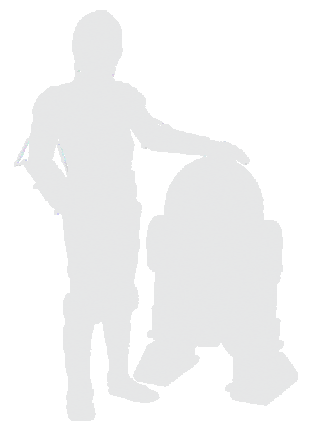


STAR WARS®

ROLEPLAYING GAME

THE QUEEN OF AIR AND DARKNESS EPISODE III OF *STAR WARS: DAWN OF DEFIANCE*

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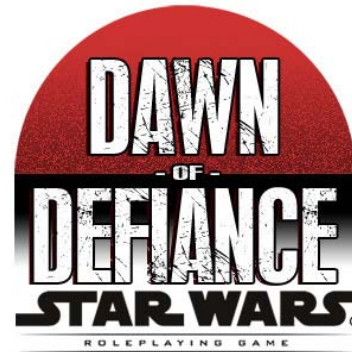
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The Queen of Air and Darkness is the third adventure in the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign, which will take heroes from 1st level all the way through 20th level in a continuous storyline designed to give both players and Gamemasters a complete *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Saga Edition experience. This adventure lets the players take part in the famous Cloud City Sabacc Tournament (the same tournament in which, years later, Han Solo will win the *Millennium Falcon* from Lando Calrissian) and the heroes should advance to 7th level by the end of the adventure. Over the course of this adventure, the heroes will discover that there is more to this tournament than is apparent on the surface, and that it is being used to cover a transaction between Darga the Hutt and the evil Galactic Empire. This adventure is the final part of the story arc that makes up the first chapter in the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign. After the adventure, the heroes should have some much-needed downtime.



WHAT IS DAWN OF DEFIANCE?

Dawn of Defiance is the name given to a series of 10 linked adventures that Gamemasters can use to create an entire campaign for their players. Set in the months after the events of *Revenge of the Sith*, the adventures in the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign are designed to provide players and GMs with the iconic *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* experience, set against the backdrop of the tyranny of the Galactic Empire. The **Dawn of Defiance** campaign takes the heroes all the way from 1st level up to 20th level, and features an ongoing storyline that progresses over the course of the campaign. Each adventure can also be played individually, and should provide the heroes with ample challenges to gain two levels per adventure. Gamemasters should feel free to use the **Dawn of Defiance** adventures either as an entire campaign or as fillers for their own home campaigns.

If you are a Gamemaster wishing to run the campaign, read the GM's Primer, which summarizes the overall plot of the campaign and the events of each adventure. The GM's Primer is available at the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Web site (www.wizards.com/starwars). The site also features other articles related to the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign, including the official campaign standards and an FAQ.

Some rules mechanics are based on the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Saga Edition by Christopher Perkins, Owen K.C. Stephens, and Rodney Thompson; the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson; and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Warning! If you will be playing in a Dawn of Defiance campaign or in a campaign utilizing its adventures, read no further.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is designed assuming that you have run your heroes through the first two **Dawn of Defiance** adventures, *The Traitor's Gambit* and *A Wretched Hive*. The heroes should be familiar with Darga the Hutt and know that he is involved with the Empire. The heroes should know he has been trading resources used for a clandestine Imperial operation known as the Sarlacc Project. The heroes also know that Darga has fled to the planet Bespin, and that finding him is the key to discovering more about the Sarlacc Project.

If you aren't running **Dawn of Defiance** but would like to use this adventure in your home campaign, the adventure can be adapted to get the heroes involved in other ways. The heroes might be hired by another crime lord to seek out Darga and figure out what he's been doing with the Empire, or the heroes could be working for a law enforcement agency that believes that Darga is engaging in illegal activities with the Empire's approval.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

By the time the heroes arrive on Bespin, Darga is firmly secluded on Cloud City, and his luxury yacht is hidden. When the heroes begin their search for him, most of the usual avenues turn up nothing—the Hutt has paid his associates handsomely to keep him hidden, and none would jeopardize their health and wealth to reveal his location to anyone.

The heroes' only lead comes when they learn that Cloud City will be holding a major sabacc tournament in a matter of days, and that it is rumored that an Imperial officer will be arriving to participate. Rumor has it that this officer is in the pocket of Darga the Hutt, and that his participation in the tournament is merely a cover-up for a clandestine meeting between them. If the heroes can infiltrate the card game, they

might have a chance to question the Imperial officer or Darga's agent about the Hutt's whereabouts—but first they must get into the game, which is by invitation only. The tournament takes place and, if the heroes do well, they find themselves face-to-face with Darga's agent.

The heroes also discover that the reason for the officer's visit was not only to play in the tournament but also to deliver payment for the biggest shipment of Tibanna gas yet. In addition, the payment for the gas is unusual as well: the officer brought an entire transport ship full of slaves to trade to the Hutt. The vessel with the Tibanna gas was launched before the tournament started, and the slave ship remains in orbit, having been brought to the system earlier.

The heroes discover that Darga has been hiding in a hangar in the underside of Cloud City. When the heroes arrive, they face a combined force of Darga's minions and a small detachment of Imperial stormtroopers. Darga makes a stand and engages the heroes in combat (or at least, his minions do, while the Hutt prods them from the back of the chamber). After Darga is defeated, the heroes learn that the Empire has set the cruiser carrying Tibanna gas on a collision course with the slave ship, eliminating the two biggest pieces of evidence of their deal, which has now gone sour thanks to the heroes' intervention.

Fortunately, the heroes still have a chance to stop the collision. Inside the hangar are a number of brand-new Z-95 Headhunter starfighters, and Captain Okeefe arrives within moments to pick up any heroes who do not wish to fly their own starfighters. As they reach low orbit, the heroes can see the Tibanna gas carrier blazing toward the slave ship. Unfortunately, the dagger-shaped form of a Star Destroyer appears out of hyperspace bearing down on the heroes. The heroes must race to destroy the ship carrying the Tibanna gas before it can crash into the slave ship, fending off TIE fighters at the same time.

OPENING CRAWL

For Gamemasters who wish to have an opening crawl before the adventure, consider using the boxed text below.

STAR WARS: DAWN OF DEFIANCE

Episode III

THE QUEEN OF AIR AND DARKNESS

The search for the truth continues. Darga the Hutt, fleeing his palace on Cato Neimoidia, has traveled to the planet Bespin to seek refuge.

Bespin, home to the famous resort and mining outpost known as Cloud City, remains free of Imperial rule for the time being, and the city teems with criminals and gamblers.

Meanwhile, intrepid heroes working with the Alderaanian Resistance travel to Bespin to find the Hutt and learn more about his dealings with the Galactic Empire . . .

PART 1: PURSUING THE HUTT

In *The Queen of Air and Darkness*, the heroes pursue the notorious gangster Darga the Hutt to Bespin, having followed him from his palace on Cato Neimoidia. Darga fled to Cloud City in his luxury yacht, then (with a hefty amount of bribery to city officials) went deep into hiding. So deep into hiding, in fact, that no amount of information gathering, intimidation, or bribery will get the heroes anywhere close to him. However, all is not lost; the heroes have a chance to discover a place where they might be able to find more clues leading to the Hutt's whereabouts: the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament.

ARRIVAL ON BESPIN

In *A Wretched Hive*, the heroes left Cato Neimoidia and headed to Bespin in pursuit of the Hutt crime lord. However, your heroes may not have come directly to Bespin, and in fact it's very likely they didn't. If your heroes decide to stop at the rendezvous point to touch base with the *Resurgence*, pick up supplies, and drop off Master Denia so that she can receive proper medical attention, allow them to do so. Though a sense of urgency should hasten their steps, there is no reason for them not to come to Bespin fully rested, supplied, and ready to tackle whatever challenges Darga throws at them. However, neither Captain Verana nor any of the other members of the Alderaanian resistance have any more information or credits for the heroes. They are welcome to rest and recuperate aboard the *Resurgence*, but their mission is not yet finished.

When the heroes eventually make it to Bespin, they find it a far more hospitable environment than either Felucia or Cato Neimoidia. Though Cloud City has not yet reached the prominence it will enjoy under Lando Calrissian years later, it is still a wealthy settlement where entrepreneurs have made small fortunes for themselves. When the heroes drop out of hyperspace, Cloud City's Message to Spacers instructs them to contact spaceport control to request permission to land. Additionally, the message advertises the upcoming Cloud City Sabacc Tournament—the heroes' first hint that there is a big event coming up.

Like the rest of the people on Cloud City, the spaceport controllers are looking to make a few extra credits here and there. When the heroes (or Captain Okeefe, if she is still ferrying the heroes around) contact the spaceport, they are told that "as a result of heavy tourist traffic from the sabacc tournament, each ship will be assigned a landing priority." The spaceport authorities assign the heroes a landing priority that would make them wait close to 12 hours to land. Fortunately, a little diplomacy and a few credits can easily grease the wheels of bureaucracy and get them a higher priority. Offering a bribe of at least 300 credits is enough to let the heroes land within the hour, and the controllers are able to electronically transfer the funds directly from the heroes' accounts if they so desire.

Arrival on Cloud City is unlike arrival on most other worlds. The approach path given by the spaceport controllers takes the heroes on a beautiful tour of the city, obviously meant to show off the planet's wealth, and finally brings the heroes in to land at one of the many civilian docking bays glimpsed on their approach. When the heroes disembark, they find several Cloud City customs officials waiting on them. Though they bear no Imperial insignia, they seem to hold themselves with the same self-assured arrogance that agents of the Empire always display.

The customs officials demand the right to thoroughly search the ship for contraband, a statement that sends Captain Okeefe into a sputtering fury. She argues vehemently with one of the customs agents, while two others watch placidly. If the heroes intervene, the situation can be defused calmly in a number of ways.

- Credits seem to be the grease in the wheels of Cloud City's bureaucracy, and offering a bribe of 500 credits for each of the three customs agents (1,500 credits in total) causes them to "waive the needless inspection" for the *Banshee*.
- Attempting to smooth talk or intimidate the agents is also possible, as each customs agent (nonheroic 1, Will Defense 12, Perception +7, Persuasion +6) is little more than a low-level bureaucrat with little real authority.



Regardless of the resolution to the customs shakedown, the heroes should come away with two important pieces of information that can help them in this adventure: credits can accomplish almost anything on Cloud City, and security has been tightened up as a result of the upcoming sabacc tournament. In fact, security is so tight that the customs officials have one more duty before departing, a duty that no amount of bribery or diplomacy can overcome. No lethal weapons are allowed in the main areas of Cloud City, and the heroes must agree to leave any weapons other than small knives or stun batons on the *Banshee*. Of course, heroes can always attempt to hide their weapons from the customs officials using the normal rules, but the penalty for discovery with a weapon is to have the weapon confiscated and the perpetrator forcibly removed from Cloud City. Later, the heroes will have a chance to gain some exemption from these restrictions, but for the first part of the adventure, they must either hide their weapons or leave them on the *Banshee*.

CLOUD CITY

Cloud City is a beautiful tourist city that also serves as a major mining outpost for the collection and spin-sealing of Tibanna gas, which is used in blaster weapons. When walking through the corridors of the city, the heroes are treated to beautiful vistas of the gas giant Bespin, and architecture designed to be as aesthetically pleasing as possible. Most of the residents of Cloud City are Humans, though occasionally the heroes will see a handful of Ugnaughts walking close to one another in tight packs. The Ugnaughts seem to keep to themselves and are mostly ignored by the Humans.

Cloud City Wing Guards (the security forces of Cloud City) stand watch over most of the major thoroughfares in the city, and rarely is one very far from the heroes. Many of the businessmen and nobles walking through the corridors of the city have their own security escort, but they seem to pay no attention to the heroes, regardless of their appearances or species. Most residents on Cloud City are too concerned about their own wealth or recreation to spend much time worrying about galactic politics, and there is no visible Imperial presence in the city.

The Cloud City Wing Guard keeps a close eye on anyone acting suspicious, especially this close to the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament. They are always on the lookout for someone possessing weapons, but in order to maintain a pleasant atmosphere for the tourist trade, they rarely shake down visitors unless there is a clear reason to do so. The atmosphere in the city is one of buzzing anticipation, as the tournament has drawn visitors from all corners of the galaxy, as it does every year. The heroes are likely to learn that the tournament is just days away, and that hundreds of players have already arrived to buy into the event.

A FEW WRONG QUESTIONS

Once the heroes have made their way through customs, their most likely course of action is to seek out Darga the Hutt. Knowing that he was headed to Bespin in his personal luxury yacht, the heroes will want to know whether he is here, and if so, where the slimy Hutt is hiding. The most straightforward method is to make Gather Information checks, but regardless of the check results, the information provided is always the same: no one has seen or heard from Darga the Hutt. Most citizens don't know the first thing about the crime lord, and they seem affronted that the heroes would suspect them of associating with criminal types.

Digging deeper turns up few leads. Computer-savvy heroes might try to break into the Cloud City computer system to see if any record of Darga's arrival is in the spaceport logs. The city's central computer

system has an Intelligence of 26 (Will Defense 23) and is one of the most sophisticated central computers in existence. The computer is unfriendly to anyone who accesses it from a location other than a designated high-security area, but if the heroes manage to sneak into or break into a Wing Guard security post, they can access the central computer with a friendly attitude. However, even this much effort proves mostly fruitless. The heroes discover a spaceport log entry for the arrival of a luxury yacht called the *Glorious Chariot*, whose port of origin is registered as Cato Neimoidia, but the docking information seems to have been erased, with no ability to retrieve it. Though the heroes will probably suspect that Darga is on Cloud City (no departure information was given for the *Glorious Chariot*), they have no idea where the ship is. With all of the luxury vessels arriving at Cloud City for the tournament, finding a specific yacht is going to prove nearly impossible, and the heroes should realize that doing so could take weeks even under the best of conditions.

If the heroes become discouraged at their difficulties (as they likely will), an event unfolds that should give them hope. When they make contact with Captain Okeefe, she tells them that a message was delivered electronically to the *Banshee*, addressed to them. The message simply states, "If you are wise, you will stop asking so many questions. It is a long drop through the clouds, and enemies of the Hutt have a bad habit of vanishing." Captain Okeefe tells the heroes that her droid copilot, Crash, has managed to trace the message back to a computer terminal in one of the more industrial areas of Cloud City, and can give them directions using the city's map if they want to find the person who sent the message.

THE PARLIAMENT OF GUILDS

Following the directions they received from Captain Okeefe, the heroes leave the tourist areas of Cloud City and begin descending into the industrial sector. Humans become less and less common, and Ugnaughts outnumber other species almost two to one in these areas. The directions lead the heroes to an office marked "Parliament of Guilds—Sector U357," which appears to be little more than a bureaucratic office. Inside, the heroes find nearly a dozen Ugnaughts working behind desks and at computer terminals. When the heroes enter the Parliament office, read the following text aloud:

As the door to the office slides open, over a dozen Ugnaughts look up from computer terminals or end conversations with one another abruptly. There is a long moment of silence as the Ugnaught workers all turn their eyes toward you. Breaking the silence, one of the Ugnaughts squeals and grabs another by the coat, shaking his comrade roughly.

"I told you they would find us!" the Ugnaught shouts. "You've brought them down on us, all because of your meddling! They will kill us for sure!"

The second Ugnaught, fighting desperately to break free of his companion's grasp, cries out pleadingly. "We don't know that they work for the Hutt! Maybe they could help us."

After struggling with each other for a few more moments (or less, if the heroes intervene), the two Ugnaughts separate, and the first turns to the heroes, begging for his life. He introduces himself as Krygg and explains that they meant no harm with the message. His shaken companion, who identifies himself as Fyren, tells the heroes (in a much less fearful tone) that they noticed the heroes snooping around after

Darga and figured that they might be enemies of the Hutt. Rebuking Krygg for his spinelessness, Fyren invites the heroes to join him in his office. The two Ugnaughts escort the heroes to a very small, cramped office (built for Ugnaught-sized inhabitants), where they explain further exactly what happened.

According to Fyren and Krygg, ever since Darga set up his ancillary operation in Cloud City, it has caused no end of trouble for the Ugnaughts, particularly those involved in the Parliament of Guilds, Cloud City's ruling body. When Darga first set up shop in Cloud City, he began bribing a number of Ugnaughts working for Figg & Associates (the company responsible for all Tibanna gas exports from Bespin) in order to siphon off some of the spin-sealed Tibanna gas for sale on the black market. When Figg & Associates discovered the missing Tibanna gas, they began taking their complaints to the Parliament of Guilds. Knowing that the Ugnaughts were responsible for the missing gas, but not knowing which ones, the Parliament had no choice but to issue tougher restrictions on all Ugnaughts. Over time, the situation has degenerated to the point where the Ugnaughts' reputation is close to being ruined.

Fyren explains that, when they noticed the heroes searching for Darga, he sent them a message to dissuade them from seeking the Hutt further. Fyren says that he was just trying to stop them from getting too involved in dealings with the Hutt, but Krygg accuses his companion of leaving a trail for the heroes to follow, hoping they would come to assist. Fyren admits that he finds it fortunate that the heroes have come, and if they will help the Parliament of Guilds root out the Ugnaughts on Darga's payroll, he and Krygg will provide information that could help them in their search for the missing Hutt. The Ugnaughts explain that they were considering dealing with their criminal comrades themselves, but they believe that the heroes are more suited to (and likely more experienced in) dealing with those in Darga's employ. Fyren explains that they don't necessarily want the heroes to kill the Ugnaughts that Darga has bought, but that such losses would be understandable if the heroes found no peaceful way to resolve the situation.

If the heroes agree to the exchange, the Ugnaughts share one piece of information with the heroes in good faith—they know that Darga has been dealing with the Empire, and they believe that a transaction is about to take place. If the heroes take care of their problem, Fyren and Krygg agree to share the rest of what they know. To get them started, the two Ugnaughts tell the heroes that they have tracked the source of the Tibanna gas being sold on the black market to one of their gas storage areas in the bowels of the city. They give the heroes directions for getting there, but they also provide a warning: The Wing Guard rarely goes into those depths, so the heroes will be on their own down there.

DISCOVERING THE BOUGHT UGNAUGHTS

Following the directions given to them by Fyren and Krygg, the heroes can make their way to one of the Tibanna gas storage areas. When they enter the storage area, read the following description aloud:

The air is damp, and the acrid smell of smoke is thick here. The corridors are cramped, clearly designed for workers of smaller stature, and heavy machinery, some of it rusting and extremely aged, litters the area. The sound of metal-on-metal is almost deafening in places, and many of the machines look corroded and covered in a green-tinted sludge, byproducts of the Tibanna gas spin-sealing process. Unlike the rest of the city, this area seems more like an aging factory than a luxury resort.

The Tibanna gas storage chambers are unguarded, though the heroes eventually stop seeing anyone—Human or Ugnaught—moving through these corridors well before they find who they are looking for. When the heroes move into a spin-sealing chamber, allow them to make DC 20 Perception checks to hear over the sound of the heavy machinery that lies ahead. Those who succeed overhear a grunting conversation between several Ugnaughts. Any heroes who speak the Ugnaught language can tell that there are workers ahead, arguing with one another over the amount of Tibanna gas to siphon from a shipment going out this afternoon. They are clearly working with machinery as well, and the sounds fill the corridor almost completely.

If the heroes approach cautiously and are not spotted, they can see further evidence that they have found their quarry. The Ugnaughts have connected a small pump to one of the massive Tibanna gas storage tanks (which is clearly labeled in Basic, Bocce, and a dozen other languages) and are transferring the gas into dozens of smaller containers, each small enough for an Ugnaught to carry.

If the heroes try to talk to the Ugnaughts, they are wary, beginning with an unfriendly attitude toward the heroes. Having been caught doing something illegal—not to mention being in the employ of a Hutt crime lord—they are extremely paranoid about outsiders. However, if the heroes are not initially hostile, the Ugnaughts avoid going for their weapons. The boss, clearly the ringleader of this gang of thieves, believes that the other Ugnaughts on Cloud City are too set in their ways and doesn't believe that they would lift a hand against him. If the heroes pursue any reasonable course of discussion (including using Persuasion or Deception), feel free to let the situation develop naturally. Bribery is unlikely to work; the Ugnaughts know that they wouldn't be able to spend the credits if the Parliament of Guilds or Figg & Associates got its hands on them. The Ugnaughts are unwilling to turn themselves in to the Parliament of Guilds, and if there is any hint that the heroes are there to facilitate such a turn of events, the encounter can turn hostile in a hurry.

See "Tibanna Gas Refinery" (page 20) for more information on running this encounter.



After the heroes have dealt with the Ugnaughts in Darga's employ, they can return to Fyren and Krygg to complete the transaction. If the heroes brought some or all of the Ugnaughts to the Parliament of Guilds without killing them, Fyren and Krygg are extremely pleased and thank the heroes for helping to restore some of the reputation their people had lost. If all of the offending Ugnaughts were killed, Fyren and Krygg are saddened, but they agree that sometimes unsavory steps must be taken.

Regardless, the heroes learn the rest of what the two Ugnaughts know about Darga's dealings on Cloud City. According to Fyren and Krygg, the Hutt has long been taking the Tibanna gas siphoned from Figg & Associates and selling it to the Empire. The transactions are usually discrete, and they have been unable to learn what Darga gets out of the deal. However, they know that the next transaction will take place during the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament. Fyren suggests that the heroes visit the Yerith Bispin hotel (one of the finest in the city) or the Royal Casino (where this year's tournament is to be held). Though the Empire rarely makes itself known on Cloud City, so many strangers have arrived in the last few days that almost anyone, including Imperial agents, could be involved in the tournament.

IMPERIAL DEALINGS

Having learned about the exchange between Darga's agents and the Empire that will take place during the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament, the heroes will likely set out to explore the locales mentioned by the Ugnaughts. If they investigate the Royal Casino, they find that the entire establishment has been closed down in preparation for the tournament, and several Wing Guards block anyone from entering. From the outside, the heroes can see workers and technicians inside the casino, working diligently to make sure that every table is spotless, every sabacc dealer droid is functioning, and every room is well lit.

At the Yerith Bispin, however, the heroes have a bit of good fortune. As they enter the lobby of the hotel, they hear a loud argument between a Human male and one of the desk workers. Everyone in earshot can hear the man complaining that his accommodations are unsatisfactory, and he demands that the hotel manager put him in a better room. Though the desk worker is doing his best to calm the man, the customer continues his arrogant tirade, heedless of how many people are watching. When the heroes enter the hotel lobby, read the following text aloud:

The opulent Yerith Bispin hotel is decorated extravagantly and is clearly one of the finest establishments in the galaxy. Beautifully woven carpets stretch from one side of the lobby to another, and crystalline chandeliers hover overhead, casting scintillating light down on the guests below. To one side of the room, a row of fine wooden desks house computer terminals for hotel employees, each of whom is helping finely dressed guests check in. One guest, however, seems to be taking issue with the service and is berating the hotel employee tending to him so loudly that everyone in the lobby has turned to stare. The Human man, dressed in the style of Core nobility, speaks with a precise accent even as he shouts at the desk worker, complaining about how unsuitable he finds the accommodations.

As the heroes approach, allow them to make a Perception check. Any heroes who succeed by 10 or more notice that, just across the lobby, a small entourage of four Humans and two Theelin women (near-Humans with colorful hair and skin patterns) waits patiently for the shouting customer to air his complaints. If any heroes make the check by 15 or more, they notice that the two Theelin are watching the man's

every move carefully and seem to be scanning the room looking for threats at the same time—clearly, they are bodyguards of some sort. With a check result of 20 or higher, the heroes also notice one other important detail. Though middle aged, the four Humans are all very similar; in fact, they could be quadruplets and are distinguished only by the scars they bear. Any hero noticing this may make a Knowledge (galactic lore) check immediately; a result of 20 or higher reveals the four men to be clones from the same stock as the clone troopers who fought for the Republic in the Clone Wars.

After a few moments, the argument at the desk subsides, and the nobleman seems to be mollified. He briskly strides over to the clones and his bodyguards and begins issuing orders in hushed tones while the hotel staff rushes off, apparently to see to his requests. The noble gathers his party and stalks off into the streets of Cloud City.

Hopefully by now, the heroes have realized that this noble has Imperial connections, and as such could lead them to more information about the Empire's deal with Darga. If the noble or his bodyguards suspect that they are being followed, they react with hostility. Likewise, if the heroes approach the noble with questions about the Empire or Darga, he orders his bodyguards to deal with the unwanted intruders. See "Imperial Threats" (on page 23) for more information on running the encounter.

Once the heroes have dealt with the noble and his guards, they can learn a good deal about who he is and why he is in Cloud City from a datapad on his person. The datapad contains travel logs that identify him as Baron Kithriss, a wealthy noble from Chandrila. The logs show that prior to coming to Bispin, he spent a great deal of time on a political retreat in the Deep Core, seemingly at Palpatine's behest. Baron Kithriss's datapad includes instructions to meet up with his "retainers" (the clone troopers) and travel to Bispin, securing accommodations at the Yerith Bispin hotel and awaiting further instructions. Moreover, he is to let no one know that he is an agent for the Empire, and he must maintain complete communications silence except to receive instructions on his hotel computer. The Baron has his hotel access card, and savvy heroes should realize that they can use the card to gain access to his suite in the Yerith Bispin, granting them luxurious rooms for the duration of their stay and allowing them to intercept the Baron's instructions from the Empire. Since he has been instructed to remain silent, they need not fear anyone noticing the Baron's untimely disappearance.

THE YERITH BISPIN HOTEL

The Yerith Bispin is one of the oldest and finest hotel establishments on Cloud City. Every room is spectacularly appointed, and it's easy to imagine that only hotels on Coruscant are nicer. If the heroes stay in the Yerith Bispin, their every need is addressed by the hotel staff, and they can spend their downtime enjoying almost any luxury activity found in upscale hotels throughout the galaxy. You can use the accommodations as a reward for the heroes' diligence up to this point in the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign. The hotel is significantly nicer than the accommodations in Darga's palace, and it beats trudging through the jungles of Felucia by a wide margin.

PART 2: THE TOURNAMENT

By the time the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament begins, the heroes should have had time to relax in their suite in the Yerith Bespin for a day or two. Captain Okeefe remains on board the *Banshee* with her droid copilot, occasionally checking in to make sure nothing has gone awry. The heroes know by now that Darga is deep in hiding, and that the Empire is sending a representative to the sabacc tournament to make another transaction with the Hutt (or one of his agents). The heroes should have been watching for a communiqué from the Empire (intended for Baron Kithriss) that will, with luck, provide them with more information about what will happen at the sabacc tournament.

If the heroes have attempted to find out more about the tournament, a simple Gather Information check for common information reveals the following:

- The Cloud City Sabacc Tournament is held annually, and it is one of the most highly publicized sabacc tournaments in the galaxy.
- This year, the tournament is being held at the Royal Casino, though past tournaments have been held in other casinos and even at the Yerith Bespin hotel.
- The buy-in for the sabacc tournament is 10,000 credits per person, with the winner taking the entire prize at the end of the tournament.

ARRIVAL OF THE EMPIRE

Once you feel that the heroes have had enough time to recuperate from their previous encounters, their involvement in the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament can begin. As expected, a message comes over the city's communications system directly to the console in their hotel room. The message reads as follows:

Missive from Coruscant: Transaction codename SARLACC065824 set to occur during Cloud City Sabacc Tournament as planned. The Hutt has assured us that his agent will be present to receive the handoff. An officer from the *Assiduous* will be taking part in the tournament. The transaction will occur during play so as to avoid arousing suspicion. You are responsible only for observing this transaction and making sure that the Hutt's agent does nothing to endanger the secrecy of the arrangement. Under no circumstances are you to interfere with the transaction. Once the transaction is complete, send a confirmation message to Coruscant standard relay 88-Shen-Xesh-3, then return to Chandrila. No further instructions will follow.

With the message received, the heroes now know what to look for. If they can discover which of the sabacc players is Darga's agent, and if they can observe the details of the transaction, they can likely find out where the Hutt is hiding and perhaps discover the depth of his involvement in the Sarlacc Project. The fact that the Empire refers to the transaction by the Sarlacc codename should indicate to the heroes that they are on the right track.

If the heroes are still having trouble deciding what to do, don't be afraid to remind them that their mission is to discover the Hutt's involvement in the Sarlacc Project. Knowing that a payment from the Empire is going to take place during the tournament gives them a

chance to dig deeper into the façade surrounding the project. From this point on, the heroes know that they need to be present at the tournament to learn more about the dealings between the Hutt and the Empire. Several ways that they can become involved in the tournament are described below. Note that not all of the heroes need to follow the same path; some might act as bystanders, others might work security, and another hero might participate in the tournament. Since all of the events surrounding the tournament take place roughly in the same locale, you need not worry about splitting the party up. They all will be present for most scenes.

MESSAGE FROM THE BANSHEE I

At some point during the heroes' quest to find their particular niche in the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament, Captain Okeefe contacts them via comlink to relay a short message. According to Okeefe, her droid copilot was able to tap into the city's central computer to keep an eye on all communications and sensor data flowing through spaceport control. Moments ago, an *Imperial I*-class Star Destroyer whose transponder identified it as the *Assiduous* dropped out of hyperspace on the edge of the system, escorting a Gallofree Yards Medium Transport (callsign *Shackles of Nizon*). The Star Destroyer launched a single *Theta*-class shuttle, which set a course for Bespin. The *Assiduous* promptly jumped to lightspeed, leaving the Medium Transport behind. Though Okeefe doesn't think that a single shuttle will bring much trouble, she warns the heroes to be on the lookout for an Imperial presence.

ENTERING THE TOURNAMENT

One of the clearest means of getting a front-row seat for the tournament action is to enter the game as a competitor. If the heroes have 10,000 credits they are willing to part with, they can buy a seat for their best gambler at one of the tables. If they have achieved greater wealth, they can get more than one hero into the game. Each buy-in of 10,000 credits is enough to get one player into the tournament.

A hero entering the tournament is interviewed briefly by one of the pit bosses of the Royal Casino before being given instructions on when to arrive, where to go, and so forth. The gamblers are not allowed to leave the table except during designated breaks, and each gambler is subject to a thorough search each time he enters or exits the gambling hall. These searches are to prevent cheating and ensure that no one is trying to smuggle sabacc cards in or out. Lastly, each gambler is required to wear a small pin to show that he is still active in the tournament; removing the pin while in the casino will result in immediate expulsion from the game.

Any heroes who succeed on a DC 15 Knowledge (technology) check can tell that the pin is more than decorative. In truth, each pin is a communications-jamming device. The wearer of a pin cannot use comlinks—they produce only static. An anti-cheating device, the pin prevents gamblers from receiving outside help during the tournament.

BUYING BACK IN

If one of the heroes playing in the tournament is eliminated, you have the option of allowing the player to reenter the game. At some point during the round, one of the other gamblers suffers a severe reaction to a drink, requiring immediate medical attention. With that gambler eliminated, the tournament administrator allows one of the previously defeated players to step back into the game for a new buy-in of 2,000 credits, allowing him or her to compete in the hospitalized gambler's place.

SECURITY

If the heroes do a bit of asking around, they find out quickly that Jacc Mandelbrot, owner of the Royal Casino, has been hiring a private security force to help keep things safe at his casino during the tournament. With a little diligence, any interested heroes can set up an interview with Mandelbrot about joining his security force. Jacc Mandelbrot is a large, boisterous man in his late 40s who has owned the Royal Casino for decades, and though he is a shrewd businessman, he is friendly and excited to see capable beings taking an interest in the security of the tournament. After a few cursory questions about the heroes (where they are from, what brings them to Cloud City, whether they have any outstanding warrants, and so on), Mandelbrot makes them an offer: provide security for all four days of the tournament at a rate of 500 credits per day. During that time, Mandelbrot will arrange special permits for the heroes that allow them to carry their normal weapons, ignoring Cloud City's usual restrictions. If the heroes accept his offer, Mandelbrot gives them their weapons permits immediately and tells them when to arrive and where to go.

During the tournament, the heroes working security will guard the doors, helping to ensure that no one gets in with an illegal weapon. If they wish to turn a blind eye to their comrades smuggling in weapons, no one will question their searching methods. This is a good way for the heroes to get some weapons into the tournament; they will come in handy later, when the shooting starts.

THE CROWD

Few spectators are allowed into the Royal Casino during the tournament. Each competitor is allowed to bring in one guest to observe, but unless the rest of the heroes have taken jobs with the security team, they need another way to get in. Charismatic heroes may be able to use the Deception skill to bluff their way in. It shouldn't be too hard to pose as an important Cloud City official or convince the guards that the hero is a relative of one of the other competitors. (Use the statistics for the Bespinn security guards on page 26 when dealing with these encounters.)

Members of the crowd must stand back from the main gambling floor during the tournament, but during breaks in the action, they can visit with the competitors, allowing the heroes to collaborate during the tournament. If any hero posing as a spectator spends a little too much time socializing with their fellow heroes on the security team, it might arouse the suspicion of Jacc Mandelbrot. Though Mandelbrot might not say anything to the heroes, he orders other members of his security force to keep an eye on the heroes who recently joined the team. Mandelbrot's warning grants non-hero members of the security team favorable circumstances on Perception checks made against those heroes.

DIRTY MONEY

If the heroes are still having trouble finding a good place to be during the tournament, they have one more option. Just before the start of the tournament, Captain Okeefe receives a message from Switch (the droid crime lord encountered in *The Traitor's Gambit*), asking the heroes to contact him and providing a means of doing so using the city's communications system. Some of Switch's contacts on Cloud City mentioned seeing the heroes, and considering that they have worked well with the droid in the past, Switch thought they might be amenable to working for him during the sabacc tournament.

Switch always has an interest in illicit activities throughout the galaxy, and with the amount of credits flowing through Cloud City during the tournament, the droid wants a piece of the action. Switch proposes to have the heroes influence the outcome of the tournament, enabling a victor of Switch's choosing to take the pot. The droid has already supplied the tournament entry fee to one of his contacts—the Twi'lek starship captain Koroma Moro—but he wants the heroes to ensure that Moro is the victor in the tournament.



If the heroes assure him that they will help, Switch offers them a percentage of the winnings (5% of the total pot, though he is willing to increase the percentage to 7% if the heroes bargain successfully). Switch is not concerned about the heroes failing to live up to their end of the bargain. He knows that it is in their interest to help Koroma Moro win, because if he loses, they get nothing.

ROGUES' GALLERY

You may wish to keep a list of generic NPCs to flesh out the tournament's competitors. Most of these NPCs can simply be names with a species and a personality attached, because their statistics will not matter for the challenges in this adventure. However, five gamblers should be of particular interest to the heroes. Over the course of the tournament, these competitors should stand out as exceptional players and beings of interest. Any one of them could be Darga's agent, though one—Koroma Moro—is a bit less suspect because he is known to be in Switch's employ. Before the tournament ends, the heroes should have gathered enough information to narrow down the possibilities a bit.

CREEKA

Creeska is a Rodian gambler who has made a name for himself as an exceptionally aggressive competitor. Though he is friendly—and surprisingly likable, for a Rodian—he never wants to back down from a bluff and has used his gambling muscle to intimidate his opponents into making mistakes. Creeska wears a bulky jacket made of Krayt dragon leather (or so he claims; in truth, it is merely dewback hide) and is quite generous in sharing his winnings with others in the casino. Creeska is also a cheater and should provide a chance for heroes working as security guards to catch him cheating on the final day of the tournament.

SILAS DRAVER

Cool, suave, and sophisticated, Silas Draver is the perfect image of the Human gambler. With long black hair pulled back in a ponytail and a mustache that droops down both sides of his mouth, Silas always wears a confident smirk, and he always speaks as though he knows something that the person he's talking to does not. Draver is a savvy gambler who plays it close to his chest; he is also a con artist who has managed to get several of his cronies into the list of approved spectators. If he loses, he is planning on stealing the pot, and he has sabotaged three of the sabacc dealer droids to help further that scheme. He has also paid a security guard handsomely (and offered a percentage of the prize to him as well) to overlook the weapons carried by Draver and his cronies.

LADY MIRANA FIORO

Looking somewhat out of place among the gamblers and card sharks, Lady Mirana Fioro is a Hapan woman who looks as though she just stepped out of a royal court. In truth, however, she is merely a con artist who specializes in running scams while impersonating a Hapan noble. The word that best describes her attitude is "frosty"—she barely has a second word for anyone, and she rebuffs any advances. Mirana Fioro is also Darga the Hutt's agent, and her sole purpose in entering the tournament is to receive the payment from the Imperial officer and obtain the information that Darga needs to take control of the Medium Transport delivered by the Empire.

KOROMA MORO

Koroma Moro is a starship captain who also happens to be an exceptional gambler. He has hauled cargo for Switch in the past, and when Switch offered to front his entry fee, the Twi'lek knew it was too good an opportunity to pass up. Koroma Moro is a polite but secretive man who has had a number of unfortunate incidents with the

authorities since the Empire came to power. As such, he is always cautious when approached by new people, but if any of the heroes mention Switch, Moro lets his guard down a bit, though he is still unwilling to discuss the details of his relationship with the droid crime lord.

VORN ZADAY

A quiet Neimoidian woman, Vorn Zaday is a skilled sabacc player who is almost completely unknown to others on the tournament circuit. Vorn was a minor dignitary in the Trade Federation who became quite skilled at the game while playing with the officers aboard a Separatist starship during the Clone Wars. She now lives on Cato Neimoidia, but she has no connection to Darga the Hutt. Her presence in the tournament is just a coincidence, but it might be enough to throw the heroes off of Mirana Fioro's trail.

DAYS 1 TO 2: ELIMINATION ROUNDS

The sabacc tournament begins with one of the largest opening ceremonies that Cloud City has ever seen. More than 51 competitors have entered the tournament (plus any heroes who entered), and the Royal Casino is packed with players and spectators. When the day begins, read the following aloud:

The first day of the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament opens with hundreds of sentient beings packed into the Royal Casino. Members of many species dot the predominantly Human audience, and the sounds of droids dealing sabacc cards rise over the din. The clank of glasses and hum of conversation fills the air, but at each of the sabacc tables, there is mostly silence except for the occasional words of a gambler placing his bets. Servant droids wheel about in the crowd, and members of the Royal's security force keep a watchful eye over the proceedings.

Each sabacc table has only five or six players at any time, though as the first two days wear on, all but two players from each of the 10 tables will lose out of the game. Over the course of the first days of the tournament, heroes fulfilling many different roles will have a chance to interact with the events surrounding the tournament. Below, you will find entries for each of the suggested roles for heroes involved in the tournament. If the heroes chose to involve themselves in some other way, feel free to adapt these scenarios to interact with the heroes. Not only do these scenarios provide something for the heroes to do each day, but they also provide hints as to who is working for Darga and who is not.

TOURNAMENT COMPETITORS

On either the first or second day, one hero participating in the tournament has a chance to interact with the officer from the *Assiduous*. The two are paired up at one of the sabacc tables, and as the day wears on, the hero should have a chance to talk to the officer, who names himself Lt. Armen Arandis. Lt. Arandis wears his Imperial uniform during the tournament, and each day it looks crisp, clean, and neatly pressed. He is young, perhaps not long out of the Imperial Academy, and his cool gaze is disrupted only by a long scar that cuts diagonally across his face, starting at one temple, crossing his right eye, and ending at his upper lip. Lt. Arandis is the picture of Imperial discipline, and he is also an excellent gambler. He begins with an unfriendly attitude toward anyone else in the tournament. He is not comfortable being in an

environment that has not accepted Imperial rule, and from his point of view, every patron of the Royal Casino could very well be a dangerous criminal.

If the hero sitting at his table can manage to shift his attitude to at least indifferent, Lt. Arandis will talk cordially to the hero while they play sabacc. Though he is not forthcoming with information, there are a few things he will share, but only if asked:

What is an Imperial officer doing playing in the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament? "Sabacc is a game of skill, but also one of luck. Much as in battle, best-laid plans can go awry due to random elements. Unfortunately, my fellow shipmates have ceased to be a challenge for me, so I requested leave to come play in the tournament in hopes of seeing how I fare against the rest of the galaxy."

How long have you been playing sabacc? "I just learned the game a little over a year ago, in the Academy. My Tactics instructor used sabacc analogies frequently to illustrate his points, so I sought out the game."

What do you think of the competition? "Not much."

What ship are you posted on? "I am a tactical officer aboard the *Imperial I-class Star Destroyer the Assiduus*. We are on special assignment duty, based out of Prakith."

Are any other Imperial officers with you? "No. My fellow crewmen have little appreciation for the game."

Any references to Darga the Hutt, Tibanna gas exchanges, or the *Shackles of Nizon* Medium Transport are met by blank looks and bland denials. Though Lt. Arandis is here to make the exchange with Darga, nothing he said above is untrue; he was chosen for the assignment because he was an excellent gambler and had a legitimate reason to be in the tournament. This first encounter should impress upon the hero one thing: Lt. Arandis is a savvy sabacc player and could very well be the best player in the tournament. The hero should see how perceptive and shrewd a card player Lt. Arandis is, along with one more quirk—after each hand, he stacks his cards neatly on top of one another and slides them face down back to the dealer. Lt. Arandis does this every single time, with practiced motion, like clockwork. This fact will be important on the final day, as it will reveal the identity of Darga's agent.

Lt. Armen Arandis

CL 6

Medium Human nonheroic 4/noble 3/scoundrel 1/officer 1

Force 2; **Dark Side** 5

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +13

Languages Basic, Bocce, Durese, High Galactic

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 16), Fort 15, Will 23
hp 37; **Threshold** 15

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +6 (1d4+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6+2)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +6

Atk Options Point Blank Shot

Special Actions Born Leader, Coordinate, Trust, Vehicular Combat

Abilities Str 10, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 12

Talents Born Leader, Coordinate, Gambler, Trust

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Deception, Persuasion), Skill Training (Deception, Pilot), Toughness, Vehicular Combat, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +15, Knowledge (tactics) +10, Perception +13, Persuasion +15, Pilot +3

Possessions blaster pistol, code cylinder, comlink (encrypted), officer's uniform

CASINO SECURITY

The first few days in the tournament go relatively smoothly for the heroes working security. Though Jacc Mandelbrot continually checks on their vigilance, for the most part, the heroes are left to their own devices. They can let their allies smuggle weapons into the casino, and they also have a chance to prove that they are doing their jobs by catching another bystander with a weapon. On the first day, a Sullustan in fine clothing comes to the Royal Casino, shows his visitor pass to the guards at the door, and passes through the security checkpoint where the heroes are stationed. Have each hero working security make a DC 19 Perception check to notice the Sullustan smuggling in a blaster pistol, granting them favorable circumstances for giving him a thorough search.

If they uncover the weapon, they can escort the Sullustan out of the Royal. However, if they bring him to Jacc Mandelbrot instead, the casino's owner is extremely pleased with their vigilance. As a result, he won't notify the rest of the security team to keep tabs on the heroes seen talking together until day 3 of the tournament (for details, see "The Crowd" on page 9).

If the heroes fail to uncover the weapon, there are not necessarily any negative consequences, though you can use this as a hook for introducing another encounter.

WORKING FOR SWITCH

For any heroes working for Switch, a chance arises to meet Vorn Zaday, the Neimoidian gambler recently arrived from Cato Neimoidia. She has come to enjoy herself in the tournament and has been saving up for it since the end of the Clone Wars. A stroke of luck brought her a sizable windfall—the Imperial garrison in Cato Neimoidia was accidentally exposed to a biological weapon left over from the Clone Wars, and her antidotes were the only thing that saved the Imperials from being wiped out. As a result, Zaday decided to take a vacation to Cloud City and test her mettle. She is very good (Wisdom 16, with two instances of the Gambler talent, giving her a total of +7 to checks when gambling), and though she hopes to win, she seems to just enjoy being away from the dreary, devastated world she calls her home.

On the first day of the tournament, any heroes working for Switch notice that Zaday has been placed at the same table as Captain Moro, and the two of them seem to be doing an excellent job of wiping out the rest of the gamblers. They each seem to be winning about the same number of hands, and as their piles of credits grow, the other competitors look more and more ashen. At some point during the first few days, a break is called for, and Zaday goes to the bar for a drink, sidling up next to the heroes to place her order. She nods and exchanges pleasantries with the heroes, giving them an opportunity to ask her a few questions. As with the encounter with Lt. Arandis, the answers she gives could affect how they react to the final day, when they become suspicious of her presence at the tournament.

Here are answers to some common questions the heroes might have for Zaday:

How did you get to be so good at sabacc? "I used to play a lot back when I worked for the Trade Federation, before the Clone Wars."

You were a Separatist? "I didn't have much choice. Fortunately, we avoided most of the fighting, and I was able to retire safely to Cato Neimoidia."

Is there any strategy you favor? "Strategy? Oh, I just take each hand as it comes. Sabacc is like that; the chaos is too prevalent to make many plans."

You're from Cato Neimoidia? "Yes, hardly as glamorous as Cloud City. I've been trying to get away from that world for a long time now."

How did you come to be here? "I recently made some . . . good deals that provided me with a small windfall. Just enough to get me here for the tournament."

Do you know Darga the Hutt? "I'm not familiar with any Hutts." (This is a lie. Darga brokered the deal between Zaday and the Empire, though she doesn't want anyone to know that she would even associate with the Hutt. Heroes who see through her deception won't be able to get this information out of her, though.)

Do you know Lt. Arandis? Are you affiliated with the Empire? "I try to mind my own business. If you don't want someone kicking down your door at night, I'd suggest you consider the same plan."

MESSAGE FROM THE BANSHEE II

Some time during the first two days of the tournament, the heroes receive another message from Captain Okeefe on the *Banshee*. Crash has been intercepting a lot of transmissions that use Imperial codes, and there seems to be a good deal of communications chatter on channels not normally used by civilians. Though the droid has been able to decode only a few of the messages, it appears that the Empire is more active on Cloud City than it seems. Moreover, he's caught references to Darga in these messages, confirming that the Hutt is still in Cloud City, though Crash has no idea where, exactly.

END OF THE DAY'S EVENTS

By the end of the second day, only about 14 competitors remain in the tournament, including Lt. Arandis, Creeska, Silas Draver, Lady Fioro, Captain Moro, and Vorn Zaday. Any heroes playing in the tournament need to make Wisdom checks as though they were gambling (gaining the bonus from the Gambler talent, if applicable). A result of 10 or more ensures that the hero moves on to the next round of the tournament, which will whittle the remaining players down to a single, final table.

INTERLUDE: GETTING TOO CLOSE

Between the first two days and the third day of the tournament, a message is delivered to the heroes' suite at the Yerith Bespin while the tournament is taking place. The note reads simply, "I know what you're here for. Meet me on Platform 13-009 at 0200." The message bears no name and is on a datapad resting in the middle of the floor. In truth, the pad was delivered by some of Silas Draver's thugs, who have noticed some (or all) of the heroes acting strangely during the tournament. Draver doesn't like how the heroes have been meddling in the tournament so far and wants to get them out of the way before the final day. He doesn't really know why they're present, but he suspects that they're cheating somehow.

One of Draver's thugs sent a message to the Wing Guard, claiming that a spice deal would go down on Platform 13-009 at 0200. Draver hopes that the guards will detain the heroes for a few days, at least until the tournament's end. With security already tense with the influx of visitors for the tournament, this does seem like a likely scenario. If the heroes decide to attend the meeting at the appointed time, a confrontation between the Wing Guard and the heroes may ensue. See "On the Heights," page 26, for more information on running this encounter.

DAY 3: LAST TABLES

The third day of the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament opens with a much smaller field of competitors, though it seems that the number of bystanders has not dwindled. When the heroes arrive at the Royal Casino for the third day of competition, read the following text aloud:

The atmosphere in the Royal Casino is much subdued compared to that of the previous two days. Each of the competitors seems to be silently lost in concentration, having survived the free-for-all first rounds. With more than half a million credits on the line, few of the sabacc players seem to be aware of anything outside their small tables. The crowd of onlookers, just as large today as it has been for the first half of the tournament, produces a low murmur of conversation, but much of the wild revelry has died down. A Bith band plays quiet, relaxing music in one corner of the sabacc floor, and the loudest sounds are the clatter of credit chips and sabacc cards at the tables.

CASINO SECURITY

As on the previous days, any heroes working security can let their comrades smuggle weapons into the casino if they so choose. With fewer competitors, the security team has a bit easier time managing the crowd. However, on this day, they will have to defuse a potentially deadly situation—one of the gamblers isn't going to accept his losses well. Midway through the third day, a Devaronian male named Szygar loses a particularly rich pot, going broke and getting eliminated from the tournament. Szygar isn't too pleased about his loss, and he is particularly upset at Lt. Arandis, who won the pot. Szygar accuses the officer of cheating, and while the Lieutenant sits calmly at the table, Szygar begins ranting and yelling that Arandis has been cheating the whole time (which is not true).

Heroes on the security team notice right away that Szygar is shaking his finger at Lt. Arandis and yelling, and as they watch, the Devaronian slides a hold-out blaster from his sleeve, leveling it at the Imperial officer. Though Szygar doesn't fire right away, the situation is precarious, and members of the security team will need to deal with it. Szygar is hostile toward Lt. Arandis and unfriendly to everyone else, but if a member of the security team can somehow shift his attitude to indifferent, he's willing to lower the blaster. He still accuses Lt. Arandis of cheating, demanding that the officer be removed from the tournament and his winnings turned over to Szygar. If the heroes can convince the Devaronian to leave peacefully and turn over his blaster, they will have successfully stopped a potentially deadly situation. However, they do not necessarily need to defuse the situation; if they have the means, they can try to take Szygar down violently.

For Szygar, use the statistics for Silas Draver's goons from the "Sabacc Table Showdown" encounter on page 29 (substituting in the Devaronian species). If combat breaks out, use the map from the "Sabacc Table Showdown" encounter. Also, keep in mind that it's best for Lt. Arandis to survive this encounter. His presence in the final round of the tournament will facilitate the revelation of Lady Fioro as Darga's agent.

BYSTANDERS

The heroes in the crowd will have a chance to come face to face with Darga's agent in the tournament, Lady Mirana Fioro. The Hapan woman has been doing quite well so far, and it already looks as though she will be one of the competitors to make it to the final table. At some point during the third day, Lady Fioro takes a break and walks to one of the

observation decks, which happens to be near where any heroes in the crowd are standing. The observation deck looks out over Cloud City, and the orange-red of the setting sun casts the entire deck in a bright glow. Lady Fioro looks radiant in this light, and though she retains her unreadable exterior, some heroes might be tempted to talk to her about the competition. Although she keeps the conversation to a minimum, she is not precisely uncivil, and the heroes can learn a little more about her, which will help confirm on the final day that she is Darga's agent and give the heroes a chance to follow her after the tournament is over.

Below are answers to some common questions the heroes might have for Lady Fioro:

Why are you playing in the tournament? "The money is, of course, no object for me. But someone has to show this riff-raff that someone will always be their superior."

What do you think of the tournament so far? "I am surprised that some of these players have gotten so far. Of course, many things surprise me here. I would have thought that my room in the famed Yerith Bepin hotel would be a little nicer than the peasant hovels on Hapes, but I can see that I was mistaken."

How did you become so good at sabacc? "My late husband taught me the game. He was an exceptional player, but before his death I had surpassed him."

Is there any particular strategy you favor? "The only way to play sabacc is to play aggressively. Anything less is certain to fail."

Do you know Darga the Hutt? Have you dealt with the Empire? "Such nonsense. I'm here to play sabacc and win, and that's all."

WORKING FOR SWITCH

On the third day of the tournament, Switch sends a message to the heroes, which is delivered by the hotel staff of the Yerith Bepin. Switch has heard that Captain Moro is doing well, but he would like to help the Twi'lek reach the final round of the competition. The droid crime lord has sent the heroes a piece of software for the sabacc dealer droids that will twist the luck of the draw in Moro's favor. The tricky part is that the heroes will have to physically insert a memory stick into the dealer droid to upload the software, a difficult prospect given the heightened security surrounding the tournament.

The heroes should come up with a plan for installing the software. They might choose to disguise themselves as technicians performing maintenance on the droid, though such a deception would be difficult to believe, especially for Jacc Mandelbrot. Heroes trained in the Stealth skill can attempt to slide the memory stick into the dealer droid when no one is looking, and if other heroes create a distraction of some kind, it can give the hero with the stick favorable circumstances on the Stealth check.

When the heroes attempt to insert the cheating software, use the statistics for Bepin guards for the rest of the security team. You can also throw other complications at the heroes to keep them on their toes. For example, another technician might walk up and start tinkering with the droid just as the hero approaches it, or one of the other sabacc players might turn to face the droid at just the wrong moment. These complications can add tension to the scene, but they shouldn't stop the heroes from completing this minor task.

Additionally, if the heroes don't care about helping Captain Moro, they can alter the software so that it provides its +2 equipment bonus on gambling checks to one of their allies instead. A DC 25 Use Computer check alters the software to help out a particular hero, but the software still has to be installed in one of the dealer droids.

END OF THE DAY'S EVENTS

By the end of the second day, only seven or eight competitors should remain in the tournament, including Lt. Arandis, Creeska, Silas Draver, Lady Fioro, Captain Moro, and Vorn Zaday. Any heroes playing in the tournament need to make Wisdom checks as though they were gambling (gaining the bonus from the Gambler talent, if applicable). A result of 15 or more ensures that the hero moves on to the next round of the tournament, which will determine the champion. If two or more heroes are playing in the tournament, only the hero who gets the highest result on the Wisdom check advances to the final table.

MESSAGE FROM THE BANSHEE III

Some time during the third day of the tournament, the heroes receive another message from Captain Okeefe on the *Banshee*. According to Crash, Imperial communications chatter has died down, and the reason seems to be that Lt. Arandis made it to the final table in the tournament. Apparently, the Empire had a contingency plan in place on the off chance that Arandis didn't reach the final table on his own.

Additionally, Crash has been monitoring communications from the Medium Transport *Shackles of Nizon*, which is still in orbit over the planet. He has been picking up infrequent signals from the ship that are consistent with signals used by slave circuits, which are used to control starships from a distance.

DAY 4: FINAL ROUND

On the final day of the tournament, the only competitors left are those who have played a significant role in the adventure thus far. If a hero has made it to the final table, he or she has the chance to become the next champion of the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament and be known as one of the most talented players in the galaxy. More importantly, though, the heroes will learn the identity of Darga's agent and the details of the exchange, and they will also be on the right path to finding the Hutt and bringing him to justice.

Only one table remains on the final day of the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament. Each of the competitors is intensely focused on the hand of sabacc cards in front of them, and there is a tension in the air as they compete to see who will take home an incredible prize. All eyes are on the central table, and the Bith band from the day before produces only the faintest background music. The crowd has not thinned, but it now surrounds the last table, which is illuminated by lights from overhead. With the house lights dimmed, the final table in the middle of the room glows like an incandescent torch in the dark casino.

CASINO SECURITY

As the final day of the tournament wears on, any heroes working security have a chance to catch Creeska, the Rodian player, cheating with a skifter. A skifter is a special sabacc card that can be changed by tapping on the correct corner of the card. Allow each hero working security a DC 23 Perception check to notice Creeska slipping the skifter from his coat during one of the sabacc hands. If a hero notices the skifter, he can point it out to the rest of the security team or to Jacc

Mandelbrot. Creeska is arrested, all the while protesting his innocence, and dragged off by the security force.

If the heroes do not notice Creeska cheating, he retains the skifter but loses and gets eliminated from the tournament anyway. Unfortunately, he uses the skifter to win hands against both Captain Moro and any hero still in the tournament, imposing a -2 penalty on their Wisdom checks to gamble at the end of the tournament.

BYSTANDERS

On the final day of the tournament, Silas Draver pays a handsome bribe to a member of the Royal's security force to get his comrades into the casino with their weapons. Allow any heroes in the crowd to make a DC 21 Perception check to notice several of Draver's thugs being let in with their weapons by the security guard. If the check is successful, the heroes can report what they saw to any member of the security force. An investigation reveals the two thugs who smuggled in weapons, as well as the guard who was bribed. If the heroes successfully reveal Draver's thugs, remove two of his goons from the "Sabacc Table Showdown" encounter (page 29), but award XP as though the party had defeated those two goons just the same.

WORKING FOR SWITCH

Despite his successes earlier in the tournament, Captain Moro is not faring well on this final day. If the heroes did not already introduce themselves to Moro as agents of Switch, the droid sends a message to the Twi'lek, explaining that the heroes are there to help him. During breaks in the action, Moro may seek out the heroes for counsel in the final round of the tournament. If they choose, they can advise him on his play, using observations they have made in the first few days to increase his chances of success. One hero working for Switch can make a DC 10 Wisdom check to aid Captain Moro on his own Wisdom check to gamble at the end of the fourth day, granting another +2 bonus to his check.

Furthermore, if the heroes interacted with Vorn Zaday earlier in the tournament, they can tip Moro off to her personality, particularly if they reveal her "chaotic" outlook on the game. Doing so imposes a -2 penalty on Zaday's Wisdom check to gamble at the end of the tournament, decreasing the chance that she will beat Moro's check. Similarly, if any of the heroes managed to talk to Lady Fioro, they can impose a -2 penalty on her Wisdom check to gamble by revealing her aggressive strategy to Moro.

TOURNAMENT COMPETITORS

Near the end of the tournament (this should be the last scenario before the final gamble checks are made), the heroes finally have a chance to learn the truth about which gambler is working for Darga. One particular hand comes about in which Lady Fioro has a clear advantage. Read the following text aloud:

Lady Fioro holds her hand close to her chest, a confident smile gracing her lips. One by one, the other competitors fold, until only the Imperial officer Lt. Arandis and the Hapan woman remain in the game. Another round of betting raises the stakes, but it seems as though Lt. Arandis is feeling out her hand. He watches her for a long moment, eyeing her with the same savvy look he has given every other player he has defeated over the course of the tournament.

"I will wager every credit I have," he says, pushing a pile of chips to the center of the table. The crowd gasps, but the other players—all except Lady Fioro—look confused. Her smile, however, deepens, and she reveals her hand: pure sabacc, the best possible hand in the game.

A cheer erupts from the crowd, but it is what happens next that draws your eye. Lt. Arandis tosses his cards haphazardly on the table, but as the credit chips are slid across the table to Lady Fioro, he begins arranging the cards once more. From left to right, he places the One of Coins, the Three of Sabers, the Seven of Flasks, then two credit chips, followed by Master of Staves, and lastly the Queen of Air and Darkness, sliding them all into the neutral field to keep them from shifting. An instant later, you notice that they produce a number sequence: 137.12. While the audience cheers, Lady Fioro stares intently at the cards, as though burning the sequence into her mind.

Based on their earlier interactions with Lt. Arandis, the heroes should know that such a play was highly irregular for him. Normally, he is conservative and is not easily baited by bluffs, but his play at the end seemed to indicate that he had been tricked into wagering his entire stake. Not only does the loss remove Lt. Arandis from the tournament (a fact that he seems to show no remorse for), it also gives Lady Fioro a significant advantage going into the final hands of the tournament, as his stake was quite sizable.



Additionally, his behavior at the end of the hand should rouse the heroes' suspicions, especially given that he specifically arranged the cards to produce the numeric sequence and slid them into the neutral field to keep them from randomizing. If the heroes have not already figured it out, allow them to make a Knowledge (technology) or Use Computer check to realize that the numeric sequence corresponds to a communications frequency used by starships, particularly slave circuits.

They should realize what has transpired: Lt. Arandis transferred his winnings to Lady Fioro so that she would win the tournament, and he also communicated the frequency of the slave circuit for the *Shackles of Nizon*. Lady Fioro is Darga's agent, and the heroes should know this now. Unfortunately, before they have a chance to confront her, they will have to deal with Silas Draver and his goons.

If no heroes are participating in the tournament at this point, this scenario can play out for bystanders as well (especially if any heroes who met Lt. Arandis on the first day are still present in the audience).

MESSAGE FROM THE BANSHEE IV

Just before the heroes witness the exchange between Lt. Arandis and Lady Fioro, Captain Okeefe contacts them via comlink to say that Imperial chatter has exploded to a new high, and that the exchange must be close to occurring. This should keep the heroes on the alert for the final round of the tournament, and it can help any heroes who are struggling to identify Darga's agent.

END OF THE DAY'S EVENTS

At the end of the final day, only a small number of competitors remain: Lady Fioro (Gamble +8), Captain Moro (Gamble +5, or +7 if the heroes succeeded on inserting the software into the dealer droid), Vorn Zaday (Gamble +7), and (if applicable) the hero participating in the tournament. Have these competitors make Wisdom checks to gamble; the player with the highest result wins the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament. Though this will determine the winner, at least one NPC does not have a chance to win: Silas Draver.

CONCLUDING THE TOURNAMENT

Once the victor of the tournament has been determined, Jacc Mandelbrot comes to the table to congratulate the winner. In a ceremony as much for the crowd as for the winner, Mandelbrot drones on about the excellent competition. He has had the credits transferred to a special account that only the tournament winner can access, and he hands over a datapad containing the access codes for the account. The crowd cheers, and things finally seem to be winding down, when Silas Draver decides to make his move.

Draver is not one to take losing kindly, and as such he has prepared for this contingency in advance. Draver draws a weapon, and several of his goons push forward out of the crowd, threatening to kill Mandelbrot and many others if the datapad isn't handed over. Surprisingly, most of the tournament's competitors and spectators abided by the "no weapons" rule, so none is able to stop Draver and his thugs. To demonstrate how serious he is, Draver activates special programming he had installed into three of the sabacc dealer droids, revealing them to be armed with blaster weapons.

The heroes will need to deal with Draver to keep him from getting away with the credits. Additionally, he points his blaster at Lady Fioro and threatens to take her hostage to keep him safe all the way to the landing pad where his ship is waiting. See "Sabacc Table Showdown," page 29, for more information on running this encounter.

PART 3: SKIRMISH OVER BESPIN

With the tournament over, the credits safe, and Silas Draver dealt with, the heroes have a chance to catch up to Darga the Hutt. Having witnessed the transaction between the Imperial officer and Darga's Hapan proxy, the heroes know that Lady Fioro has the information they need to find their quarry, and that she can likely reveal the full depth of Darga's involvement in the Sarlace Project.

Unfortunately, Lady Fioro was gravely wounded in the firefight with Silas Draver and his goons. With Lt. Arandis dead and Lady Fioro on the edge of death, the heroes should waste no time in talking to her. She might be their last chance to learn Darga's whereabouts.

EMBRACING YOUR DESTINY: DISCOVERY

Heroes with the Discovery destiny take a major step toward that destiny when they successfully discover who Darga's agent is in the tournament and learn the Hutt's whereabouts. Grant those heroes the 24-hour destiny bonus either immediately or, at your option, when the next adventure begins.

QUESTIONING LADY FIORO

Errant blaster bolts from Silas Draver's attempted robbery caught Lady Fioro off guard, injuring her seriously. However, she is still conscious and able to answer questions. While Jacc Mandelbrot's security team tries to clean up the Royal Casino, the heroes have a few moments to interrogate Lady Fioro before the authorities arrive. She is weak and fading from consciousness, but all the fight has gone out of her. She doesn't bother to deceive the heroes because she believes (perhaps rightly so) that she is only moments from death.

Below are the answers to some questions that the heroes probably have for Lady Fioro:

Who are you really? "Mirana Fioro. I'm from Hapes, but I'm no noble. My father was a pirate, and he raised me aboard his ship. I've been pretending to be a noblewoman for years."

Are you working for Darga the Hutt? "Yes. I've been Darga's agent for three years now. He instructed me to enter the tournament and take payment from the Imperial officer."

Where is Darga? "In one of the lower docking bays on the underside of the city. Docking bay 4414. He's been living on his luxury yacht, though now that he has the codes, I doubt he'll be around for long. If he's still in Cloud City within the hour, I'll be surprised."

What was the code that Lt. Arandis transferred to you? "It was the command codes for the slave circuit for a ship in orbit. A Gallofree Medium Transport. I sent the code to Darga just before the fight broke out. You've got to have a special computer to control it, but there's one on board Darga's yacht."

What is on that Medium Transport? "Slaves, used in some secret Imperial project. Darga has been taking them as a partial payment from the Empire. They're mostly decrepit and used up, but he resells them to other slavers from his palace on Cato Neimoidia."

What does Darga have to do with the Sarlace Project? "I don't know. I've only heard it mentioned. But for months now, he's been trading huge amounts of Tibanna gas to the Empire in exchange for slaves and credits. The Empire always seems to want more."

UNCOVERING THE WORM

With information in hand about finding Darga, the heroes will likely set off to find the Hutt at last. Additionally, thanks to the information given to them by Mirana Fioro, the heroes also know the extent of Darga's involvement with the Empire, and particularly altruistic heroes probably jump at the chance to free slaves of the Empire. However, Darga has also received word of the events that took place in the Royal Casino, and he is taking no chances. The Hutt has ordered his belongings packed onto his yacht and is planning on taking off as quickly as possible.

Knowing that the heroes have survived and are likely coming for him, Darga pulls every string he has with the Wing Guard and instructs security personnel in his employ to keep the heroes from getting to his shuttle at all costs. As the heroes travel through the city trying to reach docking bay 4414, they are ambushed by Bespin security guards with Imperial loyalties. With the death of Lt. Arandis, a small contingent of stormtroopers and an Imperial officer remain in the city. Darga saw to it that they were informed of the heroes' role in the Lieutenant's death, and he has painted them as the villains behind the scheme. See "Streets of Cloud City," page 32, for more information on running this encounter.

When the heroes escape the ambush, they have very little time to reach docking bay 4414. They travel deeper into the city, and at their footsteps they often hear the sounds of pursuit. Occasionally, they hear shouts of "This way!" and "I think they're heading down to a lower level!" echoing through the halls behind them. The muffled, electronic sound of the voices should indicate that a squad of stormtroopers remains in pursuit, dedicated to stopping the heroes from leaving Bespin alive.

When they finally reach the docking bay they seek, they should realize that they are just in time. The Hutt and his minions are still outside of the ship, which looms large in the docking bay, and it looks as though they have been loading huge crates (filled with contraband that Darga picked up during his stay in Cloud City) onto the yacht. There is no time to talk. The Empire is at the heroes' heels, and Darga's goons know better than to wait for their boss to give the order to attack. With the Hutt shouting encouragement, Darga's cronies and the stormtroopers try to put an end to the heroes' meddling.

See "Hutt's Hangar," page 34, for more information on running this encounter.

COVERING THE EMPIRE'S TRACKS

Though his thugs have been defeated and the Empire is too far away to help, the Hutt crime lord is nonetheless defiant as he faces the heroes. Whether he is a prisoner or merely dying of his wounds, Darga cannot resist taunting the heroes one last time. Before he dies (or is otherwise subdued), Darga has a few choice words. Read the following text aloud:

Darga gives a low groan and rolls his eyes before letting out a wheezing laugh. His words are almost dragged out of him, but despite this, he seems to be smiling that sickly Hutt smile that often graces his enormous face.

"I should have killed you the first time you walked into my palace. You think you've done something right, but you're gravely mistaken. At least those slaves would have lived if I'd sold them, but you've condemned them to die. The Empire won't let them live on the chance that they might reveal the truth. The deaths of thousands will be on your hands!"

THE ARRIVAL OF THE *ASSIDUOUS*

If the heroes used lethal force with Darga, he expires after delivering that coda. Otherwise, he simply refuses to speak further. Just moments after they finish with the Hutt, however, the heroes receive a call from Captain Okeefe on the *Banshee*. According to her sensors, the *Imperial I*-class Star Destroyer *Assiduous* just emerged from hyperspace at the edge of the system and began transmitting extensive messages on the slave circuit to the Medium Transport *Shackles of Nizon*. It beamed similar messages to a Tibanna gas hauler that had been sitting inert in the space above Bespin until now. As the *Assiduous* launched a number of TIE fighters, all of which are screaming toward Bespin, the Tibanna gas hauler fired its engines and set in a new course—a course leading it directly at the *Shackles of Nizon*. Crash has made the calculations, and the Tibanna gas hauler will collide with the Medium Transport in a matter of minutes, destroying both ships completely—and killing all the slaves on the Medium Transport.

STOPPING THE TIBANNA GAS HAULER

The Tibanna gas hauler is careening through space toward the *Shackles of Nizon*, a Medium Transport with thousands of slaves onboard. A group of TIE fighters is on its way toward Bespin, likely to finish the job in case the hauler doesn't completely destroy the slave ship. The *Assiduous* is only minutes away from being in range of the planet, and the Empire knows the heroes are in Cloud City and were involved in the death of Lt. Arandis (even if they weren't directly responsible).

Things look pretty dire for the heroes, and they may be tempted to cut their losses and make a break for it. However, thousands of slaves will die if they do. Moreover, those slaves are clearly involved in the Sarlace Project, and stopping the *Shackles of Nizon* from being destroyed could give them another lead.

In the hangar are six Z-95 headhunter starfighters that belonged to Darga the Hutt's escorts. These ships, while not in pristine condition, are well maintained, powered up, and ready to fly. It actually takes very little skill to fly the ships (even an untrained pilot could maneuver them well enough), and high-Dexterity characters are exceptionally good candidates to pilot the starfighters. Don't be afraid to encourage the heroes to hop in the Headhunters; it will give individual heroes more to do during the final two encounters of the adventure.

Another option for some of the heroes is to take command of Darga's luxury yacht, the *Glorious Chariot*. This is a great chance for the heroes to get a ship of their own that they can use for the rest of the campaign, and could provide characters who aren't great pilots with a chance to participate in the battle as gunners. Likewise, a few heroes could man the laser cannons aboard the *Banshee* while Okeefe and Crash pilot the transport. If some heroes want to take starfighters, a few want to steal the *Glorious Chariot*, and a few more want to act as gunners on the *Banshee*, that's OK. It adds a bit of diversity to the last two encounters in the adventure, and it helps ensure that no characters are just "sitting in the ship" at the end. It takes Captain Okeefe a few seconds to bring the *Banshee* around to pick the heroes up, and after that, they can blast off into the skies of Bespin together.

As the heroes scream over Cloud City in their starfighters or space transports, members of the Wing Guard begin pursuit. Some have been ordered by the Empire to shoot down any ships attempting to leave Cloud City, and they pursue the heroes' ships with lethal intent. See "Flight from Cloud City," page 37, for more information on running this encounter.

Once the heroes get out of the atmosphere, they must contend with the forces of the Empire. Though the *Assiduous* is too far away to reach the Tibanna gas hauler, it has sent TIE fighters to make sure that the *Shackles of Nizon* is destroyed one way or another. When the heroes leave the atmosphere, they have only a limited amount of time to destroy the Tibanna gas hauler before it collides with the *Shackles of Nizon*. See "Skirmish Over Bespin," page 40, for more information on running this encounter.



Clan Mionne Z-95 Headhunter

CL 7

Gargantuan starfighter

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +5

Defense Ref 14 (flat-footed 12), Fort 26; +7 armor
hp 120; DR 10; SR 15; **Threshold** 46

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,150 km/h), fly 4 squares (starship scale)

Ranged triple blasters +1 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total (crew)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +31

Atk Options autofire (triple blasters)

Abilities Str 42, Dex 14, Con —, Int 12

Skills Initiative +2, Mechanics +5, Perception +5, Pilot +2, Use Computer +5

Crew 1 (normal); **Passengers** none

Cargo 85 kg; **Consumables** 1 day; **Carried Craft** none

Hyperdrive x1

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 80,000 (45,000 used)

Triple blasters (pilot)

Atk +1 (–4 autofire), Dmg 3d10x2

THE GLORIOUS CHARIOT

The *Glorious Chariot* is a Luxury 3000 space yacht designed by the SoroSuub corporation. This particular vessel was customized for Darga the Hutt. The interior of the ship was once very nice, but like the inside of Darga's palace, it has been used as a den of iniquity for far too long. Much of the interior is in severe disrepair, and some parts of the ship can only be classified as "disgusting." However, Darga knew better than to trust his enemies to fail to recognize his ship, and thus he had after-market modifications made to the yacht to add extra defensive weapons that are normally manned by his crew.

When the heroes board the ship, a few of Darga's crewmembers are in the cabin area, hoping to be left alone. One look at the heroes, however, and they rush out in fear.

EMBRACING YOUR DESTINY: DESTRUCTION

Heroes with the Destruction destiny take a major step toward that destiny when they successfully manage to destroy the Tibanna gas hauler and all of the TIE fighters accompanying it. Grant those heroes the 24-hour destiny bonus when the next adventure begins.

Glorious Chariot

CL 5

Colossal space transport

Init –3; **Senses** Perception +5

Defense Ref 14 (flat-footed 12), Fort 26; +12 armor
hp 120; DR 15; SR 15; **Threshold** 76

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,000 km/h), fly 4 squares (starship scale)

Ranged laser cannon +2 (see below) and

double medium laser cannon +2 (see below)

Fighting Space 12x12 or 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total (crew)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +36

Abilities Str 42, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14

Skills Initiative –3, Mechanics +5, Perception +5, Pilot –3, Use Computer +5

Crew 1 (normal); **Passengers** 10

Cargo 100 tons; **Consumables** 1 month; **Carried Craft** none

Hyperdrive x2; (backup x14)

Availability Unique; **Cost** not available for sale (estimated value 160,000 credits)

Medium laser cannon (pilot)

Atk +2, Dmg 2d10x2

Double medium laser cannon (gunner)

Atk +2 (–3 autofire), Dmg 5d10x2

EMBRACING YOUR DESTINY: RESCUE

Heroes with the Rescue destiny take a major step toward that destiny when they successfully help keep the *Shackles of Nizon* from being destroyed by the Tibanna gas hauler. Grant those heroes the 24-hour destiny bonus when the next adventure begins.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

At the end of the adventure, assuming the heroes succeeded, the Tibanna gas hauler does not destroy the *Shackles of Nizon*. A few short moments after the ship's safety is assured, the heroes receive a simple text message from the Medium Transport: "We have gained control. Thank you." The engines of the ship flare, and seconds later, it makes a jump to hyperspace, with no other fanfare.

However, all is not safe in the Beshpin system. The *Assiduous* is fast approaching, and the heroes definitely don't want to stick around to answer a lot of questions from the Empire. While the navcomputers aboard the *Banshee* plot their course, the heroes can see the distant dagger shape of the Star Destroyer rapidly approaching their position. It becomes clear that the *Assiduous* won't be in range until well after the heroes have jumped to hyperspace, but the ship comes on nonetheless. Just before the heroes jump, they receive a visual communication from the *Assiduous* (if they refuse to open a communications channel, the

message can be sent as a recording to the *Banshee*, and Captain Okeefe can play it for them). Read the following text aloud when the heroes view the message:

The image on the screen resolves to show the bridge of the Star Destroyer *Assiduous*. Standing before the viewscreen is a darkly handsome man wearing long, flowing robes. The hilt of a lightsaber hangs from his belt.

"My sensor operators tell me that your ship will be far enough from Bespin to jump to hyperspace before I can reach you. I congratulate you on your victory here, but know this: the Inquisitorius never rests. My name is Valin Draco, and I will find you and make you pay for meddling here. You may have bested that slimy Hutt, but I can assure you that the affections of an Inquisitor are not so gentle."

END OF THE FIRST STORY ARC

The end of *The Queen of Air and Darkness* concludes the first story arc in the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign. By the end of this adventure, the heroes have learned that the Empire has been using slaves in the Sarlacc Project, and that they are in great need of large quantities of Tibanna gas as well. They have seen Valin Draco, if at a distance, and now find themselves known to the Empire. When the heroes return to the Nebulon-B cruiser *Resurgence*, they are welcomed by Captain Verana, who debriefs the heroes and seems amazed at all they were able to accomplish. He and his crew begin to analyze the data in the *Banshee's* sensor systems that was brought back from Cato Neimoidia and Bespin, and they continue the search for the Sarlacc Project there.

Similar to the gaps between the *Star Wars* films, the end of this adventure provides a perfect time for you to take care of any lingering issues from the first third of the campaign. The heroes should be 7th level by the time the adventure ends. If any of them are behind the curve, you can insert some small adventures of your own to help get them a little closer to the appropriate level.

If any heroes died during *The Queen of Air and Darkness*, the gap between adventures serves as a good place to introduce new heroes. Additionally, if any of the heroes have goals to be taken care of during downtime—such as refurbishing the interior of the *Glorious Chariot*, installing special modifications to their ships, or constructing their own lightsabers—now is a good time to let those things happen. With the extremely fast pace of *Star Wars* adventures, it may be difficult to find time for more mundane activities during upcoming adventures.

ADVANCING THE CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

One option you should consider is a large advancement in the campaign's timeline. The gaps between many of the *Star Wars* films leave months and even years unexplained, and doing the same for the **Dawn of Defiance** campaign could help not only make it feel more like the *Star Wars* movies but also provide interesting options for character development. You can choose how far ahead to jump, though jumping forward more than two or three years can be troublesome. During that time period, the heroes continue to work for the Alderaanian Resistance, operating out of the *Resurgence*, but getting no closer to the Sarlacc Project. They have few major adventures, and characters might change significantly between *The Queen of Air and Darkness* and the fourth adventure in the campaign, *Echoes of the Jedi*. Just as Luke goes from being a Rebel pilot to a full-blown Jedi between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, a hero might receive a major overhaul to help him or her fit in better with the rest of the group.

A large time jump also gives you the opportunity to allow a player to rebuild his or her character. Since the campaign began, the player might have found new options to try or might have learned that certain talents or feats weren't used much. If you choose to let the player rebuild his character, he should keep the ability scores the same but otherwise can rebuild the character from the ground up, choosing new classes, talents, and feats. The hero shouldn't change too drastically and must remain recognizable, and the new statistics for the character should reflect a logical evolution. For example, rebuilding a Jedi as a scoundrel and not

taking the Force Sensitivity feat is probably too big of a leap, but a noble being rebuilt with soldier levels could reflect the hero taking a larger role in the Alderaanian Resistance. You should work with your players to ensure that such changes make sense for the characters and provide new depth and story options for the heroes.



Valin Draco

TIBANNA GAS REFINERY

CHALLENGE LEVEL 5

SETUP

The encounter begins with the Ugnaught riggers spread out across the refinery floor. The Ugnaught boss stands next to a Tibanna gas container being raised up from a lower level. All of the Tibanna mynocks are clinging to the gas container, though they need not be placed on the map until the first round of combat, when they are startled into action by the Ugnaught boss. The boss should be in a position to have either total cover or improved cover from the heroes.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the heroes enter the Tibanna gas refinery, they are bombarded by sights, sounds, and smells that are both alien and heavily industrial. Allow the heroes to make Perception checks to notice the Tibanna gas mynocks clinging to the sides of the gas container.

When the heroes enter the refinery, read the following text aloud:

The air is hot and muggy in the Tibanna gas refinery, and everywhere machinery rattles, hums, or hisses as gases are vented or heavy equipment is moved. Five Ugnaughts scurry about the area, working to make sure all of the machinery is functioning properly, and one of them stands in the rear of the chamber, near a massive crane. The crane is lifting a 3-meter-wide Tibanna gas container up from somewhere beneath the grated floor. As the base of the huge container passes the floor, there is a hiss as pneumatic grates slam shut beneath it, allowing the crane to set it down.

UGNAUGHT RIGGER (4)

The Ugnaughts that work in the Tibanna gas spin-sealing refineries call themselves "riggers," as they operate a variety of heavy machines commonly referred to as "rigs." Even if the rigs have different functions, they all amount to the same thing: converting Tibanna gas into a useful form. Most Ugnaught riggers are tough customers for beings of such small stature, and they are accustomed to working under extreme conditions. These particular riggers have become weary of their menial lives and see the chance to work for Darga as a way to get away from Cloud City for good.

This small porcine being grunts as he shuffles around the refinery floor. Wearing what looks to be a heavy smock, its surface pitted and burned, the Ugnaught scurries from one machine to another, dark eyes fluttering about the chamber as though fearful of being caught.

Ugnaught Rigger

CL 2

Small Ugnaught nonheroic 6

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +3

Languages Ugnaught

Defenses Ref 11 (flat-footed 11), Fort 12, Will 10

hp 27; **Threshold** 12

Speed 4 squares

Melee unarmed +5 (1d3+1)

Ranged heavy blaster pistol +4 (3d8)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +0

Atk Options Charging Fire, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Abilities Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Charging Fire, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (Endurance), Skill Training (Mechanics), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +15, Mechanics +7

Possessions heavy blaster pistol, worker's clothes, comlink, tool belt

Ugnaught Rigger Tactics

The Ugnaught riggers know that if they are caught, they will be forever shamed, and it will be the end of Darga's payouts. The riggers are tough and aggressive opponents who have no problem firing their heavy blaster pistols (which, according to Cloud City law, they shouldn't even be carrying) while dashing around the refinery. They prefer to use their Charging Fire feats to increase their mobility, letting them take shots at the heroes while still moving to take cover from distant opponents.

UGNAUGHT BOSS

The Ugnaught boss is an experienced leader among the riggers and has proven to be a devious and capable agent for Darga the Hutt. The boss is the mastermind behind the Tibanna gas siphoning process and can motivate his fellow riggers even though the threat of being caught looms over them. The Ugnaught boss is far more cautious than his aggressive companions, and his sharp mind allows him to challenge even the wiliest of foes.

An atypical intelligence shines in the eyes of this Ugnaught, who seems have complete confidence in his control over the situation. Tufts of white hair hang down from his balding head, and a massive blaster carbine is slung over one shoulder, giving him a menacing air.

Ugnaught Boss

CL 5

Small Ugnaught nonheroic 6/noble 3

Force 2

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +5

Languages Basic, Binary (can't speak), Bocce, Huttese, Jawa Trade Language, Ugnaught

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 15), Fort 16, Will 17
hp 44; **Threshold** 16

Speed 4 squares

Melee unarmed +6 (1d3+1)

Ranged blaster carbine +7 (3d8+1)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +2

Atk Options Careful Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Special Actions Born Leader

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14

Talents Born Leader, Distant Command

Feats Careful Shot, Improved Defenses, Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill Focus (Endurance), Skill Focus (Persuasion), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +16, Mechanics +11, Persuasion +16

Possessions blaster carbine, comlink, datapad, tool belt

Ugnaught Boss Tactics

On the first round of combat, the Ugnaught boss uses a swift action to bang the butt of his blaster carbine against the metal surface of the Tibanna gas container next to him. This sends the Tibanna mynock flying around the room, increasing the chaos. The Ugnaught boss then uses his Born Leader talent to boost the effectiveness of his comrades and makes sure to take cover. The boss seeks to keep cover from the heroes, preferring to aim (gaining the benefits of his Careful Shot feat). If any of the Tibanna mynocks are killed while near a hero, the boss always tries to shoot the cloud of Tibanna gas released by the slain creature, causing the gas to burn.

TIBANNA MYNOCKS (6)

A highly adaptive breed of mynock found on Bespin and other worlds where Tibanna gas is mined, Tibanna mynocks have evolved the ability to breathe even in air highly concentrated with toxic fumes. On Bespin, Tibanna mynocks often latch on to mining vessels or large containers carrying Tibanna gas. The container being lifted into the refinery is covered in six Tibanna mynocks, which continue to try to dissolve the metal of the thick container even as they are pulled into Cloud City.

This leathery-winged creature resembles a normal mynock, with a large sucker mouth and dangling eyes. However, it seems to have some kind of gills on the sides of its neck, and as it exhales, it releases puffs of green gas.

Tibanna Mynock

CL 1

Small airborne beast 2

Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +2

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 15), Fort 10, Will 11
hp 9; **Threshold** 10

Speed fly 8 squares

Melee bite +0 (1d4)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** -2

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8

Special Qualities Tibanna pouch

Feats Skill Training (Initiative)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Initiative +8 (may reroll, keeping the second result even if it is worse)

Tibanna Pouch—Tibanna mynocks have dozens of small, leathery pouches all over their bodies that capture and hold pockets of Tibanna gas. When a Tibanna mynock is killed, its Tibanna pouches rupture, filling a 2x2 square area with Tibanna gas. Whenever a creature enters this area, the gas makes an attack roll (1d20+10) against the creature's Fortitude Defense. If the attack succeeds, the target takes 2d6 points of damage (other Tibanna mynocks are immune to this effect). Additionally, a Tibanna gas cloud can be dissipated by firing a blaster bolt into it (Reflex Defense 10 for one of the squares occupied by the gas). Doing so causes the cloud to burn up rapidly, dealing 4d6 points of energy damage to any creature in or adjacent to the gas.

Tibanna Mynock Tactics

The Tibanna mynocks don't like being disturbed, and when the Ugnaught boss bangs on the gas container, they fly out into the refinery in a frenzy. The Tibanna mynocks have no intelligence for tactics, but they are familiar enough with Ugnaughts not to attack them, focusing their efforts on the heroes.

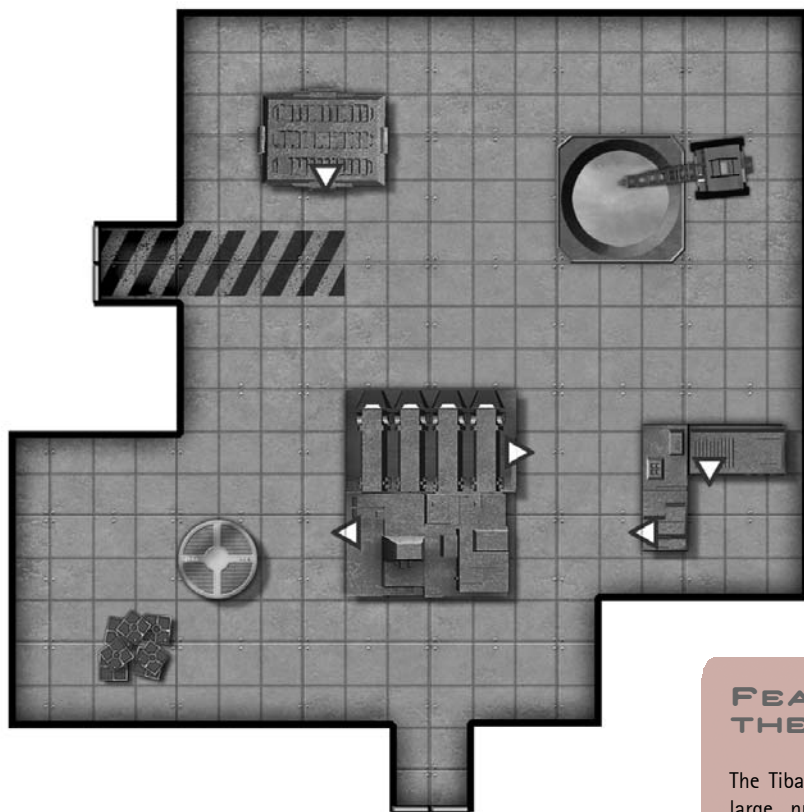
CONCLUSION

If the heroes capture any of the Ugnaughts alive, they can bring them to the office of the Parliament of Guilds or directly to the Wing Guards. Of course, if they do the latter, they will need to explain how they managed to subdue five Ugnaughts carrying illegal weapons without any weapons of their own, which could lead to trouble with the local authorities. But regardless of whether the heroes capture any Ugnaughts, they have fulfilled their obligation to Fyren and Krygg and can return to them to get the information they need on Darga.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page.

TIBANNA GAS REFINERY ENCOUNTER MAP



FEATURES OF THE AREA

The Tibanna gas refinery is filled with a large number of machines, some of which make a great deal of noise and discharge gas and vapors from time to time. All Perception checks made in the area take a -2 penalty due to the noise. Furthermore, at regular intervals, some of the machines spray superheated vapor out of exhaust ports (marked on the map). Roll initiative for each of the exhaust ports on the map. When a port's initiative comes up, make an attack roll (1d20+8) against the Reflex Defense of any character in the exhaust square; if the attack succeeds, the target takes 2d6 points of damage from the superheated vapor.

IMPERIAL THREATS

CHALLENGE LEVEL 6

SETUP

When the encounter begins, the two Theelin bodyguards should be placed close to Baron Kithriss; while both need not be adjacent to him, at least one should be. The encounter takes place on a nonspecific walkway in Cloud City, the precise location of which depends on where the heroes encounter the Baron and his entourage. Feel free to add other obstacles to the encounter area to fit the scene as it plays out.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the encounter begins, read the following text aloud:

Two Theelin women, attired in padded jumpsuits with small pieces of armor attached at the shoulders, thighs, and forearms, stand close to a Human man who is obviously of nobility, and likely from a Core world. While the trio remains close together, four nearly identical men carrying blaster rifles fan out and take up positions as if looking to defend a bunker on a war-torn battlefield.

UNDERCOVER CLONE TROOPER (4)

Drawn from the very first batch of clone troopers produced on Kamino, these clone troopers have aged much faster than normal Humans and, as such, have been removed from active duty as stormtroopers. This particular group of clones has been assigned by the Empire not only to guard Baron Kithriss but also to observe him. If the Baron shows any signs of instability as a result of his recent foray to Byss, the clones are to take care of him—quietly. These clone troopers have abandoned their usual white armor and instead have been garbed as escorts of Imperial nobility. However, thanks to a letter from a high-ranking member of the Imperial Senate, they have been granted special writ to carry their blaster rifles.

Undercover Clone Trooper

CL 2

Medium middle-age Human (clone) nonheroic 6

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +8

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 11 (flat-footed 10), Fort 10, Will 10

hp 15; **Threshold** 10

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +4 (1d3)

Ranged blaster rifle +5 (3d8)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +5

Atk Options Careful Shot, Point Blank Shot

Abilities Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Careful Shot, Coordinated Attack, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +9, Perception +8

Possessions blaster rifle, comlink

Undercover Clone Trooper Tactics

The undercover clone troopers fight much like stormtroopers, ganging up on heroes with liberal uses of the aid another action. With the Theelin bodyguards protecting Baron Kithriss, the clone troopers are free to fight on the offensive. Though their attack bonuses are likely a little low to hit the heroes consistently, they will pair up on an individual hero or use autofire to deal damage.

BARON KITHRISS

One of the new breed of Imperial nobles that dominates the Core worlds, Baron Kithriss is a Chandrilan noble who has become one of the Emperor's greatest sycophants. In fact, he is so devoted to the Emperor that he was invited to a new, secret personal retreat on the Deep Core world of Byss. For weeks, Kithriss was the guest of Emperor Palpatine, but unknown to the Baron, the Emperor was secretly exposing him to a variety of Sith techniques intended to build up a resistance to Force powers. The conditioning will wear off in a matter of months, but while it lasts, the Baron's loyalty to Palpatine will remain at zealous levels.

This handsome nobleman is young, barely more than 20 years old, but he carries himself with an air of superiority that befits a veteran member of the Imperial Senate. His dark black hair has been cut short in the new fashion favored by COMPNOR agents, though the rest of his garb suggests the latest fashions on Chandrila.

Baron Kithriss

CL 5

Medium Human noble 5

Force 2; **Dark Side** 2

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +8

Languages Basic, Bocce, High Galactic, Huttese, Kel Dor, Ryl

Defenses Ref 19 (flat-footed 17), Fort 16, Will 19

hp 30; **Threshold** 16

Speed 6 squares

Melee vibroblade +5 (2d6+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6+2)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Atk Options Melee Defense, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse

Special Actions Bolster Ally, Ignite Fervor, Inspire Confidence

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16

Special Qualities Thrall of Palpatine

Talents Bolster Ally, Ignite Fervor, Inspire Confidence

Feats Improved Defenses, Linguist, Melee Defense, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +10, Gather Information +10, Initiative +9, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +9, Knowledge (galactic lore) +9, Perception +8, Persuasion +10, Pilot +9, Use Computer +9

Possessions blaster pistol, vibroblade, fine clothes, comlink, sabacc deck

Thrall of Palpatine—As a result of the exposure to Emperor Palpatine's dark side energies on Byss, Baron Kithriss gains a +5 Force bonus to any defenses and damage threshold against Use the Force checks.

Baron Kithriss Tactics

Though Baron Kithriss possesses a limited amount of resistance to Force powers, he does not know it, and he will not rush to engage any heroes openly showing displays of Force. He prefers to let his bodyguards protect him while his clone troopers lead the way in the fight. His first action is to Inspire Confidence, but on subsequent rounds, he prefers to make careful attacks, aiming to negate cover, in the hope of being able to use his Ignite Fervor talent on one of the clone troopers (preferably one benefiting from an aid another action). If any heroes get too close, he switches to using his vibroblade. If he is confident in his ability to strike that hero, he will swing with abandon, though against heroes with a high Reflex Defense, he will switch to Melee Defense to boost his own and let his bodyguards deal with the hero instead.

THEELIN BODYGUARD (2)

Identical twin sisters, these two near-Human bodyguards are devoted to the protection of Baron Kithriss. Though he calls them his "hired guards," in truth Kithriss purchased them as slaves from a Hutt gangster some years ago. Members of the Theelin near-Human species, these bodyguards boast a somewhat startling appearance which helps them take the attention off of the Baron. Like many slaves, they have been cowed by years of abuse, and go about their duty of protecting Kithriss with impassionate efficiency.

This startling-looking woman resembles a Human but has a shock of bright orange hair. A pattern of spots runs from her neck down across her arms, and she moves with a grace that belies the slightly bulky armor she wears. Though a blaster rifle is slung over her shoulder, she looks as though she is ready to go for the vibroblade swinging at her hip first.

Theelin Bodyguard

CL 3

Medium Theelin (near-Human) soldier 3

Force 1; **Dark Side** 2

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +8

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 20 (flat-footed 17), Fort 21, Will 16

hp 53; **Threshold** 21

Speed 6 squares

Melee vibroblade +5 (2d6+3)

Ranged blaster rifle +6 (3d8+1)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +8

Atk Options Expert Grappler, Trip

Special Actions Harm's Way

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12

Talents Expert Grappler, Harm's Way

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Improved Defenses, Toughness, Trip, Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +9, Perception +8, Treat Injury +8

Possessions blaster rifle, vibroblade, bodyguard armor (as armored flight suit), comlink

Theelin Bodyguard Tactics

The Theelin bodyguards are excellent close-quarters fighters, and though they are quite accurate with their blaster rifles, they really shine when the fight gets up close and personal. The Theelin bodyguards will use Harm's Way to divert attacks to themselves, relying on their good Reflex Defenses to protect them. If any heroes get too close, a Theelin will try to grab one and trip him, allowing her comrade to slash down with her vibroblade at the prone hero. If no enemies are within melee range, the bodyguards use their blaster rifles, though they never stray too far from Baron Kithriss and always keep one of them adjacent to him.

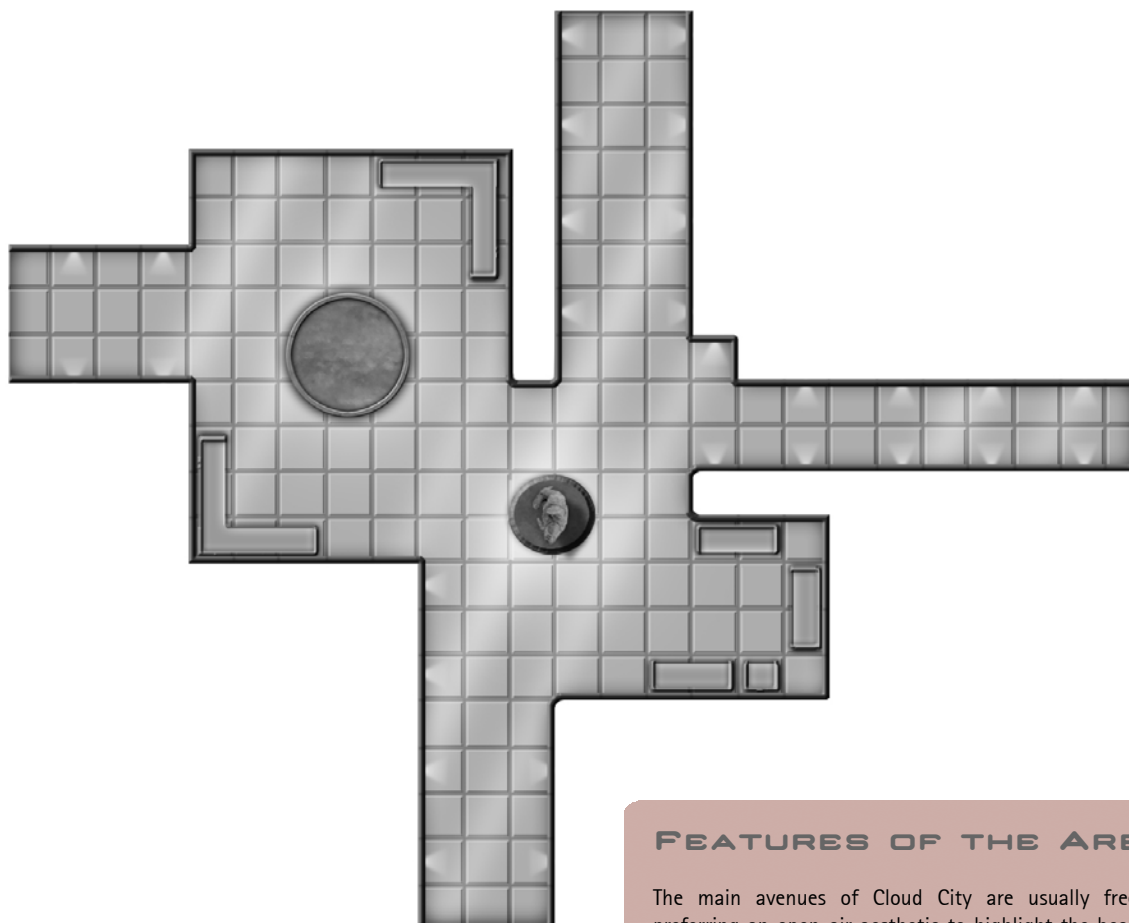
CONCLUSION

When the encounter ends, as long as the fight did not occur in an overtly public place, the heroes stand a good chance of escaping without having been seen by any local authorities. Even if someone did see the fight and alerted the Wing Guard, it will take several minutes for any guards to arrive, giving the heroes ample time to escape. However, given the number of people in Cloud City who want to avoid trouble with the law, it's also possible that no one reported the fight at all (though with so many visitors in Cloud City for the sabacc tournament, this is unlikely).

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page.

IMPERIAL THREATS ENCOUNTER MAP



FEATURES OF THE AREA

The main avenues of Cloud City are usually free of debris, preferring an open-air aesthetic to highlight the beauty of a city in the clouds. As such, there is little to take cover behind during this encounter, and some heroes may find themselves far more exposed than they are accustomed to.

ON THE HEIGHTS

CHALLENGE LEVEL 5

SETUP

This encounter begins with the heroes starting on the topmost of the three landing platforms in the area. Two of the six Bespin security guards wait on the bottom platform by the turbolift, while the remaining four exit the turbolift on the third platform, behind the heroes. The security chief waits in the turbolift but will exit when combat begins, and the two hovering security droids begin the encounter landing on the outer rim of the uppermost platform.

READ-ALoud TEXT

Though it is unlikely that the heroes will fail to notice the security guards pouring out of the turbolift, allow the heroes to make DC 10 Perception checks to notice the whine of the patrol droids' jump jets.

When the encounter begins, read the following text aloud:

Three circular landing platforms connect to a large, central turbolift shaft on one of the upper open levels of Cloud City. Each platform is offset from the others, allowing someone standing on one platform to view the other two without obstruction. Each platform is ringed with lights, and on the uppermost platform, you hear a pneumatic hiss as the doors to the turbolift slide open, allowing members of Bespin's security force to pour out onto the platform.

BESPIN SECURITY GUARD (6)

Known in Cloud City as the Wing Guard, Bespin's security force consists mostly of disciplined security personnel that report directly to the Baron-Administrator of Cloud City. These particular members of the Wing Guard are part of an anti-spice smuggling unit that has worked diligently to keep harder criminals—such as narcotics dealers—from polluting Cloud City with their corruption. With the Baron-Administrator's permission, the guards follow a take-no-prisoners approach to policing the city, and they do not hesitate to use lethal force against the heroes.

This Human man wears the dark blue uniform of Bespin's security force. Each wears a blue cap and has a blaster pistol in hand, drawn from the holster at his hip, looking ready to deal with any threats to the peace and prosperity of Cloud City.

Bespin Security Guard

Medium Human nonheroic 3
Init +7; **Senses** Perception +13
Languages Basic, Bocce

Defenses Ref 11 (flat-footed 10), Fort 10, Will 12
hp 8; **Threshold** 10

Speed 6 squares
Melee unarmed +2 (1d4)
Ranged blaster pistol +4 (3d6)

CL 1

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3

Atk Options Point Blank Shot

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10

Feats Coordinated Attack, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Perception),
Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +7, Perception +13, Persuasion +6

Possessions blaster pistol, Bespin guard uniform, binders, comlink

Bespin Security Guard Tactics

The Bespin security guards work best in groups where they can combine their efforts to take down a superior foe. They try to move into point-blank range with their opponents and use the Coordinated Attack feat to boost the attack bonus of an ally. They usually work in pairs, though against particularly resilient foes, they will sometimes combine all of their fire against the same opponent.

BESPIN SECURITY CHIEF

The security chief is the leader of the anti-spice smuggling squad. Drawn from the best private security forces in the galaxy, all Wing Guard security chiefs are guaranteed to make their squads better, more accurate, and more perceptive.

This member of Bespin's Wing Guard boasts rank insignia far more impressive than that of the other members of the security team. Brimming with confidence, he issues orders with precision and poise.

Bespin Security Chief

CL 4

Medium Human nonheroic 3/noble 3

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +15

Languages Basic, Bocce, High Galactic, Huttese

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 15), Fort 14, Will 18
hp 20; **Threshold** 14

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +4 (1d4+1)

Ranged blaster pistol +6 (3d6+1)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +5

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Sniper

Special Actions Born Leader, Inspire Confidence

Abilities Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10

Talents Born Leader, Inspire Confidence

Feats Improved Defenses, Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skill
Focus (Perception), Sniper, Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon
Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +9, Perception +15, Persuasion +8

Possessions blaster pistol, Bespin guard uniform, binders, comlink

Bespin Security Chief Tactics

The security chief has received special training and works best in concert with other members of the Wing Guard. On the first round of combat, he uses his Born Leader talent and his Inspire Confidence talent to boost the attack rolls of his allies. From that point on, he seeks shelter behind the crates on the landing pad, taking advantage of his accuracy feats to shoot heroes engaged in combat with his allies. If he sees that the fight is going against his men, he summons the two security guards from the lowest level (they call the turbolift on one round and ride it up the next), and then locks down the turbolift so that no one else can access it.

CLOUD CITY PATROL DROID (2)

These droid security assistants are left over from the Clone Wars and have been modified to aid the Wing Guard in Cloud City. The droids boast jump jets that allow them to fly up to the highest platforms, though they can maintain this flight for only a round at a time. These patrol droids are designed to close to melee range with opponents and subdue them physically, though they are also equipped with ranged weapons if needed.

This tall battle droid resembles a skeletal humanoid with a smooth, featureless faceplate broken up by a pair of illuminated eyes. The droid's jump jets, protruding from either shoulder, whine faintly as they idle, and the droid whirls a force pike around its body as though looking for an excuse to use it.

Cloud City Patrol Droid

CL 3

Medium droid (4th degree) soldier 3

Force 1

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +1

Languages Basic, Binary

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 19), Fort 19, Will 13

hp 41; **Threshold** 19

Immune droid immunities

Speed 6 squares, fly 12 squares

Melee force pike +8 (2d8+10)

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6+1)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +7

Atk Options Melee Smash, Stunning Strike

Special Actions Bantha Rush

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

Special Qualities droid traits

Talents Melee Smash, Stunning Strike

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Bantha Rush, Weapon Focus (advanced melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +6, Initiative +8

Systems remote processor, walking locomotion, flying locomotion (limited; jump jets), 2 hand appendages, internal comlink, vocabulator

Possessions blaster pistol, force pike, duranium armor plating

Cloud City Patrol Droid Tactics

The patrol droids land on the outer rim of the upper platform and try to pin the heroes in. They prefer to fight in melee with their force pikes because their high Strength makes their attacks particularly devastating. If they see that the heroes are gaining an advantage, they will use their Bantha Rush feat to try to push their foes off the platform, though they usually try to push the heroes onto the platform below so they don't die from the fall. The droids will use their jump jets to move between the three platforms safely, hoping to restrain the heroes and knock them down the condition track.

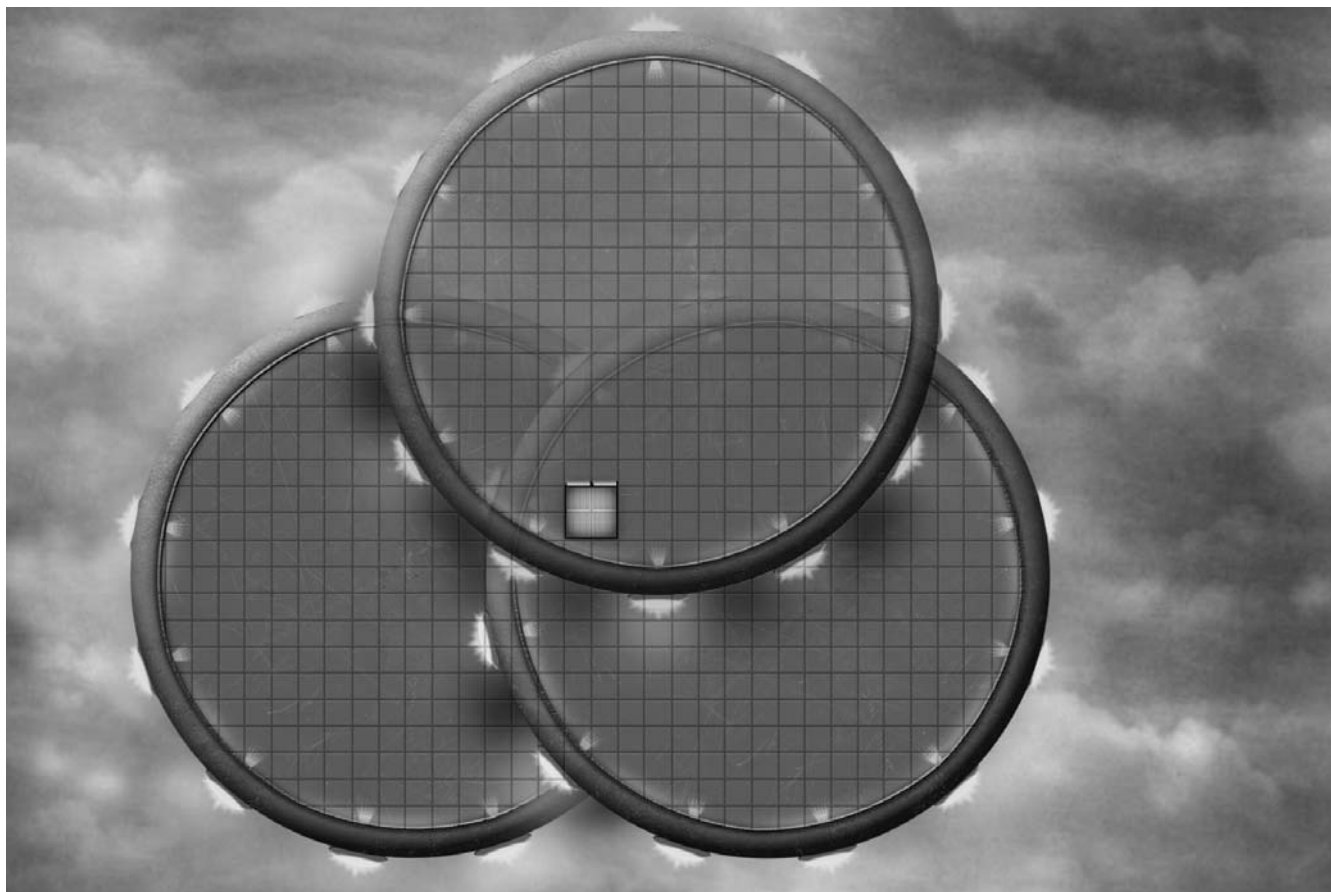
CONCLUSION

Given the odd hour at which this encounter takes place, there should be few bystanders to witness the fight. If the heroes manage to subdue or kill all of the Wing Guard, they may face repercussions later if it is discovered that they were responsible. However, given the need for the heroes to move about the city unhindered during the sabacc tournament, you should be careful about branding them as known criminals—at least until the tournament is over and the heroes find themselves on the wrong side of Imperial (and Bespin) law.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page.

ON THE HEIGHTS ENCOUNTER MAP



28

THE QUEEN OF AIR AND DARKNESS

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The three landing platforms overlap slightly, allowing flying heroes (particularly those with jet packs), heroes with syntherope, or simply reckless heroes to move between the platforms. The second platform is roughly 6 squares above the bottom platform, and the top platform is 6 squares above the middle platform.

Additionally, the turbolift computer has a Will Defense of 17 and has a hostile attitude toward anyone who tampers with it after it has been locked by the security chief.

SABACC TABLE SHOWDOWN

CHALLENGE LEVEL 6

SETUP

When the encounter begins, the heroes should be spread around the room, depending on their role. Any hero participating in the tournament should be adjacent to one of the sabacc tables, while any members of the security team should be by the door. All the others should be in the crowd area. Silas Draver begins the encounter next to the sabacc table, and his goons should begin in the crowd area. The three sabacc dealer droids are placed as indicated on the encounter map.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the encounter begins, read the following text aloud:

"I'll be taking that!" shouts Silas Draver. Drawing a blaster pistol from beneath his coat, he simultaneously pushes a button on the sabacc dealer droid in front of him. That droid, and two others, spin slightly as arms extend from their bodies, each one capped with a blaster pistol. Several members of the crowd also draw blaster pistols and turn them on their fellow spectators, clearly allied with Draver. The gambler levels his blaster pistol at his startled-looking Hapan competitor, causing her eyes to go wide in terror.

SILAS DRAVER

Silas Draver is a good gambler, but he knows he is not the best. Though he came to the Cloud City Sabacc Tournament hoping to win, he took no chances on coming away with the prize money. Since he owes his entry fee to a loan shark on Nar Shaddaa, Draver is unlikely to give up the credits without a fight—he knows that a fate worse than death awaits him if he fails to pay back the loan. Draver bribed one of the technicians in the Royal Casino to implant software that allowed him to trigger the droids' defense systems (illegal defense systems, which Jacc Mandelbrot thought were installed in secret) in case he lost out of the tournament. Draver has a ship waiting for him on a nearby landing platform, and he believes that he should be able to get away without too much trouble.

This Human man has a dashing air about him, with his long, black ponytail, a drooping mustache, and a suit made in the finest Corellian fashion. He offers a grin that can only be described as arrogant, and he seems to carry enough swagger to put many nobles to shame.

Silas Draver, Gambler

CL 6

Medium Human scoundrel 6

Force 1

Init +11; **Senses** Perception +12

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 22 (flat-footed 19), Fort 18, Will 22

hp 42; **Threshold** 18

Speed 6 squares

Melee knife +5 (1d4+4)

Ranged blaster pistol +8 (3d6+3)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Running Attack

Special Actions Disruptive, Quick Draw, Walk the Line

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

Talents Disruptive, Gambler, Walk the Line

Feats Improved Defenses, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Running Attack, Skill Focus (Deception), Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +15, Initiative +11, Knowledge (galactic lore) +8, Perception +12, Persuasion +10

Possessions knife, blaster pistol, comlink, datapad, sabacc deck, 2,700 credits, various personal belongings

Silas Draver Tactics

Draver wants one thing above everything else: the credits from the tournament. He doesn't want to risk his life, but he will if he has to. He uses his Disruptive talent to improve his goons' chances to hold the heroes at bay, and he uses Walk the Line if he feels as though he is a prime target. He remains adjacent to Lady Fioro whenever possible, coercing her to move with him toward the door. If flushed out, he uses his Running Attack feat to keep mobile and uses the sabacc tables for cover while not impeding his own shots.

SABACC DEALER DROID (3)

Each sabacc dealer droid is programmed to provide the most fair gaming experience possible, and because the droid is implanted in the ceiling, it cannot be moved or tampered with easily. These particular dealer droids were modified by Jacc Mandelbrot to have blaster pistols implanted in their chassis. If anything like this happened, Mandelbrot hoped to use the droids to stop it; he didn't expect someone else to hijack the droids.

This cylindrical droid has six spindly arms extending from its body, three pairs designed to deal out sabacc cards with efficiency and speed. Flashing lights blink all across the droid's interfaces, and the entire droid rotates within its socket in the ceiling.

Sabacc Dealer Droid

CL 3

Medium droid (1st-degree) nonheroic 9
Init +13; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +20
Languages Basic, Binary

Defenses Ref 14 (flat-footed 10), Fort 10, Will 14
hp 23; **Threshold** 10
Immune droid immunities

Speed 0 squares
Melee claw +6 (1d4)
Ranged blaster pistol +11 (3d6) or
blaster pistol +9 (3d6) and
blaster pistol +9 (3d6)
Fighting Space 1 square; **Reach** 2 squares
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Dual Weapon Mastery II, Point Blank Shot

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con —, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 13
Special Qualities droid traits
Feats Dual Weapon Mastery I, Dual Weapon Mastery II, Point Blank Shot,
Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency
(pistols, simple weapons)
Skills Initiative +13, Perception +20
Systems basic processor, 2 claw appendages, 2 tool mounts, vocabulator,
improved sensor package
Possessions 2 blaster pistols

Sabacc Dealer Droid Tactics

The sabacc dealer droids are programmed to avoid targeting Silas Draver and his allies, but anyone else is fair game. The droids recognize overtly aggressive action, so they should target the heroes, though other bystanders might be targeted by accident. In fact, this is exactly what happens to Lt. Arandis and Lady Fioro, and the Imperial officer is slain by the attack.

SILAS DRAVER'S GOONS (4)

Silas has a number of accomplices in the crowd who help him put down any opposition. These thugs focus only on the credits that they'll earn for helping their boss, and they aren't smart enough to know when to back down.

Dressed in far plainer clothes than many of the other spectators, this Human looks to have seen his share of fights in cantinas. The hilt of a heavy knife juts out from beneath his coat, and he has a sinister look about him.

Silas Draver's Goons

CL 2

Medium Human nonheroic 3/scoundrel 1
Force 1
Init +4; **Senses** Perception +3
Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 18 (flat-footed 16), Fort 12, Will 13
hp 15; **Threshold** 12

Speed 6 squares
Melee knife +2 (1d4)
Ranged heavy blaster pistol +5 (3d8)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4
Atk Options Careful Shot, Dastardly Strike, Point Blank Shot

Abilities Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12
Talents Dastardly Strike
Feats Careful Shot, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus
(pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)
Skills Deception +8, Stealth +14
Possessions heavy blaster pistol, knife, combat jumpsuit, casual clothes,
200 credits, various personal belongings

Silas Draver's Goons' Tactics

The thugs working with Draver have very simple tactics: shoot the heroes. When they see the heroes reacting to the situation, they will take cover and try to aim as much as possible. However, they also have the Dastardly Strike talent, so if they can get behind cover and make Stealth checks to hide, they will pop out and snipe whenever possible.

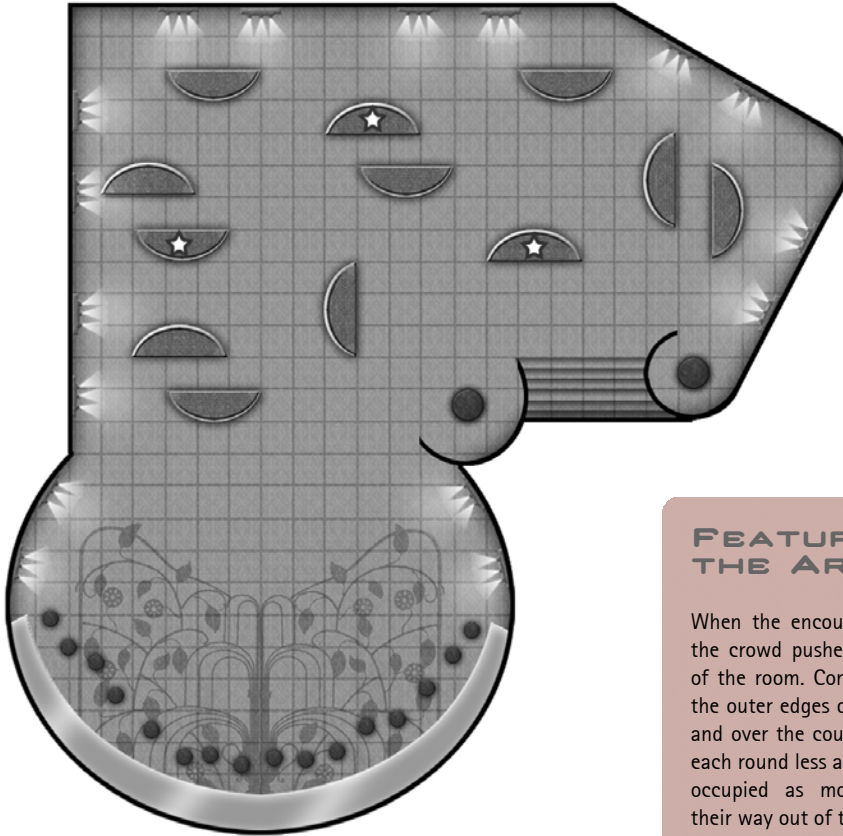
CONCLUSION

By the end of the encounter, most of the crowd has pushed its way out of the Royal Casino, and the heroes (plus any wounded) are the only ones left. Jacc Mandelbrot is frantically trying to get his security team to help the victims, leaving the heroes free to talk to Lady Fioro. Unfortunately, Lt. Arandis does not survive the encounter, which may lead to trouble for the heroes down the road.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page.

SABACC TABLE SHOWDOWN ENCOUNTER MAP



FEATURES OF THE AREA

When the encounter begins, most of the crowd pushes to the outer edges of the room. Consider the squares on the outer edges of the room occupied, and over the course of the encounter, each round less and less of the room is occupied as more bystanders push their way out of the doors.

STREETS OF CLOUD CITY

CHALLENGE LEVEL 6

SETUP

When this encounter begins, the heroes should be placed in the building on the lower-right corner of the map, leaving the door. The elite Beshin guards should be placed on the leftmost platform. When the heroes have left the building in which they start, the stormtroopers and Imperial officer arrive through that same building, coming in behind the heroes to pursue them across the bridges. The heroes need to leave through the building on the upper-right section of the map.

READ-ALoud TEXT

Before the encounter begins, allow the heroes a DC 15 Perception check to hear the echoes of footsteps approaching in the hallway behind them. Those who succeed can tell that several beings are coming from that direction but shouldn't arrive for a few more rounds.

When the encounter begins, read the following text aloud:

This segment of the city features several long walkways connecting to various buildings, taking pedestrians on a roundabout tour of the district. Up ahead, several members of the Wing Guard round the corner of a building, approaching from the opposite side of a walkway leading directly to the building you are standing in.

ELITE BESHIN SECURITY GUARD (4)

Elite Beshin Security Guard

CL 2

Medium Human nonheroic 3/soldier 1

Force 1

Init +8; Senses Perception +14

Languages Basic, Bocce

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 15), Fort 13, Will 13
hp 16; Threshold 13

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +3 (1d4)

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6)

Base Atk +3; Grp +4

Atk Options Point Blank Shot

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10

Talents Devastating Attack (pistols)

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Coordinated Attack, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +8, Perception +14, Persuasion +7

Possessions blaster pistol, combat jumpsuit, Beshin guard uniform, binders, comlink

Elite Beshin Security Guard Tactics

The elite Beshin security guards work best in groups where they can combine their efforts to take down a superior foe. They try to move into point-blank range with their opponents and use the Coordinated Attack feat to boost the attack bonus of an ally. They usually work in pairs, though against particularly resilient foes, they will sometimes combine all of their fire against the same opponent. Additionally, since they wear modest armor, they will sometimes take more risks to close to point-blank range, forgoing cover if it means lining up a better shot. These security guards are meant only to slow the heroes down, allowing them to move forward just far enough to make room for the stormtroopers entering behind them.

STORMTROOPER (6)

Stormtrooper

CL 1

Medium Human nonheroic 4

Dark Side 1

Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +4

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 16), Fort 12, Will 10
hp 10; Threshold 12

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +4 (1d4+1)

Ranged blaster rifle +4 (3d8) or

frag grenade +3 (4d6, 2-square burst)

Base Atk +3; Grp +4

Atk Options autofire (blaster rifle)

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Coordinated Attack, Weapon Focus (blaster rifles), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +7, Perception +4

Possessions stormtrooper armor (+6 armor, +2 equipment), blaster rifle, frag grenade, utility belt with medpac

IMPERIAL OFFICER

Imperial Officer

CL 5

Medium Human nonheroic 4/noble 3/officer 1

Force 2; Dark Side 5

Init +3; Senses Perception +10

Languages Basic, High Galactic

Defenses Ref 15 (flat-footed 15), Fort 14, Will 19
hp 33; Threshold 14

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +6 (1d4+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6+2)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +6

Special Actions Born Leader, Coordinate, Trust, Vehicular Combat

Abilities Str 10, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Talents Born Leader, Coordinate, Trust

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Skill Focus (Persuasion), Skill Training (Deception, Pilot), Toughness, Vehicular Combat, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +11, Knowledge (tactics) +10, Perception +10, Persuasion +16, Pilot +8

Possessions blaster pistol, code cylinder, comlink (encrypted), officer's uniform

CONCLUSION

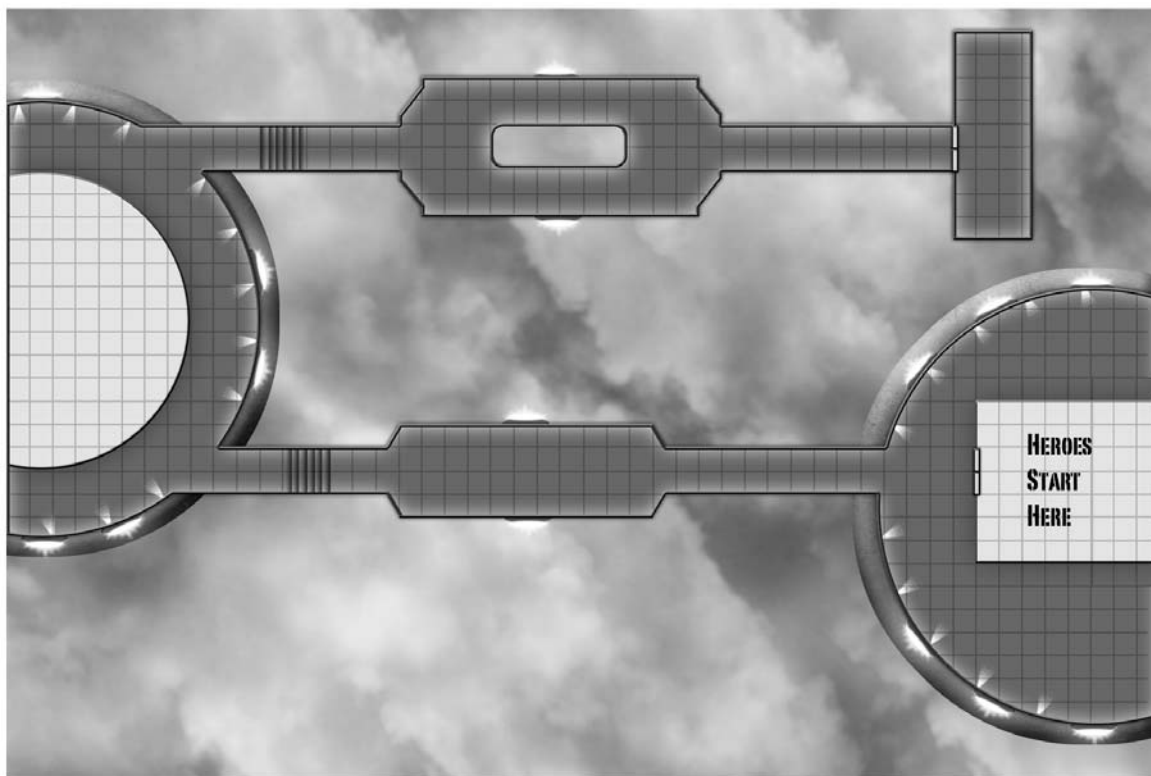
Having evaded both the Wing Guard and the Empire for now, the heroes have a chance to make their way to the hangar where they know Darga is docked. Due to the winding nature of many of the halls and walkways in Cloud City, the heroes might hear or see stormtroopers giving pursuit without coming into direct conflict with them. In fact, the Imperial forces shouldn't catch up to the heroes until they reach Darga's hangar.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Each of the two major walkways in this area features a low railing, which counts as low cover. However, since the walkway near the top of the map is actually a few flights of stairs lower than the other, characters on the walkway near the bottom of the map have total cover from characters on the walkway near the top of the map. The only exception, due to the height discrepancy, is characters who are standing near the railing—they would have only normal cover.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears below.



HUTT'S HANGAR

CHALLENGE LEVEL 8

SETUP

When the encounter begins, Darga the Hutt is standing near the landing ramp to his luxury yacht, accompanied by his security droid. Each of the Clan Mionne pilots is standing beside one of the Z-95 Headhunter starfighters, making last-minute adjustments before takeoff. The heroes enter via the door on the far side of the chamber from Darga's yacht. The stormtroopers enter the hangar on the second round of combat through the door on the side wall.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the encounter begins, read the following text aloud:

The air is thick with the smell of burning oil, and the sounds of repulsor engines firing up echoes through the hangar. To one side, six modified Z-95 Headhunters decorated with Hutttese symbols idle while their pilots go over them carefully before takeoff. At the far end of the hangar, the rear boarding ramp of a Luxury 3000 star yacht extends to the floor, while the bloated form of Darga the Hutt stands beside it, issuing orders to the pilots. A tall battle droid stands vigilantly beside him, and in the distance behind you the sounds of pursuit continue. At the sight of your entrance, Darga barks orders at his pilots, who draw weapons and turn to fire at you.

DARGA THE HUTT

Darga the Hutt, once the heroes' host and now their target, is trying to make a getaway from Cloud City with all haste. He has been living out of his luxury yacht since arriving on Bespin, and with the heroes hot on his trail, he is anxious to be away. When the heroes arrive, he knows his only hope is to kill them, so the appearance of the stormtroopers is a blessing to him.

The bulky form of this slimy Hutt undulates as he drags himself across the hangar floor. Darga's wide eyes are open in surprise, and his movements seem rushed and frantic, odd emotions for a being of his size.

Darga the Hutt

CL 8

Large Hutt noble 5/scoundrel 2/crime lord 1

Force 3; **Dark Side** 16

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +17

Languages Basic, Bocce, Dosh, Hutttese, Neimoidian, Pak Pak, Quarrenese, Rodese, Ryl

Defenses Ref 17 (flat-footed 17), Fort 20, Will 26 (31 vs. Use the Force)
hp 50; **Threshold** 30

Speed 2 squares

Melee unarmed +6 (1d6+6)

Ranged blaster pistol +1 (3d6+4)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +11

Atk Options Point Blank Shot

Special Actions Fool's Luck, Impel Ally I, Inspire Confidence, Weaken Resolve

Abilities Str 14, Dex 4, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 18

Special Qualities Force resistance, supreme stability

Talents Fool's Luck, Impel Ally I, Inspire Confidence, Presence, Weaken Resolve

Feats Improved Defenses, Improved Damage Threshold, Linguist, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Deception, Knowledge [galactic lore], Perception, Persuasion), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, simple weapons)

Skills Deception +18, Gather Information +13, Initiative +6, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +12, Knowledge (galactic lore) +17, Knowledge (social sciences) +12, Perception +17, Persuasion +18 (may reroll, keeping the better result), Use Computer +12

Possessions blaster pistol, gaudy jewelry (estimated value of 400 credits)

Darga the Hutt Tactics

Darga is a typical crime lord and likes to have his allies fight for him. He takes the first round to use Inspire Confidence, and then he uses Fool's Luck to boost his defenses. On subsequent rounds, he attempts to use Weaken Resolve and Impel Ally I to enhance his allies' chances, but he rarely strays far from his bodyguard droid.

CLAN MIONNE ESCORT PILOT (6)

Hired by Darga to escort his personal yacht on its trips around the galaxy, these pilots are always at the disposal of one of the most prominent members of the Mionne Hutt clan. Though they have no particular loyalty to Darga beyond the credits he spends on them, they know that most of Darga's enemies would consider them enemies by association, and thus they have no compunctions about fighting for their lives.

This Zabrak wears a green and brown flightsuit covered in equipment designed to interface with the cockpit of a starfighter. The pilot wears dark brown gloves and thick black boots, lacking only a helmet to be ready to fly.

Clan Mionne Escort Pilot

CL 3

Medium Zabrak scout 3

Force 1; **Dark Side** 1

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +7

Languages Basic, Zabrak

Defenses Ref 22 (flat-footed 19), Fort 19, Will 16
hp 36; **Threshold** 19

Speed 8 squares

Melee unarmed +3 (1d4+2)

Ranged blaster pistol +5 (3d6+1)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5
Special Actions Shake It Off, Vehicular Combat

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 11

Special Qualities Heightened Awareness

Talents Evasion, Long Stride

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Improved Defenses, Shake It Off, Vehicular Combat, Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +7, Initiative +9, Mechanics +6, Perception +7 (may reroll, keeping the second result even if it is worse), Pilot +9

Possessions blaster pistol, armored flight suit

Clan Mionne Escort Pilot Tactics

Unfortunately for Darga, these pilots are not nearly at home in ground combat as they are in space. The escort pilots are fast, however, and dash across the battlefield to seek shelter if they can find it, boosting their Reflex Defense with cover.

SECURITY BATTLE DROID

Rather than have an entourage of Gamorrean guards follow him around when he travels abroad, Darga prefers to use a single, powerful battle droid capable of defending him against harm. The battle droid's shields are enough to deflect low-powered attacks, and its large size makes it an imposing opponent, capable of stepping in the way of attacks directed at the similarly large Hutt.

This bulky battle droid moves with surprising grace, wielding a humming vibro-ax and looking ready to intercept any attacks directed at its Hutt master. A thin layer of energy flows over the outside of the droid's chassis, promising to deflect energy attacks directed its way.

Clan Mionne Security Droid

CL 4

Large droid (4th-degree) soldier 4

Force 1

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +4

Languages Basic, Binary

Defenses Ref 21 (flat-footed 19), Fort 21, Will 15

hp 47; **SR** 10; **Threshold** 21

Immune droid immunities

Speed 8 squares

Melee vibro-ax +9 (2d10+10 or vibro-ax +6* (2d10+16))

Ranged blaster pistol +6 (3d6+2)

Fighting Space 2x2; **Reach** 1 square

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +13

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions Draw Fire, Harm's Way

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 14

Special Qualities droid traits

Talents Draw Fire, Harm's Way

Feats Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Improved Defenses, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (advanced melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (advanced melee weapons, pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Initiative +9, Persuasion** +9

Systems basic processor, walking locomotion, 2 hand appendages, tool mount, improved sensor package, shield generator, vocabulator

Possessions blaster pistol, vibro-ax, duranium armor plating

* *Includes 3 points of Power Attack.*

** *Reprogrammed skill.*

Security Battle Droid Tactics

The droid will do anything to make itself a tempting target for the heroes' attacks. Its ability to use Draw Fire in combination with Harm's Way makes it a capable defender, at least for a while, and its shields should lessen any energy attacks while they last. Though the droid will not leave Darga's side, it takes every opportunity to place itself between the Hutt and the heroes, using its body to provide soft cover to Darga.

STORMTROOPER (4)

Stormtrooper

CL 1

Medium Human nonheroic 4

Dark Side 1

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +4

Languages Basic

Defenses Ref 16 (flat-footed 16), Fort 12, Will 10

hp 10; **Threshold** 12

Speed 6 squares

Melee unarmed +4 (1d4+1)

Ranged blaster rifle +4 (3d8) or frag grenade +3 (4d6, 2-square burst)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Atk Options autofire (blaster rifle)

Special Actions Coordinated Attack

Abilities Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Armor Proficiency (light), Coordinated Attack, Weapon Focus (blaster rifles), Weapon Proficiency (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

Skills Endurance +7, Perception +4

Possessions stormtrooper armor (+6 armor, +2 equipment), blaster rifle, frag grenade, utility belt with medpac

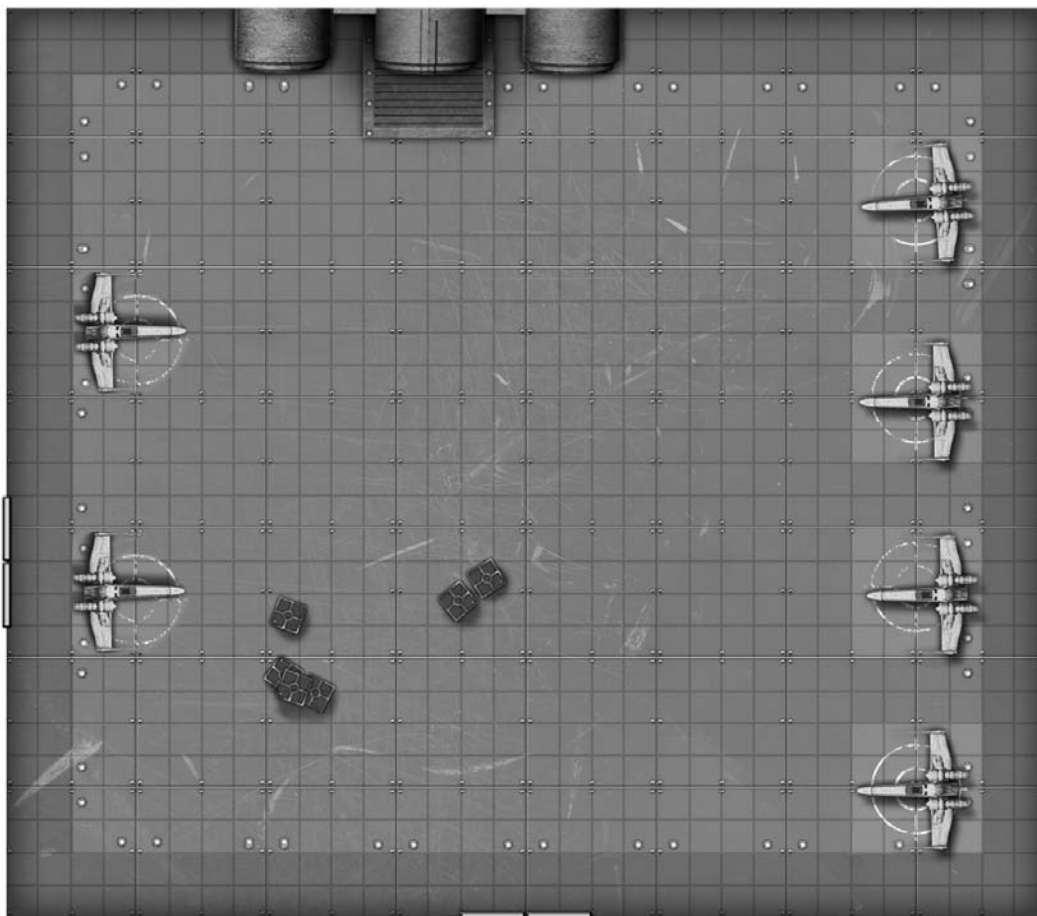
CONCLUSION

When the encounter ends, the heroes have some time before more reinforcements show up, so they can catch their breath, perform first aid, or discuss what to do next. When the messages come from Captain Okeefe, they will be rushed enough in making their decision, so you need not challenge the heroes with further opponents just yet.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page.

HUTT'S HANGAR ENCOUNTER MAP



FLIGHT FROM CLOUD CITY

CHALLENGE LEVEL 7

SETUP

The encounter begins with the heroes flying through a segment of the Bespin atmosphere that holds a number of Tibanna gas refinery platforms. Set up the Tibanna gas refinery platforms at random across the battlefield. As the heroes enter the combat arena from one side of the map, the twin-pod cloud cars and the combat cloud cars should enter from the opposite side, meeting up in the middle.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the heroes enter the combat arena, allow them to make Perception or Use Computer checks to notice the Tibanna gas refinery platforms. A result of 15 or better also reveals that the platforms are armed, and that their targeting sensors seem to be ignoring the cloud cars. Before combat begins, read the following text aloud:

The sun setting over Bespin's horizon casts the entire atmosphere in a red-orange glow. The beauty of this scene is broken up by the cloud cars, some with two pods and others of a sleeker, more aerodynamic design, racing toward you. As the first blaster bolts pass to either side of your vessel, the cloud cars still too distant to get a good shot, you can tell that they mean to take no prisoners.

STORM IV TWIN-POD CLOUD CARS (5)

The Storm IV twin-pod cloud car is the standard vehicle used by Bespin's Wing Guard to patrol the skies above the gas giant. These cloud cars are extremely fast and maneuverable, though their hulls are weaker than a starfighter's and their weapons are no match for the superior shielding of a space transport. The Wing Guard pilots in these vessels are Imperial loyalists dispatched against the wishes of the Parliament of Guilds. They were informed that the heroes murdered an Imperial officer, and they believe it is their duty to stop the heroes from escaping justice (an act they hope will earn them favor with the Empire).

This oddly shaped airspeeder has two pods to each side of a connecting fuselage. Both pods are painted orange, with a cockpit protruding from the top. The cloud cars are the same kind that escorted you into Bespin, though they are much less friendly now.

Storm IV Twin-Pod Cloud Car

CL 6

Gargantuan air vehicle (airspeeder)

Init +6; Senses Perception +6

Defense Ref 15 (flat-footed 10), Fort 18; +5 armor
hp 80; DR 10; Threshold 38

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,500 km/h), fly 6 squares (starship scale)

Ranged double blaster cannon +3 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); Cover total (crew)

Base Atk +2; Grp +30

Abilities Str 26, Dex 20, Con —, Int 12

Skills Initiative +6, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot +6, Use Computer +5

Crew 2 (skilled); Passengers none

Cargo 10 kg; Consumables 1 day; Carried Craft none

Availability Licensed; Cost 75,000 (28,000 used)

Double blaster cannon (copilot)

Atk +3 (–2 autofire), Dmg 5d10

Twin-Pod Cloud Car Tactics

The pilots of these cloud cars know that the heroes are dangerous, and seeing as they are in the inferior craft, they are notably cautious. During the combat encounter, these cloud cars hang back from direct engagement with the heroes, letting the combat cloud cars get closer to engage the heroes in dogfights. However, since the twin-pod cloud cars have two crewmembers, the pilot will often take the opportunity to move close to the heroes, let the copilot take a shot, and then fly away.

TALON I COMBAT CLOUD CARS (4)

The Talon I Combat Cloud Car is a fast, agile airspeeder that also boasts greater durability than the average cloud car. Additionally, the Talon I is outfitted with starfighter-scale weapons, allowing the pilots to deal with spacecraft attempting to flee Cloud City. These combat cloud cars are used only in situations where the targets of pursuit are in starfighters or space transports, and though they have only a pilot for crew and cannot leave the atmosphere, they fill a gap between airspeeders and starfighters.

This sleek, aerodynamic airspeeder boasts a narrow fuselage with curving wings stretching out from each side. The red-colored airspeeder looks more like a starfighter than a repulsorcraft, and it has the weapons to match that appearance.

Talon I Combat Cloud Car

CL 7

Gargantuan air vehicle (airspeeder)
Init +7; **Senses** Perception +6

Defense Ref 18 (flat-footed 12), Fort 21; +7 armor
hp 110; **DR** 10; **Threshold** 41

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,500 km/h), fly 6 squares (starship scale)

Ranged double blaster cannon +3 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total (crew)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +28

Abilities Str 32, Dex 22, Con —, Int 12

Skills Initiative +7, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot +7, Use Computer +6

Crew 1 (skilled); **Passengers** 1

Cargo 50 kg; **Consumables** 1 day; **Carried Craft** none

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 80,000

Double blaster cannon (pilot)

Atk +3 (–2 autofire), **Dmg** 4d10x2

Combat Cloud Car Tactics

More agile and well defended than their twin-pod comrades, the combat cloud cars have no compunctions about getting up close and personal with the heroes. They are willing to engage in dogfights with any heroes piloting starships, and with weapons on par with those on the heroes' vessels, they are far more aggressive than the other cloud cars.

TIBANNA GAS REFINERY PLATFORM

Several large Tibanna gas refineries dot the airspace above and around Cloud City. These platforms are waypoints for the Ugnaughts traveling on Tibanna gas mining vehicles, and they also serve as remote storage and for particularly contaminated gas harvests. Each platform has several gas tanks that can hold contaminated Tibanna gas as it is filtered and transferred to other containers, which are then picked up later by the miners. Each platform is relatively motionless, and each has basic weapons systems that fire at unidentified vessels coming too close.

This large, hovering platform looks like a thick metal disc with a half-dozen cargo pods attached to the upper surface and large repulsorlifts jutting from the bottom. Corroded and looking as though it has seen better days, this refinery station has rotating blaster cannons sticking out from a protrusion at the top of the platform.

Tibanna Gas Refinery Platform

CL 4

Gargantuan air vehicle (platform)
Init +0; **Senses** Perception +5

Defense Ref 10 (flat-footed 10), Fort 14; +5 armor
hp 40; **DR** 10; **SR** 10; **Threshold** 34

Speed fly 0 squares (starship scale)

Ranged blaster cannons +1 (see below)

Fighting Space 4x4 or 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +19

Abilities Str 18, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12

Skills Initiative +0, Mechanics +5, Perception +5, Pilot +0, Use Computer +5

Crew 1 droid brain (normal); **Passengers** 0

Cargo 20 tons; **Consumables** none; **Carried Craft** none

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 42,000 (30,000 used)

Blaster cannons (pilot)

Atk +1; **Dmg** 4d10

Tibanna Gas Refinery Platform Tactics

The Tibanna gas refinery platforms have no advanced tactical programming, and they attack unidentified targets (the heroes) when they approach to Short range or closer.

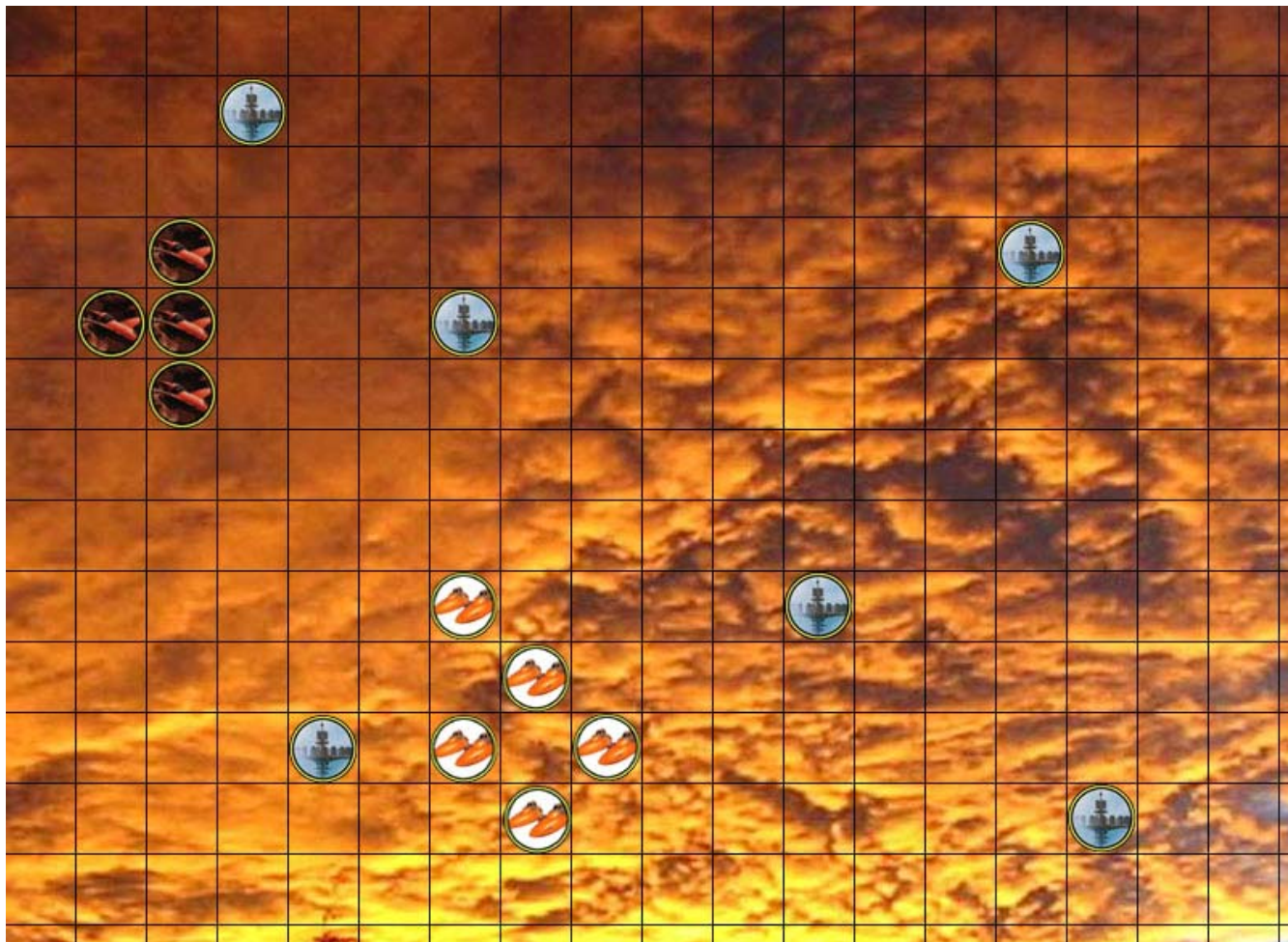
CONCLUSION

When the encounter ends, no more pursuit comes from Cloud City. The Parliament of Guilds has managed to stop any further launches, and Imperial loyalists on Cloud City are trusting the fighters from the *Assiduous* to finish the job of destroying the heroes. However, the heroes move almost instantly into the next encounter, which takes place in the space above Bespin.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page.

FLIGHT FROM CLOUD CITY ENCOUNTER MAP



FEATURES OF THE AREA

This encounter takes place in the atmosphere of Cloud City and follows all the normal rules for combat in the atmosphere. Due to the distances being traveled and the fact that the encounter takes place almost entirely in vehicles, the encounter is best run at starship scale. Additionally, because this encounter takes place in the atmosphere of a gas giant, you can rule that disabled ships do not plummet and crash, but instead are caught up in thick gas pockets and must be rescued by tractor beam at a later time.

SKIRMISH OVER BESPIN

CHALLENGE LEVEL 6

SETUP

The setup for this encounter is particularly important because, in order for the scene to have any tension, you must strike a precise balance between the speed of the heroes' ships and the speed of the Tibanna gas hauler. The *Shackles of Nizon* should be placed on the far side of the map. The Tibanna gas hauler starts the combat 40 squares away from the *Shackles of Nizon*, and will be moving directly toward it throughout the encounter. The heroes enter the battlefield 24 squares behind the Tibanna gas hauler, on the far side from the *Shackles of Nizon*, so that the Tibanna gas hauler is in the middle. The TIE fighters start 16 squares away from the Tibanna gas hauler, placed between the hauler and the heroes.

READ-ALoud TEXT

When the encounter begins, allow the heroes to make Perception or Use Computer checks to determine the various distances of the ships in the encounter. Anyone succeeding on a DC 15 check can tell that, at the speed the Tibanna gas hauler is flying, it should reach the *Shackles of Nizon* slave ship in about 30 seconds (or 5 rounds). When the encounter begins, read the following text aloud:

The Gallofree Medium Transport identified as the *Shackles of Nizon* floats in space, illuminated by the light from Bespin below. A massive Tibanna gas hauling starship, laden with the explosive substance, barrels through space directly toward the slave ship. However, between you and the Tibanna gas hauler is nearly an entire squadron of the Empire's TIE fighters. Ten of the flat-winged vessels scream toward you, lasers flashing even at a great distance.

12TH SQUADRON TIE FIGHTER (8)

The 12th Squadron is one of the first fighter squadrons to switch over from the now-antiquated V-wing starfighters to the cutting-edge TIE fighter. Though many of the pilots preferred the durability of the V-wing, the Empire's mandate that all squadrons convert over to TIE fighters has been obeyed. Unfortunately, many of the pilots are not yet accustomed to the TIE fighter's cockpit and maneuvering style. As a result, though the pilots might be considered skilled in the V-wings they trained in, they are reduced to normal skill level in the cockpit of a TIE fighter. The 12th Squadron is one of the first fighter groups to convert over entirely, and they have been assigned to the *Assiduous* at the request of Valin Draco.

Two large, flat wings flank the eyeball-like cockpit of this TIE fighter, which seems unblemished and without normal wear and tear, as though it just rolled off the assembly line.

12th Squadron TIE/In Fighter

CL 5

Huge starfighter

Init +7; Senses Perception +5

Defense Ref 15 (flat-footed 11), Fort 22; +3 armor
hp 60; DR 10; Threshold 32

Speed fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,200 km/h), fly 5 squares (starship scale)

Ranged laser cannons +2 (see below)

Fighting Space 3x3 or 1 square (starship scale); Cover total

Base Atk +0; Grp +22

Atk Options autofire (laser cannons)

Abilities Str 34, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14

Skills Initiative +7, Mechanics +5, Perception +5, Pilot +7

Crew 1 (normal); Passengers none

Cargo 65 kg; Consumables 2 days; Carried Craft none

Availability Military; Cost 60,000 (25,000 used)

Laser cannons (pilot)

Atk +2 (–3 autofire), Dmg 4d10x2

TIE FIGHTER TACTICS

The TIE fighters launched by the *Assiduous* were dispatched to ensure that the heroes could not interfere with the destruction of the *Shackles of Nizon* and the Tibanna gas hauler, two starships that provide major evidence of the Empire's dealings with Darga the Hutt. The TIE fighters' primary goal is to delay the heroes long enough for the Tibanna gas hauler to reach the *Shackles of Nizon*, though if they manage to kill some of the heroes in the process, they would consider it a victory. As such, they make extensive use of the dogfighting action, hoping to slow the heroes whenever possible (though they will have difficulty stopping space transports). If the heroes manage to destroy the Tibanna gas hauler, the TIE fighters receive new orders to destroy the *Shackles of Nizon* themselves. As a result, the heroes will need to destroy all of the TIE fighters before the slave ship is destroyed.

TIBANNA GAS HAULER

The Tibanna gas hauler is a custom vehicle designed by the Ubrikkian corporation specifically for the transportation of Tibanna gas from Cloud City. The starship operates via a droid brain that receives orders from designated controllers; unlike a slave circuit, the droid brain on the Tibanna gas hauler can make snap decisions on its own to preserve the ship. In this instance, the Tibanna gas hauler has been ordered to collide with the *Shackles of Nizon*, and the single-minded droid brain controlling it will stop at nothing to complete the mission.

This long, tubular starship resembles a shiny metal cylinder with engines at one end and a cockpit on the other. Auxiliary metal canisters, some as large as a starfighter, decorate the hull of the ship at odd intervals, acting as secondary storage areas for the Tibanna gas inside. Blinking red and green lights line either side of the space transport, flashing at regular intervals like the warning lights on industrial vehicles.

Tibanna Gas Hauler

CL 2

Colossal space transport

Init -5; **Senses** Perception +5

Defense Ref 13 (flat-footed 13), Fort 28; +13 armor
hp 150; **DR** 15; **SR** 20; **Threshold** 78

Speed fly 2 squares (starship scale)

Fighting Space 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +38

Abilities Str 46, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12

Skills Initiative -5, Mechanics +5, Perception +5, Pilot -5, Use Computer +5

Crew 1 droid brain (normal); **Passengers** none

Cargo 150 tons (Tibanna gas*); **Consumables** none; **Carried Craft** none

Availability Restricted; **Cost** 90,000 (50,000 used)

* If the Tibanna gas hauler is involved in a collision, multiply collision damage to both vessels by 5.

TIBANNA GAS HAULER TACTICS

The Tibanna gas hauler will stop at nothing to complete its sole mission: to collide with the *Shackles of Nizon*. The volatile Tibanna gas in its storage area is guaranteed to create a much larger explosion than normal, so the vessel travels along a straight course for the Medium Transport, heedless of its own safety even if under fire.

SHACKLES OF NIZON

This Medium Transport has traveled from the Byss system, where the Sarlacc Project is being worked on, and has weathered a good deal of damage before arriving at Bespin. Thousands of mistreated and malnourished slaves are inside the ship's holds, and it is controlled by a slave circuit installed by the Empire.

This Medium Transport looks like all of the other ships in the line produced by Gallofree Yards, though it has seen better days. Large amounts of carbon scoring dot the vessel's exterior, and wide segments of the ship's hull seem to have been replaced haphazardly.

Shackles of Nizon

CL 8

Colossal space transport

Init -5; **Senses** Perception +5

Defense Ref 14 (flat-footed 14), Fort 31; +14 armor

hp 130; **DR** 15; **SR** 45; **Threshold** 81

Speed fly 12 squares (max. velocity 650 km/h), fly 2 squares (starship scale)

Fighting Space 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total (crew)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +41

Abilities Str 53, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12

Skills Initiative -5, Mechanics +5, Perception +5, Pilot -5, Use Computer +5

Crew 6 (normal); **Passengers** 40

Cargo 19,000 tons; **Consumables** 6 months; **Carried Craft** none

Hyperdrive ×4, navcomputer

Availability Licensed; **Cost** 350,000 (125,000 used)

CONCLUSION

With the TIE fighters destroyed and the Tibanna gas hauler stopped, the *Shackles of Nizon* is safe from destruction. The ship refuses all hails; however, the slaves became aware of the battle outside (and of the Tibanna gas hauler careening toward them), disabled the slave circuit, and regained control of the ship just as the encounter concludes. See page 18 for more information on what happens next.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

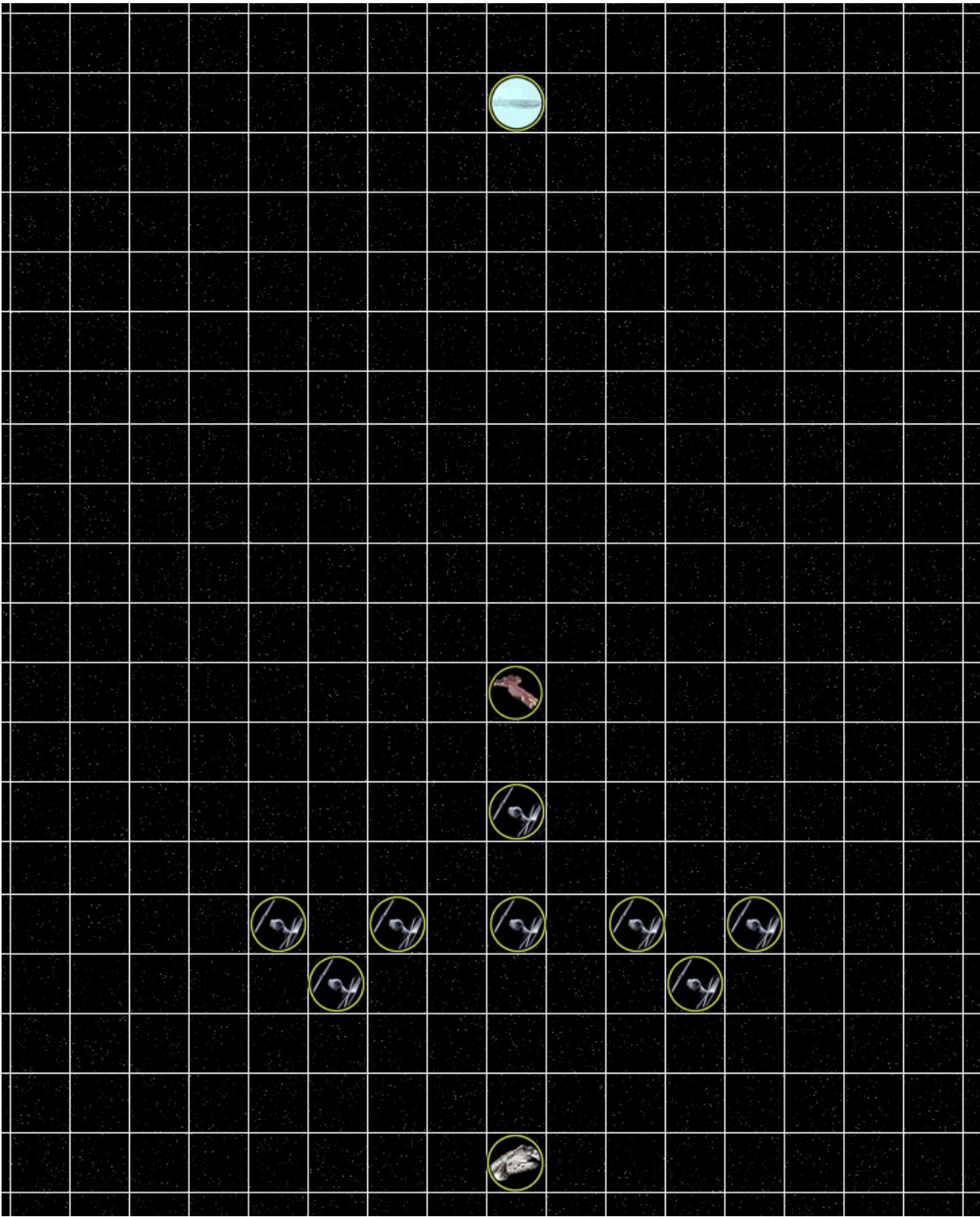
There are no environmental hazards to deal with in this encounter. However, if you have the *Starships of the Galaxy* Saga Edition sourcebook, you can use Inquisitor Draco's *Imperial I*-class Star Destroyer, the *Assiduous*, as another element of the environment. Just use the Tactical Fire and Focused Fire options presented for Star Destroyers in that book, turning the Inquisitor's flagship into a dangerous piece of terrain. Keep in mind that adding the *Assiduous* to the fight without those options would likely prove to be too much of a challenge for the heroes.

However, using the Star Destroyer merely as a set piece to intimidate the heroes could heighten the tension in the scene. Just make sure to keep the ship out of weapons range of either the heroes or the *Shackles of Nizon* to avoid altering the encounter.

ENCOUNTER MAP

A map of the encounter appears on the next page. On the map, 1 square equals 4 starship-scale squares.

SKIRMISH OVER BESPIN ENCOUNTER MAP



Event Name: _____ Event Code: _____
(This number was given to the senior GM when the event was sanctioned.)

Adventure Title: The Queen of Air and Darkness (Dawn of Defiance, Pt. 3) Session Number: _____
(For administrative use only.)

Date of Play: / / Start Time: : Give hour in military time standard (p.m. hours = hour +12). Don't record the exact minute the adventure played. Instead list the closest 30-minute interval the game was scheduled to start at (30 or 00).

A legal RPGA table has no less than four players, and no more than six players.

Player Name	RPGA Number
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DM Name: _____

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