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FICTION BY ELAINE CUNNINGHAM



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ON THE COVER

Mikael Noguchi brings us a defining moment from Michael A. Stackpole's *Star Wars: The New Jedi Order—Onslaught*. Master Luke Skywalker pulls out all the stops to rescue a fellow Jedi from the Yuuzhan Vong. Sometimes, one lightsaber is not enough.

MIKAEL
Noguchi

STAR WARS Gamer

THE FORCE IN STAR WARS GAMING

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ONE WITH THE
FORCE

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UNIVERSE

TECHNICAL
DATA

ALIEN
HORIZONS

ALTERNATE
DIMENSIONS



THE FORCE IN STAR WARS GAMING

Group Publisher: Johnny L. Wilson
Editor-in-Chief: Dave Gross
Art Director: Kyle Stanley Hunter
Managing Editor: Michael Mikaelian
Assistant Editor: Stacie Florito

Lucas Licensing Editors: Michelle Vuckovich
Lucas Licensing Art Director: Iain Morris

Production Director: John Dunn
Prepress Technician: Jefferson L. Dunlap

Circulation Director: Pierce Walters
Circulation Assistant: Dawnelle Miesner

Advertising Sales Director:
 Bob Henning
 425-204-7262, bhenning@wizards.com
Northeast Advertising Representatives:
 Sig or Scott Buchmayr, Buchmayr Associates, 137 Rowayton Avenue, Rowayton, CT 06853. Phone 203-855-8834, FAX 203-855-9138. Email: sbuchmayr@worldnet.att.net

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Forget those maniacs who flame each other over whether something's canonical in the *Star Wars* galaxy. The Expanded Universe is a wonderful smorgasbord, and if you come across something you don't like, don't put it on your plate. No pity for the fool who moans because he ate a pickled egg just to complete his collection.

The canon question is simple for gamers: If you like it, then it's "game canon."

Card gamers have known this all along, with theme decks pitting characters who weren't even alive at the same time in head-to-head conflict. Princess Leia fighting Droidekas? Why the heck not?

With most computer games, there's no question of crossing the streams, but Galactic Battlegrounds, for example, lets you take on the Imperial Army with your Gungan warriors. Logical? Not really.

Canonical? Not even close. But it's plenty fun.

My D&D group has been too busy to play this year—and now I insist on GMing *Star Wars* instead. Some of the players want to stick to traditional fantasy, so I need a sub-menu to tempt them away from their standard fare. Fortunately, the Expanded Universe provides plenty of choices.

Before venturing beyond the basics, I made a list of 10 things that should be in a *Star Wars* campaign and checked off the ones that fit a traditional fantasy world.

- ☐ Blasters
- ☒ The Dark Side
- ☒ Aliens
- ☐ Imperial Walkers
- ☒ Scoundrels & Smugglers
- ☐ X-wings & TIE Fighters
- ☒ Stormtrooper Armor
- ☒ Bounty Hunters
- ☒ The Theme Music
- ☒ Lightsabers

Armed with these food groups, let's consider what dishes to prepare. Let's base the campaign on a planet that's been cut off

from the rest of the galaxy for centuries. Those who still live here don't remember the greater galaxy since the time of a cataclysm, and their fallen society has risen back only to Medieval-Renaissance levels.

The Force exists, and while there are no Jedi (yet), there are still wizards here and there—similar to the witches of Dathomir. Naturally, some of the campaign's villains must be darksiders. That's a no-brainer.

The other *Star Wars* classes work just fine, although Fringers might have little to do in the beginning. Since I'm sick of elves, giving the players a choice of Humans, Wookiees, Trandoshans, Rodians, and Ithorians sounds great. The aliens don't even need new names—they already sound fantastic.

Indulging my own taste, I borrow a few things from *Nausicaä*, one of my favorite films and comics. Monstrous insects inhabit our planet's vast poisonous forests. The sentient species eke out a living in those few areas that remain pure, and occasionally they discover artifacts from the time before the cataclysm.

That's not really *Star Wars*, so I'm tempted to discard the idea entirely—but then it makes me think of the Yuuzhan Vong and their biotechnology, which is different enough from traditional technology my D&D players might buy it as magic. So the Vong it is, and perhaps our planet is an early, forgotten outpost from the Vong's first explorations into the galaxy.

That's a start, but there's plenty more planning to do before we start cooking. Want to help in the kitchen? Send your suggestions via email, and maybe one of your ingredients will end up in the soup!



Dave Gross
 Gamer-in-Chief
vader@wizards.com



FORCE FEEDBACK



"I felt a great disturbance in the Force ... as if millions of voices suddenly cried out..."

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Yuuzhan Vong Invade Gamer

You asked for it...

The New Jedi Order series, if you haven't heard, is shaking up the *Star Wars* galaxy. In some ways our heroes are facing specters of past conflicts—disaster on a galactic scale, Jedi targeted for extermination, political infighting, and shifting alliances. At the same time, new wrinkles in the fabric of these tales keep it fresh and interesting—the Yuuzhan Vong, extra-galactic invaders, are unique in many aspects. Seemingly non-existent in the Force, the Yuuzhan Vong see the Jedi as the ultimate threat to their conquest of the known galaxy.

This issue we bring you plenty of New Jedi Order goodies: Part I of Greg Keyes's "Emissary of the Void" serial, a campaign guide to playing Yuuzhan Vong, an adventure for Yuuzhan Vong heroes, a Yuuzhan Vong "Rogues Gallery," and more. Judging by all the letters we've received, this is just what you've all been waiting for.

We've got a pretty good idea of what you're expecting to find when you open a copy of *Star Wars Gamer*. Still, there are those among you that feel we've "hit pretty close to the mark" but haven't quite bull's-eyed the womprat, so to speak. Others seem ready to "rip peoples' arms out of their sockets." What we're hearing most often, though, is how much you love the

magazine. It always amazes me how *Star Wars* can elicit such strong emotions.

Michael Mikaelian
Managing Editor



Let the Wookiee Win?

I was angered by the uncalled-for condescension in your response to the letter from Sean H. ("Bane of His Existence," *Star Wars Gamer* #6). He brought up valid concerns about the content of your magazine and was met with what you yourself termed "browbeating."

You might intend the *Gamer* to complement "the entire spectrum of *Star Wars* products," but is it unreasonable to ask a magazine published by Wizards of the Coast—whose main *Star Wars* product is the roleplaying game, and who publishes two magazines devoted entirely to DUNGEONS & DRAGONS—to dedicate more of its pages to their own game?

Your defense of the inclusion of fiction is especially specious. If GMs need inspiration, there are literally hundreds of *Star Wars* novels, comics, and other spin-offs reaching back 24 years, with many more arriving monthly.

You might have a license to publish articles about *Star Wars* video games, but the fact remains that there are plenty of places to read about those products. To my knowledge, there is only one magazine in which one can find supplemental materials for the roleplaying game.

If one does not wish to play a Tatooine, Naboo, or Living Force-based campaign, the main source of support has been *Star Wars Gamer*. Is it any wonder that some players are concerned that you continue to devote a quarter of your editorial content to non-RPG material? Those 23 pages in issue 6 could've gone to another adventure, more aliens, more planets—in other words, more useful information for starving GMs.

David Thiel
Champaign, IL



Like the mighty Chewbacca, David is all grunts and growls on the outside, but inside he's a loveable teddy bear. All he really wants is to have as much *Star Wars* roleplaying coverage as these pages can contain. There are many reasons why this won't happen, not the least of them the

fact that roleplayers are only part—albeit a very important and vocal part—of the *Star Wars* audience. I went through the trouble of listing them all, then realized it doesn't make a difference what I say. Instead, I'll let the other readers speak for themselves.

Don't Go Changin'

Like the previous two issues, *Star Wars Gamer* #6 had much to offer. I enjoyed the write-ups on Dengar, 4-LOM, and Zuckuss ("How the Other Half Hunts"). I've wondered what happened to those three during the time of the New Jedi Order. The article was almost as good as the one on the Emperor's Hands ("The Emperor's Pawns," *Star Wars Gamer* #5). Since you asked, here are a couple suggestions:

First, don't get rid of "Deck Plans!" Though I don't play the card games, the articles are amusing to read. Second, keep the updates on minor characters and worlds. They make excellent GM characters. Also, keep adding starship deck plans in each issue. Though you use the d20 rules for their design and I still use the WEG game system, I am able to convert them for my game.

An issue on the Yuuzhan Vong would be greatly appreciated. I want to run a campaign set during that time, but I do not feel I have enough information on their ships and culture to run it properly.

Lastly, I have a request for "Rogues Gallery." The artwork is always good and shows a great variety of aliens each issue, but I've only seen one "template" for Human characters. My request is for different Human "templates" to be offered, representing the diversity of Humans.

Thank you and keep up the great work!

Christopher Davls
Fairfax, VA

It's wonderful to hear from readers that love *Gamer* even though they don't use the roleplaying statistics. "Deck Plans" isn't going anywhere. Beginning in *Star Wars Gamer* #10 it will expand to rival "State of the Arts" in size.

The New Jedi Order Sourcebook and this

issue of *Star Wars Gamer* combine to give you all the details you need to incorporate the Yuuzhan Vong into your game as heroes or adversaries.

When it comes to "Rogues Gallery," we don't play favorites. It's difficult to provide an image of each core species, let alone the full range of aliens, all the time. If we included more Humans, non-Human heroes would barely have any representation. What you can look forward to is seeing some Humans in nearly every issue's installment of "Rogues Gallery."

Space Madness

We are so glad that various computer games keep the *Star Wars* legacy alive. With this outlet, the story will always continue. There is an outstanding video game that my wife and I enjoy immensely called *Alien vs. Predator*. I wish (and I know it probably will never happen) that some company would produce a *Star Wars* vs. *Star Trek* video game. Can you imagine how a game like this would sell? By the billions! I know, I'm only dreaming.

Joe & Lanette Lambert
Colgate, OK

Unfortunately, dreaming is still your best shot at avoiding the harsh reality that such a game is highly unlikely.

Not Bountiful Enough

I just finished reading *Star Wars Gamer* #6, and thought I'd pass along some thoughts.

I was looking forward to the bounty hunter issue, and while I enjoyed it, I was also disappointed. There was no mention of Boba Fett or even a hint about the mysterious Jango. I know full details are available in other products, but it would have been nice to have something about them in this issue. Their absence made the issue seem somewhat empty.

As for Kathy Tyers's story, it too was a disappointment: something about bounty hunters—however tangential—would have been appropriate. "Rebel Bass"

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Star Wars Gamer #4

Walk on the Wild Side! Secrets of Kashyyyk, herds of Ithor, ships of the Smugglers' Alliance, Shaman class combo, and "Kashyyyk in Flames" adventure.



Star Wars Gamer #5

The Dark Side! The Emperor's pawns, objects of the Sith, campaign guide to the Centrality, Slicer prestige class, Charlatan class combo, Silent Death™, Rise of the Empire ships, "The Hutt Hit," and "Talnar's Rescue" adventures.



Star Wars Gamer #6

The Hunt is on! Dengar, Zuckuss, 4-LOM, bounty hunter weapons, bounties worth dying for, heroic combat tactics, Dark Horse Comic characters, Freelancer class combo, "Welcome to the Jungle" adventure.



Star Wars Gamer #7

Living on the Fringe! Huge Barty's Landing campaign setting and adventure, starships of the bounty hunters, "Secrets of Mos Eisley," Dilettante class combo, Vehicle Ace prestige class, and Jag Fel fiction from Elaine Cunningham.



seemed rushed and wasn't one of her best. After *Balance Point* and *Truce at Bakura* we know she is capable of far, far more.

I enjoyed seeing the Hoojib ("Welcome to the Jungle") and "Bounties to Die For." Even here, though, there seemed some confusion. Why would an Imperial database castigate Imperial practices in one spot then spout all-is-well Imperial propaganda in another? It was also good to see the Dark Horse characters given some attention.

Your video game coverage was exemplary: plenty of screen shots and enough tech talk for me to understand the game before I buy it. I hope that *Star Wars Gamer* will not always praise every game that comes out. A reader will appreciate honesty more often than be comforted by the party line.

I'd like to see more fiction, more adventures, more in-depth articles, less basic game play, and no more Silent Death. Give me a ten-page article on dovin basals any day.

Sean Twist
London, Ontario
Canada

With nothing new to add to Boba Fett's profile, it would have been hard to justify adding him to issue #6. By now you should have *Gamer* #7, which has stats and deck plans for Fett's Slave II starship. That should help ease that empty feeling. You'll notice that this issue's fiction ("Battle on Bonadan" and "The Apprentice") is closely tied to The New Jedi Order theme of this issue. The IPK database is obviously subcontracted, as the Empire is known for its scornful sentiments toward the bounty hunting trade.

If you liked "State of the Arts" before, you're going to be ecstatic about it from now on. In this issue we go in-depth into Obi-Wan and Galactic Battlegrounds, and next issue will be bursting at the seams with information, strategy, and exclusive screen shots.

Alas, Silent Death... we knew thee well. There are no plans to do any more Silent Death (or ten-page articles on dovin basals), but this issue does feature a great new take on the starship combat rules. Check them out!



Laboda na Rowka?

I just bought *Star Wars Gamer* #5. Great job! Here are some suggestions to make the magazine even better.

First, less roleplaying content. I don't play, so I'm a little biased here, but there are other things besides pages of roleplaying stats that you could focus on as well.

Second, your Hutttese article ("Words to Live By," *Star Wars Gamer* #5) stated that modern Hutttese started about 500 years ago and that there is evidence of ancient Hutttese 1,000 years ago. In the book *The Hutt Gambit*, it says that old Hutts can live close to a millennium in age. It makes little sense that Hutttese could progress so quickly, even through only one generation of Hutts. Also, it says Hutts have been civilized for much longer than Humans and consider themselves higher beings than all others in the universe. Therefore, calling them rougher and less refined would be a mistake as well.

I hope you take these suggestions into consideration and not let this kind of mistake go unnoticed again.

Jason Ginter
Juneau, AK

The Jedi Returns—Again!

By Ray and Val Vallesse

No, we're not talking about a re-release of Episode VI. We're talking about the Jedi making their presence known on www.wizards.com/starwars, the official website of the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game, in January and February! Have they come to battle some new threat or menace? Hardly—they're appearing in our original tie-in material for the new accessory *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*!

What's more, we've doubled your fun. You'll get backstage passes to an interview with JD Wiker and another with Steve Miller, the co-designers of the new sourcebook. You'll get two fresh creatures to drop into your New Jedi Order campaign. You'll get two sneak peeks at what's waiting in the pages of the sourcebook. You'll even get two free New Jedi Order mini adventures! And let's not for-

get all the other extras like an art gallery, screensaver, and wallpaper.

Of course, even the Jedi can't do it all, so we're glad to pitch in with a number of bonus features. Drop by each month to get the current tie-in to the Living Force campaign scenario, plus all the latest news straight from the Campaign Director. Enjoy our coverage of Winter Fantasy, start thinking about the GEN CON Game Fair, and whet your appetite for *Star Wars* Celebration II with news and previews of the biggest *Star Wars* fan event ever. And you can always turn to old friends like the "Tips and Tactics" gaming column, visions of upcoming issues of *Star Wars Gamer* and *Star Wars Insider*, and Expanded Universe characters.

Visit www.wizards.com/starwars regularly in January and February to check in on all the news, features, and surprises we'll have waiting for you. See you online!

Ebenn Q3 Baobab has been known to "elaborate" from time to time. It is true that modern Hutttese has evolved over the last 500 years. The Hutts, however, haven't changed physically in millennia. Baobab's differentiation between "ancient Hutttese" and the species' current tongue is like the difference between modern English and that of Chaucer.



Don't Be a Slave

I love your magazine, and I especially like modifying your adventures for my own campaigns. However, I don't want to take many leads from The New Jedi Order series for fear that the next book will unravel all my hard work. Thus far, you've not printed an adventure from that time period. Any hope you'll be printing one soon?

Also, would it be possible to print sub-mission guidelines for adventures? I know

continued on page 126



JEDI COUNSELING

Answers to Your STAR WARS RPG Dilemmas

BY JD WIKER

Can I use a blaster in either hand, both firing on multifire, during the same round? The rules seem unclear, except that I'd get a big penalty, if I'm reading this right.

The rules are pretty specific, explaining the effects of autofire, multifire, Multi-shot, Rapid Shot, and a weapon in your off hand. According to Chapter 8 of the core rulebook, wielding a second weapon in your off hand gives you one extra attack only, regardless of its setting. You can still fire your primary weapon in multifire or autofire mode, but not your off-hand weapon.

Using a weapon in your off hand does not double your number of attacks in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. If it did, Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Improved Two-Weapon Fighting would be the no-brainer feats of the game, and all soldier heroes would look alike.

Think about it this way: Using the multifire option of blasters is a full-round action. So is using the Force skill Affect Mind. Can you use both during the same round? One application uses your hand, the other your head. Those are two separate things, right? So why can't you use both at the same time? Because you can take only one full-round action in any given round. We built that into the d20 system to keep things from getting out of control.

According to *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, page 59, you need only Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) to use a double-bladed lightsaber as an ordinary lightsaber. It doesn't state whether you would need Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed lightsaber) to use it as a double weapon—and I have a player who is making a case that it's not needed. What's the verdict?

The double-bladed lightsaber works just like an ordinary lightsaber—even with both

blades ignited—if you have only Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber). The second blade is completely ignored if you don't want to suffer the -4 penalty. If you want to make the additional attack allowed by the second blade, you suffer a -4 penalty for non-proficiency and the normal penalties for fighting with two weapons (as the table on page 59 of *The Dark Side Sourcebook* points out).

Can you expend additional Force Points when constructing a lightsaber to gain bonuses to the various rolls? The task of making a lightsaber takes more than one round, and the bonuses from the expenditure of a Force Point last for only the round that the Force Point was spent. The book says that the checks are made at the same time, but does that mean that the Constitution, Wisdom, and Intelligence checks to "harmonize the Force," "harmonize the self," and "harmonize and imbue the crystals" can all be performed in the same round? Would one Force Point aid all three rolls?

Yes, a Jedi hero could expend one Force Point to imbue the focusing crystals with the Force—and then spend another Force Point on her three ability checks to improve her chances of successfully preparing the crystals. The Craft (lightsaber) check to assemble the components takes place after this and can't benefit from the Force Point spent on the three ability checks. The Jedi could expend yet another Force Point to increase her chances on the Craft check.

Does the Sith sword gain the damage bonuses based on levels, or is it restricted to the Force-derived bonus damage only?

The Sith sword operates completely differently from the lightsaber, so it does not gain the lightsaber damage bonus based on the hero's level.

Can you use Force Mind with Knight Mind? For example, can a Jedi guardian with both feats first activate Force Mind (for a +2 to any ability score), and then activate Knight Mind (for a +4 in any ability score)? Would that then be +6 to any one ability score?

Force Mind and Knight Mind both provide "Force bonuses," which do not stack with each other. The same goes for Master Mind. A Jedi could, however, sustain multiple uses of a feat like Force Mind, as there's no restriction on the amount of time you must wait before using the feat again.

***The Dark Side Sourcebook* isn't clear on how to play someone with cortosis weave in their armor. For instance, if I had a jumpsuit woven with cortosis fibers and someone swipes at me with a lightsaber, do I take no damage?**

There are various kinds of cortosis armors, from the "shields" worn by the Yinchorri warriors in the Dark Horse comic *Jedi Council: Acts of War*, to the cortosis ore that appears in Timothy Zahn's *Hand of Thrawn* duology. Cortosis weave (as in the armor in *The Dark Side Sourcebook*) shuts the lightsaber off after it has inflicted its damage. Cortosis ore (as we saw in the *Hand of Thrawn*) works the same way, except of course that there's no wearer—the cortosis itself suffers the damage. A cortosis shield shuts the lightsaber off before it inflicts damage. Reactivating the lightsaber is a free action—if the Jedi thinks to do so—but that action can't be taken in the midst of a full attack action—so no taking the first attack, reactivating the saber, taking the second attack, reactivating the saber, and so on.

Is it possible to lose a prestige class? For example, if you have taken on a dark side prestige class and you redeem yourself so you have no Dark Side Points, you obviously



can't be a dark side hero—but the rules don't cover anything about losing a prestige class. Would you lose everything that class gave you? That doesn't seem logical, because how do you lose a skill that you've already learned?

If a hero no longer meets the requirements for a prestige class, she loses all special abilities gained from levels of the prestige class. This can happen either from reducing a hero's Dark Side Points or the temporary loss of a feat due to ability damage. She retains the vitality dice, base attack bonuses, base save bonuses, bonus feats, Defense bonus, and Reputation bonus. The hero won't lose skill ranks but could lose access to certain Force skills if she no longer meets the prerequisites for the skill (such as those that require Sith Sorcery). ☐

Got rules questions? Send them to:

Jedi Counseling
c/o STAR WARS Gamer
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057

or via email to:
swgamer@wizards.com
(include "Jedi Counseling"
in the subject)

Gamemastering Advice

In my group are two 2nd-level Jedi, both of whom have lightsabers. There is also a 2nd-level scoundrel/soldier who wants to use a lightsaber. He says that he should be allowed to because, from a player's perspective, it is just another kind of weapon; and in character he says he is impressed by the lightsabers. One of the Jedi says no, because the lightsaber is a Jedi weapon. The other Jedi in the group says that if he wants to he can. I haven't found anything in the book prohibiting this, but I just don't like it. Is there anything in the rules that says a non-Jedi can't have a lightsaber?

There's nothing in the rules that says a non-Jedi can't have a lightsaber. Of course, a non-Jedi will never be as good with a lightsaber as a well-trained Jedi (one who's focused on lightsaber feats and built his own lightsaber—and advanced in levels and improved his damage), but that's the price the non-Jedi hero pays for wanting to diversify.

Personally, I would allow a non-Jedi to pick up the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to use a lightsaber simply because it forces the Jedi heroes to think about the nature of the Jedi Order, and that makes for some good roleplaying. Those two Jedi heroes would have to ask themselves why the Jedi Order doesn't already hand out lightsabers to anyone qualified to wield one (that is, anyone who had taken the Exotic Weapon

Proficiency for it), if they feel that person is worthy. At the very least, their masters might ask them why they felt it was necessary to train a non-Jedi how to use a lightsaber. (And one can easily imagine Masters Yoda and Windu calling the heroes to the Jedi Temple on Coruscant to ask the very same question.)

Now, that having been said, what might be the Jedi Order's reasons for not teaching non-Jedi how to use lightsabers? Well, for one, a lightsaber is a powerful weapon, and one should not wield it without knowing the will of the Force—something a non-Force-user cannot do. (If you give someone a lightsaber and that person accidentally kills an Innocent person, who is responsible?)

Also, a non-Jedi is more corruptible than a Jedi because he doesn't have to answer to the Jedi Council, although the Jedi who gave that hero a lightsaber in the first place would!

A non-Jedi is also not as keen to hang onto the weapon as a Jedi, although this is a relatively minor concern. (If you give someone a lightsaber and he loses it to someone less responsible, whose fault is that?)

Further, and perhaps most importantly, wielding a lightsaber marks you as a Jedi, just as a katana marks someone as a samurai. People will expect you to uphold the Jedi Code. If you do not, not only will people suffer, but also you will besmirch the reputation of the Jedi Order.

Imperial Dispatch

The Dark Side Sourcebook

Page 21, Dark Side Devotee, under requirements

Move Object is not a requirement to become a dark side devotee.

Page 23, Dark Side Marauder, under requirements

The Base Attack Bonus requirement is only +1, not +3.

Page 31, Corrupted Jedi sidebar

Clarification: Trading in levels means that you lose all the feats or special abilities of the levels you trade in, as well as base attack bonuses, save bonuses, Defense bonuses, lightsaber damage, and reputation scores. You retain your skill ranks, Force Points, and Dark Side Points. You cannot trade in so many levels that you no longer qualify for the Sith prestige class (by losing levels at which you gained the feats Control, Sense, or Alter, for example).

Page 61, Table 4-2: Dark Armor Special Qualities, under Cortosis Weave effects

Clarification: When a lightsaber strikes armor with cortosis weave, the lightsaber inflicts its damage before deactivating.

Page 88, Aurra Sing entry, Force Skills

Aurra Sing should have purchased her ranks in Force Push, Move Object, and See Force as cross-class skills, making their true totals Force Push +4, Move Object +4, and See Force +5.

Page 88, Aurra Sing entry, under Feats

Aurra Sing should have the Dodge feat.

Page 93, Darth Vader entry, under Feats

Darth Vader should have the feat Alertness.

ROGUES GALLERY

Yuuzhan Vong

ILLUSTRATED BY JEFF CARLISLE

It might seem like a bit of art-direction irony to feature one of *Gamer's* finest hard-tech illustrators to render a species that has a pathological hatred of machinery, but Jeff Carlisle has proven he was the right man for the job. Jeff called upon his encyclopedic knowledge of *The New Jedi Order* to put a pen to this panel of pug-ugly pierced protagonists. *Icky.*







EMISSARY OF THE VOID

BATTLE ON BONADAN

BY GREG KEYES

ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE HUDDLESTON

Well, that's interesting, Uldir Lockett thought, as a pair of feminine legs in black tights came hurtling over his left shoulder. Above the tights he was vaguely aware of a dark yellow skirt and, even farther up, a young, determined face framed in short dark hair. But it was the feet that held his attention as they hit square in the center of the table at which he and his companions sat, shocking their drinks into brief suborbits. Then the feet were gone, propelling legs, yellow skirt, and all an estimated two meters up and one out toward the balcony above them. Searing flashes of weapon fire hissed by, and Uldir found his hand groping at an empty holster.

"Stop her!" Someone behind Uldir shouted.

Two of his three companions, Uldir saw, were also reaching for weapons that weren't there. The third, a human woman with startling platinum hair, brushed a fleck of Corellian whisky from the long scar beneath her left eye.

"I need a new drink," she noted, as another volley of yellow streamers seared by, striking the synthewood balcony the girl had managed to grab. The patrons of the *In the Red* cantina were diving away from the newly declared war-zone, but the music from the band continued to blare cheerfully over the sound of weapon fire.

"I hate locals," Leaft growled, thumping the curled fist of his foot on the table and scowling as only a Dug can scowl.

A glance over his shoulder confirmed what Uldir already suspected: The girl's pursuers were Corporate Sector Authority law enforcement, the only people on Bonadan allowed to carry weapons. From the color and intensity of their beams, he figured they were using a stun setting, and in any event their target was definitely the girl, who was now significantly above them, putting Uldir and his companions well out of the line of fire. He relaxed a little, settling his amber gaze on the girl as she heaved herself up, wondering what she had done to provoke such a strong reaction from the local constabulary.

"Very impolite," Vook said, apparently agreeing with the Dug. His flat, noseless Duro face was unreadable, but his tone, as usual, was melancholy, as if even this put him in mind of his lost homeworld.

"I hate vacations," Leaft said, thumping the table again.



It wasn't exactly a vacation. A close scrape with a Yuuzhan Vong interdicator on the Hydian Way had left the transport the unlikely quartet shared with a sputtering hyperdrive and no shields at all. They had managed to limp to the Corporate Sector, a rimward territory still essentially neutral in the conflict between what remained of the free New Republic and the fierce extragalactic Yuuzhan Vong, who were gobbling it up system by system in their religious crusade of conquest. Left with nothing to do while repairs were effected, Uldir figured they could all use a little time off, and consequently the four soon found themselves on the galasol strip, a colorful collection of overpriced cantinas and casinos near the spaceport. The fleeing girl was dressed like the attendants Uldir had seen earlier that evening at the *Blue-Shift Luck* casino, but if she was really a game-girl, she was a nimble one. As he watched, she flipped over the balcony, twisting deftly between the several lines of fire directed at her, and crouched behind a now abandoned table. The CSA lawmen clustered below the balcony, firing up.

"That's probably a mistake," remarked Vega Sepen, the platinum-crowned woman.

"Tactically unsound," Vook agreed, gravely.

"One unarmed short human against four corp-clowns," Leaft sneered. "Not worth the price of admission."

"She's not that short," Uldir corrected, crossing his arms and lifting the square tip of his chin toward the balcony. "She's a girl."

"Uh, oh," Vega murmured.

"Don't discuss human gender," the Dug growled. "The whole idea sickens me. Urr... *Captain*." He added that last a little sullenly, probably remembering one of the many formal reprimands he'd gotten lately from superiors.

About that time, the table the girl was hiding behind suddenly came over the balcony rail. It hit three of the security men squarely and nicked the fourth. With a fierce grin, the girl turned and ran off across the upper level toward an exit.

"She's getting away," Vook noticed.

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"Yeah," Uldir said. "Maybe not."

Vega must have seen the expression on Uldir's face.

"Not our fight," she cautioned. "We're rescue fliers, not bounty hunters."

"Well, we can't fly without a ship, and I'm bored," Uldir said. "Anyway, she owes me for these drinks." With that, he pushed back his chair, closed up his flight jacket, and leaped onto the table.

"This won't turn out well," he heard Vook mournfully predict.

Uldir followed the girl's example, launching himself from the table. He caught the balcony, swiftly pulled himself up and over and ran toward the exit through which she had vanished.

The exit led to an upper story, open-air courtyard. There, beneath a rusty evening sky, he found a trail of angry and confused patrons cursing after his quarry as she clambered up the output cable of the ion shield that filtered Bonadan's polluted air into something approaching pleasant. Uldir's opinion of the young woman's ath-

THE BARABEL HAD TEETH, CLAWS, AND SIXTY KILOS ON HIM. ULDIR HAD HIS FISTS AND THE BEST UNARMED COMBAT TRAINING THE SEARCH AND RESCUE CORPS COULD PROVIDE.

letic prowess rose another notch, offset by the growing suspicion that she was probably some sort of burglar or spy. Maybe she had stolen something from the casino, or had been attempting to.

Whatever it was, he was determined to find out.

He skipped to his right to avoid tripping over a fallen Rodian, but that brought him face-to-face with an immense Barabel male gnashing a set of very sharp teeth some half a meter above his own meter-and-a-half frame.

"Sorry," Uldir grunted at the scaled tower.

The Barabel's black reptilian face contorted. "You insult me?" He flexed his claws, and it occurred to Uldir that the Bonadan police couldn't confiscate natural weapons.

The Barabel had teeth, claws, and sixty kilos on him. Uldir had his fists and the best unarmed combat training the Search and Rescue Corps could provide.

So he ran, dodging behind a stumbling-drunk Togorian as the Barabel took a swipe at him. The big lizard tried to correct for Uldir's sudden movement and instead hit the white-furred humanoid, who yowled and lurched to face her antagonist. Uldir thought he wouldn't mind seeing how that turned out, under ordinary circumstances, but once again he'd lost sight of the thief.

He went up the cable hand-over-hand, pulling himself onto the rooftop. From here he couldn't see the galasol strip, but he could hear it in a blare of music—Uldir and his companions had arrived during a sort of local festival thrown by one of the new execs of the corporate sector. They'd had to push their way through a parade dominated by floaters bearing likenesses of the various leaders of the CSA, distributing free gambling chips for adults and trinkets for the kids. His vantage now overlooked the uglier side of

Bonadan, the warehouse district that lay behind the flashy facade of the strip.

"How in the ...?" Uldir began, then realized he was talking to himself, something he considered a bad sign. But how had she made that jump? It was four meters to the air lane the barges traveled in if it was a centimeter.

She was running toward the next barge up, which was separated from its companion by only a meter or so, and the line of barges went on as far as the eye could see.

"Carbon flush," he swore. If he could not make the jump, he'd lost her, but it sure wasn't worth seeing if he could make the jump, so that was that.

He heard a hiss behind him and turned to see the Barabel coming up fast and decided it was worth finding out after all. He took ten paces and leaped with all of his might. At the last instant, he had the sudden sinking feeling he wouldn't make it, followed swiftly by the sinking feeling of gravity having a joke on him. He'd jumped

long enough, but not high enough. He wouldn't even scrape the side of the barge going down.

He almost didn't see the multi-sensor cable dangling in front of him, but at the last instant he did, and he wrapped his hands around it, wincing at the friction burn he produced killing his momentum.

Swearing a silent thanks to whatever fates protected fools and starpilots, he started pulling himself up, ignoring the sibilant string of unintelligible curses the Barabel was howling after him.

On top, he took a moment to catch his breath, and for an instant he stood awestruck by the evening. Bonadan's primary was a giant red egg yolk smeared against a stark ebony horizon of eroding hills and slag heaps. In the melting glare of that light, the plexisteel towers of the spaceport appeared to be molded of living lava. Plumes of black smoke drifted up from distant refineries, pancaking into clouds made luminous by the dying light of the sun, stretching shadow fingers toward the horizon of night. In the deep of the sky the actinic flares of ion drives winked here and there as ships arrived and departed. The ore train he stood on stretched far away, like some sort of magical path above the barren landscape.

There was nothing admirable about the ecological mess the Corporate Sector Authority had made of a once-lush planet, but there was beauty in everything, even devastation. The Force was present even in a wasteland.

The barges were strictly planetary, their interiors open to the air. He didn't recognize the ore—he hoped it wasn't radioactive—but it certainly made for bad footing, so as he started after the girl, he ran along the raised metal lip of the barge. The narrowness of it didn't bother him—as a boy the spaceports on Coruscant and pretty much everywhere else in the galaxy had been his playgrounds, and he'd spent many an hour doing far more foolish things on far more precarious surfaces.

To his satisfaction, his quarry didn't seem to have noticed him yet. She was taking her time, certain she'd lost her pursuers. He jumped the meter to the next barge, and then the next, closing all

the while, confident that the steady hum of repulsorlifts would mask his approach. Besides, the girl had stopped now, lifting up her dress to reveal something taped to her leg. She began working at the adhesive, tearing it off in strips.

Ah-hah, he thought. Now we'll see what you've stolen.

When he came within five meters, however, the girl stopped what she was doing and spun on her heels to face him.

"Stay there!" she shouted over the thrum of the barges. "I will defend myself."

"Oh, I'm sure of that," Uldir said. "I saw what you did to law enforcement back in the cantina."

She lifted her chin, and he suddenly realized she was kind of pretty, with her dark eyes and short brown bangs. And young—maybe younger than he. She certainly did not look like the glamorous ideal of a galasol game-girl—more like someone's kid sister playing dress-up.

"What business is that of yours?" she demanded, looking him over. "That's not a CSA uniform."

"You owe me four drinks," he said. "Besides, I just have this odd feeling you're up to no good."

"You're wrong there," the girl replied. "You have no idea how wrong."

"Explain my error, then. I'll be happy to listen."

She smiled faintly. "You don't need an explanation," she said.

It occurred to Uldir that he really didn't. Now that he had met her, she seemed an honest sort. Whatever problem she had with the CSA was probably a misunderstanding. He shrugged and was starting to walk away when he got it.

"Hey!" he said, turning.

A lump of ore thudded into his shoulder with enough force to knock him down. He bounced back up, fast, but she was already there. Now that he knew what she was, he wasn't surprised.

Nor did he get a chance for more conversation. She was in midair, aiming a kick at his solar plexus.

Training took over. Flying kicks were good for taking opponents off of speeders, or maybe if they were paralyzed, but they stunk against someone standing with balance and a little presence of mind. He spun aside and chopped at the back of her neck as she hurled past—except she didn't hurl past. Instead, she touched down and pivoted, turning the kick into a wheel that caught him on the same target he'd been aiming for on her. He rolled with it, tumbling roughly over the ore, coming up to find her already on top of him. In her haste she had gotten sloppy, however, and he blocked her next kick and drove stiffened fingers into her midriff. She wheezed and fell back roughly onto the ore.

"Listen—" he began, but before he could get more out, she gestured with her left hand, and another chunk of rock leapt up from about a meter away and popped him in the forehead. He sat down, hard.

"Ow," he said, rubbing his head. "You didn't have to do that. I'm—"

He noticed it before she did, maybe because she was stunned from his punch and maybe because she was concentrating on him. He dove toward her. She jerked her hands up defensively, but he caught them and hauled her to her feet just as several white-hot flashes melted pits through the ore she'd been lying on.

"Fliers!" he shouted.

Sure enough, five atmospheric security fliers were descending toward them, spraying blaster fire. Uldir suddenly found himself face-to-face with the girl, still holding both of her hands. She seemed to study him for about a nanosecond, then broke free and began running again. Uldir followed, blaster fire warming his heels.

The girl ran to the edge of the barge, followed it for a few seconds, and then leaped out into space.

"Wait!" Uldir shouted. Too late. He came skidding to a halt, peering over, hoping she'd dropped onto some tall building, but there was nothing but a sixty-meter plummet to the drab, one-story duraplast outskirts of the spaceport.

A bolt came near enough to curl his eyebrows, and he gathered that he had become a substitute target. Several more shots spanged around the barge's edge, and with a wordless curse he jerked back into motion, dropping back into the barge so he could use the raised lip as limited cover. His hand itched for his blaster, but that was still on his ship.

The pilots were smart. Four stayed back, laying down a sort of perimeter of fire that kept him boxed on the barge. The fifth zoomed in lower, focusing on hitting him. He tried to clear his mind, feel the shots coming before they did, but his Jedi training had been mostly wasted—he had no natural talent for the Force. Still, now and then, his luck was unusual enough to suggest that Master Skywalker's academy had left him with *something*.

This time, he didn't think he would be as lucky as usual. When a sixth flier rose up from below the barge, scarcely two meters to his right, he was sure of it. He winced as blasters fired.

But the bolts seared over his head and struck the flier harassing him at close range, and his focus suddenly changed, centering on the yellow-and-black-clad figure at the controls of the newly arrived vessel. The figure was gesturing impatiently.

"You don't have to tell me twice," Uldir muttered. Still dodging the more distant fire, he ran toward the flier and jumped in. The instant he was on board, the girl punched the throttle, weaving through a net of white bolts.

"Thanks," Uldir said.

"If this is a trick, you'll regret it," the girl snapped. "Why were you chasing me?"

"I didn't know you were Jedi."

The girl banked crazily and dropped low toward the landscape.

"I think you really want altitude, here," he added.

"Yeah? You want to fly?"

"Um—okay."

"Great." She let go of the controls, leaving Uldir to dive for them before the flier smacked into a transmission tower. Meanwhile, she went back to work on whatever was strapped to her leg.

"Didn't know I was Jedi? That's why everyone else is after me."

"I thought you were a thief," Uldir explained, nosing up in time to avoid a serious insult from coherent light and charged particles. "Why are they after you?"

"Because I'm Jedi. Are you stim-pickled? Don't you know every planet in the galaxy is scrambling to turn us over to the Yuuzhan Vong?"

"I'm aware of that," Uldir said, dryly.

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"I nearly got turned in myself."

She laughed. "You're no Jedi."

That stung more than Uldir cared to admit. "Hey, be nice to me. I saved your skinny . . . er, your skin."

"And I returned the favor," she reminded him. "We're even now. So. Why would anyone try to turn you in?"

Uldir flipped a lock of his chestnut hair away from his eyes. "I'm a rescue flier," he said. "An ex-partner of mine turned out to be Peace Brigade, and he found out I once attended the Jedi academy. He arranged an ambush I was lucky to get out of. That was right after the Yuuzhan Vong warmaster announced that if all the Jedi were turned over to him, he'd stop conquering the galaxy." He shook his head. "As if anyone could really believe that."

"You attended Master Skywalker's academy?" The girl asked, skeptically.

"Is there another?"

"No."

"I didn't have any aptitude for the Force, though," Uldir added.

"So much is obvious," the girl said.

"Yeah, I think you mentioned that," Uldir said, veering sharply to port, where the police fliers were trying to flank him and doing a pretty good job. "Hold on a second," he said. "We'll have to fight a little, here." He glanced over his shoulder. "My name is Uldir, by the way."

HE GRINNED TIGHTLY, REMEMBERING WHAT VEGA WOULD SAY: "IF" IS JUST A SHORT WAY OF SAYING, "WE'RE DOOMED."

"Klin-Fa Gi, at your service," she said grimly. "You almost got me killed, Uldir. Don't do it again."

"I'll try not to, Klin-Fa Gi. Stay down. We're going to take some hits."

"Not if I have anything to say about it."

For the second time that night, she leaped past him, landing with feline grace on the prow of the speeder. She stood there, a perfect target for the two fliers they were barreling toward. Then a snap-hiss carried over the wind, and a silver of yellow energy appeared in her left hand, cutting quickly into a figure eight and sending a pair of blaster bolts humming off into the wastelands.

So that's what was taped to her leg, Uldir concluded. Klin-Fa must have walked in front of one of the weapons sensors that Bonadan was lousy with.

"I guess I have shields now," Uldir murmured, thumbing the blaster fire controls on his stick and jinking starboard. His shot was dead on, frying the opposing flier's stabilizer. It went spinning off. Uldir hoped the pilot would get the flier under control before it hit the ground below.

That's one, he thought, as Klin-Fa executed another crazy series of parries that left their flier unscathed by enemy fire.

As he'd noticed before, the pilots weren't stupid. Contrary to the usual tactics of aerial combat, they were now trying to get under-

neath them, where the Jedi's lightsaber wasn't. He let the flier drop, hoping that Klin-Fa could keep her footing, afraid to do any really tight turns.

Shadowed wasteland came up at them, endless hectares of chemical-blistered ground cut into fractal patterns by violent erosion. Bonadan's primary was now a thin red lens on the horizon, and a little north of that lightning serpentine inside an anvil-shaped cloud. The wind tasted of water, grit, and unwholesome carbon compounds.

The storm gave him an idea, though, so he flattened his course toward the thunderhead. Rain would stymie eyesight, and lightning would confuse instruments. Maybe even the eye-in-the-sky droids the patrol was undoubtedly tapping into. If he and Klin-Fa got through that, maybe he could circle back and find the *No Luck Required* before the security fliers picked up the trail. If the ship was repaired, then they might be able to get off-planet before the port authority shut them down. If . . .

He grinned tightly, remembering what Vega would say: "If" is just a short way of saying, "we're doomed."

"Are those guys Peace Brigade?" Uldir shouted to the girl.

"You mentioned them before," she shot back. "I never heard of them."

Uldir arched an eyebrow. That was surprising. "They're a collaborationist organization," he told her. "They figure we can't beat the Yuuzhan Vong, so they might as well join them, get in their good graces while it's still possible. Sometimes they infiltrate local law enforcement."

Klin-Fa snorted. "Nobody in the Corporate Authority ever needed prompting when there was any potential for profit, and the 'zecs don't deal with middle-men unless they have to. There's a Yuuzhan Vong executor on this planet even as we speak. I'm guessing the 'zecs cut their own deal."

"What? But that violates the neutrality pact."

"I'll bet it doesn't. CSA attorneys can find a loophole when there isn't even a loop."

The cloud loomed, but the fliers were getting too close. He dipped lower, dropping into one of the arroyos that crawled downhill toward the spaceport.

"I guess you can fly," Klin-Fa conceded reluctantly, leaping over the cockpit to land on their stern, now the most threatened portion of the ship.

"You don't say?" Uldir retorted. "Gosh, I'm glad you told me. I'd never have known. Now I'm all beaming and confident. I just *know* I can get us out of this."

She ignored the sarcasm. "Rescue flier, huh?" she mused. "Who do you rescue?"

"Jedi, mostly."

Klin-Fa blocked a bolt aimed for their rear stabilizer and shot him a strange look. "What?" She asked. "Who do you work for?"

"The paycheck comes from the New Republic Search and Rescue Corps, but that's sort of a cover. The orders come from Master Skywalker, ultimately. He's been organizing a network to move Jedi out of danger for months."

"I wouldn't know about that," she said. "I've been . . . out of

touch. I didn't even know about the warmaster's ultimatum until yesterday."

That explained why she didn't know about the Peace Brigade either. "Where were you that you didn't hear about that?"

Uldir asked.

Her eyes narrowed. "You'll understand if I don't just volunteer that information."

"Hey, you're the Jedi. Can't you tell if I'm lying, or a threat?"

She hesitated. "I've been fooled before," she admitted. "Just understand this—I'm on a mission, also for Master Skywalker. I've discovered something of utmost importance, a dire threat to the New Republic."

"But you won't tell me what it is?"

"No."

Uldir was impressed at how impassive she remained. Though his crazy course through the canyons had them temporarily free of blaster fire, it couldn't be easy for her to keep her footing, yet she hadn't even blinked. She had liquid helium in her veins, this girl.

"We're about to plow straight into a storm," he said. "Maybe you ought to get back into the cockpit."

"Storm? No. Maybe you ought to—*watch out!*"

Uldir jerked on the stick, mentally tasking himself for becoming distracted. One of the security fliers had somehow worked its way up a side canyon and was now quite suddenly in front of him. Blaster fire scorched along their underbelly, and the craft jerked like a harpooned toukfin. The power system whined, and all of the indicators on the board went dead. The flier dropped as Uldir frantically jiggled at the re-route to emergency systems.

The power failure lasted only an instant, but it was a gut-plunging one, and he was now on a collision course with the offending flier. He banked hard to port, momentarily forgetting he had a passenger balanced on his prow. Klin-Fa didn't seem to mind—she deftly shifted to stand on the narrow part of the flier now presented to the sky, crouched, and cut downward at the other vehicle. Uldir saw a shear of sparks before the impact. It was a glancing blow, and their opponent went gyring away missing a good chunk of its nose. Uldir was vaguely aware of the crunching sound it made as it plowed into a canyon wall, but most of his attention was focused on avoiding the same fate. The repulsors sputtered again, and with a silent curse he rose out of the arroyo, unable to trust his craft enough to maneuver there anymore.

It was then, facing the black wall of the storm, that he realized he didn't see Klin-Fa. His last maneuvers must have dislodged her.

He dug into a sharp turn—hoping to spot her and hoping as well that her Jedi abilities had helped her survive the fall—when a shout from below got his attention. He saw the young Jedi clinging to the craft's magnetic mooring lock by the fingers of one hand.

"Hang on!" Uldir locked the course for the storm and reached into the dash compartment, coming out with an enforcement special blaster. Then he climbed out of the cockpit and onto the nose of the craft, waving his arms for balance.

The three remaining fliers were catching up quickly, and the air was brittle with ionized death. Uldir dropped to his belly and reached over the brink, grasping Klin-Fa by the wrist. She locked her own fingers around his wrist in turn and dangled in space, whirling

her lightsaber to deflect a blaster bolt that would have cut her in half. Uldir stood, hauling her up, watching in amazement as she continued to fend off attacks. With his free hand he grimly fired at the lead police craft, which was coming in way too fast. He grazed it twice, then hit the cockpit a glancing blow that must have hurt the pilot, because the craft peeled off suddenly. Then two concussions in a row rocked his flier so badly that Uldir nearly lost his footing. He swung the Jedi back onto the bow just as the first of the rain spattered around them.

"Back in the cockpit!" he shouted. The craft was beginning to list weirdly toward starboard, indicating a probably fatal malfunction in one of the stabilizers.

Another bolt hit them as they made it to the crash seats, and then, as if they had passed under a curtain, the rain was driving so hard Uldir couldn't see anything. He flipped on the weather shield, and the water began sheeting off against its field, but visibility didn't increase in the slightest.

An eighteen-headed dragon of lightning howled around them, and Uldir's neck hairs prickled to attention. The sound was like the implosion of a planet.

"Sithspit!" Klin-Fa shouted. "What have you done to us?"

"You don't see our friends anymore, do you?"

"No. They'd know better than to fly into a sweeper storm."

"A what?"

"Bonadan has weather control stations all over it. You don't think this is natural, do you? They generate these on the outskirts when the air gets too caustic for the miners. The rain and lightning precipitates some of the crud they put in the sky every day."

"Oh. Your point?"

"My point is, it's more concentrated and violent than a normal storm, jets-for-brains. The funnel around the eye is designed to create maximum ionization."

"Maximum—uh-oh."

It had been getting darker, but in the not-to-distance he saw sheets of lighting dancing like nebula veils.

"So we don't want to go there, huh?" Uldir grunted, frantically pulling the stick starboard. Nothing happened. The ship was carrying them nowhere but the heart of the storm.

"No. So get us out of here already," Klin-Fa shouted. Even through the windscreen, the sound of the storm was almost deafening.

"I can't. I locked the controls when I went out to get you. They're still locked."

"Well, unlock them, vac-brain!"

Uldir continued flipping switches. "Not happening," he said.

"Well, what, then?"

"Hang on, I guess."

He pointed the blaster at the rear repulsor assembly and fired.

"Are you insane?" Klin-Fa shrieked.

"I wasn't before I met you," Uldir replied. "Now I'd need a professional opinion." He fired again, and the flier seemed to sag against the wind. The bow dropped nearly perpendicular to the ground.

"Like I said," Uldir remarked, as another net of lightning crackled completely around them, "hang on."

He felt a tingle then that did not come from the lightning, and he recognized it as a movement in the Force. He might not be sen-

BATTLE ON BONADAN

sitive enough to actually wield it, but he had been around the most powerful Jedi in the galaxy, and had learned to recognize its use.

Especially now, when it felt somehow *wrong*. He looked at Klin-Fa and found her eyes shut and her face utterly composed. For some reason that was momentarily terrifying. Then he didn't have any more time to think about it, because they hit the ground, skipped, tumbled, and hit again. The screen went down, and rain was suddenly smothering them. After that, darkness.



Uldir woke spitting water from his mouth and feeling the painful itch of it in his lungs. One of the flier's running lights shone murkily from beneath the surface. Other than that, the darkness was broken only by the terrible white and red flares of lightning that grew more extreme with each second. The rain was mixed with hail now, which struck painfully against the bare skin of his face, and the thunder was an almost uninterrupted roar. The torrents unleashed from the sky were continuing to sculpt the arroyo he'd crashed in as it had been doing since the natural vegetation of Bonadan had given up its tenuous hold on existence. The flier was fetched up against something and filling quickly with water.

OUTSIDE, IT SEEMED THE PLANET WAS BURNING, THE THUNDER BECAME LIKE THE SOUND OF A FUSION DRIVE BLOWING IN ATMOSPHERE.

In the dull light, he made out Klin-Fa G1, slumped unconscious, her face just out of the water. He felt for her pulse and, to his relief, found it strong. When he failed to wake her, he got her in a swim carry, holding her from behind so her head would remain above the surface. Even as he did this, the level and speed of the flood rose, and swiftly. He had to get to higher ground; that much was obvious. Not too high, though—lightning had a lofty aim, and Uldir already felt like he was on a target range for a tactical air-to-planet assault force.

The current took him, and it was far too strong to fight. He pointed his feet downstream, using his boots to protect him from rocks and other obstacles. This was awkward, as it put Klin-Fa on top of him, and his head went under with regularity. He'd been trained for this sort of situation, however, as part of his preparation for rescue flying, and the little voice of panic that threatened to become a shout kept relatively quiet. All he had to do was keep his head, he told himself. And his arms, and his legs...

When he started to feel the shock of the lightning, that became more difficult to do. Nightmare images of stone and turbid water strobed every few seconds, so he had almost a continuous view of his surroundings now. Kicking from a protruding rock, he aimed himself at what looked like a slope that might take him above flood

capacity. He nearly missed it, but he managed to get a clawhold on a rock and—pulling against the immensely strong current—drag himself and the Jedi onto the incline. He lay panting there for a moment until a bolt struck so close that he felt the hot spray of spalled stone on his cheek. With a grunt, he got Klin-Fa on his shoulder and made for what looked like a sort of overhang.

His luck held; it was indeed a small cave in the side of the canyon. It went in deep enough to be dry. He hoped it was also deep enough not to conduct a lightning strike, and high enough that the flood wouldn't fill it, because he didn't have a joule of strength left. He lay in the darkness, trying not to flinch at the barrage outside, promising himself that the next time a girl upset his drink he'd just buy another one.

Outside, it seemed the planet was burning, the thunder become like the sound of a fusion drive blowing in atmosphere. He closed his eyes against the glare and waited for it to pass.

It did, finally, and an eerie calm settled as the eye went over. Then Uldir was treated to another fireworks display, courtesy of Bonadan weather control.

When the lightning finally receded, he began to realize he was cold. Was it winter here? Did Bonadan have a winter? He couldn't remember. Maybe when the renewed search found them, they would find a couple of frozen corpses.

By the light of a glowstick he had in one of his many pockets, he examined Klin-Fa with the small medpack he always carried. A

nasty swelling on her head indicated the cause of her continued unconsciousness, but otherwise she seemed sound—he couldn't find any evidence of broken bones or internal bleeding.

He gave her a broad-spectrum anti-inflammatory and antibiotic, made her as comfortable as he could, then turned to his

remaining resources.

That consisted more-or-less of his comlink. He handled the small cylinder thoughtfully for a moment, considering. It had been modified with a trace-scrambler—though any searchers in the area would know he was transmitting; it would take a security decryption to allow them to triangulate. The CSA probably had pretty decent technology in that area, but he could probably transmit for thirty seconds or so before they had enough data to either unscramble the message or pinpoint his position.

It was getting colder. It was worth the risk. He keyed it on.

Static roared, probably due to the nearby storm. Still, after a second, he made out a distorted version of Vega Sepen's voice.

"Hey, boss-boy," she said. "You really should follow my advice now and then."

"Listen, Vega," Uldir said. "The girl was a Jedi, turns out. We've eluded pursuit for the time being, but we're down in the outback, maybe fifteen clicks southeast of town."

"Those aren't very good directions."

"Just look for wherever the police fliers are shooting," he said.

"With what? The ship's still in dock."

"I trust you, Vega. You'll think of something. Gotta go, before they trace this."

"Okay. Good luck, boss-boy."

"I hate it when you call me that."

"I know." The signal crackled out, and Uldir keyed off the comlink. He was probably still safe, but the next time he used it they would find his location in seconds.

Klin-Fa stirred and moaned. He touched her forehead and found it cold. He'd actually started shivering himself, from the wet and the falling temperature. With a sigh, he drew off his jacket. He lay next to the young Jedi, spooning against her, and covered them both with the jacket. It took a long time before the contact began to feel warm.



He woke with dark eyes centimeters from his own.

"Did you enjoy that?" Klin-Fa asked.

"Huh?"

"Snuggling up against me? Is that your idea of a good time?"

"Hey, I was just trying to keep us warm. Keep you warm."

She almost smiled. "Relax, jets-for-brains," she said. "I know what you were doing, and thanks. Just don't get any ideas."

Uldir realized their bodies were still touching, and he felt suddenly and completely uncomfortable. "What? No, of course not."

She tapped his forehead with her finger. "Right. I didn't think there was that much danger of an idea popping out of there, but you never know."

"Hey, I was doing more thinking than you were last night."

"I bet you were."

"That's not what I meant." His face felt tingly.

She sat up. Harsh yellow-white light glared through the entrance to the cave. "Where are we?"

"Somewhere in the badlands south of town. Our flier went down, you may remember."

"I remember you flying into a sweeper storm."

"Hey, how was I to know? For that matter, how did you know?"

"I'm from here," she growled.

"Bonadan?"

"No, this cave. Yes, Bonadan. I grew up on this miserable hole."

"Hey, everyone has to grow up somewhere."

"Yes, but they don't have to go back. I did, worse the luck."

"Why?"

"You and your questions. Are you a pilot or a reporter?"

"A pilot," Uldir said.

"And where's your ship?"

"I—ah, I don't know."

"Not much of a pilot then, are you? Looks like it's up to me to get us out of here."

"Well, it is your planet."

"Don't remind me." She started toward the entrance, then froze.

"What?"

"Come here," she whispered. "Be quiet."

He went with her to peek through the cave entrance. Beyond was the gully that they'd both nearly drowned in the night before. It was dry now, silted with fresh alluvium, and they could see about half a



ULDIR LOCKETT, RESCUE PILOT

Uldir Lockett: Male Human, Sct 5/Sol 3; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 16 (+3 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 24/12; Atk +8/+13 melee (1d6+2, crit 20, punch) or +9/+5 ranged; SQ Trailblazing, uncanny dodge (Dex to Def), skill mastery (Pilot, Spot); SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +4; SZ M; FP 4; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 14. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Spacer's clothes, medpack, glowrod, encrypted comlink.

Skills: Astrogate +10, Climb +5, Computer Use +8, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (Jedi lore) +4, Listen +6, Pilot +16, Read/Write Basic, Repair +6, Search +8, Speak Basic, Speak Dug, Speak Durese, Spot +10, Survival +8, Swim +5, Treat Injury +4.

Force Skills: Enhance Ability +10.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Force-Sensitive, Martial Artist, Spacer, Starship Dodge (space transport), Starship Operation (space transport), Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

click down it. Near the bend, up toward where the flier had gone down, he could see eight figures on foot, moving down the arroyo in their direction.

"Search party," he said.

"Yes," she replied. "See that one third from the left?"

"I'm not blind."

"I am, where he's concerned," Klin-Fa replied. "I can't feel him in the Force. That can only mean one thing."

Uldir nodded. "Yuuzhan Vong," he said. "Things just got a whole lot worse."

As if to underscore the remark, he heard the whine of fliers overhead, several of them. ☐

To Be Continued...

Greg Keyes is the author of *Star Wars: The New Jedi Order—Edge of Victory I: Conquest* and *Star Wars: The New Jedi Order—Edge of Victory II: Rebirth*.



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STAR WARS: THE NEW JEDI ORDER

THE APPRENTICE

BY ELAINE CUNNINGHAM

Jaina Solo adjusted the restraints on the copilot chair and leaned forward, eager for her first glimpse of Gallinore. The small Hapan freighter glided smoothly out of hyperspace, and star lines compressed into brilliant points of light—a beautiful sight, but one that could have marked nearly any destination. Then the ship banked sharply to starboard, and a soft green haze bloomed against the darkness of space.

Mist clung to the deeply forested planet, and the slanting rays of the rising sun lent the humid atmosphere a luminous, verdant glow. Lowbacca let out a low, poignant moan that mingled appreciation and longing.

"It does look a bit like Kashyyyk," Jaina agreed, naming the Wookiee's homeworld.

She glanced back at her companions. Lowbacca had always been thin by Wookiee standards, but their recent captivity had left him positively gaunt, and his ginger-hued fur was dull and patchy. Tenel Ka was thinner, too, and her dark green flight suit clung to her too-slender form. Her long reddish hair was carefully plaited in the many-braided fashion of a Dathomiri warrior, but with one difference: She'd swept her hair over to one side to hide the raw patch left when a Yuuzhan Vong inquisitor had yanked out one of her braids. Jaina quickly averted her eyes from this reminder of their shared ordeal. Her own scars were of a different sort.

Her gaze shifted to the man in the pilot seat. Kyp Durrone could add about a dozen years to her eighteen. The long, careless waves of brown hair were threaded with silver, and faint lines collected at the corners of his green eyes—lines that suggested easy smiles and shared laughter. Kyp had the sort of face that inspired camaraderie and confidence, and probably would have even without the added charisma of his formidable Jedi powers. One thing was certain: People followed Kyp. Jaina intended to figure out why.

The mists of Gallinore swirled up to receive their ship. Jaina shifted impatiently in her seat. Her fingers itched for the feel of the controls, and she briskly scrubbed one hand against the leg of her flight suit as if that could erase the urge to take over. Kyp was a Jedi Master, however, and—more importantly—a Master who'd asked Jaina to be his apprentice. For Jaina, sitting in the copilot's chair was one way of taking this notion for a test flight.

Part of her wanted to reject his offer out of hand. Kyp Durrone had

been a dubious figure before the war started, before he'd undertaken his rogue crusade against the Yuuzhan Vong invaders. His forays were highly controversial, and his passionate advocacy of aggressive tactics brought discord to every Jedi gathering, whether he attended or not.

But at some level, Jaina sensed that she and Kyp were already flying on the same vector. She couldn't argue against either his philosophy or his methods. She just wasn't sure she wanted to hand over the controls.

Kyp peered at the unbroken expanse of green rushing up toward their ship. "The navicomputer confirms our landing coordinates, but I don't see anything that down there that looks like a city."

Tenel Ka glanced up from the datapad she'd been studying throughout most of the trip. "Dimitor is difficult to see from above. The city is constructed mostly of green marble and all the streets are lined with tall trees. Even the landing docks are paved with multicolored stone, making them indistinguishable from meadowland until you are almost upon them."

"Makes you wonder what they've got to hide," Kyp observed, sliding a quick, pointed glance at Jaina.

"Gallinore is a lawful world, closely affiliated with the government of Hapes," Tenel Ka returned gravely. Her gaze shifted to Jaina. "I'm more concerned about our purposes than theirs. We are landing shortly. Shouldn't you tell us why we've come?"

Jaina conceded with a nod. "Let me see your lightsaber."

The warrior woman frowned in puzzlement, but she removed the weapon from her belt and handed it over.

Jaina turned the unusual lightsaber over in her hand, running her thumb over the strange carvings Tenel Ka had meticulously etched into the yellowed ivory handle. "A rancor's tooth," she observed. With a flick of her thumb she unleashed a stream of brilliant, turquoise light—a strangely iridescent hue, one that, on close inspection, held dancing motes in every color of the visible spectrum. "You used rainbow gems for the focusing crystals, right? From Gallinore?"

"Fact," Tenel Ka confirmed.

"These 'gems' are actually living creatures, yet you were able to use them in a Jedi lightsaber—just as Anakin attuned the Yuuzhan Vong's lambent crystals to his. I've read that the rainbow gems, like

many of the unique life forms on this world, were bioengineered."

Understanding dawned on the warrior woman's face. "This similarity leads you to hope the scientists of Gallinore can help you understand the *Trickster*," she concluded, naming the living ship that Jaina and Zekk had stolen from a Yuuzhan Vong worldship.

"That's the plan." Jaina switched off her friend's Jedi weapon and handed it back.

They fell silent as Kyp made voice contact with the dock officials. He passed along the authorization codes and deftly maneuvered the ship down through layers of clouds. The three younger Jedi rose immediately, leaving him to power down the controls.

The ramp unfolded, and Jaina walked down and gazed around the docks with interest. She could see why this place was nearly invisible from above.

A stiff breeze stirred the thick, landbound clouds that filled the open docks and clung to the trees in the city beyond. Tall, swaying branches moved in and out of sight like timid forest animals. The docking bays were teeming with pilots, mechanics, and dock officials, all clad in flight suits fashioned from mottled shades of green. They, too, seemed to move in and out of the mists in random patterns. Some odd optical quirk made their movements appear nearly identical to that of the swaying foliage.

Even so, workers immediately converged on any newly landed ship, using stout little hover sleds to maneuver it into a docking bay covered by a tall, camouflaged canopy. It was hard to believe that Gallinore's sun could burn off the sheltering morning clouds before reaching its zenith. Jaina squinted up at the brightest patch of fog, noting the sun's position with dismay. She'd have to work fast.

"The customs building," Tenel Ka said, nodding toward a low, green structure. "City officials will be expecting us there." She set her shoulders back, in the manner of a warrior preparing to do battle, and set off at a brisk pace.

"JEDI ARE SWORN TO PROTECT ALL LIVING THINGS, YET I FIND MYSELF STRANGELY UNABLE TO SHED TEARS ON HIS BEHALF."

A fleeting grin touched Jaina's lips as she imagined the "diplomatic meeting" that would follow. Tenel Ka was a princess of Hapes, the dominant world in the Hapes Cluster, but she was here as a warrior to exhort others to prepare for the coming conflict. At Jaina's suggestion, all of the visiting Jedi except Lowbacca were dressed in green flight suits identical to those worn by the Gallinorians. She'd suggested this as a means of honoring local custom, of creating an impression of unity. Tenel Ka had been pleased with this notion, and she didn't ask if Jaina had had other reasons for wanting to blend in.

Kyp came down the ramp and checked the hatch leading into the cargo hold. Tenel Ka glanced over at the older Jedi. Although the

expression on her face did not change or her pace alter, disapproval rolled off her in waves.

Jaina stepped into the Dathomiri warrior's path and faced her down. "All right, let's have it."

Tenel Ka stopped and regarded Jaina with a cool, gray-eyed stare. "I understand your desire to learn from Gallinore's scientists. But why is Kyp Durrion with us? Surely you're not considering his offer of apprenticeship."

"Maybe I should. Kyp is an exceptionally powerful Jedi." Jaina paused for a brief, humorless smile. "He'd have to be. The only reason he's still alive is that people who mattered believed that his talent overbalanced his past crimes."

Tenel Ka lifted one red-gold brow. "It is not like you to be cynical."

"Practical," Jaina corrected. "Kyp Durrion knows things I don't. I could learn from him."

"Fact. That's what concerns me."

Jaina blew out a frustrated sigh and put down her best card—an endorsement powerful enough to clinch arguments and bring conversations to a dead stop. "Master Luke trusts him."

"Do you?" Tenel Ka shot back. "Can you, after what he did at Sernpidal?"

The blunt reminder hit Jaina like a punch to the gut. Not long ago, Kyp had used the Force to convince Jaina that enemy shipyards hidden among the fragments of the dead world Sernpidal were building super weapons. Kyp had manipulated her, using the Solo name and Jaina's personal reputation as a Rogue Squadron pilot to convince New Republic forces to join in the attack. That deception still stung, as did the knowledge that Rogue Squadron, largely at her instigation, had attacked a civilian target.

She tried to dismiss all this with an impatient shrug. "The mission was a success. The destruction of the Vong's new worldship strengthened the Republic position."

"Perhaps," Tenel Ka allowed. "Yet I wonder if your willingness to attack Sernpidal had as much to do with vengeance as tactics."

A Wookiee howl of protest preempted Jaina's retort. Lowbacca stepped up to Jaina's side, his long arms folded over his chest and his black eyes narrowed. He whuffed out a few curt, indignant phrases. Some of the nuances of the Wookiee language might have escaped Tenel Ka, but his meaning was clear enough to bring a faint flush to her cheeks.

She inclined her head. "I apologize, my friend. I meant no disrespect to your uncle Chewbacca's honor, or to the life debt you assumed in his name. His sacrifice on Sernpidal would indeed be diminished by vengeance." The look she sent at Jaina was pointed, but not as sharp as it might otherwise have been.

Kyp strode over to the trio. His gaze slid over them, lingering on Lowbacca's defensive stance. "What did I miss?"

"We're just getting ready to split up," Jaina said, mindful of the possible double meaning her words held—and certain that Kyp would pick up on the nuance. "Tenel Ka has some sort of diplomatic meeting to attend, and Lowie and I will go to the research center."

"I see. I'll stay with the ship and keep an eye on things."

"That should not be necessary," Tenel Ka observed. "Dimitor is a lawful city."

"All the more reason I should stay here," Kyp said in a dry tone. A glint entered his eyes and he turned his most charming smile on Tenel Ka. "Or perhaps I misunderstood. Were you inviting me to join you?"

The warrior's eyes widened, and for a moment her formidable composure faltered. Before she could formulate a suitably tactful refusal, Kyp sent her a mocking wink and then strode off toward their ship.

Jaina lifted a hand to her lips to conceal a smirk. Of course the Jedi Master had sensed the discord between the two young women, and he'd enacted this small, teasing vengeance on Jaina's behalf. His support amused and warmed her, even though she recognized the manipulation that prompted it. For whatever reason, Kyp wanted to take over her training. She intended to see just how far he'd go to meet this particular objective.

She waited until Tenel Ka left with a pair of city officials, then she turned grateful eyes to her genuine supporter. Lowbacca acted as a buffer between Jaina and her other friends. Tenel Ka was not the only young Jedi who followed Jaina but did not entirely trust her. No one questioned the Wookiee's integrity, however, and his continued support of Jaina helped mitigate their concerns.

"I don't know what I'd do without you," she said sincerely.

Lowbacca's brief, disgruntled response brought a grin to Jaina's face. "If EmTeedee was still around, he'd probably translate that as 'Master Lowbacca respectfully suggests that without his intervention, you might inadvertently enter targeting coordinates that focus your weapons upon vital portions of your own anatomy.' I'll bet you really miss that little droid."

The Wookiee let out an unmistakably derisive chuff.

Jaina tucked her arm through his. "Me either," she agreed.



Jaina and Lowbacca wove through the mist-laden maze of green marble buildings to the sprawling research district. A letter from Ta'a Chume, Tenel Ka's grandmother and the former Queen Mother of Hapes, earned them full cooperation and unquestioned access to the facility. Within moments, Lowbacca was seated before a terminal, his furry digits flying as he sifted through computerized records of the Gallinore research, searching for anything that might provide a link between a technology that he and Jaina could understand, and the secrets of the *Trickster*, their stolen Yuuzhan Vong ship.

But apparently even Ta'a Chume's influence was not enough to grant them unsupervised access to this information. A dark-haired young woman wearing a technician's white tunic and a perpetually worried expression stayed nearby to "help" them. Jaina waited until the tech's comlink beeped, then bent over and rested her chin on the Wookiee's shoulder.

"Can you get me a reading on the layout and security?" she said softly.

Lowbacca growled a question. In response, Jaina sent him mental images of their recent battle in the Yuuzhan Vong worldship, flashed back to him the terror and uncertainty of fighting their way through the unknown. A knowledge of the worldship's layout might have made a difference, might have saved some of the lives lost in that terrible place. A soft, whirring moan escaped the Wookiee as he acknowledged their shared loss, and the prudence of Jaina's precaution.

She straightened up and turned to the technician. "I need to speak with Sinsor Khal. Can you show me where I might find him?"

A peculiar expression crossed the young woman's face, but she pulled out her comlink again and relayed Jaina's request. Lowbacca deftly affixed a holocube to an output terminal and transferred the requested data. This he surreptitiously passed to Jaina.

In moments an armed escort arrived and guided her though a maze of pristine white halls. They left her before a large door, nodded toward a palm reader mounted beside the door, and left at a much faster pace than that which had brought them here.

Jaina shrugged, then placed her hand against the device. The door irised open. She ducked through into a large room, one crowded with so much equipment, all of it in such disarray, that for a moment Jaina suspected she was viewing the result of a head-on collision between two large ships. The door snapped shut behind her with a clang like that of a prison door.

She crept through the room, surveying it as she might a battlefield. When she knew all she needed, she slipped out the way she'd come and retraced her steps through the corridors, finally making her way back to their ship.

Kyp awaited her in the hold, his lean face grim and his eyes holding no trace of the sly humor he'd turned against Tenel Ka. He nodded toward their shared secret—the Hapan prisoner hidden in the hold, kept in a Force-induced trance so deep that the two other Jedi couldn't perceive the presence of a fifth person aboard ship.

"Let's hear it," he said without preamble.

"You know that this man is a Yuuzhan Vong collaborator," Jaina began, "and that he attacked Tenel Ka, a member of the Hapan royal family. That's a capital crime on Hapes. If we hadn't helped him escape, he would have been executed."

Kyp shifted one shoulder in a negligent shrug. "Jedi are sworn to protect all living things, yet I find myself strangely unable to shed tears on his behalf."

"The Vong gave him a coral slave implant," she went on. "This is a communication and control device. I want to have it removed, tested, and modified. Ultimately I want to hit the Yuuzhan Vong with their own weapons."

Interest sparked in the Jedi Master's eyes. Jaina activated the holocube, and a shining model of the building's layout took shape, floating in the air between them. "Lowbacca's good. He got me this without anyone realizing what he was doing. He can just as easily remove any records from the system. We get this man in, we get out, we erase our footsteps. Lowbacca can wipe anyone off the security records we don't want to leave there, and rumor has it that you've had practice removing unwanted memories from people."

She glanced expectantly at Kyp. He nodded for her to continue. "Here's the lab, down in this lower level. I've already been there."

These plans have all the details we'll need, but I wanted to see the layout with my own eyes and get a feel for it through the Force. Here's what I think we should do."

Kyp listened intently to her plan, his expression inscrutable. His eyes flickered, once, when she concluded her proposal by noting, "You asked me to be your apprentice. This is where it starts."

He leaned against the wall and folded his arms. "You have a high opinion of your value."

"That's the asking price." Jaina spread both hands and gave him her best imitation of her father's trademark smirk. "Do you want me or not?"

For a long moment the two Jedi locked stares. "You know we could never speak of this, not to anyone," Kyp said.

"Who would I tell?" she retorted. "Uncle Luke?"

He lowered his head in a slow nod, holding her gaze. "All right, then. Let's get it done."



It took both Jedi to wrestle their prisoner into a green flight suit, even though he was still deep in stasis. The Hapan was a big man, at least a head taller than Kyp and heavily muscled. He was enough trouble as deadweight; Jaina figured he'd be much worse awake. His recent fight with Tenel Ka had revealed considerable skill in the Hapan kickboxing style. Two Jedi could certainly handle him, but not without drawing unwanted attention.

Finally the task was done. Jaina sat back on her heels and tucked a stray wisp of brown hair behind one ear. "I say we transport him like this. Put him on a repulsor sled."

Kyp shook his head. "Three of us walking away from the ship wouldn't draw much notice. Two walking and one floating—that's likely to raise some questions. Plus, the ventilation tunnels are light

before an invisible fist seized his mind and crushed it into darkness and silence.

The Hapan hauled himself to a sitting position and scuttled away, crab-walking backward as he put as much distance between himself and the young Jedi as possible. "Why?" he demanded in a dry, raspy tone.

Jaina knew precisely what he meant. Why had his escape from the prisons of Hapes been arranged? Why were his two compatriots allowed to continue the escape, while he was kept behind? Why had he been mind-controlled and stashed in the hold of some ship?

She sent him a reassuring smile. "Princess Tenel Ka has issued a conditional pardon. She understands the Yuuzhan Vong implant might have prompted you to attack her. We've brought you to Gallinore to have it removed. Afterward, if you'll recant your desertion, and if Jedi inquiry shows that you're free of any further treasonous intent, your pardon will take full effect."

"Why?" he repeated in a stronger voice.

"We're trying to win back deserters, especially those who might possess valuable information about the Yuuzhan Vong. Hapes needs all the good pilots it can get."

Wary blue eyes searched her face as the man weighed her claim. "And the other two men? The pirates who escaped with me?"

"They'll be picked up before they leave Hapes's atmosphere. Since we're circumventing Hapan law, we've got to keep this quiet until we know for sure that the effort is worthwhile. Your friends' getaway ships will be reported as destroyed. That way, if they don't rehabilitate, they'll already be listed as dead."

Jaina lifted one eyebrow, underscoring the choices before him. She deliberately made her story grim enough to be plausible and added a powerful nudge of Jedi persuasion. After a moment the man accepted his "reprieve" with a nod. The two Jedi helped him to his feet and flanked him as they headed toward the pilot refresher facility.

"We're going in through the ventilation tunnels," Jaina explained as they slipped into a dimly lit side corridor.

They stopped before a large, circular hatch. Kyp caught her wrist as she reached for the controls. "Wait. The light in this hall could trigger an alarm."

He drew his lightsaber and swept it in a shining arc toward the ceiling lights. They flared sharply and then blinked

out, leaving the hall in darkness.

Immediately a profound chill swept through Jaina. She reached out for their prisoner with a hand that suddenly was heavy and numb. Her fingers closed around the Hapan's wrist. His skin felt cold to the touch.

"What is this?" he demanded thickly. "What's happening?"

"I have to lower our body temperature to match the air temperature in the tunnels," Kyp responded. "It might not be comfortable, but it's necessary. Move slowly, keep alert. Remember, if we're caught, the Gallinore officials will send you right back to that Hapan prison."

"I copy," the man mumbled.

INSTINCTIVELY JAINA THREW OUT ONE HAND TOWARD HER ATTACKER. DARK LIGHTNING FLARED FROM HER FINGERTIPS.

and heat sensitive. The sled doesn't generate much heat, but the control lights might be enough to tip off the sensors."

"I could reset the controls."

"Sure, but that would take time. I doubt we've got much to spare."

Jaina conceded with a nod. She watched intently as Kyp placed a hand on the man's temples. She felt the Jedi Master reach out into the prisoner's mind, felt him use the Force to peel back the shields holding him in torpor.

The big man came awake suddenly, thrashing and sputtering like a man drowning in a sea of nightmares. His eyes focused on Jaina, and he abruptly fell still and silent. Memory flickered in them, and then a searing flash of panic—hers had been the last face he'd seen

Jaina eased the door open and hauled herself into the tunnel. The rounded passage was just big enough to crawl through, and it sloped downward. As Jaina pulled herself along, she quickly became grateful for the decline. The tunnels were cold, and her chilled limbs felt sluggish and unresponsive.

Finally the tunnel leveled out, and an almost imperceptible bluish glow dawned at the end. Jaina picked up her pace. The tunnel opened into a rounded corridor big enough to allow them to walk upright. She rolled out, reveling in the soft light. The tunnel was still painfully cold, but after the utter darkness of the side tunnels, the faint, diffused light felt oddly reassuring. She stepped aside to allow the Hapan to emerge. The big man crawled out and stretched, then rolled his shoulders to loosen cramped muscles.

He fell into step with the two Jedi, walking nearly as quietly as his much-smaller captors. Jaina reached out with the Force, trying to measure his mood and intentions. She picked up a high level of anxiety, but under the circumstances that seemed reasonable.

They moved silently through a maze of tunnels, counting off side tunnels and drainage shoots, following the pattern that Kyp had committed to memory. Finally the Jedi Master pointed to a hatch on the far wall. "That's it," he said softly.

Without warning, the Hapan dropped to the floor and executed a quick leg sweep. His attack was unbelievably quick—would have been even if he hadn't been chilled to near-immobility. Kyp went down, and his tumble gave Jaina time to stumble back a couple of paces. The prisoner completed the spin and came up in one fluid movement.

He pivoted to one side, brought his knee up and snapped off a quick kick. Instantly Jaina fell back into lessons learned during her brief apprenticeship with Mara Jade. Recognizing the feint, she ducked under the first high kick. She pivoted hard toward the kickboxer, timing her momentum to his second kick and slamming her stiffened forearm against the sensitive tendon just below the bunched muscle of his calf.

The jolt of impact was not nearly as hard as she'd expected. Too late, Jaina realized the double feint. The Hapan's third, powerful kick caught her off balance and sent her flying.

Jaina hit the rounded wall and rolled down. She came up on one knee, too cold and too angry to feel the pain that would certainly come later. The kickboxer advanced, sweeping one stiffened leg up high for a powerful downward chop.

Instinctively Jaina threw out one hand toward her attacker. Dark lightning flared from her fingertips. Jagged, eerily dancing tendrils caught the Hapan, lifted him, and then hurled him across the tunnel.

Once before Jaina had unleashed Force lightning. This time it came more easily—but once summoned, it was harder to dispel. Streaks of dark energy edged with searing blue-violet shadows poured from her, pinning the writhing, struggling man against the tunnel wall.

She was dimly aware of another power falling like a shadow on her dark and brilliant rage. The lightning ended with an abrupt, audible sizzle as Kyp seized her wrist. He spun her around to face him.

For a moment she simply stared at the Jedi Master, stunned at her own actions and not at all sure whether they would meet with condemnation or approval.

Kyp broke off first. She tracked his gaze up at the ceiling, and noticed the faint hiss coming from dozens of small round openings. "The flash set off the sensors," he said curtly. "Let's get him out."

They hauled the dazed Hapan to his feet and started toward the hatch. A wall of durasteel suddenly slammed down into their path, sealing off the tunnel. Jaina spun in time to see a similar wall fall behind them. The hiss rose in volume, and suddenly a stream of cold, acrid-smelling fluid poured from the valves.

A swift flood of coolant poured into the locked-off tunnel, knocking Jaina's feet from under her and sending her spinning down into the churning fluid. She went under briefly and came up spitting out a mouthful of the bitter stuff.

Something seized her foot and yanked her under again. Jaina flailed about until her hand grazed some metallic hold on the rounded wall. She seized it and struggled to pull away from her attacker. She hauled herself upward, found another handhold. Up she went, rising toward the ceiling by slow, painful centimeters. The coolant numbed her, and her lungs ached and burned. Her struggle ceased abruptly, and she shot upward. Her head broke the surface, and for a few moments all she could do was gasp in air and cling to her cold metal perch.

Jaina looked around for Kyp. He'd found a similar handhold. To her surprise, his free arm was looped under the Hapan's chin, keeping him afloat in a rescuer's hold. She'd assumed that the big man had been trying to pull her under, but realized at a glance that he was in no condition to continue his attack.

The coolant level continued its swift rise, and the powerful spray coming from above made breathing difficult and speech impossible. Jaina slanted a glance toward the ceiling. The fluid would soon reach the top. If they didn't find a way out soon, they'd drown.

Kyp caught her eye and looked pointedly toward her left—toward the unseen force that had tried to pull her under. Jaina noted the vortex rising to the surface, spreading toward them. A drainage tunnel, most likely.

The Jedi Master let go, deliberately releasing himself and his charge into the powerful spiral. Jaina took a long, deep breath and followed.

Down she fell, whirling through the cold and darkness. Her tumbling descent slowed as the wall narrowed, and then diffused light rushed toward her through the tumbling water. Silhouetted against it were the dark, tumbling shapes of Kyp and their prisoner. Then, suddenly, both men stopped.

Jaina continued to hurtle forward. She made out the regular shape of a metal grate, and then a heartbeat later she slammed headlong into it.

Coolant continued to surge through the narrow tunnel, pinning her to the grate like a mynock stuck to an accelerating starfighter. She struggled to free herself, but the force of the rushing fluid was too great.

She felt Kyp's touch through the Force, and then she was sliding to one side of the grate, moved by a psychic shove more powerful than the swift-flowing stream. The flare of Kyp's lightsaber darted toward the hatch, and the lock gave way.

The three of them tumbled out, falling into a wide, shallow tank. Jaina struggled to the side and hauled herself over. She tumbled to

THE APPRENTICE

flooded through Jaina in a sudden wash of power, and her chilled limbs awoke to a thousand sharp prickles of pain. She clung to the guard's wrists, certain that she'd fall if he let her go. Though every instinct prompted her to fight, Jaina focused on the struggle within. She was perilously close to losing consciousness. If she did, then all would be lost.

A bright flare of light filled the room, a burst of power that shattered Jaina's faltering concentration. She slid to the floor, no longer supported by the guard, and let the darkness claim her.



The dull humming in Jaina's ears rose swiftly to a shrill wail and then dissipated in a sharp, sudden burst. She sat up abruptly, feeling dazed and disoriented. After a moment, she remembered her mission, and the bruising tumble that had brought them this far.

She looked around. The Hapan had recovered consciousness. He leaned heavily against the now-empty coolant tank, eying her with undisguised horror. Jaina's gaze quickly slid away from the accusing stare. Four guards lay sprawled across the floor. Kyp Durron knelt by one of them, rhythmically pumping the man's chest with both hands. The guard's body suddenly jerked, and the bluish color began to fade from his face.

The Jedi Master rose to his feet and extended a hand to Jaina. She took it and let him pull her up. "Wow," she said, gazing at the Force-blasted guards. "Who did this, you or me?"

"We've got to keep moving," Kyp said, ignoring her question. "The longer this takes, the slimmer our chances of walking out of here."

Jaina nodded. "Before we go, I need you to show me how to wipe away memories. They can't remember they saw us here."

When he did not respond, she continued her argument. "The scientist is a political prisoner. Secrecy is vital, not only so we can get our prisoner where he needs to go, but also to stave off more reactionary response to the Jedi."

"AN APPRENTICE SHOULD LEARN FROM A MASTER, NOT REPEAT HIS MISTAKES."

Kyp held his silence for several moments. "No."

"No?" she repeated, incredulous. "You said yourself that no one can know about this."

"And I hold to that. But I'll do it myself."

She lifted one brow in challenge. "What's the matter? Not the sort of lessons you had in mind?"

"An apprentice should learn from a Master, not repeat his mistakes."

the floor—and came to a stop just short of several pairs of booted feet.

Strong hands seized her and dragged her upright. Inner warmth

"This is no different from the little Jedi mind tricks that every Jedi uses without a twinge of guilt," she argued. "You're just better at it than most. If I'd wanted to become a singer of ballads, I'd be traveling with Tionne. You want to win the war against the Yuuzhan Vong. That's why we're here. Show me."

The Jedi Master let out a profound sigh. He grimaced as if steeling himself for an unpleasant task, then dropped to one knee. "Watch, feel, and follow," he instructed, and then he reached out to one of the prisoners.

Jaina felt the older Jedi's power reach into the man's mind. Kyp formed the image of a morning-misted sun, barely visible above the forest horizons of Gallinore—about the time, Jaina recalled, that they had landed. With smooth, cool strokes, Kyp swept away the memory from that moment to this. He eased away, like a thief creeping from a plundered home.

Slowly Kyp broke the contact with the fallen guard and lifted his eyes to hers. His face was still pale from the chilling tumble, and the deep shadows beneath his eyes made them look vividly green. The power in them, though fading, was both eerie and compelling. "Now you."

Jaina nodded and reached out to another guard. But instead of envisioning the morning sun, she focused upon an image of a chronometer. Slowly she forced it into backward motion, stripping away moments from a man's life.

When the task was done, she looked to the Jedi Master. He studied her for a moment, his expression unreadable. "You have a knack for this," he said at last. "Good control. Very precise. You take that one, I'll do the other. Let's get this over with."

In moments they were back on their way to Sinsor Khal's lab. Jaina placed her hand on the palm reader, and the door slid open. A small, thin man glanced up from his work. At first glance there was nothing particularly unusual about him. His sandy hair was neatly groomed, and his beard short and trimmed. He wore a red lab coat marked with a few dark spots.

"Professor Khal?" Jaina inquired.

"I am he. And you'd be Ta'a Chume's young protégé," he said easily. "Welcome."

He came forward, one hand extended in greeting. At close range she noted the faint, coppery scent emanated from the red garments, and realized that the color was chosen for practicality, or perhaps camouflage. This was a man who dealt in blood, and his red lab coat served the same purpose in this venue that the green flight suits did above.

Jaina took Sinsor Khal's hand, noting as she did that the scientist was not much taller than she. She could look him directly in face without tipping back her head—an unusual experience for the small young woman.

The scientist did not return her scrutiny. In fact, his eyes never settled on her or the two men behind her. Obviously he was aware of them, but he seemed strangely detached. Most people would have commented on their wet clothes, their disheveled appearance. Curious, Jaina reached out through the Force. There was little to read. Sinsor Khal was strangely closed to her. The

only perception she could pick up was a neutral curiosity, devoid of almost any emotional flavoring and far different from any human response she'd encountered before. They were not persons but... specimens, perhaps?

She quickly withdrew her hand and gestured toward the tall Hapan. "This man has the implant."

"Just put him over there," he said, gesturing.

"There" was a long table, bordered with a small gutter and slanted downward slightly toward a pair of drains.

Kyp turned a dubiously stare toward Jaina. "It'll be fine," she asserted.

The prisoner didn't share her optimism. The struggle to get him onto the table ended abruptly when Sinsor Khal placed a small blaster-shaped weapon against the man's shoulder and pressed the trigger. The Hapan slumped over the table.

"Now then," the scientist announced. "All set for a quick vivisection and a general tune-up. A figure of speech," he added cheerfully, as if he perceived the stormcloud frown gathering on Kyp's face.

Jaina and Kyp worked together to shift the big man onto the table. As she straightened, hands to the small of her aching back, Jaina felt a flash of mental power, a force of mind weirdly similar to that of a Jedi. She whirled toward it and stared directly into Sinsor Khal's face. The scientist was looking at her, really looking, with an intensity that suggested he saw things most people could never fathom.

"I know you," he observed.

Jaina shook her head. "From what Ta'a Chume said, you were already a guest of Gallinore's government when I was learning to walk. I've never been to Gallinore before."

An odd smile slipped onto Sinsor Khal's face. He held his hand out, palm up. A small, sharp tool rose from the tray and settled down into his grasp with practiced ease. Jaina's jaw fell, but the scientist hardly seemed to notice his own feat.

"I didn't say we'd met," the failed Jedi specified. "I said I know you."

Kyp started forward. Jaina placed one hand on his arm. "We've got to get back," she said softly. "We still have some work to do to make sure there's no record of our passing."

After a moment, Kyp nodded agreement. They left their prisoner in Sinsor Khal's dubious care and retraced their steps through the corridors, seeking out all those they'd encountered. The older Jedi insisted on doing most of the work. Jaina was content to let him do as he willed. She'd stretched her Force powers to new levels today, and the scientist's words echoed through her thoughts like mocking laughter. She could not ignore them, could not deny them—not considering the task still before her.

Finally Kyp returned to the ship, leaving Jaina to deal with Lowbacca. As she entered the research center, all the chill and pain of the tunnels seemed to come back to her, centering in a cold lump in the pit of her stomach.

Lowbacca was still seated at the terminal, his furry face engrossed. The dark-haired tech had grown bored of her assignment and sat wearily at another workstation. A faint smile touched Jaina's lips. The Wookiee loved computers. He probably

THE PRISONER

Hapan Kickboxer: Male Human, Sol 10; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 18 (+5 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 80/14; Atk +14/+9 melee (1d6+3, crit 20, punch) or +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 3; Rep 3; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 7. Challenge Code: D.

Equipment: Prisoner's clothes.

Skills: Bluff +4, Diplomacy +0, Disguise +0, Escape Artist +9, Intimidate +13, Jump +7, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +5, Tumble +9.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Martial Artist, Mobility, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (punch), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

had scant perception of the hours that had passed since his arrival. In a way, that made her task easier.

Jaina came up behind him and leaned down, resting her chin on his shoulder. Her eyes drifted shut, and she drew in a long, steadying breath. The familiar, musty scent of Wookiee fur filled her senses. She reached out through the Force and for a moment savored the solid, loyal presence that was Lowbacca. The only friend who truly trusted her, the only Jedi who looked at her and saw the Jaina she once had been.

She stealthily slipped him a holocube. The Wookiee quickly transferred the needed information and returned it to her. When he slipped it into her hand, she caught his big paw and clung to it for a moment. He tipped his head to one side and slanted a curious look back up at her. His nose wrinkled at the scent of coolant that clung to her nearly-dry flight suit.

"Long story," she said softly. "I need you to get into the security records. I was never there. Make that happen."

The Wookiee nodded and erased her footsteps with a few deft movements. When a satisfied grunt announced his success, Jaina reached out through the link between them and brought to mind an image of a Wookiee sun dial. Slowly, inexorably, she forced the shadows to deepen.

A few moments later, Jaina straightened up and turned toward the tech. Puzzlement and then concern swept the woman's thin face. Suddenly Jaina was aware of the damp tracks of tears on her cheeks. She wiped them away, as she'd wiped the past few hours from Lowbacca's memory. ☐

"The Apprentice" takes place during the events of Elaine Cunningham's Star Wars: The New Jedi Order—Dark Journey available in February 2002.





BY PETER SCHWEIGHOFER
ILLUSTRATED BY RAMÓN PÉREZ

Welcome to Vaynai. Incoming vessels must first descend to an altitude of no more than 50 meters at least 20 kilometers from the archipelago. At this point ships may approach from the north or south vectors. Do not exceed the 50-meter altitude limit. If you travel above 50 meters, the local aristocracy may exercise its right to secure airspace. Enjoy your stay on Vaynai, and clear skies.

**— Vaynai Spaceport
automated Message to Spacers**

The rich and privileged view Vaynai as a pleasure planet, but to many others it's just another smuggler haven governed by vice, greed, and profit. Near the end of the Perlemian Trade Route, somewhere between the Corporate Sector and the Tion Cluster, sits an unassuming water-world known for a modest aquaculture industry. Most commercial vessels visiting Vaynai land directly on the behemoth harvester-processor ships to take on cargoes of preserved foodstuffs. Some divert their course to Vaynai spaceport for more risky yet potentially more profitable purposes.

The Vaynai archipelago formed millions of years ago along an ancient subduction zone. As one tectonic plate slid under the

other, molten rock boiled up through immense volcanoes that broke the ocean's surface. After the volcanoes became dormant, waves and storms slowly eroded the cinder cones, leaving behind towering plugs of igneous rock—the basis for the Vaynai archipelago. Explorers first settled the green surfaces of these mesas rising from the shallow ocean. When the aquaculture industry started, the corporate barons banished the general populace to caves within the islands and platforms extending from the shores, preserving the lush topside land for their own estates.

Today the surface belongs to various aristocrats—crimelords, corrupt politicians, reclusive nobles, and shady entrepreneurs—while visitors, merchants, and unscrupulous individuals haunt the caves or construct towers rising from the shallow surf. The topside dwellers value their privacy and enforce arbitrary laws to protect it. Mundane citizens avoid trespassing unless they accept the rare invitation to visit. Buildings, exhaust, starships, and vehicles may not rise above the islands' surfaces lest they pollute the pristine view. The average citizen lives in cave quarters carved from the rock below. The most fashionable addresses belong to

those wealthy enough to build towers attached to the islands, or those living in the cliffs. The farther underground one goes, the worse the neighborhood.

**spaceport regulations
and procedures**

Vaynai spaceport's regulating body consists of a consortium of island owners (usually represented by loyal aides or stewards who oversee estates in their absence). They occasionally set standards for law throughout the archipelago, fix tariffs, and resolve conflicts to ensure the general well-being of all topside aristocrats. Each island's security force consists of hired thugs or commissioned citizens in the pay of that particular topside aristocrat. Working from centralized facilities in the caverns, these militias patrol the streets, platforms, and corridors, resolve disputes, levy fines, conduct customs inspections, and collect tariffs. Interpretation and enforcement of law varies among individual islands based on the temperament of their owners and the corrupt nature of their commissioned security forces.

Space is a premium on the Vaynai islands, leaving little room for prisons. Most crimes have immediate penalties: seizure of assets,



vaynai: planetary data

Vaynai sits near the end of the Perlemian Trade Route, about 3 hours' hyperspace jump from Lianna. It orbits a main sequence star at just the right distance to provide a tropical climate throughout most of the planet. Its annual orbit takes 336 local days consisting of 29 standard hours. Temperatures reach a comfortable 30° centigrade during the day and dip to 20° at night. Lazy breezes alleviate most of the humidity. Although rain falls over much of Vaynai, the archipelago receives only light squalls in the late afternoon and evening.

The spaceport at Vaynai archipelago hosts the only permanent settlement. Shallow oceans cover the rest of the planet's surface, providing a breeding ground for abundant aquatic life. Nobody's really mapped its underwater features, though the aquaculture concerns possess a good understanding of where to harvest the best catch.

Inhabitants avoid Vaynai's two other notable regions: the Boiling Sea and Distant Peaks. Underwater tectonic activity vents heat and subterranean gasses into the Boiling Sea, causing its surface to bubble and steam. The gasses filtering through the water transform it into a mild acid; even the steam can begin discoloring the hull of a floating harvester

or low-flying starship. A small amount of water from the Boiling Sea inflicts 1d4 points of damage on contact. Submerged individuals, as well as waterborne vessels, sustain 10d4 points of damage initially, then 1d4 points of damage per round. Those inhaling the acidic steam must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) or suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. Ten rounds later, those who fail must make another save or temporarily lose another 1d4 points of Constitution.

Storms wrack the shores of the Distant Peaks, which rise sharply out of the ocean and disrupt the natural currents. Geologically young, the mountains offer little shelter on their steep slopes, nurturing only simple lichens, flocks of avians, and several species of insect. Waves relentlessly pound the rocky shores. Anyone in the breakers must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) each round or suffer 3d6 damage from being pummeled against the jagged rocks (a successful save reduces damage by one-half). Wind and storm make approach by air difficult: add -7 circumstance penalty to all maneuvers near the Distant Peaks.

Vaynai's aristocrats frequently exile criminals to these inhospitable regions, a sentence perhaps worse than summary execution.

fines, or exile to one of the planet's less hospitable regions. Some aristocrats commute sentences of execution and exile (and seizure of assets when little exists to seize) by indenturing offenders to servitude with the Corporate Sector, essentially selling them into slavery.

Sample Class One Infractions

- » Violating topside airspace on any island.
- » Trespassing topside.
- » Conspiracy against topside aristocrats.
- » Causing the death of an aristocrat or her duly appointed representative (including security forces).
- » Piracy (defined as any aggressive action against another vessel).

Penalty: Execution, exile to the Distant Peaks or the Boiling Sea, seizure of assets.

Sample Class Two Infractions

- » Murder or manslaughter.
- » Inability or refusal to pay debts or fees.
- » Theft from a topside aristocrat.
- » Shipjacking.

Penalty: Fine of up to 15,000 credits, or seizure of assets.

Sample Class Three Infractions

- » Theft, robbery, or burglary.
- » Assault or reckless endangerment.
- » Aiding or abetting a convict.
- » Operating without proper datawork (licenses, identification).

Penalty: Fine of 100–5,000 credits, or seizure of assets.

violating topside airspace

Topside aristocrats value their privacy. Laws against violating topside airspace largely affect spacers unaware that inconsiderate flight plans might get their vessel blown from the sky.

Incoming ships must first descend to the planet's surface far from sight of the archi-

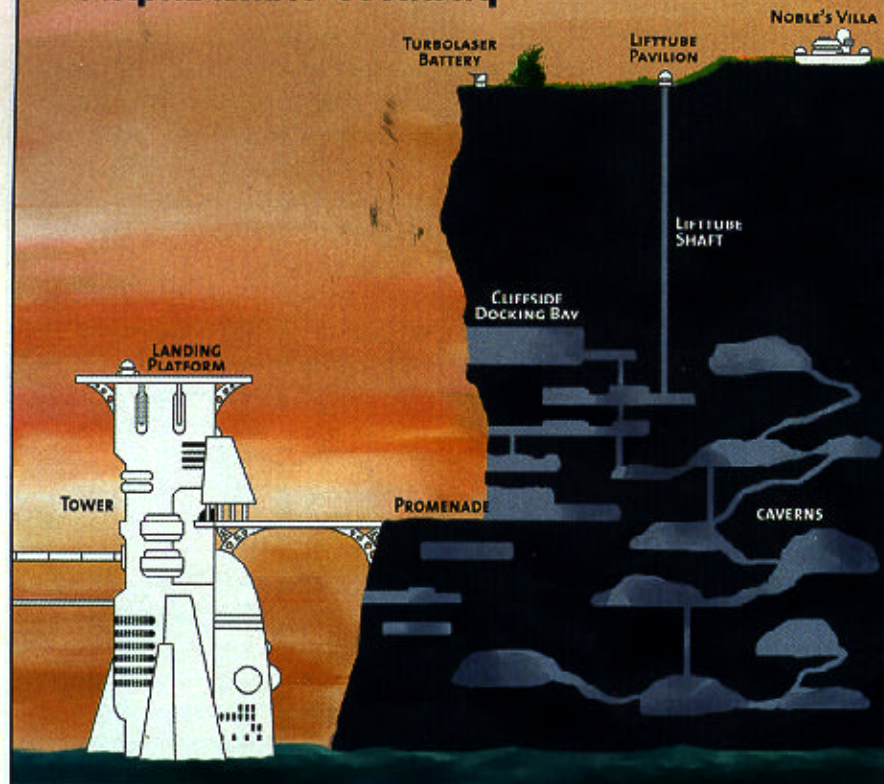
pelago—at least 20 kilometers out. Only when they've reached an altitude no more than 50 meters should they approach the spaceport. Inbound ships fly from the north and south, while outbound craft fly east or west before blasting away from the planet's surface. Any craft flying over 50 meters near the archipelago is a fair target for the topside gunnery defenses. Too many spacers ignore the Message to Spacers (METOSP) broadcast continuously over major comm channels—topside defenses quickly blast them from the sky, leaving greedy scavengers to salvage the wreckage from the shallow ocean floor.

landing facilities

Vaynai offers a variety of landing facilities to visiting spacers. Some large caves carved out

the vaynai archipelago

vaynai island cutaway



of the cliffs serve as docking bays, but most ships land on platforms built atop sturdy towers rising from the shore, or on repulsorlift-assisted landing grids floating just above the water. Most offer comparable services, though only the cavernous docking bays have adequate facilities for major repairs. Lack of centralized flight traffic control doesn't create the chaos one might expect. Incoming ships maneuver through the light traffic until they find a vacant landing site and set down. Frequent visitors keep several preferred facilities in mind, moving on to the next if the first is occupied.

Facilities offer the standard array of services. Except for the cave docking bays, all landing areas are open to the sky, with access limited not by walls but by bridges or pliers connecting the platforms to the island. This doesn't prevent others using speeders or skimmers from maneuvering right up to the platform—sometimes an advantage when conducting business with locals. Some businesses consist solely of repulsorlift vehicles that hover near platforms with new arrivals. Although facility owners forbid commerce in similar services (fuel, resupply,

repair), these mobile entrepreneurs offer hot meals, unique trade items, souvenirs, and transport to other islands.

Facility owners collect fees related to their services, while visiting customs patrols accept tariffs for passengers and cargoes. Drawn from the aristocrat-sponsored militia, the customs inspectors care more for collecting the straight 10% of a cargo's value than enforcing galactic standard safety codes and trade regulations. Permits and licenses don't matter as long as visitors pay the cargo taxes and cause no trouble. The topside aristocrats know that open commerce lines their pockets with tax revenue and stimulates the local economy.

Fee/Tax	COST IN CREDITS
Docking Berth (per day)	
Fine ship	60
Tiny ship	250
Small ship	300
Medium-size ship	1,200
Large ship	2,500
Passenger tax (per passenger)	25
Cargo tariff	10% cargo's value

Island districts

Each island contains several districts, each characteristic of its location on the island. The aristocrats and their minions inhabit the topside estates. Upscale businesses, homes, and docking platforms bristle from the island's perimeter or look out from the cliff faces. Lower-class establishments and warrens of personal dwellings honeycomb each island's interior.

topside estates

Vaynai's privileged topside residents include bored aristocrats from other systems, former senators, high-ranking military personnel, influential politicians, and successful entrepreneurs from both the legitimate business world and the shadowy realm of the criminal elite. Some use their estates year-round as residences and business headquarters. Others keep their Vaynai property as another luxury retreat, a repository for a small portion of their wealth or business capital they might visit only once a year.

Individual topsiders own each island, making their homes on the flat, green surfaces above the unsightly towers, tunnels, and industries. Most maintain the natural beauty, cultivating gardens, trimming greens, and even allowing the indigenous jungle vegetation to sprawl over certain areas. These villas cater to their personal tastes, with architecture ranging from pleasingly organic to fantastically eccentric. Careful landscaping conceals essential facilities such as gunnery platforms, com-scan installations, landing pads, and guard stations.

Most topside estates share several features. Villas contain the owner's main residence, offices, and other comforts, though some construct compact pavilions around the island catering to their interests (hunting lodges, spas, painting shelters, amphitheaters). Lakes provide reservoirs for collecting rainwater or holding distilled water pumped up from desalinization plants below. Lifttube pavilions allow the topsider's minions access to the island's lower regions to enforce laws and collect tariffs. Low platforms or marked fields provide areas for vessels to land, though some construct elaborate underground hangars. Gunnery emplacements face outward along the island's perimeter, protecting airspace and shooting down violators. Some peer out

from caves in the upper cliffs, though others are mounted on the surface and screened behind lush vegetation. Other defenses include frequent patrols with guard-beasts and carefully concealed detection sensors.

Weapon: Cave-mounted quad laser cannons;
Fire Arc: Front; **Attack Bonus:** +6 (+2 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 6d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB/S +0, M -2, L n/a.

Weapon: Surface-mounted turbolaser platform; **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +6 (+2 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 5d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB/S +0, M -2, L n/a.

promenade and towers

The next most fashionable district on the Vaynai islands follows the shoreline—the towers, docks, promenade, and cliffside businesses. Although these structures have access to open sky, they don't have the sheer space of topside estates.

Towers rise from the surf, providing luxury homes for upper-class citizens, space for large businesses and industry, and docking platforms for starships. Bridges allow access to the island caves and promenade. Their isolation provides a degree of privacy and security. Many corporate towers provide work, storage, and living spaces, forming a semi-independent community. Towers cannot exceed a certain height lest they violate the privacy of topside owners.

Each island also has a broad balcony avenue circling the perimeter. This promenade forms a commercial hub that showcases the most upscale businesses. Visitors disembark from their ships on platforms or caves and—avoiding the dark and unsavory caverns—wander the open-air promenade seeking quality goods and services. Restaurants, casinos, shops, hotels, and other fine establishments catering to spacers line the promenade's cliffs. The balcony side offers a view out over the sea, as well as access to bridges leading to other islands, docking platforms, and raised walkways to the towers.

Other dwellings and establishments jut from the cliffside. Generally, they are reached through interior caverns, exterior bays, or stairways and lifttubes from the promenade. These include lesser homes for citizens who can pay for a view outside,



docking and repair bays, and industries built directly on the shoreline. Those with access from the caverns employ basic safeguards to keep out the unsavory denizens of that district.

caverns

The caves that honeycomb each island form the most disreputable neighborhoods. They shelter shadowy businesses, colonies of homeless refugees, gangs that prey on the weak, and industries that abuse their workers and pay only a few scraps of food each day. Anyone with wealth who lives or works in this district pays for solid defenses to ward off unwanted riff-raff. Visitors wander into the caverns only to conduct trade at establishments that offer goods they cannot find elsewhere in the archipelago.

Cavern denizens provide their own illumination in the form of glow rods or iridescent fungus that grows in some dank caves. Passages and chambers owned by individuals and companies with wealth supply lighting, but only enough for essential operations. Those in power provide energy, water, and other services as needed for their busi-

ness—others eke out a living eating vermin and drinking natural water dripping through the rock.

The inner-most caves have the worst reputation and conditions: warrens of refugee caverns, garbage pits, gang hideouts, and industrial facilities. As one heads closer to the promenade, the caverns become somewhat more habitable: corridors of simple dwellings, shady establishments, storage areas, and worker dormitories. Companies with facilities in towers or the promenade often purchase sections of the caverns, maintaining and protecting them for workers and support personnel.

streysel island

Streysel typifies the numerous islands in the Vaynai archipelago. An eccentric art collector, Gallo Memm, owns the island and maintains a modest estate topside. He spends much of his time journeying throughout the galaxy on his luxury yacht, seeking new pieces for his personal collection. His Duros steward Havaal oversees the security force of hired thugs that patrols the island, enforces basic law, and collects taxes from

the vaynai archipelago

locals and visitors. Although Memm seems like a harmless art aficionado, many whisper that he has connections among the galaxy's most powerful politicians and crimelords.

The establishments on Streysel flourish thanks to Memm's policy of leaving island businesses alone to profit from offworld visitors (profits he in turn taxes). They provide a wide range of goods and services catering to spacers, and take advantage of native resources and local atmosphere.

uncle nyyv's floating eatery

Ships arriving at any of Streysel's docking facilities first receive a visit from Uncle Nyyv's Floating Eatery—often before customs officials show up to collect cargo tariffs. This Sullustan and his two assistants know starship crews have hearty appetites for real food after eating the substances their ship's autochef extrudes. Nyyv caters to such tastes by bringing his restaurant directly to customers.

A few minutes after a starship docks, a stripped-down transport barge ambles up to the platform edge, anchors itself with tractor beams, and extends a gangplank. The eatery's single deck contains an open-air seating area shaded by broad blue sails, with a small pilot house forward and an enclosed kitchen aft.

UNCLE NYyv's PRICES (PER PERSON)

Meal	Credits
Snack	1
Lunch	5
Dinner	7
Dessert	2
Crew Special	10

UNCLE NYyv's FLOATING EATERY

Craft: Modified Ubrikkian Transport Barge;
Class: Ground (Speeder); **Cost:** 150,000 (new), 80,000 (used); **Size:** Colossal (25 m);
Crew: Normal +2 (1 pilot); **Passengers:** 20;
Cargo Capacity: 1,000 metric tons; **Speed:** 35 (max. speed 100 km/h); **Altitude:** up to 40 meters; **Defense:** 4 (-8 size, +2 armor); **Hull Points:** 60; **DR:** 5;
Weapons: Tractor beam projector; **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack:** +0 (-8 size, +2 crew, +6 fire control); **Damage:** Special; **Range:** 50 meters.

Few hungry spacers can resist the tempting aromas that waft from the barge's greasy kitchen. Nyyv serves everything from snacks to full dinners, drawing on easy-to-prepare galactic cuisine and local dishes. The menu ranges from Sullustan magwip, Rodian rygg-noodles, and Ithorian foombah to batter-fried glaav, dried seaweed salad, and broiled cliff-snail. For safety concerns he serves no intoxicating beverages, so Nyyv offers drinks free with any paid meal. Many captains celebrate their arrival by taking advantage of Uncle Nyyv's "Crew Special"—a full meal in which each diner receives double portions plus dessert.

Nyyv's eatery isn't simply a tasty place to satisfy one's hunger for food—the affable Sullustan and his assistants also serve up a good sampling of local news to any friendly spacers willing to chat. They recommend the best establishments along the promenade catering to various needs. They collect and share gossip surrounding visiting spacers, vessels, their cargoes, and business in port. Nyyv even keeps track of political events on Vaynai and this particular corner of the Outer Rim.

Between meals, Nyyv pilots the eatery around Streysel's perimeter, keeping an eye open for incoming ships or hungry spacers hailing him from docking platforms. The Sullustan knows the vessels of his favored customers and gives them priority over the larger ships he would usually serve first.

Uncle Nyyv: Male Sullustan Exp 3; Init +1; Defense 12 (+1 Dex, +1 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: —/9; Atk +1 melee (1d4–1, vegetable knife) or +3 ranged; SQ Darkvision; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Equipment: Greasy apron, serving ladle, hot spatula, vegetable knife, 147 credits.

Skills: Appraise +4, Climb +1, Computer Use +4, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +3, Forgery +3, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (cuisine) +7, Listen +5, Pilot +3, Profession (chef) +10, Read/Write Sullustese, Repair +3, Speak Basic, Speak Rodese, Speak Sullustese, Survival +5.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Profession: chef), Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

Fil'vye transport

Onoron Fil'vye owns one of the large towers rising from Streysel's shoreline, one with two trios of docking platforms protruding from it at varying heights. The wealthy Bothan shipping magnate operates various commerce enterprises from Vaynai. His transport corporation's contracted freighter pilots specialize in rapidly shipping sensitive cargoes and passengers throughout the Outer Rim. Fil'vye supplies many businesses on the planet with rare goods essential to their operation. He sponsors smuggling ventures between the Tion Cluster, Corporate Sector, and Hutt Space, with occasional runs to other regions to take advantage of new business opportunities. Fil'vye covertly funds several secret facilities to ferment slick—a slimy seaweed oil with medicinal properties—and has cornered the planetary market for exporting it (see Doctor Guzzere's Clinic below).

During the day entrepreneurs crowd the broad bridge linking Fil'vye's tower to the promenade. The walkway leads to a central vaulted chamber, a vast public space where the Bothan's trade representatives, expeditors, pilots, and accountants conduct trade with local businesses seeking goods, freighter captains booking cargo, and spacers interested in working for the operation. A contingent of burly Klatooinians controls access to all other areas within the tower, including all six docking platforms, basement storerooms, armory, offices, and quarters for guards, pilots, and business personnel. At night a heavy blast door lowers to seal off the tower's main chamber from the access bridge.

Fil'vye's private office sits at the top, with transparisteel walls affording a stunning panoramic view of the other towers rising from Streysel's shoreline. He rarely wanders down to the main chamber, relying on his associates to brief him on business dealings. Occasionally Fil'vye invites potential pilots and customers to his office for a personal interview, especially if they might prove part of a particularly profitable operation. Nobody but Fil'vye may enter the chamber armed.

Pilots working for Fil'vye indenture themselves to his service in return for a vessel, repairs, frequent work, and meager pay. The Bothan starts them on simple commercial



runs, flying passengers and legitimate cargoes to easy ports with few hazards. Once they prove themselves, pilots receive more challenging assignments—smuggling contraband into heavily patrolled regions, catering to problem passengers, and conducting delicate business transactions far from Fil'vya's supervision. When their terms run out, these spacers rarely have more than when they started. Some savvy pilots manage to save enough to purchase the weary starships Fil'vya first granted them as company property.

Most of Fil'vya's docking platforms remain cleared for incoming contract pilots. He usually has one light freighter undergoing repairs or awaiting a new captain. The Bothan doesn't sell starships, but he gladly grants them to crews willing to indenture themselves to his service. One docking pad remains reserved for Fil'vya's six escort fighters.

ers, armed gigs "liberated" from Corporate Sector forces. These vessels escort freighters with particularly valuable cargo to and from orbit, protecting them from pirates and other hostile forces in the Vaynai system.

Fil'vya maintains good relations with Gallo Memm, allowing his customs agents to inspect incoming ships and examine cargoes in his main warehouse. Although the tower contains small storage areas for cargoes in transit, the Bothan maintains two large warehouses on Streysel. His personnel access the main warehouse cavern over another bridge from the tower to the cliffs. A blast door similar to the one on the tower protects the entrance. The cave within contains stockpiled cargoes as well as a few load lifters and cargo skiffs. Klatooineans regularly patrol the area to ruthlessly evict anyone sneaking inside or burrowing up from the caverns below.

Fil'vya keeps his most precious and illegal goods in another warehouse cavern, a smaller one few know exists (including Memm). The entrance lurks in the tower's shadow close to the waterline. A holographic projection of the rock face masks the wide cave mouth. The Klatooineans access this storehouse using repulsorlift

FIL'VYA TRANSPORT PATROL ESCORT

Craft: TIS Zeta 19; **Class:** Starfighter; **Cost:** 45,000 (new), 4,500 (used); **Size:** Tiny (15 m long); **Crew:** 2 (Skilled +4); **Passengers:** 2; **Cargo Capacity:** 200 kg; **Consumables:** 1 day; **Hyperdrive:** None; **Maximum Speed:** Attack; **Defense:** 22 (+2 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** None; **Hull Points:** 80; **DR:** 5. **Weapon:** Laser cannons (2 fire-linked); **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (+2 size, +4 crew, +2 fire control); **Damage:** 5d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S -2, M/L n/a.

Oneron Fil'vya: Male Bothan Nbl 9; Init -1 (Dex); Def 15 (-1 Dex, +6 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: 32/10; Atk +6/+1 melee (1d3, punch) or +5/+0 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Bonus class skill (Gather Information), call in a favor (3), inspire confidence +2, command +4; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 3; Rep 9; Str 11, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, fine tunic, comlink, datapad, 1,200 credits.

Skills: Appraise +10, Bluff +9, Computer Use +9, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +4, Forgery +5.

Gather Information +11, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +11, Knowledge

(organized crime) +12, Knowledge (spacer lore) +10, Profession (merchant) +11,

Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Bothan, Search +4, Sense Motive +12, Speak Basic, Speak

Bothan, Speak Huttese, Speak Ryl.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Quick Draw, Sharp-Eyed, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Fil'vya Transport Guard: Male Klatooinean Thg 3; Init +2 (Dex); Def 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: —/12; Atk +5 melee (2d8+2, force pike) or +5 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster pistol); SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Equipment: Blast vest and helmet, heavy blaster pistol, force pike, 2 credits.

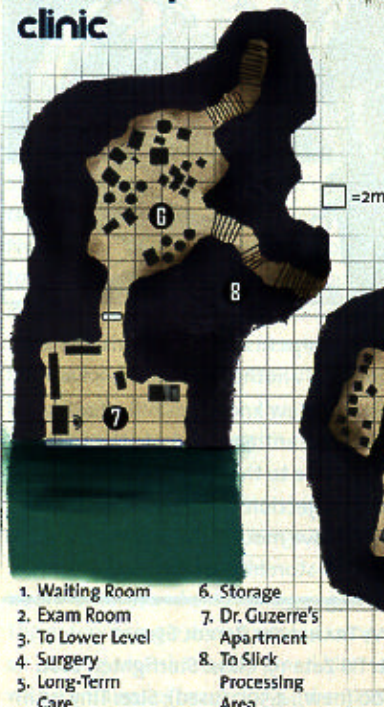
Skills: Intimidate +1, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Spot +0.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Weapon Group Proficiency (vibroweapons).

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vehicles, as no passageways or bridges connect it to the rest of the island or the tower. Here Fil'vye hoards valuables more suitable for generating quick, emergency capital than goods destined for trading. His people shuttle cargoes between one of

doctor guzerre's clinic



the lower docking platforms and the secret warehouse only at night to minimize the chance that someone might discover the cave.

Adventure Seed: Caught in the Middle

A mysterious patron hires the characters to find Fil'vye's most secure tower storeroom or warehouse cavern and plant incriminating evidence against him: six large crates of choice ryll worth more than one million credits. The patron, a rival crimelord, plans to pay Fil'vye a friendly visit and expose his "treachery," reason enough to start a feud between their two organizations and rouse Memm's anger. The characters might carry

out this deceitful plot, make off with the spice themselves, or inform Fil'vye of this scheme. If they don't act cautiously, they might earn the vengeful rage of one of these crimelords.

doctor guzerre's clinic

Deep within the caverns—and behind an armored door—a grizzled old Twi'lek doctor attends to Streysel's sick and injured. His clinic features a waiting area, examination room, surgical theater, small dormitory for recovering patients, and a disorderly niche that serves as his office. Chambers carved from the rock beneath the clinic house a supply room where Guzerre keeps his medicinal stores, and a meager apartment with a view outside.

The doctor receives all unarmed visitors. A security scanner embedded in the armored door monitors the corridor outside, alerting Guzerre of potential patients via computer units in his office niche and apartment. He requires visitors to deposit any weapons in a reinforced lock-vault outside the door, and monitors them on the security scanner to make sure they comply. The doctor explains that they may collect their weapons when they leave, as he controls access to the lock-vault from his computer. The security scanner gives Guzerre a +10 bonus to his Search skill when screening his clients for weapons.

Guzerre employs standard methods as well as lesser-known medical treatments.

Slick

When harvested, pureed, and fermented, the seaweed of Vaynai's shallow oceans congeals into a slimy oil with beneficial medicinal properties. Slick stimulates tissue regeneration when prepared as a salve and applied to wounds. It also accelerates natural healing when ingested.

A dose of slick may be used just like a medpac to treat a character's wounds. This can be done once per 24-hour period, and its effects stack with all other healing abilities. Or, when ingested, one dose restores 1d6 vitality and 1d3 wounds after one hour of rest. This can be done once per 1-hour period and, like external application, stacks with other healing abilities.

Slick has one major drawback. When applied to wounds or ingested, the chemicals stimulating the healing process also affect the mind, causing euphoric delirium. The sensation seems pleasant to the patient: He babbles incoherently, cannot comprehend others, and fumbles about ineffectively. On a failed Fortitude save (DC 30) the user suffers 1d3 points of Wisdom damage initially, and after 1 minute he must save again or suffer another 1d3 points of Wisdom damage. These ability points are restored at a rate of 1 per hour, even when the character does not rest.

Slick serves as a recreational substance in some circles. Oneron Fil'vye takes advantage of this by subsidizing slick's fermentation and exporting it from his base on Vaynai. Storing processed slick proves problematic, as the oil eventually eats through plastoid containers and spoils. Slick lasts longest in glass jars and canisters, though these are prone to breaking if handled roughly.

Doctor Guzerre: Male Twi'lek Exp 5; Init +1 (Dex); Def 12 (+1 Dex, +1 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP —/8; Atk +2 melee (1d4–1, scalpel) or +4 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Low-light vision; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 2; Rep 3; Str 9, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12. Challenge Code: A.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, datapad, medpac, surgical tools, 500 credits.

Skills: Bluff +6, Computer Use +8, Disable Device +7, Forgery +6, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (medicine) +8, Move Silently +4, Profession (doctor) +6, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Ryl, Sense Motive +3, Speak Basic, Speak Bothan, Speak Huttese, Speak Lekku, Speak Ryl, Survival +2, Treat Injury +8.

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

Including those using ryll from his native Ryloth and slick fermented from local seaweed (see sidebar). He maintains one of the few bacta tanks on the island available to common residents. He always has plenty of bacta, thanks to a quiet arrangement with Fil'vye Transport. The Bothan merchant often sends his Klatooonian guards to the clinic, though they often leave carrying mysterious glass canisters bound for their master's warehouse.

The doctor treats patients with no questions asked, as long as they pay his fees. Guzerre charges 50 credits for first aid, 100 per day of long-term care, 75 to treat poison, 50 to treat disease, and 120 per hour in the bacta tank (for details of treatment, see Chapter 4 of the core rulebook). If the doctor deems it necessary, he can employ ryll or slick to effect a more complete cure—doubling all costs of treatment.

Those who default on their payments quietly disappear amid the doctor's claims that they refused his treatment and walked out of the clinic. Many disappear into the caves below, where Guzerre operates a still for processing and fermenting Vaynai seaweed into slick. Here he keeps debtors chained to machinery night and day, crushing seaweed, feeding it into a still, and monitoring the fermentation process. A passage leads to a cave near the waterline, where a contact at Ocean Harvesters frequently dumps seaweed cleaned from seagoing vessels docking for overhaul and resupply.

Guzerre owes much of his operation—his clinic equipment, slick processing facility, and his seaweed supply—to Fil'vye's generous indenture terms. In return for his practice, the doctor supplies the Bothan with a steady source of slick for export to more profitable markets.



harvester maintenance station

Ocean Harvesters runs one of the largest aquaculture industries on Vaynai. Although a different island hosts the corporate offices, the company relies on many floating docks to maintain, resupply, and repair the massive harvester plants that ply the seas.

The Streysel facility typifies these installations. A long dock runs from a cave near the shoreline to a wide platform that provides a staging area for operations. Subsidiary platforms contain station offices and storage sheds for maintenance equipment, supplies, and fuel. Pillings firmly anchored in the rock below provide stability against tides for the docks and for arriving harvesters.

Incoming ships tie up at the platform and lower gangways to allow laborers ashore and maintenance personnel aboard. Technicians recharge power sources, replace desalinization filters, repair damaged machinery, clean seaweed and other debris from sluices, and restock preservation chemicals, packing material, and manufactured consumables for the crew.

The harvesters themselves operate self-sufficiently at sea—they dock for maintenance only once every two months.

Onboard desalinization units purify drink-

ing water, and autogalleys prepare meals from a portion of the food gathered. Harvesters locate fish using aquatic sensors, move over vast schools with their repulsorlift engines, then use tractor beam technology to draw clouds of fish from the water and into the packaging plant. Stations on the harvester's side allow for capturing and processing larger sea creatures. Vast refrigeration bays store food until freighters land on the harvester's docking platform to take product to market in systems along the Perlemian Trade Route and Hydian Way.

Ocean Harvesters' floating plants range far over Vaynai's abundant oceans gather-

HARVESTER PLANT

Craft: SoroSuub AQ21 Aqua-Harvester Factory; **Class:** Ground (Speeder); **Cost:** 2 million (new), 1 million (used); **Size:** Colossal (110 m); **Crew:** Normal +2 (8 operators, 2 engineers, 4 gunners); **Passengers:** 150; **Cargo Capacity:** 18,000 metric tons; **Speed:** 35 m (max. speed 100 km/h); **Altitude:** up to 20 meters; **Defense:** 6 (-8 size, +4 armor); **Hull Points:** 200; **DR:** 12.

Weapon: Defense blasters (4); **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** -2 (-8 size, +2 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 3d8; **Range:** 75 m.

the vaynai archipelago

ing and processing marine life for food. Enormous schools of fish flourish in the shallow seas, while larger animals cruise waters that can plunge several kilometers. They generally avoid navigational hazards, such as the Boiling Sea—where underwater tectonic plates spread apart—and the stormy shores of the Distant Peaks—relatively recent mountain ranges rising straight from the ocean.

For those who don't live aboard a hovering harvester, the islands of Vaynai spaceport are the only habitable land. Many cavern dwellers find work aboard Ocean Harvesters' facilities, spending months at sea living in cramped quarters, eating bland seafood mush, and working in degrading conditions. They dream of saving enough credits to open their own businesses in the Vaynai archipelago, or to head off into the galaxy to seek their fortune. Since Ocean Harvesters provides all their needs, their meager pay seems like a fortune; however, these hard-earned credits quickly disappear in port. When harvesters arrive at maintenance stations for repairs, laborers pour off the ship, scamper along the dock, and rush for the restau-

rants, entertainment halls, and casinos to relieve the tedium of months at sea. Few save enough credits to leave Vaynai.

Adventure Seed: Harvester Mutiny

The crew of one of Ocean Harvester's floating plants mutinies while far off at sea, and the company hires the heroes to retake the ship and return it intact. (Or the heroes might know one of the officers aboard the harvester and volunteer to save him.) They must fly out to the ship near the Distant Peaks, board it, and take control.

The heroes do not know that the mutiny occurred among the ship's officers, upset that several of their comrades recently received sentences of exile to the Distant Peaks for vocally opposing oppressive policies of the topside aristocrats. The crew mutinied when they discovered they were heading into hazardous waters. With the only weapons on board—and the recently rescued exiles—the officers quickly put down the worker uprising, but now face the quandary of how to get off planet and escape the anger of Vaynai's aristocrats and Ocean Harvester's corporate office. The heroes must decide whether to carry out their original mission or help the wayward officers.

Casino Security Attendants: Male Mon Calamari Sol 3; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 15 (+2 Dex, +3 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: 20/10; Atk +4 melee (special, stun baton) or +5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Amphibious, low-light vision; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, stun baton, fine tunic, comlink, 50 credits.

Skills: Computer Use +5, Craft (aquarium) +6, Intimidate +5, Listen +2, Profession (security guard) +5, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Calamarian, Search +7, Sense Motive +6, Speak Basic, Speak Calamarian, Speak Huttese, Speak Ryl, Spot +4, Swim +5, Treat Injury +3.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Sharp-Eyed, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Amira Nasrabi: Female Mon Calamari Sol 6; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Def 15 (+5 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: 17/8; Atk +3 melee (1d4 -1, knife) or +4 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Amphibious, low-light vision, sneak attack +2d6; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 3; Rep 7; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, knife, fashionable dress, 1,500 credits.

Skills: Appraise +12, Bluff +7, Computer Use +9, Craft (poison) +14, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (business) +9, Knowledge (biology) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +4, Profession (doctor) +6, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Calamarian, Sense Motive +8, Speak Basic, Speak Calamarian, Speak Huttese, Speak Ithorese, Speak Ryl, Swim +3, Treat Injury +7.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Quick Draw, Skill Emphasis (Sense Motive), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Illuminated Aquean

Streysel's finest casino, the Illuminated Aquean, stands along the most fashionable portion of the island's promenade. Transparesteel fish tanks bulge from the outer walls, providing pleasing diversions for passers-by and an illuminated spectacle at night. Both the tanks and the casino's main entry doors were constructed from reinforced materials to preserve the highest level of security.

Patrons enter through a foyer where Mon Calamari attendants greet them and collect weapons for safekeeping. The Illuminated Aquean's owner, Amira Nasrabi, hires the meanest-looking array of Mon Calamari mercenaries credits can buy, though she requires them to maintain impeccable manners. Ordnance passes through an armored hatch for storage in the casino's formidable security center. Here sentries monitor sensors showing scenes from around the casino, restaurant, and kitchen, ensuring no unauthorized activity occurs. Comm sets allow them to communicate with well-dressed guards on the casino floor and plainclothes security personnel working undercover.

Anyone discovered with a weapon inside the casino forfeits all their belongings—including any credits won at the games. Those with concealed arms playing at tables risk the loss of their own property and that of their fellow players, reason enough for gamblers to police their own. The Mon Calamari guards strip violators of all possessions and money, then toss them out onto the promenade. Fools who actually use weapons in the casino receive the same punishment, except they're tossed over the promenade balcony to the rocks below.

The darkened casino interior occupies several immense caverns divided by massive fish tanks from which the establishment gains its name and reputation. Each aquarium hosts an environment representing the oceans of a different planet. Creatures swimming through the water include species native to the oceans of Vaynai, Ando, Mon Calamari, Pantolomin, Aquaris, and Bestine. Lighting above and below lends the fish an even more exotic glow. Non-reflective coatings prevent gamblers from using the transparesteel tanks as mirrors to spy on their opponents. Aside from

lamps shining on individual tables, the illuminated aquariums provide the only other source of light. Concealed generators shield the transparisteel tanks and their lighting from blaster fire and other damage.

At night the gaming halls fill with clients, including transient spacers, visiting dignitaries, vacationing nobility, and the occasional topside aristocrat. Street-level riff-raff rarely get past the burly Mon Calamari door sentries. Although its fashionably dressed clients frown on anyone who obviously appears beneath their station, the casino enforces no strict dress code. As long as patrons have substantial credits to wager, they're welcome in the Illuminated Aquean.

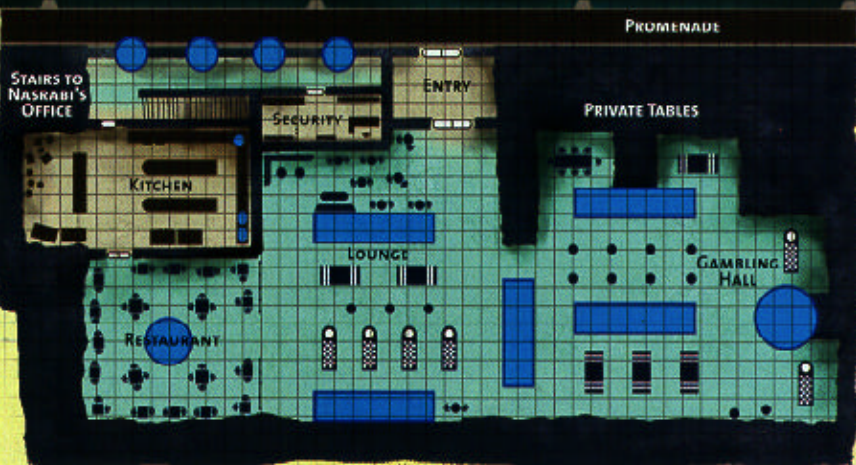
The casino boasts several gambling halls offering such games of skill, strategy, and luck as trin sticks, Point 5, Iaro, dejarik, double-down, horansi, lugjack, and tregald. The Aquean also hires out rooms for private games, including a secluded sabacc parlor. For those who avoid taking unnecessary risks, a restaurant serves fine food and drink (with a view of a vast circular fish tank), and a lounge provides subdued music and comfortable furniture.

When the mood strikes her, Amira Nasrabi slips into a sleek outfit and wanders the casino floor, welcoming guests, playing hostess, and resolving disputes with her cool charm and attentive manner. She spends much of her time supervising operations from her personal suite above the casino. Sensors relay video and audio to her office, all recorded for future reference. Although she doesn't sell the information she gathers like an infochant, Nasrabi has no scruples using it for her own advantage. If she overhears details of a business opportunity or notices an influential client in trouble, she may investigate further before investing her resources in such meddlesome endeavors. Nasrabi prefers manipulating people and situations to her own profit rather than creating opportunities of her own. Using the casino as a cover, she maintains files on all important patrons, both locals and visitors. Some fall victim to blackmail, while others suddenly discover their rivals have terribly useful information against them.

Few people on Vaynai know Nasrabi's personal specialty: concocting poisons from the marine life sheltered in the Illuminated

the illuminated aquean

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Aquean's aquariums. She maintains a compact laboratory in her suite where she can extract and blend components from sea creatures into chemicals that kill, disable, and disorient living beings. Nasrabi uses her poisons sparingly, preferring not to draw attention to her lucrative casino operation. Most she manufactures for off-world clients—crimelords, vindictive aristocrats, ambitious politicians—but a few find their way into the hands of those she tries manipulating or their adversaries. Although Nasrabi doesn't publicly sell her concoctions, she offers them to those she hopes to influence, or those doing her bidding in her various manipulations.

Adventure Seed: Aquarium Heist

A wealthy collector, having visited the Illuminated Aquean, hires the heroes to smuggle a rare fish out of the casino tanks. They must create some diversion and sneak behind the scenes when the casino is open, or slip in after hours, defeating security systems (sensors that provide +7 to Spot and Search rolls, DC 20 electronic door locks) and escaping with the live fish before Nasrabi's capable security attendants notice them.

jungle vault

While the Illuminated Aquean cultivates an elite class of clients drawn from the fashionable promenade, the Jungle Vault caters to the more mundane citizens of Streysel

willing to brave the caverns to enjoy its sanctuary. The Jungle Vault occupies a vast subterranean cave. The Ithorian proprietor Whuvumm cultivates an underground jungle nourished by water dripping through the rock, sunlight reflected through several conduits leading in from the cliffside, and a few carefully placed luma grids to provide continuous light.

Several entrances lead from passages within the caverns to the Jungle Vault. The armored doors only allow entry to patrons who make a five credit donation. A collection slot in the door accepts credits and triggers the portal's entry routine—it slides open for ten seconds for every donation before slamming closed. Regulars know the routine well enough that nobody gets caught in the door.

The jungle within represents Vaynai's surface flora with a few traditional Ithorian plants and bushes. Whuvumm collected cuttings from a topside estate and transplanted them here—some speculate that he maintains a quiet relationship with a topside aristocrat, while others believe he simply stole the cuttings. Once he may even have owned a noble estate he since lost through misfortune or folly. The Ithorian specimens verify Whuvumm's ties to his people's herd ships, though none were ever known to stop in this system.

The club provides an ideal setting for clandestine meetings and quiet chats.

the vaynai archipelago



Lush foliage on bushes and trees prevent voices from echoing throughout the cavern. Plots of thick grasses rustle with breezes wafting through the light conduits. The reflected surface light and luma arrays provide an eerie twilight. Water trickles down natural rock waterfalls, runs in streams in raised rock troughs, and gurgles into natural pools. Noise from the water mixes with inflections from voices to further mask conversations. All Listen rolls suffer a -5 penalty in the Jungle Vault.

Whuvumm arranged the club's comforts to place maximum distance and foliage between parties. Booth walls consist of dense shrubbery, while tables cluster in clearings near sources of running water

that make eavesdropping difficult. Paths wind their way through stands of saplings and bull-ferns leading to more secluded sections. The bar stands along one wall beneath an overhang of merian vines rustling in the breeze. The modern fixtures don't seem out of place—the jungle is alien enough to the underground cavern that further incongruities don't matter.

The Jungle Vault serves many beverages found at cantinas throughout the galaxy, plus several specialties brewed from ingredients found in Whuvumm's subterranean jungle. A few menu items include local seafood dishes and some Ithorian cuisine, mostly light fare. Few people visit the Jungle Vault to indulge in fancy meals. The dive attracts

spacers seeking an exotic atmosphere in which to conduct business discreetly. Less-scrupulous entrepreneurs from the towers and promenade make shady business arrangements in booths secluded behind verdant foliage. Cavern dwellers who can afford the donation often spend free time here to bask in the lush surroundings denied most citizens in the archipelago. Most locals and frequent visitors treat the Jungle Vault's vegetation with respect, knowing how hard Whuvumm works to cultivate it in such inhospitable conditions. Although the Ithorian hires no bouncers, the regulars quickly evict brawling, blaster-happy patrons who abuse the jungle's hospitality.

Whuvumm: Male Ithorian Frg 4; Init +3 (Dex, Improved Initiative; Def 13 (-1 Dex, +4 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: 27/13; Atk +3 melee (1d6/1d6, quarterstaff) or +2 ranged; SQ Barter, jury rig +2, adaptive learning (Move Silently); SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +5; SZ M; FP 3; DSP 0; Rep 4; Str 11, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Equipment: Quarterstaff, apron, clean towel, 78 credits.

Skills: Hide +3, Knowledge (botany) +9, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +5, Profession (bartender) +10, Profession (gardener) +10, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Ithorese, Search +7, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Ithorese, Speak Ryl, Spot +8, Survival +8.

Feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

trin sticks and dejarik

Two games have a particularly popularity at the Illuminated Aquean: trin sticks and dejarik.

Trin stick players draw six elongated sticks from a common tub, concealing one end in their hand while the other remains in full view. Each end of a stick has a particular color: red, blue, green, and yellow. Players bet on how well they can form these combinations into a geometric shape on the table before them, matching colors in the shape's corners. For instance, a player making a simple triangle would need three sticks, red/blue, blue/yellow, and yellow/red. Larger shapes are more complex and rare, but they win over simpler shapes.

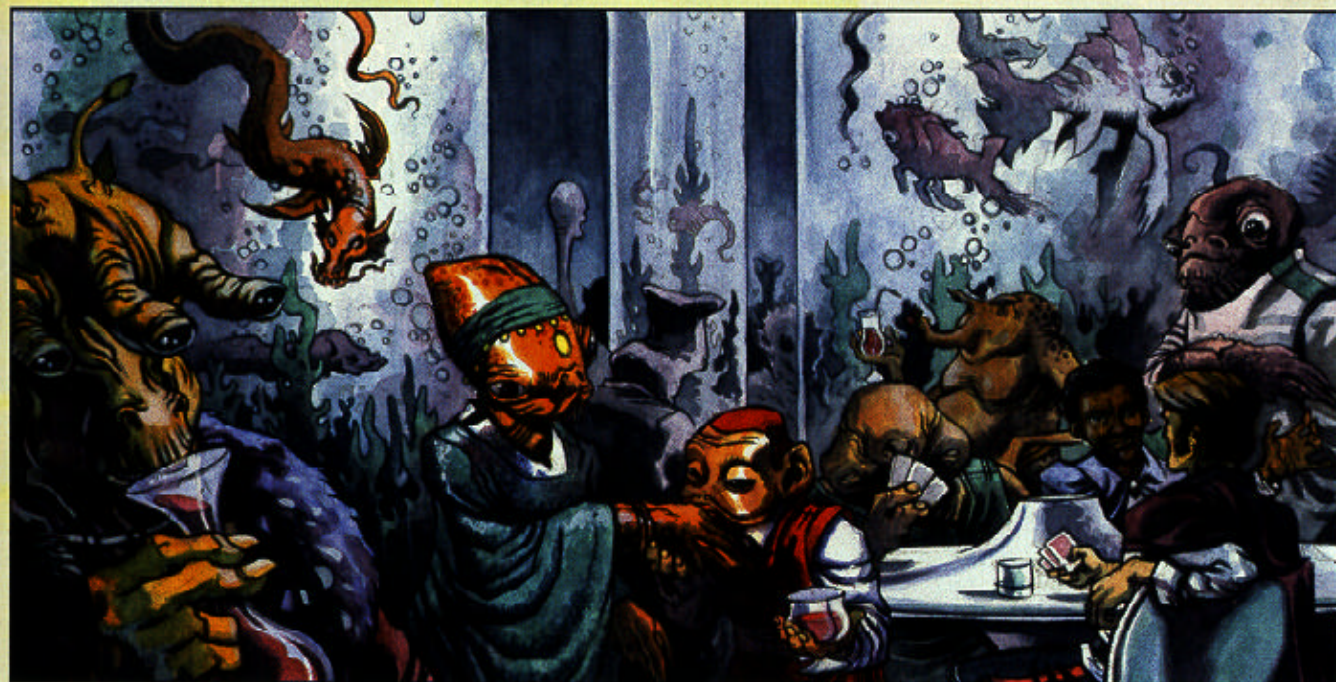
Making two triangles wins over all other combinations, a play called "trin." Players have one chance to discard up to five sticks they don't want (tossing them back into the tub) and draw the same number.

Players begin by each rolling a d12—this is the quality of their starting hand. Then, each player makes a special Intelligence check, adding the quality of their hand to the total, as well as +2 for each of the following skills they have more than 4 ranks of: Bluff; Diplomacy; Intimidate; Sense Motive. The player with the highest total has the best hand and wins that round.

In dejarik, commonly known as holo-chess, two players face off over a round, checkered board on which holographic rep-

resentations of various creatures square off. Players place an initial bet (and observers bet on who they think will win), then begin maneuvering their pieces in a strategy to outflank and eliminate their opponent's creatures. The outcome of their holographic battles depend on the strengths of the creatures fighting.

After the initial bets, the two players make an opposed Intelligence check. Then, each player makes a special Intelligence check, adding +2 for each of the following skills they have more than 4 ranks of: Bluff; Diplomacy; Intimidate; Sense Motive. The winner of the opposed Intelligence check gains a +5 bonus to this roll. The highest roll wins the match and the agreed-upon sum.



Adventure Seed: Listening Leaves

Amira Nasrabi hires, coerces, or blackmails the heroes into undertaking a job for her. She wants them to hang out in the Jungle Vault, surreptitiously planting a handful of special seeds she gives them in various secluded places around the club. They must do this without arousing the suspicions of the loyal patrons or Whuvumm.

She later asks them to return to the Vault and harvest several leaves from the vines they planted earlier. The foliage is receptive to various frequencies of voices and "records" them in patterns on different leaves. Nasrabi hopes to use them to find incriminating information about various patrons. The heroes must harvest several leaves without arousing suspicion. Little do they know the plants have adapted to their new environment and developed defenses of their own. . . .

preena's repair bay

Preena Jallop operates a repair bay carved from the cliff face of Streysel island. The vast cavern stands open to the outer elements, although a slight overhang keeps Vaynai's infrequent rain showers from drenching the bay entrance. The docking area can accommodate one Medium-sized vessel or several smaller craft. Most captains land elsewhere on Vaynai first, meet

with Preena to arrange repairs and agree to a price, then fly their craft to the bay when her schedule opens up. For those with light damage, she sends a tech crew out to docking platforms to perform routine maintenance and basic repairs, as long as these require no more than a skiff full of tools and replacement parts. Preena reserves the bay for vessels requiring heavy repair or modification.

Preena Jallop: Female Human Scl 6; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 19 (+2 Dex, +7 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: 24/11; Atk +4 melee (1d6, heavy wrench) or +6 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster); SQ: Illicit barter, better lucky than good, sneak attack +2d6; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +3; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 0; Rep 3; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 16.

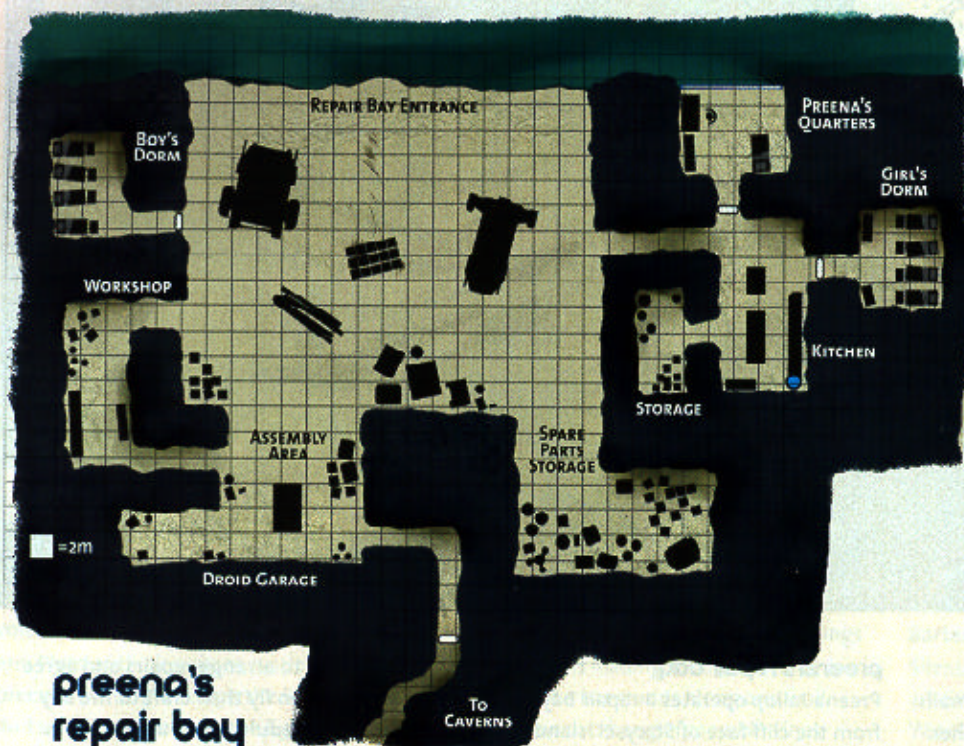
Equipment: Heavy blaster, mechanic's coveralls, comlink, datapad, tool kit, 150 credits.

Skills: Appraise +4, Astrogate +4, Bluff +6, Computer Use +7, Craft (starship) +10, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +4, Forgery +4, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (spacer lore) +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +10, Pilot +10, Profession (mechanic) +9, Read/Write Basic, Repair +14, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Spot +7, Tumble +3.

Feats: Gearhead, Sharp-Eyed, Skill Emphasis (Repair), Spacer, Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

NASRABI'S POISONS

Poison	Type	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	Cost per Dose
Sponge powder	Ingested DC 12	1d8 Wound Points	Unconscious	300
Aquyfin	Ingested DC 12	2d6 Vitality Points	4d6 Vitality Points	375
Scale dust	Inhaled DC 15	1d4 Wis, 1d4 Dex	Hallucinations	500
Gnoorooop extract	Ingested DC 12	1d4 Con	2d6 Con	1,000
Cripe oil	Injury DC 15	1d4 Str	2d4 Str	1,200
Pantol spine venom	Injury DC 18	2d6 Wound Points	Paralyzation	1,500



preena's repair bay

Although she keeps several droids on hand for specialized tasks, Preena and her technical team personally take care of most work. Her strong motherly instinct drives her to accept and provide for orphans who migrate here from islands throughout the archipelago. The children receive food, shelter, and training in return for dedication to learning and applying their skills in starship maintenance. The younger ones train by taking apart and repairing smaller components, learning to use common tools and diagnostic instruments. The older kids scamper over starships, inspecting systems and assessing damaged components. Preena personally effects all major repairs with more skilled assistants helping, but she supervises the younger ones on routine operations. When they acquire enough skills, those who wish to leave gain apprenticeships with passing spacers. Preena carefully screens potential employers before recommending any of her children—she never sends an orphan off with anyone suspected of having vile intentions, underhanded methods, or abusive behavior. Children who train with her and find their fortunes working the

space lanes often refer to her repair bay as "Preena's Academy."

Typical Tech Crew Apprentice: Male or Female Exp 2; Init +1 (Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP: —/9; Atk +1 melee (1d6, heavy wrench) or +2 ranged; SV Fort —1, Ref +1, Will +2; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 14.

Equipment: Mechanic's coveralls, comlink, datapad, tool kit, 15 credits.

Skills: Appraise +2, Astrogate +2, Computer Use +6, Craft (starship) +5, Disable Device +5, Gather Information +6, Pilot +4, Profession (mechanic) +4, Repair +8, Speak Basic, Survival +4.

Feats: Gearhead, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

The repair bay employs three light tractor beam generators for moving large sections of hull plating or heavy components. A load lifter transfers oversized parts from the adjacent spare parts bay. Landing lights guide inbound ships, while luma arrays provide illumination in the dim cavern. Fusion generator tanks, barrels of hydraulic fluid, and lubricant canisters pile against the walls. Subsidiary chambers off the main

repair bay include Preena's quarters, dormitories for boys and girls, a kitchen and mess hall, supplies storage, droid garage, assembly area, spare parts storage, and the workshop where younger children learn basic mechanical skills. An armored door protects the entrance from the caverns into the repair bay complex.

Preena maintains an inventory of parts for most major systems for the ships she most often repairs. Her technical crews sometimes manage to fix damaged materials salvaged from vessels for spare parts. She also keeps components in stock for a few standard modifications:

Shield Generator Upgrade:

Preena can boost a ship's shield system to give it additional shield points, to a maximum of 20% over the original output (round up to the nearest 10 points). She cannot install shields on a ship that has no existing shield system. For

every 10 additional shield points, the cost is 2,500 credits.

Fire Control: All weapon systems come with a fire control rating of +2. Preena can upgrade a weapon's fire control. A +4 rating costs 5,000 credits per weapon system; a +6 costs 10,000 credits. Fire control systems with modifiers greater than +4 are considered military equipment, and systems with modifiers greater than +6 are too hard for Preena to get a hold of.

For more possible starship modifications, see the *Starships of the Galaxy* supplement.

Adventure Seed: Kidnapped!

While a crowd of Preena's kids work on the characters' ship (in the repair bay or on their docking platform), a team of bounty hunters ruthlessly abducts one of the children by eliminating everyone else in the vicinity. The girl is actually nobility, the hunters hired by her possessive parents to bring her back. The girl ran away from home to get out on her own and follow her own destiny. Preena hires the characters to find the bounty hunters and free her apprentice.

I, Yuuzhan Vong

A Campaign Guide to Playing the *Star Wars* Invaders

BY DANIEL WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY ANTHONY WATERS

S*tar Wars* is a black and white world. As befits an epic space fantasy, we cheer the heroes and hiss the villains and rarely have much trouble deciding who's who. This is one reason why it's so much fun to play in this universe—you can tell who your enemies are without getting gridlocked in moral ambiguity. It also explains why roleplayers, after saving the entire galaxy from the forces of darkness, sometimes get the itch to see how the other half lives. Whether you're exploring the temptations of the dark side or just looking for a change of pace, sometimes it's good to be bad.

Traditionally, the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* allowed players to assume the part of a smuggler, a bounty hunter, or a similarly dubious hero. That changed with *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, which introduced out and out villains as heroes. With *The Dark Side Sourcebook* you can even play a Sith Lord—Evil with a capital E. You can't top that, right?

Well, maybe you can. *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook* hits the shelves in February, encompassing the first nine volumes of the Del Rey/LucasBooks series and covering all the roleplaying opportunities contained therein. In this newest era of *Star Wars* history, the Yuuzhan Vong have replaced the Empire and the Sith as the galaxy's most dire threat. These alien invaders come from outside the galaxy and are intent on exterminating everyone who doesn't cotton to their particular brand of religious fanaticism—and that includes the New Republic, the remnants of the Empire, and the outlaws of the fringe. Individual Yuuzhan Vong are not inherently evil, but they are active participants in a culture that has caused more destruction than Emperor Palpatine ever did. After all, the Sith wanted to rule the galaxy's inhabitants. The Yuuzhan Vong want to sacrifice them.

When setting any campaign during this time period, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*

is an absolute necessity. If you want a Yuuzhan Vong perspective for your campaign, however, this article should help get you started. It's certainly possible to play a sympathetic Yuuzhan Vong hero in a creatively planned campaign, similar to the vengeful warrior Vua Rapuung in Greg Keyes's novel *Edge of Victory I: Conquest*. Or perhaps your player group would prefer to despoil Ilhor and subjugate Coruscant, crossing amphistaffs with lightsabers as they face the hated *Jeedai*.

The Final Insult

Unlike the infidels of the New Republic, the Yuuzhan Vong never abbreviate the name of their people. Calling the species "the Vong" offends the creator god Yun-Yuuzhan and is blasphemy of the highest order. Gamemasters should keep this in mind, for a carefully-inserted insult among Yuuzhan Vong true believers is guaranteed to trigger a brawl.



The Yuuzhan Vong

After surviving for generations aboard galaxy-roaming worldships, the Yuuzhan Vong started sending scouts into Republic territory approximately thirty years before the Battle of Yavin. The New Jedi Order era began twenty-five years after the Battle of Yavin with the Yuuzhan Vong's full-scale invasion at an entry point designated Vector Prime. Years of warfare have led to such saga-changing events as the death of Chewbacca and the fall of Coruscant. The players' heroes must play a role in this invasion—a Yuuzhan Vong Rebel pilot isn't a viable hero option—although their feelings about the war can vary a great deal.

Two things govern Yuuzhan Vong life: caste and religion. For a full exploration of these cultural fundamentals, see *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*.

CASTE

Every hero is born into one of five castes: warrior, shaper, priest, intendant, and worker.

- Warriors are at the forefront of the invasion and naturally see the most action. This caste offers the most opportunity for adventure, and therefore most players are likely to gravitate toward warrior heroes. Members of this caste tend to be the most loyal to the gods and to Supreme Overlord Shimrra. The necessity of obeying orders has been drilled into them almost since birth. Con-

sequently, a lack of creativity often undercuts their astonishing martial abilities.

- Shapers are the scientists of Yuuzhan Vong society, responsible for bioengineering everything from amphistaffs to worldships. Often kept far from the front lines, shapers are nevertheless capable of inflicting an infinite variety of deaths upon their enemies. The less religious among the shapers might suspect the truth of Yuuzhan Vong biotech—that their innovations come not from the gods but from an ancient and nearly depleted library. These heroes might secretly be heretics.
- Priests and priestesses might shy away from active combat, but they are devotees of deception. Priests often pull

Yuuzhan Vong Hero Templates

Yuuzhan Vong Warrior

Level 1 Soldier

Ability Scores:

Str 17, Dex 13, Con 16,
Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

Vitality: 13

Wounds: 16

Defense: 15

Reputation: 0

Skills: Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Yuuzhan Vong) +4, Read/Write Yuuzhan Vong, Speak Yuuzhan Vong, Survival +2, Treat Injury +4

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (amphistaff), Power Attack, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons)

Weapons: Amphistaff, coufee (dagger), 2 thud bugs, 2 blorash jellies

Gear: Warrior's vunduun crab shell armor, tizowrym

Special Qualities: Immune to Force, Sense, and Alter

Yuuzhan Vong Scout

Level 1 Scout

Ability Scores:

Str 14, Dex 15, Con 15,
Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Vitality: 10

Wounds: 15

Defense: 15

Reputation: 0

Skills: Knowledge (Yuuzhan Vong) +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Pilot +6, Read/Write Yuuzhan Vong, Speak Basic, Speak Yuuzhan Vong, Spot +5, Survival +5

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (thud bug launcher), Starship Operation (space transport), Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons)

Weapons: Coufee (dagger), thud bug launcher, 2 blorash jellies

Gear: Ooglith masquer, tizowrym, villip

Special Qualities: Immune to Force, Sense, and Alter

Yuuzhan Vong Shaper

Level 1 Expert

Ability Scores:

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

Vitality: 0

Wounds: 12

Defense: 11

Reputation: 0

Skills: Appraise +6, Craft (biomechanisms) +8, Craft (disease) +5, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (physical sciences) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Knowledge (Yuuzhan Vong) +6, Read/Write Yuuzhan Vong, Speak Yuuzhan Vong, Treat Injury +5

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Craft: biomechanisms), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons)

Weapons: Coufee (dagger)

Gear: Robes of rank, villip, tizowrym, variety of bio-engineered organisms.

Special Qualities: Immune to Force, Sense, and Alter

Yuuzhan Vong Priest

Level 1 Noble

Ability Scores:

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

Vitality: 6

Wounds: 10

Defense: 14

Reputation: 0

Skills: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (Yuuzhan Vong) +5, Pilot +5*, Read/Write Yuuzhan Vong, Sense Motive, Speak Yuuzhan Vong

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (tsaisi), Persuasive, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons)

Weapons: Tsaisi, coufee (dagger)

Gear: Villip, tizowrym

Special Qualities: Immune to Force, Sense, and Alter, bonus class Skill (Pilot), call in a favor (1)

**This is a class skill for this template.*

Yuuzhan Vong Intendant

Level 1 Scoundrel

Ability Scores:

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

Vitality: 7

Wounds: 12

Defense: 15

Reputation: 0

Skills: Appraise +6, Bluff +5, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +5, Gather Information +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Yuuzhan Vong) +6, Read/Write Yuuzhan Vong, Sense Motive +3, Speak Yuuzhan Vong, Survival +3

Feats: Dodge, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons)

Weapons: Amphistaff, coufee (dagger)

Gear: Ooglith masquer, villip, tizowrym

Special Qualities: Immune to Force, Sense, and Alter, illicit barter

the strings of elaborate

schemes and possess the contacts to execute any plan. They are, of course, devoted to their particular god.

- » **Intendants** are the politicians and businessbeings of Yuuzhan Vong society. They will probably be the second most popular caste behind warrior, for their pragmatism and adaptability allows them to assume any role.
- » **Workers** are the lowest caste, barely higher than slaves. It's unlikely that heroes will come from the ranks of the workers, for the cultural bias against them discourages workers from tackling heroic deeds.

RELIGION

Caste is closely tied to religion in Yuuzhan Vong society. Yun-Yuuzhan is the creator god and all must venerate him, but the

lesser gods have separate sects devoted to their worship. All heroes have an affinity for a particular god, and even heretics possess a special knowledge of the god they were raised to revere.

- » **Yun-Yammka the Slayer** is the patron god of warriors. Since the onset of the invasion, billions of infidel lives have been offered to Yun-Yammka in sacrifice.
- » **Yun-Harla the Trickster** (also known as the Cloaked Goddess) represents deception, of equal importance in Yuuzhan Vong philosophy as aggression. Together, Yun-Harla and Yun-Yammka are known as the Twin Gods. Although it is possible to be a priest of any god, the priestly caste is most commonly associated with Yun-Harla.
- » **Yun-Ne'Shel the Modeler** oversees the natural life cycles of the universe and is invoked to provide help in creative pur-

suits. Given the reactionary nature of Yuuzhan Vong society, a hero with a strong allegiance to Yun-Ne'Shel might possess an innovative mind. Members of the shaper caste often invoke Yun-Ne'Shel.

- » **Yun-Txiin and Yun-Q'aah, the Lovers**, are flighty gods who govern love and relationships. An allegiance to the Lovers could provide crucial motivation for a hero since Yuuzhan Vong are generally forbidden from pursuing relationships outside of their caste.
- » **Yun-Shuno the Pardoner** is the patron god of the Shamed Ones—Yuuzhan Vong from every caste whose bodies have rejected biological implants of rank. According to religious dogma the gods have shunned these pariahs; only Yun-Shuno can intercede on their behalf. A hero who starts out as a Shamed One might be driven by revenge. A hero who becomes a Shamed One due to a failed graft can provide the hook for a campaign built around redemption.

Location, Location, Location

Unless the players are spies during the Rise of the Empire or Rebellion eras, their Yuuzhan Vong heroes won't mobilize from a traditional *Star Wars* site. During the war, Yuuzhan Vong of all castes are most likely stationed on a worldship, an occupied planet, or a biologically altered planet.

- » The worldship *Alak Schou* is a typical specimen of the arks in which the Yuuzhan Vong made the long march between galaxies. Countless individuals inhabit this aging ship-city. If your player group is composed of members of different castes, the *Alak Schou* is a perfect setting for them to cross paths. Another advantage of a worldship is its mobility; the GM can place the *Alak Schou* anywhere in the galaxy to suit the needs of the campaign. (Note that during the early stages of the invasion, all Yuuzhan Vong stage missions from a worldship.)
- » An occupied planet is a conquered world that has been spared the extermination of its lifeforms (unlike Ithor, for example). The natives might be cowering in fear of their new Yuuzhan Vong overlords, or they could be plotting a violent resistance. This



Yorik-vec Assault Cruiser

This compact gunboat is perfect for an adventuring group, given its small crew requirement and large passenger capacity. In gaming terms, the ship serves many of the same purposes as a YT-1300 freighter.

However, the Yuuzhan Vong use the *Yorik-vec* cruiser as a warship, not a transport or freighter. The ship fills the gap between the coralskipper and the corvette analog. Given the ship's classification as a military vessel, the heroes don't "own" the cruiser, just as a New Republic pilot doesn't own his X-wing. Unless they steal it, of course.

Craft: *Yorik-vec* Assault Cruiser; **Class:** Transport; **Cost:** Unknown; **Size:** Small (30m long); **Crew:** Expert +8 (2 pilots, 3 gunners); **Passengers:** 8; **Cargo Capacity:** 100 metric tons; **Consumables:** 1 month; **Hyperdrive:** x3; **Maximum Speed:** Attack (8 squares); **Maneuver:** +9 (+1 size, +8 crew); **Defense:** 21 (+1 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 60; **Hull Points:** 150; **DR:** 10. **Weapon:** Quad volcanic cannon; **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +17 (+8 crew, +1 size, +8 Fire Control); **Damage:** 7d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB/S +0, M/L n/a. **Weapon:** Twin volcanic cannon (2); **Fire Arc:** 1 left, 1 right; **Attack Bonus:** +13 (+8 crew, +1 size, +4 Fire Control); **Damage:** 6d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S/M/L n/a.

Eras of Play

Rise of the Empire era: Mongel Shai and his kinsmen were among the first Yuuzhan Vong to scout this galaxy. Not long after the Battle of Naboo, an advance force of Yuuzhan Vong staged a raid on the outlying planet Zonama Sekot.

Yuuzhan Vong heroes can participate in these missions or similar ones throughout the final decades of the Republic. Warriors are more common among the ranks of scouts than are intendants, priests, or shapers.

At this point, the Yuuzhan Vong do not yet know what sort of galaxy the supreme overlord has promised them. They know nothing of its native species or its political structure. Though the players should certainly have a clear picture of the *Star Wars* galaxy, this information should come to the heroes piecemeal, after great effort. Their Yuuzhan Vong superiors reward them based on the quality of the information they are able to bring back.

A campaign set in the Rise of the Empire era should be concentrated in the fringes of the Outer Rim bordering on the Unknown Regions (see the map of the galaxy included with *Star Wars Gamer #5*). Here the heroes might encounter pirates, hostile aliens, or even roving *Jeedai*. Note, however, that it is crucial they do not blow their cover (dead *Jeedai* tell no tales) or venture too far from the fringe. The Yuuzhan Vong are merely scouting and do not take an active role in galactic affairs until the rise of the Empire.

The Rebellion era: During this era, the Yuuzhan Vong have begun to phase out scouting in favor of espionage. Already aware of the galaxy's political hierarchy, a few select agents have begun infiltrating important institutions. Their inexperience with Basic and the sometimes spotty performances of their new ooglith masquer disguises have so far prevented them from achieving influence within the Imperial machine. This is not their goal, however—at this point, stirring up trouble would only sabotage their reconnaissance efforts.

A Yuuzhan Vong campaign in the Rebellion era is similar to one in the Rise of the Empire era—the heroes are on a secret mission and cover must be maintained at all costs. Supreme Overlord Shimirra has ordered his agents to inventory the enemy's military capabilities and suggest weak points to be exploited in the coming invasion. Heroes are now allowed to operate in the Core, but they must operate with greater discretion here than in the freewheeling Outer Rim.

Yuuzhan Vong spies are most likely to be members of the intendant caste. Priests and priestesses belonging to the sect of Yun-Harla also make good spies.

The New Republic era: By now, the Yuuzhan Vong are no longer just spying; they're actively sabotaging. Executor Nom Anor is the Yuuzhan Vong's premier agent in this era, pulling off such coups as the splintering of the Imperial Ruling Council (as seen in *Crimson Empire II* from Dark Horse Comics). Heroes playing this era likely take orders from Nom Anor and could be working to undermine the New Republic, the Imperial Remnant, or both. The heroes are still undercover, however, and must take every possible step to keep the secret of the Yuuzhan Vong. For example, heroes who destroy a New Republic outpost to leave a sector vulnerable to Grand Admiral

Thrawn should plant evidence that implicates a third party. Chaos and misdirection are the order of the day.

Intendants and deception priests are the most common castes in this era. Warriors are common enough when a specific mission calls for more than just espionage.

The New Jedi Order era: Of course, the most satisfying Yuuzhan Vong campaigns take place during the galactic invasion. *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook* contains detailed information on the invasion. Below are important year-by-year considerations for Yuuzhan Vong heroes:

— **The Invasion Begins** (*Vector Prime*): The first stab of Yuuzhan Vong conquest was left to the Praetorite Vong, a special advance force of intendants and warriors. Their job was to establish a foothold at Helska and carve out a wedge of territory to inaugurate the invasion corridor. Despite their victories at Sernpidal and elsewhere, the Praetorite Vong's failure to protect their yammosk at Helska left them in disgrace.

Players involved at the invasion's onset should be members of the Praetorite Vong, which is led by intendants and staffed by warriors. (Alternatively, the players could be "consultants" sent to correct the Praetorite Vong's incompetence.) Priests are still uncommon, with only a few aboard each warship to read auguries and prepare sacrifices.

After the Battle of Helska, the main Yuuzhan Vong battle force comes up to replace the Praetorite Vong. With rare exceptions, shapers are still being held in reserve.

— **The Fall of Duro** (*Balance Point*): By the time of the Battle of Duro, the Yuuzhan Vong invasion has been in place for a year. All Yuuzhan Vong castes have taken their places in their new galaxy. The most significant fallout from Duro is not the Yuuzhan Vong's capture of their first Core World but Warmaster Tsavong Lah's decree that the New Republic surrender its Jedi. Overnight, planets betray their Jedi protectors, and the collaborationists of the Peace Brigade become power brokers.

For players, this greatly changes the dynamic between them and the Jedi. Rather than running afoul of a brave Jedi Knight when they overrun a planet, the players might now be led to the planet by a fearful populace who will join them in hunting down a Jedi-in-hiding. This time period is also appropriate for a campaign set in Hutt Space, where Supreme Commander Nas Choka is busy chastising the criminals for abandoning the Yuuzhan Vong "partnership" that could have preserved their vile little kingdom.

— **The Fall of Coruscant** (*Star by Star*): After two years of warfare, the Yuuzhan Vong have succeeded in capturing the galactic capital. Warriors are hugely important in bringing down Coruscant's defenses, while shapers play a vital role in the biological restructuring of the city-planet. The seizure of Coruscant is a turning point in the war. Many citizens now view the players not as interloping vandals but as inhuman conquerors who cannot be stopped. This might make the players' opponents easier to intimidate, but it can also lead to trouble. Few enemies are more dangerous than an enemy with nothing to lose.

Adventure Seed: For the Glory of Yun-Yuuzhan!

The Hutts have been severely punished for breaking their alliance with the Yuuzhan Vong. By treacherously supplying military intelligence to the New Republic, they've incurred the wrath of the gods and suffered under the avenging lash of Supreme Commander Nas Choka.

Now, however, the Hutts have started fighting back. Even as Nal Hutta and Nar Shaddaa are being shaped into organic wildernesses, word has gotten out that Embra the Hutt is leading a coalition of displaced crimelords from an offworld headquarters. The Hutts have enlisted mercenaries and out-of-work smugglers in their quest to reclaim Hutt Space.

Supreme Commander Nas Choka dispatches the heroes to take out a cell of Hutt-sponsored Klatooinian mercenaries, staging from an abandoned Trade Federation battleship drifting near Ylesia. The heroes must fight their way to the ship, board it, and eliminate its detested battle-droid crew on their way to the bridge. Before they sacrifice the Klatooinian captain as decreed by the gods, they learn from their captive that Embra the Hutt isn't plotting in exile from somewhere in the Outer Rim—she is hiding deep within the lowest levels of the Smugglers' Moon of Nar Shaddaa.

Nas Choka gives the heroes command of a platoon of Chazrach slaves to storm Embra's hiding place. They must make their way down through the levels of the vertical city where the bizarre Yuuzhan Vong biosculpting has only partially taken root, facing opposition from desperate squatters and displaced native vermin. When they finally arrive at Embra's hidden stronghold, they discover that her thugs have somehow sabotaged the control vehicle for the Chazrach slaves. When it explodes, the heroes must face a gang of Hutt bruisers on one side and a mob of half-mad Chazrach on the other. Creative thinkers might win the honor of honoring Yun-Yuuzhan with a particularly generous sacrifice: one Hutt, extra-large.

setting's major advantage is its familiarity—any existing *Star Wars* environment can be modified into an occupied planet. Members of every caste can intermingle

in this setting, although their duties should keep them somewhat segregated. Don't forget that the planet itself can provide interesting side adventures, such as local resistance or rumpaging wildlife. See *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook* for listings and descriptions of major occupied planets.

Biologically altered planets become more common late in the war, after the Yuuzhan Vong have

had enough time to pick and choose promising candidates for shaping. Altering a planet's ecosystem is an expensive allocation of resources, and the

Yuuzhan Vong cannot afford to expend this much effort on the vast majority of their conquered worlds. Planets selected for shaping are turned into cleansed land fit for Yuuzhan Vong habi-

lation (such as Nal Hutta and Coruscant) or "living factories" to produce war materiel (such as Belkadan and Tynna). Shapers play a critical role in creating and maintaining a biologically altered world. Members of other castes could be present as the situation demands, particularly if the planet is being used to house the inhabitants of a dying worldship.

New Yuuzhan Vong Equipment

GRUTCHIN SYMBIOTE

Weight: 18 kg

Grutchins are armored insects that chase and grapple starships; grutchin symbiotes are a miniature variety for use in personal combat. These half-meter bugs have many of the same traits as their larger cousins, including acid-edged mandibles. They cannot survive in vacuum, however, and are easier to kill due to a lighter carapace.

Grutchin symbiotes are not implants, but those who wish to carry them must undergo ritual modification. During this ceremony, four hollows are gouged into the host's back all the way down to the shoulder blades. The grutchin symbiote then inserts its back legs into the holes, attaching its claws to bone, and hooks its front legs around the host's neck. Its hideous, mandibled face looms over its master's shoulder, giving the unnerving impression of a creature with two heads.

During combat, the grutchin symbiote can leap at a target of the host's choosing (the command is transmitted telepathically, though the grutchin is not intelligent enough to understand anything more than attack/return orders). Unless redirected by its master, the creature continues attacking until its target is dead.

Grutchin symbiotes are used among the intendant, shaper, and priestly castes when the subjects are stationed in high-risk environments. These Yuuzhan Vong lack combat expertise, and the grutchin is an insurance policy for their survival. Many soldiers also carry the creatures, having been ordered to do so by their superiors, but employing a surrogate in battle is considered vaguely dishonorable among the warrior caste.

Grutchin symbiote: Armored predator 8; Init +8 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 20 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, +2 size); Spd 12m; VP/WP 64/16; Alk +14 melee (1d3, 2 claw), +5 melee



Grutchin Symbiote

(Dk, bite) or +4 ranged; SQ Blindsight 20m, Improved grab; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +2; SZ 1; PP 0; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 2. Challenge Code A. Skills: Climb +10, Jump +14, Spot +8, Survival +9. Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (claw).

Special Qualities: Improved Grab—Grutchin symbiotes and any opponents they grapple ignore the special size modifier when making opposed grapple checks initiated by the creature. A Grutchin can pin only creatures smaller than Medium sized, and it automatically fails a hold attempt against Huge or larger opponents.

TOKHLOR TALLOW

Weight: 1.6 kg

Considered an alternative to blorash jelly, tokhlor tallow is in fact its opposite. Rather than gluing foes in place, tokhlor tallow creates a frictionless film that makes enemies fall on their faces.

Tokhlors are foul-smelling ticks whose bodies are swollen with oil and mucus. When thrown on the ground they burst with wet pops, spraying the area with their noxious tallow. Anyone standing nearby must make a Reflex save (DC 16 on a smooth surface, DC 12 or lower if on sand, gravel, or similar terrain) or fall prone. Any subsequent movements suffer a -4 Dexterity penalty until the subject is free of the slippery tallow.

Tokhlor tallow is also corrosive. If bare skin comes into contact with the tallow puddle, the subject suffers 1d2 points of wound damage each round until he or she is able to break contact. At the GM's discretion, species with natural body armor, such as Barabels, could be immune to this effect.

KAVAAVIK

Weight: 0.5 kg

Millennia ago the kavaavik was a flightless avian on the Yuuzhan Vong homeworld. Over time its eyes adapted to burrowing through dark subterranean tunnels. The creature exists now only as a genetically-altered freak with a powerful echolocation sense that has been co-opted to allow the Yuuzhan Vong to see in the dark.

The kavaavik is a delicate bundle of flesh and thin bones; its pale skin is puckered as if freshly plucked. When a Yuuzhan

Adventure Seed: Kneel, Imperial Slave!

Following the Battle of Ithor, the navy of the Imperial Remnant has fled from the war's front lines to safeguard its own territory. Warmaster Tsavong Lah, unwilling to be so easily flanked, has ordered small strike forces to penetrate the defenses of the Yaga Minor shipyards and destroy its largest munitions dump. The ensuing damage will soften up the Imperial worms in preparation for a full Yuuzhan Vong invasion.

In deep space, the heroes set upon and capture a Sentinel-class landing shuttle. Donning ougithi masquers, they fly the abominable vessel into enemy territory. After penetrating Yaga Minor's orbital defenses, the heroes must locate, sabotage, and trigger the explosion of the reinforced munitions sphere. Yaga Minor's ubiquitous white-armored stormtroopers should prove no challenge for proud Yuuzhan Vong warriors.

On their way to their ship after the blast, the heroes discover that the Yaga Minor shipyards also contain a laboratory where Imperial scientists are experimenting with baffort tree pollen. This substance, salvaged from the wreck of Ithor, is fatal to Yuuzhan Vong wearing vunduun crab armor. The heroes must destroy the lab if they wish to protect the troops who will follow them in the glorious invasion of Imperial space.

The Yaga Minor spaceports are now on full alert, but if the heroes reach the lab they discover that Lumiya ("The Emperor's Pawns," *Star Wars Gamer* #5) has arrived at the same time, hoping to steal the pollen for her own purposes.

Assuming the heroes survive their encounter with this Sith Lord and her escorts, they must still escape through a wall of angry Star Destroyers and TIE fighters.

Vong places a kavaavik over his eyes, the bioengineered animal grips the wearer's head with its two surviving limbs and inserts its spinal needle into the wearer's optic nerve through the tear duct in his right eye. When wearing a kavaavik in this fashion the subject can see whatever the kavaavik sees—its echolocation pulses are translated into visual images. This temporarily gives a wearer Blindsight for a range of 500 meters. The wearer perceives his surroundings as silhouettes only; everything looks as if it has been dipped in gray paint. (For example, a Yuuzhan Vong wearing a kavaavik would be unable to

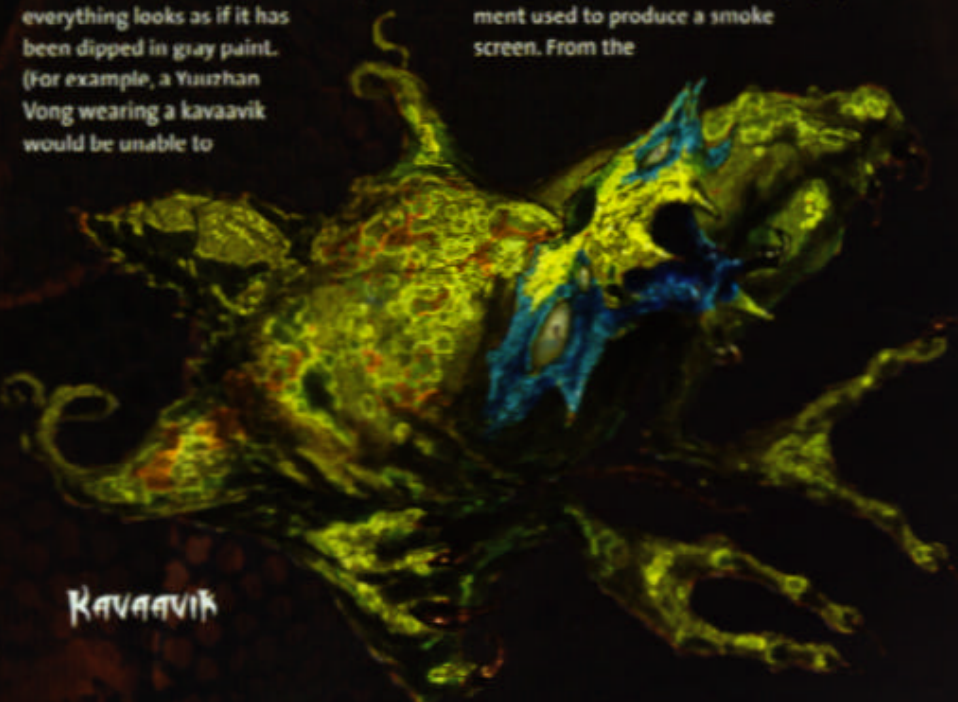
view a datascreen or read a paper scroll, unless the scroll had raised lettering.)

If the kavaavik is killed while attached to a host, the host is blinded for 1d4 rounds until his optic nerve can adjust to the shock. Kavaavik are typically carried in a membranous pouch.

TZUR'QIPAT

Weight: 18 kg

Often used in conjunction with a kavaavik, the tzur'qipat is a piece of heavy equipment used to produce a smoke screen. From the



KAVAAVIK

Adventure Seed: Domain Yaght Must Die!

Rivalries and blood feuds are common among Yuuzhan Vong domains (genealogically-related groups equivalent to clans). Rival domains can nurture a grudge for generations, with hundreds dying on either side in honor duels.

The heroes are ordered to assist in the pacification of Gyndine, a New Republic world in the Expansion Region. After destroying a number of armed refugee ships in Gyndine's orbital space, the heroes are set upon by the system's native ethersquids—clearly led there by a *Yorik-vec* cruiser bearing the markings of Domain Yaght. The heroes know the members of Domain Yaght as dishonorable, jelly-spined weaklings and should relish the thought of besting their ancestral enemies.

If the ethersquids haven't caused sufficient damage to the heroes' ship, the Domain Yaght team takes them down with a cheap shot. The heroes must crash-land on Gyndine, followed closely by their rivals. On this war-ravaged world they must defeat the treacherous warriors of Domain Yaght while surviving ambushes from blaster-toting locals and a Jedi Knight caught behind enemy lines.

outside it resembles a fat clam with knobby handholds along its rim. This organism, however, is merely an airtight bucket. Inside, floating in a tank of salt water, is a writhing ball of tentacles called a *tzur*. On the roof of the container, sealed within a milk-filled blister, is a fist-sized insect known as a *qipat* firewasp.

Two Yuuzhan Vong typically carry a *tzur'qipat*, due to its weight and the necessity of keeping the *tzur*'s waters placid. Rapping the roof of the clamshell while speaking the order "*yuth ugh*" releases the *qipat* from its bubble. Immediately, the starved *tzur* snares the insect and swallows it, not realizing that its meal's body chemistry is catastrophically incompatible with its own.

The ensuing chemical reaction consumes both animals, the water, and the lining of the clamshell, generating enough smoke to create zero visibility within an area measuring approximately 100x100 meters and up to 3 meters high. The smokescreen confers total concealment to anyone within the affected area (50% miss chance and must guess target's 2x2 meter square). The smoke is released through pressurized valves in the shell, instantly filling an area 25x25 meters. Each round, the affected area grows by 25 meters until it reaches its full size. Those not wearing breather masks or holding their breath suffer smoke inhalation damage as described in Chapter 12 of the core rulebook. Kavaaviks and gnullith breathers (or their technological equivalents), also allow characters to operate normally.

Anyone who tries to destroy an unused

tzur'qipat runs the risk of triggering it. It has a Defense of 7, 10 hardness, and 30 wound points. Each time an attack hits the *tzur'qipat* (or it is dropped), there's a 30% chance it activates.

BLAST BUG

Weight: 2.25 kg

Like the *thud bug* and the *razorbug*, the *blast bug* is a beetle that accelerates to kill velocity when thrown at a target. It is unique, however, in the manner of its death—when it nears its target, it explodes.

An exploding *blast bug* deals 4d4 damage to its target and 2d4 damage to anyone within 2 meters of the target. A successful Reflex save (DC 15) reduces the damage by one-half. Like *thud bugs* and *razorbugs*, *blast bugs* double their range when fired from a *thud bug* launcher.

The chemicals that govern volatility in a *blast bug* are not always reliable. On a natural "1" (a result of 1 on the d20 roll), the *blast bug* is a dud. It continues to operate as a *thud bug* until destroyed or recalled.

SNAP BUG

Weight: 2.25 kg

This beetle is a weakling when compared to its cousin, the *blast bug*. But the *snap bug* does have specialized uses. When the goal is to capture a target, the *snap bug* can be invaluable.

The *snap bug* dies an explosive death just like the *blast bug*, but its detonation creates a bright flash of light and a sonic shockwave. This causes no physical damage, but a subject targeted by a *snap bug* must make a Reflex save (DC 10) to avoid being blinded for

1d4 rounds, as well as a Fortitude save (DC 12) to avoid being stunned for 2d8 rounds.

Yuuzhan Vong have also been known to explode *snap bugs* to provide split-second illumination of dark surroundings.

STENG'S TALONS

Steng, a legendary Yuuzhan Vong warmaster, lost to Warmaster Yo'Gand in the climactic battle of the Cremlevian War. Despite his defeat, Steng's name has survived throughout the ages as a warrior who fought with ruthlessness and died with honor.

Steng's talons are pointed grafts formed from *sgauru* bone and sheathed in *yorik coral*. Eight to ten of the spikes are implanted beneath the skin of the user's torso during a painful and dangerous ceremony, after which they are undetectable to the untrained eye. When involved in a grapple, the user can extend the spikes a distance of ten centimeters as a free action. On a successful grapple check she deals 2d10 points of damage to her opponent.

Members of the warrior caste traditionally use Steng's talons to honor the name of Warmaster Steng. Members of other castes cannot receive Steng's talons unless they resort to bribery or similarly risky subterfuge.

FIRE SPITTER

Unlike the *fire breather* (a terrifying behemoth used during planetary pacifications), the *fire spitter* is an implanted organism that replaces a recipient's forearm from the elbow to the wrist leaving the host with his own hand. The *fire spitter*'s flexible spine acts as the recipient's new radius and ulna; the creature feeds on its host's blood as it circulates through its interior. The *fire spitter*'s head—a snaky proboscis speckled with black eyespots—coils around its host's wrist like a bracelet.

Once every three rounds, the *fire spitter* can spew a stream of flaming biomatter that deals 2d8 points of damage on contact. The host suffers 1d6 points of damage each time the implanted creature does so. There's also a chance the target catches on fire. See the *Catching on Fire* sidebar in Chapter 12 of the core rulebook.

Twice every 24 hours, the *fire spitter* can spray a mist of sticky droplets over a 2x2 meter area. This goo is a fast-burning chem-

ical that does no damage by itself. If it's exposed to flame (such as the fire spitter's flame stream), blaster fire, or even a spark, it's instantly set alight. The 2x2 meter area, as well as anyone that was standing within it when the fire spitter sprayed the goo, is set on fire. Coated targets do not get a Reflex save to avoid catching on fire as normal, but do get one each subsequent round while attempting to put out the fire.

Yuuzhan Vong warriors with fire spitter implants can be easily identified by their forearms, which are covered with brown triangular scales and the wriggly stumps of vestigial legs.

VAGH RODIEK (RODIAN SLAVES)

The Yuuzhan Vong captured the planet Rodia less than a year into the war, shortly before the conquest of Duru. Shapers immediately descended on the verdant sphere, obliterating Rodia's polluted cities with metal-eating microbes and planting damutek laboratories in the open jungle. Master Shaper Taug Molou, in charge of the Rodia project, received orders from Warmaster Tsavong Lah to create a tractable slave species on par with the reptilian Chazrach (who were brought from the Yuuzhan Vong's home galaxy). Master Molou was not willing simply to control Rodians with coral implants. He wished to shape a completely new species and was not above straining religious protocols to do so. Thousands of Rodians died in vivisection chambers before the first Vagh Rodiek emerged from its birthing blister.

These former Rodians are no more than animals, mindless drones without guidance from their Yuuzhan Vong masters. They scuttle on four pointed, crab-like legs; their arms have been replaced with half-meter hooks of bone. The Rodians' natural head-spines now bristle as puncturing quills. Vagh Rodiek are made available to military commanders, particularly those operating near Hull Space, when Chazrach are

Adventure Seed: Heretic!

The heroes have reached a pivotal moment in their lives as Yuuzhan Vong. They have accepted the terrible truth—that the qang qahsah holding the sum of Yuuzhan Vong knowledge long ago ran dry, that Supreme Overlord Shimrra is deceiving his own people, that the gods are a fiction worshipped by bloodthirsty fools. They have decided to defect to the New Republic and do everything they can to end this pointless war.

Agents of Yun-Harla are everywhere, however, and the heroes' heresy is discovered before they have a chance to depart their worldship. Exposed as traitors, they battle their way to their ship while loyal Yuuzhan Vong employ every weapon in their arsenal to stop the non-believers.

After escaping, the heroes execute several hazardous hyperjumps to reach the closest New Republic shipping lanes. Yuuzhan Vong pursuit teams make every effort to track and destroy them. At last they are welcomed aboard a colossal New Republic cargo barge whose captain promises to escort them into the safe custody of Leia Organa Solo.

But it quickly becomes apparent that the crew has anything but altruism in mind. The "rescuers" are actually Peace Brigades, and the heroes must take swift action to prevent them from being delivered right back into Yuuzhan Vong hands.

This adventure can also be played from the opposite side, as devout Yuuzhan Vong out to silence the blasphemers who threaten to upset the social order. The recapture of defectors is such a high priority that the heroes might have top-level equipment at their disposal.

unavailable. A typical strike unit consists of 1d10+2 individuals. Vagh Rodiek do not exist until some time after the fall of Rodia (circa *Balance Point*) and are not common until the fall of Coruscant.

Vagh Rodiek receive a +4 species bonus to Climb checks due to their hooked appendages. They also maintain their progenitors' +2 species bonus to Listen, Search, and Spot checks and Track bonus feat.

Vagh Rodiek: Armored Vermin 1; Init +0; Det 14 (+4 natural); Spd 12m; VPI/WP 10/14; Atk +1 melee (2d6+1, 2 claws) or +0 ranged; SQ +10 species bonus to saves against mind-influencing effects; DR 5; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -3; SZ M; Rcp 1; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 5, Cha 1; Challenge Code: R
Skills: Climb +8, Hide +4, Listen +2, Search +0, Speak Yuuzhan Vong (understand only), Spot +2, Survival +2, Feats: Power Attack, Track 6

VAGH RODIEK

FASTER, STARFIGHTER,

KILL! KILL!

Revised Starship Combat

BY JD WIKER AND OWEN K.C. STEPHENS

Roleplaying games become distinctively yours the moment you drop, add, or change a rule to suit your campaign. Since gamers are such a gregarious bunch, we share our house rules with friends, online message boards, and even in comments and questions to *Star Wars Gamer*. You've had a lot to suggest about the starship rules in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, and the designers have been paying attention. Here is the direct result of your feedback—a new, sleeker, stronger set of rules for ship-to-ship combat in the *Star Wars* galaxy. Take them out for a spin, then let us know what you think. Who knows? Your suggestions could be the next to shape the game. Share them by sending email to swgamer@wizards.com or write to *Star Wars Gamer*, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707.



Using a Grid

Starship combat uses a square grid, with each 1" square representing an area of space 500 meters on a side. Thus, a ship moving from one square to the next travels half a kilometer. Considering that some ships can travel 14 squares in a single action, the fastest of starships travels through space at roughly 8,400 kilometers per hour!

Starships on a square grid must be facing a side or a corner of the square they are in. Moving forward one square costs 1 movement point. Traveling diagonally uses a slightly different rule: every other diagonal move costs 2 movement points. Thus, a ship with 12 movement points moving diagonally for its entire action does not cover 12 squares—only 8. See the diagram below for some examples of movement.

Some starships are so large that they take up two or more squares on the grid. Examples include the *Imperial* Star Destroyer and the Trade Federation battleship. Exactly how many squares such vessels occupy is noted in the ship's specific listing. When moving such ships, always count the squares from the ship's engine; when firing weapons, count from the location of the weapon.

Multiple starships can occupy the same square, but they pose a hazard to each other when doing so. See *Avoiding Hazards* for details.

Relative Altitude

Most starship combat tends to take place within roughly the same half-kilometer plane of space. Starships derive no benefit from moving above or below their opponents, since shields cover a starship top and bottom, and weapons can fire up and down as well as side to side. Moving vertically is relevant only when traveling in a gravity field, always important for airspeeders and starships that move in atmosphere.

Crew Quality

Rather than providing statistics for every member of an entire starship's crew, most ship descriptions provide a general "crew quality" descriptor. This indicates the crew's aptitude with ship systems, including piloting, weapons, and defenses.

The Starship Crew Quality table lists the four levels of crew quality for GM-controlled starship crews, along with the appropriate check modifier. Use the Check Modifier for all skill checks related to the operation and piloting of the vessel (including Pilot and Repair checks). Use the Attack Bonus for all attack rolls performed by the crew.

For unique vehicles where the crew's statistics are included, this table is unnecessary. Likewise, if you wish to create an "enemy ace" or a particularly talented starship crew, feel free to assign specific check modifiers.



Starship Crew Quality

Crew Quality	Check Modifier	Attack Bonus
Untrained	-4	-2
Normal	+2	+0
Skilled	+4	+2
Expert	+8	+4
Ace	+12	+8/+3

Getting Started

Starships take time to warm up, with larger ships taking more time. Whenever a starship's engines are powered down—as when docked or undergoing maintenance—the crew must take time to get the ship ready for flight. How long this takes depends on the size of the ship.

The pilot can reduce this time by one step with a Pilot check (DC 20), taken as a move action. (Thus, not even a Fine-sized ship can be powered up in less than one move

action.) So, for example, a particularly good Star Destroyer crew could cold-start their ship in as little as five minutes, while an X-wing pilot could power up her engines as a full-round action.

Speed and Movement

There are five categories of starship speed, from a complete stop to ramming speed. At the beginning of a pilot's action, the player must declare the speed he intends to move during his action (Stopped, Docking, Cruising, Attack, or Ramming). This declaration determines the ship's speed for purposes of modifiers to attack rolls and skill checks, the ship's Defense, and how far the ship moves. The ship can change speed only at the beginning of the pilot's action or with a successful Hard Brake or Afterburner stunt (see Stunts, below).

Actions in a Round

Actions during starship combat are handled the same as actions during personal combat: a character can take two move actions, one move action and one attack action, or one full-round action in a round. Free actions can be performed at any time.

Sometimes a pilot wants (or needs) to perform an action other than attacking with a starship's weapons while keeping it moving. A move or attack action—such as firing a personal weapon or using a skill other than Pilot—is treated just like an attack action below: the starship moves forward a number of squares determined by its current speed while the pilot performs that action. Similarly, a full-round action is treated like a full attack below.

Free Actions

Communicating orders and switching weapon fire modes are two examples of free actions. Crewmembers can perform as many free actions as the GM permits in one round.

Move Actions

The starship must use a certain amount of movement points determined by its

current speed. These movement points can be used to move the starship forward or to make simple maneuvers such as turns and slips (see Simple Maneuvers). The pilot can also perform one stunt at any time during his move action (see Stunts).

Attack Actions

A pilot or gunner can make a single attack with one of a starship's weapons using his ranged attack bonus. The ship's size, speed, and equipment modify this attack. When the pilot performs an attack action, the starship also moves forward a number of squares determined by its current speed, and the pilot chooses at which point during the ship's movement the weapon fires.

Full Attack

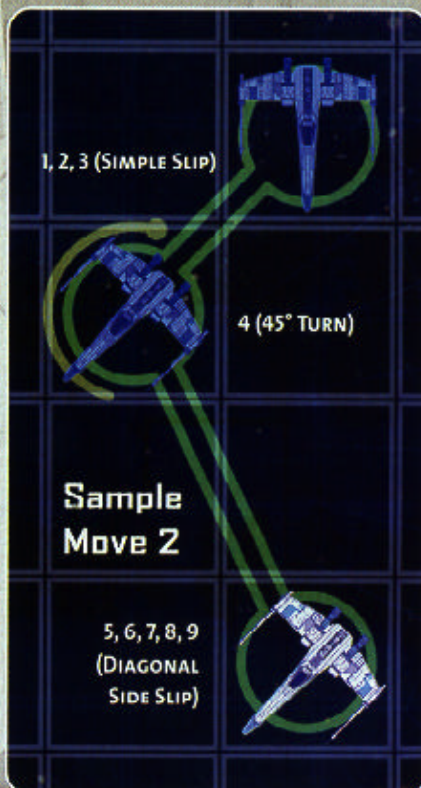
A pilot or gunner can, as a full-round action, use all of his attacks with one of a starship's weapons as above. When the pilot performs a full attack action, the starship also moves forward a number of squares determined by its current speed twice, and the pilot chooses at which point during the ship's movement the weapon fires.

At the beginning of a combat, the GM decides how fast any GM-controlled vessels are moving. The default is the maximum speed of the slowest ship in the group (assuming they are in a group). When in doubt about a ship's speed at the start of combat, assume that a ship is using the fewest number of movement points for its speed class.

A ship does not have to expend all of its available movement points during its turn; unspent movement simply indicates that the vessel is traveling at less than its top speed. A ship must use at least the minimum number of movement points for its speed category each action. Ships never go

Power Up Times

Ship Size	Time to Power Up
Fine	move action
Diminutive	full-round action
Tiny	2 rounds
Small	3 rounds
Medium	4 rounds
Large	5 rounds
Huge	1 minute
Gargantuan	5 minutes
Colossal	10 minutes



FASTER, STARFIGHTER, KILL! KILL!

faster than their maximum speed as indicated in the ship's listing.

Stopped: The ship is motionless.

Docking Speed: The ship is moving very slowly. This is generally used during docking procedures.

Cruising Speed: The ship is traveling at a normal cruising speed. This is the maximum speed for Imperial Star Destroyers and Mon Calamari cruisers, for example.

Attack Speed: The ship is moving at combat speeds. Unless a ship has been heavily modified, only vessels of Large or lesser size can move at attack speed. This is the maximum speed of Y-wing fighters, stock YT-1300 freighters, and Corellian Corvettes, among other ships.

Ramming Speed: The ship is traveling at the fastest sublight speed possible. Generally, only vessels of Small or lesser size can move at ramming speed. This is the maximum speed for X-wing and TIE

fighters, Guardian-class custom cruisers, and similar ships—A-wing fighters and the *Millennium Falcon* being at the upper end of this range.

A starship's speed affects its Defense and any Pilot skill checks or attack rolls made by the starship's operators.

Simple Maneuvers

When the pilot determines what speed a starship is traveling for the round, it must use at least the minimum number of movement points. The following actions can be undertaken by spending movement points during the pilot's move action.

FORWARD

Flying straight forward is the easiest maneuver possible. The only decision required on the part of the pilot is how fast to go. A pilot can always choose to travel more slowly than his ship's maximum speed—and in some cases, when the going is tricky, it's crucial not to travel too fast.

Moving forward 1 square costs 1 movement point. A starship may not combine forward and reverse movement during the same action.

Diagonal Movement: Moving diagonally (across the corner of a square) costs additional movement points. The first diagonal move a starship makes during each action only costs 1 movement point. The second costs 2 movement points instead of 1. The third costs 1, and so on.

Attacking Starships: When a pilot uses an attack action, the starship moves forward a number of squares determined by its current speed. (For example, a starship moving at Attack speed must move at least 5 squares straight forward when performing an attack action, and it can move up to 8 squares or its maximum speed, whichever is lower. It may

New Starship System: Inertial Compensators

Most starships employ a small field stabilizer known as an inertial compensator, designed to provide the crew with artificial gravity—and thus, a sensation of "down." Even when the ship is traveling upside down, the crew is always standing on the floor, rather than the ceiling or the walls.

Some pilots like to adjust the inertial compensators. They find that it improves the ship's performance slightly—while others find that it gives them a rough ride. Adjusting the inertial compensator gives the pilot a +1 circumstance bonus to Pilot checks; however, whenever the Pilot fails a maneuver, the entire crew suffers 1d4 points of damage.

Modifiers on the Standard Scale

In space, a character or vehicle firing at a passing starship has only a split-second to aim and fire. The "Standard Scale" column on the table below reflects the effective Defense bonus the passing starship gains against such attackers. Ignore the "Standard Scale" column when targeting starships in atmosphere.

Declared Speed	Movement Points	Defense Bonus	Check Modifier	Standard Scale
Stop	0	+0	+4*	+0
Docking	1	+1	+2	+8
Cruising	2-4	+2	+0	+10
Attack	5-8	+3	-2	+12
Ramming	9+	+4	-4	+14

*A stopped ship cannot make Pilot checks except to turn.

Simple Movement



Atmospheric Movement

When traveling in atmosphere, a starship's speed is reduced drastically to only 50 meters per square rather than 500. This change reflects the effects of gravity, aerodynamics, and atmospheric drag. This change in scale is also applied to weapon and sensor ranges.

NOT JUST STARSHIPS!

The way a starship moves and maneuvers can easily apply to an airspeeder or similar vehicle. You can use these rules rather than those in Chapter 10: Vehicles of the core rulebook. Using the same rules for both airspeeders and starships operating in atmosphere makes these encounters easier to play. To determine the maximum number of squares a vehicle can move, divide its listed speed by 50, (round down) to a minimum of 1.

not perform any other maneuvers or stunts.) When using a full attack, the ship does this twice. (If the starship in the example above made a full attack while moving at Attack speed, it would move 5 to 8 squares forward once, then move 5 to 8 squares forward again, as part of the full attack.)

REVERSE

Traveling in reverse is more difficult than flying forward, since most starships don't

include reverse thrusters any more powerful than braking thrusters. Unless otherwise noted, all ships traveling in reverse have a maximum speed of Docking.

Moving backwards 1 square costs 1 movement point. A starship may not combine forward and reverse movement during the same action.

SIMPLE SLIP

A pilot might wish to move to the side while simultaneously remaining pointed forward. This maneuver is a slip, and it's useful for avoiding obstacles without changing your facing. The simplest of slips moves the ship one square forward and to the right or to the left, and costs 3 movement points.

Diagonal Simple Slips: When the starship is facing a corner of its square instead of a side, a simple slip moves it into the forward left or right square and costs 3 movement points.

SIDE SLIP

A more difficult slip maneuver is the side slip. With it, the pilot covers more space laterally than she moves forward. For every square the ship moves forward, it can move 2 squares right or left. A side slip costs 5 movement points.

Diagonal Side Slips: Ships facing the corner of a square move into the forward left or right square, then moves one more square left or right (in the same direction only).

45° TURN

Every ship, from the smallest to the largest, can make a simple turn of 45° by spending 1 movement point. Before a ship can turn it must move at least 1 square forward.

Quick Turns: Instead of using movement points to execute a turn or to turn without first moving forward, a pilot can perform a quick turn. A quick turn is a stunt and requires a Pilot check (see Stunts, below).

Stunts

Once during each of a pilot's move actions, she may perform one difficult maneuver, or stunt. To perform a stunt requires a successful Pilot skill check. Movement points cannot be used to perform these actions.

AFTERBURN

Before finishing movement, a pilot can attempt to increase his speed one category



Diagonal Movement

1 MP

2 MP

DIAGONAL FORWARD

MOVING DIAGONALLY (ACROSS THE CORNER OF A SQUARE) COSTS ADDITIONAL MOVEMENT POINTS. THE FIRST DIAGONAL MOVE A STARSHIP MAKES DURING EACH ACTION ONLY COSTS 1 MOVEMENT POINT. THE SECOND COSTS 2 MOVEMENT POINTS INSTEAD OF 1. THE THIRD COSTS 1, AND SO ON.

DIAGONAL SIDE SLIP
5 MP

DIAGONAL SIMPLE SLIP
3 MP

KILL! KILL!

(from Cruising to Attack speed, for instance) from his declared speed with a successful Pilot check (DC 10).

HARD BRAKE

Before finishing movement, a pilot can attempt to lower his speed one category (from Ramming to Attack speed, for instance) from his declared speed with a successful Pilot check (DC 15). The new speed category cannot provide fewer movement points than the ship has already spent this action.

QUICK TURN

To turn without first moving forward 1 square requires a Pilot check. A quick turn can also allow a starship to make tighter turns within a single square. The angle of the turn determines the DC. The diagram below illustrates the DCs of a right turn, ranging from a 45° turn to a full 360° turn.

Failed Quick Turns: When a pilot fails a quick turn stunt, reduce the angle of the turn by 45° for every increment of 5 below the DC. For instance, a pilot attempting a 180° turn (DC 20) rolls a 10, so the ship turns only 90°. As with all failed stunts, failure by 10 or more requires the pilot to check for loss of control.

LAND

Landing is the one of the first lessons that every pilot learns. Setting a ship down on a solid surface requires a Pilot check (DC 20, +5

per size category above Medium, -5 per size category below Medium). A pilot can take 10 on this check, if the circumstances allow.

This stunt is best attempted at docking speed, though it's still possible to land a ship moving at ramming speed, provided the pilot can overcome the speed penalties. A ship that fails a landing stunt by 4 or less fails to land; it's hovering a meter or so above the surface. Failing a landing check by 5 or more indicates that the ship has hit the ground harder than intended, suffering collision damage. Calculate collision damage based on the ship's current speed using an approach vector of "perpendicular" (see Starship Collision Damage, below).

ESTABLISH PURSUIT

Sometimes a pilot wants to get behind an opponent and follow his every move or take advantage of a "blind spot." To establish pursuit, a ship must be in the same square as the target vessel, have the same facing, and fly within one speed category of the target's current speed (Attack, Ramming, and so on). A ship cannot establish pursuit if the target ship hasn't moved yet this round. To establish pursuit, the pilots make an opposed Pilot check. The target ship gains a +5 bonus to his check (unless he's unaware of the pursuer). If the would-be pursuer's roll beats the target's, he establishes pursuit.

Pursuing: Once a pilot has established pursuit, he acts on the same initiative and moves at the same declared speed (if possible). A pursuing ship moves at the same time as its target through exactly the same squares the target moves through—even squares including obstacles—and must perform all the same stunts and Avoid Hazard checks. If a pursuer fails to execute the maneuvers taken by his target, pursuit is broken—even if the pursuer doesn't suffer any damage as a result of a failed check.

Attack as a Free Action: After the target has declared speed for the round (which determines the pursuer's speed this

round too), the pilot of the pursuing craft may make a single attack with one forward-firing weapon. All gunners with forward-firing weapons may act as normal. While pursuing a ship, the pursuer ignores all speed modifiers to the target ship's Defense.

Flanking: Similar to flanking in personal combat, two or more ships can "bracket" an enemy ship and thus increase their chances of successfully hitting it with an attack. Two or more fighters that have established pursuit on the same target gain a +2 flanking bonus on attacks on the pursued ship.

Breaking Off Pursuit: A pursuer can break off pursuit at any time by choosing a different course than his target has. Breaking off pursuit is a special delayed action that allows the pursuer to finish acting after the target. Whenever a pilot breaks off pursuit, his initiative drops by one; he no longer acts at the same time as his target. Any remaining movement points and unused actions must be used this round when the former pursuer finishes acting.

ESCAPE PURSUIT

To escape a pursuer, the target and pursuer make an opposed Pilot check. The pursuer gains a +5 bonus to his check. If the target ship wins, it breaks off pursuit as described above.

If the pursued ship spends more movement points in one round than the pursuer can, it automatically escapes pursuit. The former pursuer's action is over, his initiative drops by one, and the target finishes moving.

Example: Vuko (initiative 17) is flying his YT-1300 freighter past an Imperial blockade when he attracts the attention of a pair of TIE fighters (initiative 14). The TIEs begin chasing Vuko's ship, and when he refuses to stand down for boarding, they move into the square behind the YT-1300 and attempt to establish pursuit. Both TIE pilots may attempt an opposed check against Vuko. Vuko has a total bonus of +10 to his Pilot checks, and the TIE pilots each have a +8 bonus. Vuko gains a +5 bonus to his check and rolls a 12, for a total of 27. One of the TIE pilots rolls a 9, for a total of 17, and the other rolls a 20, for a total of 28.



"Pursuing" or "Chasing"?

While pursuing a ship can be a harrowing prospect, a ship need not establish pursuit just to go the same place that another ship is going. A ship can always follow along—even through the same squares—making whatever maneuvers the pilot wishes to make to stay behind the other ship, or it can take an alternate route. A daring pilot beset by pursuers can fly through difficult hazards, thus increasing the DC of the Avoid Hazard check and possibly losing his pursuers or causing them to suffer collisions—thus getting rid of them for good. A ship pursuing another ship can, likewise, change course (breaking off pursuit) to avoid making an extremely difficult stunt, then pick up pursuit again later.

The second TIE is now pursuing Vuko's ship. The initiative of this pilot changes to match Vuko's initiative (17); when Vuko acts, the second TIE pilot acts. The first TIE still acts on initiative 14, and if it can get in behind the YT-1300, it can again attempt to establish pursuit.

Vuko tries to shake his pursuer. Now Vuko must attempt an opposed Pilot check against the TIE pilot who is pursuing him, though he can ignore the other TIE fighter for purposes of this check. He still has his +10 bonus, but the TIE pilot gains a +5 bonus in addition to his +8 Pilot bonus. Vuko rolls a 19, for a total of 29, and the TIE pilot rolls a 10, for a total of 23. Vuko manages to shake the TIE fighter, and the pursuing pilot's initiative drops to 16.

REVERSAL

Before finishing movement, a pilot can try to turn the tables on a pursuer by getting behind him. This is called a reversal. Both pilots make an opposed Pilot check (with the current pursuer adding +10 to his roll). If the pursued pilot's check beats the pursuer's, the pursued pilot is now pursuing. Both ships continue moving, and the new target determines the course they follow. Neither ship's initiative changes in the event of a reversal.

A separate reversal check must be attempted for each pursuer; a ship pursued by multiple opponents can turn the tables

on only one of them with a single reversal attempt, unless the pursuing ships are part of a wing. In this case, the reversal affects the entire wing. A pursuing ship can suddenly find itself pursued, while its allies are still pursuing its pursuer.

REGAIN CONTROL

This stunt can be attempted only when the pilot has lost control of the starship (see Failed Stunts, below). Any penalties that apply for the loss of control apply to this check, and any further penalties resulting from multiple failed checks to regain control stack.

JOIN/REJOIN WING

The wing formation is a common starfighter stunt that allows pilots to trade versatility for increased firepower. Most wings don't survive past the first few moments of a large battle, when fighters quickly peel off and fight on their own. Many squadrons consider this a standard tactic that grants their pilots the benefits of a wing when combat starts and greater versatility for the heavy fighting.

Starfighters in wing formation attack and maneuver together. The advantage of a wing formation is that it allows a group of fighters to stay together even during the most hectic space combats. The drawback is that the ships in a wing can maneuver only as well as the worst pilot's ship. As a result, squadrons of equally skilled pilots typically use wing formations.

Forming a wing requires that the ships all be in the same square, moving at the same speed and in the same direction. Each must make a Pilot check (DC 15). If the ships attempting to form a wing are not the same size category, the DC rises to 20. A starfighter wing can be from 2 to 6 ships.

A wing operates as a single starship in most respects. The initiative of all the pilots in the wing drops to the lowest initiative of all the pilots in the wing (though this change does not allow a ship that has already acted to act again). The wing rolls a single Pilot check whenever it attempts a stunt, using the worst Pilot skill total among its members. If the stunt is successful, all the ships in the wing succeed. If the stunt fails, the entire wing fails.

It is not possible for a pilot to drop out

of a wing by failing a stunt check—the entire wing succeeds or fails together. When attacking, each ship in the wing must fire at the same target, and they combine fire as a battery. When a wing combines fire, a single starfighter is designated the primary attacker. Only this ship's attack bonus is used, but it gains a +1 bonus for each additional ship in the wing. On a successful hit, resolve damage as with battery fire (see Battery Fire), using the primary shooter's weapon as the default weapon. No more weapons can hit than are available in the wing.

If the wing attempts to ram a target, resolve the ram attempts individually.

Ships attempting to establish pursuit on one ship in a wing make a single check to see if they succeed against the entire wing. When a ship in a wing is hit, the player running the wing decides which ship within the wing takes the damage. If player-controlled characters pilot all of the ships in the wing, randomly determine which ship suffers each incidence of damage.

RESIST/ESCAPE TRACTOR BEAM

The pilot of a vessel hit by a tractor beam can attempt to resist or escape the beam's hold by making a Pilot skill check. The DC to resist is 10, while the DC to escape is 20. Add +4 to this DC for every category of size

Using Fighter Wings

If you find yourself running a space battle with dozens of fighters, you might want to form most of them into wings. Since wings can be formed before the battle, even poor pilots can join by taking 20. Each wing is treated like a single ship in most respects, saving time when making attack rolls and stunt checks. When a wing suffers damage, assume the same ship is hit every time until it is destroyed. While this might not be realistic, it's faster and keeps large conflicts moving quickly.

If you want to involve starships piloted by heroes in large and dangerous space battles, you might want to assign them each a wing. While this option prevents the player from using his character's own Pilot skill, it lets him assign damage to other ships before his own, increasing the character's chance of survival.

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difference between the captured vessel and the vessel firing the tractor beam (or subtract 4 from the DC if the capturing vessel is smaller). If the pilot rolls high enough to resist the tractor beam, he maintains his current distance. If he rolls high enough to escape, his ship can act normally.

Failed Stunts

In most cases, a failed Pilot check on a stunt means the pilot has failed to perform the intended maneuver. If the Pilot check fails by 10 or more, however, the pilot might lose control of the starship. (You can't lose control due to a failed opposed check.) Make another Pilot check at the same DC as the original (failed) check. If the second check succeeds, the

pilot maintains control of the vessel but still fails to perform the desired maneuver. If this second check fails, the pilot has lost control of his vessel. Compare the pilot's measure of failure (how much he missed the second check by) to the Loss of Starship Control table to determine the effect.

Loss of Starship Control			
Failed by ...	Effect	Penalty	Defense
Up to 5	Skew	-2	-1
6-10	Pitch	-5	-2
11-15	Yaw	-5	-5
16-20	Spin	-10	-8
21+	Tumble	-12	-10

Skew: The ship is only marginally out of control, skewing slightly to one side or spinning slightly, for instance. Until the pilot regains control, it must move along

its current vector a number of squares determined by its last declared speed. All operators of the ship (including pilots, gunners, and anyone else operating ship systems) suffer -2 penalties to checks relating to operating the ship until the pilot regains control. The ship itself suffers a -1 penalty to its Defense.

Pitch: The ship's nose pitches up and down at random. Until the pilot regains control, it must move along its current vector a number of squares determined by its last declared speed. Then roll 1d6 to determine its attitude: 1-2 up, 3-4 level, 5-6 down. A ship pointed up is considered to be climbing, and a ship pointed down is considered to be diving. In space, this doesn't matter, but if the ship is flying near a planet or other large object, its attitude can make a big difference.

All operators of a pitching ship suffer a -5 penalty to checks relating to operating the ship until the pilot regains control. While a ship is in a pitch, its Defense is reduced by -2.

Yaw: The ship turns at a 45° angle to its original position each action until the pilot regains control. Roll 1d6 to determine which way: 1-2 left, 3-4 forward (no turn), 5-6 right. Until the pilot regains control, the ship must move along its current vector a number of squares determined by its last declared speed. All operators of the ship suffer a -5 penalty until the pilot regains control. In addition, anyone aboard the ship attempting any check (except saves) unrelated to the operation of the ship suffers a -2 penalty. The ship suffers a -5 penalty to its Defense.

Spin: The ship goes wildly out of control but continues in the same direction it was heading. Until the pilot regains control, it must move along its current vector a number of squares determined by its last declared speed. Then roll 1d8 each action until the pilot regains control to determine its facing: 1 front, 2 front right, 3 right, 4 right rear, 5 rear, 6 left rear, 7 left, 8 front left.

All operators of the spinning ship suffer a -10 penalty while a ship is spinning. In addition, anyone aboard the ship attempting any check (except saves) unrelated to the operation of the ship suffers a -5 penalty. While the ship is spinning, it suf-

Starship Size

A starship's size is perhaps its most important characteristic. Size affects a ship's Defense, attack rolls, initiative, and Pilot skill checks. The size modifiers appear in the Starship Sizes table.

When a starship fires at a vehicle—or even a character—the Starship Sizes table might not cover the full range of possible modifiers. While several vehicles are larger than 5 meters long, few characters are—so modifiers for “less than Fine size” are provided. For combat between starships and vehicles, or starships and characters, use the italicized portions of the table to determine modifiers to Defense and attack rolls. This expanded scale does not affect initiative and skill checks.

Starship Sizes

STARSHIP SCALE	STANDARD SCALE	MODIFIER	SIZE (M)	EXAMPLES
Colossal		-8	1001+	Imperial star destroyer, Mon Calamari star cruiser
Gargantuan		-4	501-1000	Assault frigate
Huge		-2	251-500	Nebulon-B escort frigate
Large		-1	101-250	Corellian corvette, bulk freighter
Medium		+0	51-100	Medium transport
Small	Colossal	+1	21-50	Light freighter, Imperial customs light cruiser
Tiny	Gargantuan	+2	11-20	Starfighter
Diminutive	Huge	+4	6-10	TIE fighter
Fine	Large	+8	2.41-5	Missile, escape pod
—	Medium	+12	1.21-2.4	Human
—	Small	+16	0.61-1.2	Ewok
—	Tiny	+20	0.31-0.6	Ysalamiri
—	Diminutive	+24	0.1-0.3	Sand tick
—	Fine	+28	less than 0.1	Stingfly

Spin d8

8
FRONT
LEFT

1
FRONT

2
FRONT
RIGHT

7
LEFT



3
RIGHT

6
REAR
LEFT

5
REAR

4
REAR
RIGHT

Pitch d6

1-2
UP



3-4
No
CHANGE

5-6
DOWN



Yaw d6

1-2
LEFT



3-4
NONE



5-6
RIGHT



Starship Piloting Stunts

Stunt	Pilot DC
Afterburn	10
Hard Brake	15
Quick Turn	+5 per 45°
Land	special*
Establish pursuit	Opposed, pursued +5
Escape pursuit	Opposed, pursuer +5
Reversal	Opposed, pursuer +10
Regain Control	10†
Join/rejoin wing	15
Resist/escape tractor beam	10/20*

*See description for variations according to ship size.

†This stunt can be attempted only when a Pilot has lost control.

squares determined by its last declared speed. Roll 1d8 to determine its facing, as for a spin. Then roll 1d6 to determine its attitude, as with a pitch result. Make both of these rolls each action until the pilot regains control.

All operators of a tumbling ship suffer a -12 penalty while their ship is tumbling. In addition, anyone aboard the ship attempting any check (except saves) unrelated to the operation of the ship suffers a -8 penalty. While the ship is tumbling, it suffers a -10 penalty to its Defense.

While a ship is out of control, the pilot may not perform any maneuvers; the ship moves according to its last declared speed in a direction indicated by the table. To regain control of a ship, the pilot must make a successful Regain Control

stunt (see above) as a move action. If the check is successful, the ship may maneuver normally for the remainder of that action but cannot perform another stunt until the pilot's next action.

Avoiding Hazards

Sometimes space is littered with obstacles: asteroids, starship wreckage, and even other ships. A pilot can avoid such obstacles by flying around the square they occupy. If a pilot flies through a square that includes an obstacle, the pilot must attempt an Avoid Hazard check.

Avoiding a hazard does not require an action: the pilot makes as many Avoid Hazard checks each round as required by the obstacles in his path. The DC for an Avoid Hazard check is based on the size of the obstacle—though the GM may apply additional modifiers

to the DC based on the speed and course of the obstacle.

A GM who wishes to generate hazards randomly can roll to determine the obstacle's size, speed, and direction.

d20 Roll	Obstacle Size	Avoid Hazard DC
1-4	Fine	0
5-7	Diminutive	5
8-10	Tiny	10
11-13	Small	15
14-15	Medium	20
16-17	Large	25
18	Huge	30
19	Gargantuan	35
20	Colossal	40

d20 Roll	Obstacle Speed	DC Modifier
1-4	Stop	-10
5-8	Docking	-5
9-12	Cruising	+0
13-16	Attack	+5
17-20	Ramming	+10

d20 Roll	Obstacle Direction	DC Modifier
1-7	Moving Away	-5
8-13	Moving Perpendicular	+0
14-20	Moving Toward	+5

Failing an Avoid Hazard check almost always means that the ship has collided with the obstacle. (See Ramming and Collisions, below.) If the hazard in question is another ship, the pilot of the other ship also makes an Avoid Hazard check. If both checks fail, a collision occurs.

fers a -8 penalty to its Defense.

Tumble: The ship rolls, pitches, spins, and yaws all at once, while simultaneously moving along its last vector. Until the pilot regains control, it must move along its current vector a number of

FASTER, STARFIGHTER, KILL! KILL!

A pilot can choose to live dangerously by flying closely to an obstacle. Adding increments of +5 to the Avoid Hazard check DC reflects how close the pilot would like to fly. In most cases, this is simply reckless flying—it might impress people, but it serves no other purpose. When a ship is pursued, however, such reckless flying can shake the pursuers off one's tail.

Example: Sarribo encounters an asteroid cluster and decides to test his piloting skills by flying directly through the center. The GM determines that the Pilot check DC for avoiding this particular hazard—that is, not suffering any damage—is 25 (because the combined size of the cluster is Large), plus 5 because the asteroids are moving fairly quickly (attack speed), and minus 10 because the asteroids are moving directly away from Sarribo's ship. The total DC for Sarribo's Pilot check, then, is 20 (25+5-10=20).

Sarribo is cocky, however, and he wants to show off. He decides that he's going to fly his starfighter between two asteroid chunks that are about to bounce off one another. Sarribo can time his flying so that this stunt adds +5, +10, +15, +20, or even more to his Pilot check DC. Not being entirely crazy, he opts for the +10, for a total DC of 30.

Ramming and Collisions

Collisions occur when a vessel loses control and strikes a solid object, or when the pilot of a ship decides to ram into an object on purpose.

RESOLVING COLLISIONS

Like vehicle collisions (see Chapter 10: Vehicles, in the core rulebook), starship collisions depend on the speed and size of the ships or obstacles involved. Find the highest speed (in squares traveled this action) between the two objects colliding. This determines the damage die type.

Once the base damage inflicted by the collision has been determined, determine the number of damage dice to roll based on the size of the smallest object involved.

Finally, the GM must decide the angle of collision (based on whether the obstacle

was moving toward, away, or perpendicular), modifying the damage according to the chart below.

Once the damage has been determined, apply it to both ships (or objects) involved in the collision.

Starship Collision Damage

Base Speed	Damage Die Type
Docking	d4
Cruising	d8
Attack	d10
Ramming	d12

Object Size	Number of Dice
Colossal	24
Gargantuan	20
Huge	16
Large	12
Medium	10
Small	8
Tiny	6
Diminutive	4
Fine	2

Vector Multiplier Target Is ...	Multiplier
Moving toward the ramming ship	x2
Moving perpendicular to the ramming ship	x1
Moving away from the ramming ship	x1/2

Starship Combat

The ultimate goal of any starship combat scenario in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* should be to create an exciting, fast-paced scene in which the heroes feel their skills and aptitudes have an impact on the outcome of the battle. These rules provide a framework for combat between two or more ships. Keep in mind the more ships that are fighting, the more complicated the situation becomes.

Once it becomes clear that a starship combat is about to occur—either because opponents come within sensor range of each other, or because the scenario calls for a battle to commence—you need to know who acts first, what they can do during their action, and how that action affects everyone else involved.

INITIATIVE

The Gamemaster has two options for starship combat initiative. First, you can use individual initiative just as in normal combat, where each hero rolls separately. This is probably the best method if most or all of the heroes are aboard the same ship, however this can result in a lot of delayed or readied actions as gunners wait for pilots to perform maneuvers.

An easier way is simply rolling initiative for each ship (or wing of fighters) using the ship's size modifier as the initiative modifier. This option is useful when most heroes are on separate ships. Have everyone on the same ship act more or less simultaneously. Pilots of starfighter-class ships may also add their personal initiative modifier to the roll.

POWERING WEAPONS

Before you can begin blasting your enemies to so much space dust, you must power-up your ship's weapons. In civilized systems, casually flying around with your weapons powered up is the equivalent of waving a blaster pistol in a threatening manner; it's not something you do if you don't want to draw attention to yourself. Starship weapons take a little time to charge before they can be fired. Power-up depends on the size of the ship.

Ship Size	Time to Power-Up
Huge or larger	full round
Small/Medium/Large	move action
Tiny or smaller	free action

RAISING SHIELDS

Starship shields take less time to ready than weapons, but the delay can still be a costly one. The Damage Reduction of shields applies as soon as the shields are activated, even though the full protection of the shields might not be available immediately. Though it's not a crime to fly around with your shields powered up, it can draw unwanted attention to your ship. The charging time of shields depends on the size of the ships.

Ship Size	Time to Power-Up
Gargantuan	full round
Large/Huge/Colossal	move action
Medium-sized or smaller	free action

FACING AND FIRING ARCS

All standard-mounted weapons point in one of four directions: forward, aft, right, or left. Some weapons are partially turret-mounted (giving them two adjacent arcs of fire) or fully turret-mounted (allowing them to fire in all four directions). A weapon's facing and arc of fire is listed in the ship's description.

Starship Range Penalties

	PB	S	M	L	Sensor
Size	0-1	2-5	6-10	11-20	21-40
Colossal	-6	-4	-2	0	†
Gargantuan	-6	-4	-2	0	†
Huge	-4	-2	0	0	†
Large	-2	0	0	-2	†
Medium	0	0	-2	-4	†
Small	0	0	-2	-4	†
Tiny	0	-2	-4	-6	†
Diminutive	-2	-4	-6	-8	†
Fine	-2	-4	-6	-8	†

†Starships at sensor range can't fire at one another.

With some exceptionally large vessels, the part of the ship that includes a given fire arc could be two or more squares wide. If it becomes important (such as for determining range, or for firing at Point Blank range), count the number of weapons included in that fire arc and divide by the number of squares the ship has in that fire arc. The result indicates, in most cases, exactly how many weapons are actually in a given square on a ship and, thus, how much of the ship's firing actually comes from that square (as opposed to the adjacent square).

RANGE

The table below shows the attack penalty when a ship of the listed size is firing at a target at the listed range. Note that most weapons are also listed in the ship's description with a maximum range, so it's possible that certain modifiers here might not apply.

Example: An X-wing (size Tiny) and a light cruiser (size Large) are engaged in combat at Short range (4 squares apart). The X-wing pilot suffers a -2 penalty to hit the light cruiser at this range, while the cruiser's gunners attack at no penalty. Clearly, the X-wing pilot wants to close the distance to reduce or eliminate her penalty.

POINT BLANK RANGE

At Point Blank range, capital ships have difficulty bringing their weapons to bear on small targets. They can target no more than 25% of their weapons at any single Medium or Small starship and no more than 10% at any single Tiny, Diminutive, or Fine starship. Round fractional values down, to a minimum of one.

Firing Into A Dogfight: If your target is at Point Blank range from an ally (such as when engaged in a dogfight), you suffer -4 to attack rolls if you are at more than Point Blank range.

Example: An X-wing and a light cruiser attack each other at Short range. At this range, both vehicles can bring all their weapons to bear (assuming the weapons are facing in the proper direction, and not including point defense guns). Once the X-wing closes to Point Blank range, the light cruiser can only target the X-wing with 25% of the weaponry that it has facing in the proper direction (as well as 25% of its point defense guns), while the X-wing could continue to fire with all its weapons.

MAKING ATTACK ROLLS

Firing a starship weapon uses the gunner's base ranged attack value (including Dexterity modifier). Unless you have the proper Starship Operation feat (starfighter, space transport, or capital ship) you suffer a -4 penalty to attacks with starship weapons.

If you are also the vessel's pilot and you have 5 or more ranks of Pilot, you gain a +2 synergy bonus when firing starship weapons. A fire control computer grants a computer bonus to attack rolls (based on the computer's quality) with starship weapons enhanced by the computer.

Normal Starship Fire Arcs



Large Starship Fire Arcs



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MULTIPLE ATTACKS

Multiple attacks must be taken with a single weapon, a group of fire-linked weapons, or a set of adjoining weapons. If two or more identical weapons have identical facings, they are considered adjoining weapons. For example, a pilot in an X-wing who could make two attacks as a full attack action could fire each of the fighter's proton torpedo launchers once, or its fire-linked laser cannons twice. It would not be possible for the pilot to fire the laser cannons once and launch one proton torpedo as a full attack action.

Taking a full attack action is useful only if a character is capable of making more than one attack. Characters with a base attack bonus high enough to get multiple attacks (+6 or higher) can take the full attack action to make multiple attacks during starship combat. Characters with the Rapid Shot feat can use it to make an extra attack with starship weapons.

Double lasers, adjoining weapons, and all weapons described as blasters are considered multifire weapons. This allows two attacks as a full attack action, but each attack suffers a -4 penalty (see Multifire in Chapter 8: Combat in the core rulebook). Quadlasers are autofire weapons; they may be used to make two additional attacks as a full attack action, but each attack suffers a -6 penalty (see Autofire, also in Chapter 8). Quadlasers on capital ships can be set to autofire. This is an exception to the normal rule preventing capital weapons from making multiple attacks.

ATTACK RUN

A ship can, as part of an attack action or full attack, ignore normal defensive maneuvering to line itself up with its target, gaining a bonus to attacks made against the target. The attacking ship must move directly toward the target this action.

The ship gains a +2 circumstance bonus to attacks made with weapons in the front firing arc, but it also suffers a -4 penalty to Defense until the beginning of the pilot's next action. A ship making an attack run cannot fight defensively.

Ram Attack: A ram attack is a type of attack run in which the pilot attempts to fly

her ship into another object. This is an attack action that requires an attack roll (including the +2 circumstance bonus and ignoring the target's armor bonus to Defense). If the attack succeeds, resolve the damage as a collision (see below). If the attack fails, the ship carries on along the same course, using up any unspent movement points based on its declared speed.

FLYING DEFENSIVELY

Just as in melee combat, you can "fight defensively" while piloting a starship or select "total defense."

Fighting defensively grants a +2 dodge bonus to the ship's Defense and applies a -4 penalty on attack rolls, and can be performed as part of an attack or full attack action.

Total defense grants a +4 dodge bonus to Defense but does not allow the pilot to attack; gunners suffer a -8 penalty on attack rolls. Total defense takes the place of an attack action; the starship may maneuver as if this was a move action but may not attempt a stunt.

These modifiers last 1 complete round. If you have 6 or more ranks of Pilot and the appropriate Starship Operation feat, the dodge bonuses increase to +3 for fighting defensively and +6 for all-out defense.

POINT DEFENSE WEAPONS

Many capital-class vessels have small weapons called "point defense" weapons designed to fire against starfighters at Point Blank range. These weapons fire as if they were part of a Medium starship (+0 modifier, no penalty to hit at Point Blank range), regardless of the actual size of the capital ship.

Point defense guns can't target a ship at greater than Point Blank range.

The best use of point defense weapons is to hold them in reserve until an enemy ship comes within Point Blank range. Although it's usually most convenient to let the entire crew act on the same initiative, they need not do so—allowing the gunners on the point defense weapons to

deliver potentially crippling blows to enemy ships that venture too close, before those enemy ships can bring their own weapons to bear.

BATTERY FIRE

Most capital ships have weapons grouped in batteries. These weapons can fill an area of space with swathes of blaster fire. A battery is usually a group of up to five identical weapons that fire as one (using a single attack roll to determine success). When using battery fire, each additional weapon after the first in a battery adds +1 to the attack roll, to a maximum of +4 for a 5-weapon battery. If the attack succeeds, roll damage as if one of the weapons had hit.

Further, for each 3 points by which the attack succeeds, an additional weapon has hit the target, inflicting its damage as well, up to the maximum number of weapons firing. This advantage allows capital ship weapon batteries to do what they

(continued on page 70)

Starship Speeds

If you already have a starship but don't know what its maximum speed should be, you can follow these simple guidelines:

Maximum Speed	MPs per Action
Cruising	3
Attack	6
Ramming	10

Below are the maximum speeds of typical starships heroes are likely to fly or encounter as well as the maximum number of squares per action they can move.

Starship	Speed	MPs per Action
X-wing	Ramming	10
Y-wing	Attack	8
TIE fighter	Ramming	10
Z-95 headhunter	Ramming	9
Droid starfighter	Ramming	10
N-1 starfighter	Ramming	9
YT-1300	Attack	10
Millennium Falcon	Ramming	12
Guardian light cruiser	Attack	7
Imperial Star Destroyer	Cruising	3
Mon Calamari star cruiser	Cruising	4
Nebulon-B frigate	Cruising	3
Corellian corvette	Attack	5
Trade Federation battleship	Cruising	2

Starship Missile Weapons

Missile weapons (such as proton torpedoes and concussion missiles) function differently from beam weapons. For use beyond Point Blank range, a gunner must first establish a missile lock on his target. After it is fired, a missile closes the distance to the target.

UNGUIDED MISSILES

Missile weapons may be fired without a missile lock. This is the default firing mode, as listed for certain ships. The missile moves straight forward from its point of origin and may not turn or otherwise attempt stunts.

At Point Blank range, a missile works like any other ranged weapon: the firing character makes a ranged attack to determine the outcome. When the missile goes beyond Point Blank range and enters a square occupied by another object, it attempts to attack that object, even if the object in question is not the intended target.

An unguided missile can hit a target only if it is within a certain range, as indicated on the Unguided Missile Range table. If the range between the firing ship and the target ship is greater than the listed range, the missile has no chance of striking its target.

Unguided Missile Range

Target Size	Maximum Range*
Up to Medium	up to 1 square away (as a normal attack only)
Large	
to Colossal	up to 5 squares away
Planetary	up to 10 squares away

*If the object is stopped, add one category to the maximum range listed.

ESTABLISHING AND BREAKING MISSILE LOCK

A pilot or gunner can attempt to establish a missile lock against any target within 20 squares (see the Starship Range Penalties table for modifiers based on the firing ship's size and range to target). To establish a missile lock, the attacker makes an attack roll as an attack action (the missile is not fired as part of this action). The character trying for a missile lock gains a +2 synergy bonus to this roll if he has 5 or more ranks of Computer Use. If the attack roll succeeds, a missile lock is established, giving the attacker a readied action to fire the missile at any point later in the combat.

The missile lock remains established until the missile weapon is fired (unless the target ship moves a range category farther away). The pilot or gunner can execute his readied action to fire the missile at any time.

A missile always moves 9 squares each action, even if that movement carries it beyond its intended target. It cannot reduce its speed for any reason. A missile acts on the same Initiative number it was fired and begins acting as soon as it is fired. A missile can maneuver as though it had the Pilot skill (see the Missile Guidance Systems table), though it cannot attempt the Establish Pursuit, Break Pursuit, Reversal, or Join/Rejoin Wing stunts. A missile's Pilot skill allows it to make turns more quickly and thus resume its attempt to hit its target.

FIRE-LINKED MISSILES

If a starship incorporates two missile launchers or torpedo launchers with the same facing, the pilot may fire a missile from both launchers simultaneously. This action requires only one check to establish missile lock. When the missiles are fired, both move at the same time and on the same vectors. (Two missiles traveling together this way are not required to attempt Avoid Hazard checks for each other.) The two missiles attack separately, however, so one missile might hit and the other miss. In this case, the surviving missile would continue to pursue the target until it ran out of fuel.

Example: N'ottakcca is operating the missile tubes aboard a modified YT-1300 and wants to obtain a missile lock on an approaching Guardian-class customs cruiser. Consulting the Starship Range Penalties table, she sees that she suffers a -4 penalty on the attempt while the cruiser is at Long range (11–20 squares distant) and a -2 penalty to the attempt when it reaches Medium range (6–10 squares distant). She decides to take her chances while the ships are still 12 squares apart, so she suffers a -4 penalty to her attack roll. This time the Force is with N'ottakcca, and she rolls a natural 20; she has obtained the missile lock. N'ottakcca immediately fires the missile, and it streaks out toward the approaching customs ship, covering the distance in just two actions.

Whenever a missile enters the same square as its target, the missile attempts to hit its target using an attack bonus listed on the Missile Guidance and Quality table (Ordinary missiles unless otherwise noted). If the attack fails, the missile carries on with the rest of its movement, if any, although it cannot attempt a stunt on the same action that it attempts to resolve the attack.

A missile operates for 6 rounds before it runs out of fuel. It may make several attempts to hit its target in that time, though never more than one attempt each round. A missile that enters its target's square makes one attempt to resolve the attack.

AVOIDING MISSILE ATTACKS

Any ship can attempt to destroy the missile before it reaches its target. All missile weapons have Defense 22 (including size and speed) and 30 hull points, with no shields or damage reduction. A missile can suffer ion cannon damage just like a starship.

The most dangerous method of avoiding a missile is to "distract" it by giving it another target. A pilot can attempt to trick a missile's guidance system into chasing a dif-

Missile Guidance and Quality

Missile Guidance System Quality	Pilot Skill Rating and Attack Bonus*
Marginal	+5
Ordinary	+10
Good	+15
Amazing	+20

*Includes modifiers for speed and size.

ferent target by flying through a square occupied by another object—for example, an asteroid or another ship, perhaps even the ship that originally fired the missile. This trick, of course, prompts an Avoid Hazard check for the pilot chased by the missile. The pilots of all vessels in the square then make opposed Pilot checks: the lowest total check becomes the new target of the missile.

If the object in the square is unpiloted (an asteroid or a derelict ship, for example), the missile must attempt an Avoid Hazard check. If the check fails, the missile collides with the object and detonates. If the check succeeds, the missile passes harmlessly through the square and resumes its pursuit of the original target.

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do best: mercilessly pummel large, slow-moving targets (such as planets or space stations), but it makes starfighters much, much harder to hit.

If an attack roll with battery fire results in a threat, use the above procedure to determine which shots are considered critical hits, which inflict damage directly to the hull. Weapons in the battery that did not hit on the confirming roll are treated as ordinary shots, which must first penetrate any shields on the target.

FIRE-LINKED WEAPONS

Instead of weapon batteries, starfighter-class vessels (and vehicles) sometimes have fire-linked guns. These are groups of weapons that point and fire in the same direction. In effect, this arrangement creates a single weapon (fired with a single attack roll) that inflicts greater damage than either weapon alone. Each doubling of the number of weapons (two, four, eight, and so on) that are fire-linked adds one die of damage, before multiplication.

Thus, if two weapons that normally inflict $4d10 \times 2$ damage apiece were fire-linked, they would attack together and inflict $5d10 \times 2$ damage for the pair. If another pair of weapons were added to the link (bringing the total to four fire-linked weapons), the set would do $6d10 \times 2$ damage.

Only identical weapons can be fire-linked.

CRITICAL HITS

Critical hits in starship combat function similarly to critical hits in normal combat, but instead of doing damage directly to a target's wound points, a critical hit with a starship weapon bypasses a target's shields, doing damage directly to its hull. Critical hits of this type represent extraordinarily lucky shots that manage to slip past a ship's shields. All starship weapons have a threat range of 20, and they still need to make a second attack roll to confirm any attack that was a threat.

ION WEAPONS

An ion weapon can be used to reduce a starship's shield points, but does not inflict hull point damage. Instead, any hit by an ion cannon that would normally cause hull damage

shorts out a ship's systems and potentially shuts them down. Compare the amount of damage to the Ion Damage table. The ship cannot move, fire weapons, or perform stunts until the crew spends a full-round action and makes a successful Repair check depending on the result.

Ion Damage

Damage	Result	Repair DC
11-20	Superficial ionization	10
21-40	Minor ionization	15
41-60	System ionization	20
61-80	Major ionization	25
81+	Catastrophic ionization	30

TRACTOR BEAMS

This weapon does not inflict damage to a target. Instead, it traps its target in place, pushes it away, or pulls it toward the capturing ship. Catching a ship (or other object) in a tractor beam requires an attack roll, but the target receives no armor bonus to its Defense. If the tractor attack is successful, the tractor beam can then pull the target toward it, push it away, or simply hold it in place.

As a move action, a tractor beam can pull a captured target toward itself, or push it away, a number of squares based on the size of the ship doing the tractoring. The tractor beam need not move its target the full listed distance.

Size Tractor Squares

Size	Tractor Squares
Colossal	10
Gargantuan	8
Huge	6
Large	5
Medium	4
Small	3
Tiny	2
Diminutive	1
Fine	0

While caught in a tractor beam, a starship cannot move, perform stunts, or change facing. Escaping a tractor beam requires a Resist/Escapes Tractor Beam check. Attempting this check is a stunt. If the check is successful, the ship may maneuver normally for the remainder of that action, but cannot perform another stunt until the pilot's next action.

TAKING DAMAGE

All starships have hull points, which are roughly equivalent to a character's wound points. Some ships also have shield points, which must be exhausted before any damage can be inflicted to the starship's hull points.

Most ships also have a damage reduction (DR) rating. Whenever damage would be inflicted to a ship's shield or hull points, subtract the ship's DR from the damage inflicted. This reflects the fact that even the best blaster pistol shot simply can't inflict damage to the hull of a star destroyer.

When a starship is reduced to 0 hull points, it is disabled. If a starship ever suffers twice as much damage in a single attack as it has remaining hull points, it explodes, inflicting $20d6$ damage to anyone within the ship (Reflex save DC 20 for half). If the characters actually make it through this firestorm, the Gamemaster should check Chapter 12: Gamemastering *Star Wars* of the core rulebook, for details on surviving in the vacuum of space. If the starship explodes when ramming or colliding with another vessel, the other ship also suffers $20d6$ damage.

REPAIRING DAMAGE

Damage to a starship's shield points automatically disappears at a rate of 1 point per ship's size category per minute. Lost hull points must be repaired manually (by welding hull patches onto the ship).

A full hour of work is required to repair lost hull points. The result of the Repair check equals the number of hull points repaired.

A starship that suffers more damage than twice its hull points cannot be repaired. **S**





Hive of the Infidel

BY DAVID NOONAN WITH PETER SCHWEIGHOFER

ILLUSTRATED BY DEREK THOMPSON

"Hive of the Infidel" is a short adventure for Yuuzhan Vong heroes assigned to infiltrate a refugee ship and capture a Jedi hiding aboard it. Because the adventure uses Yuuzhan Vong heroes who might not survive, this scenario makes a good one-shot adventure for players who want to try their hand at playing the antagonists outside of or in addition to a New Jedi Order campaign.

For the Game Master

This adventure is for four to six Yuuzhan Vong heroes of 6th level. You need a copy of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* core rulebook to use this adventure. *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook* further explains Yuuzhan Vong culture and history, but it's not strictly necessary to play this adventure.

The heroes' mission is relatively difficult, because the Yuuzhan Vong don't bat an eye at insurmountable odds; in fact, it's quite likely that the heroes will die completing their mission. Because they are products of Yuuzhan Vong society, however, the opportunity to die in battle against the godless users of dead technology is the highest honor possible.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Yuuzhan Vong fleets are invading the galaxy, and despite New Republic victories

at Dubrillion and Fondor, they continue to conquer planet after planet. With each Yuuzhan Vong victory, a rag-tag refugee fleet flees the defeated planet.

The Yuuzhan Vong are intensely curious about the Jedi, whom they consider a threat to their otherwise inevitable conquest. Previous efforts to capture or convert Jedi have failed. Recently, prisoners captured in the battle for the planet Druckenwell have revealed that there may be a Jedi hiding aboard the converted freighter *Chilastra*, part of the refugee fleet trying to leave the Druckenwell system.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The heroes are Yuuzhan Vong commandoes sent in a captured shuttlecraft to infiltrate the *Chilastra* and capture the Jedi aboard. Failing that, they are to destroy the Jedi and create as much havoc among the refugee fleet as possible.

The heroes receive equipment from their commander, but they have operational control of the mission. They decide whether to bluff or to fight their way aboard the *Chilastra* and how to find the Jedi.

Along the way they must deal with a security detachment, a hostile ship's defenses, and some rather unusual refugees. Eventually they must confront their quarry, a Cerean named Ka-Tu-Un. It turns out that

Ka-Tu-Un is a Force adept, not a Jedi, but his knowledge of the Force will still prove useful to Yuuzhan Vong intelligence.

Finally, the heroes must escape aboard the shuttle or destroy the *Chilastra* in a final blaze of glory.

ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

For groups who would rather not play Yuuzhan Vong, adapting the adventure is as easy as changing Ka-Tu-Un to a Cerean with a bounty on his head or, if your heroes are the more virtuous types, one of a variety of darksiders. Bounty hunters and Jedi might approach the *Chilastra* differently, but they can face the same obstacles with few changes to the rest of the adventure.

For the Players

You are the cream of the Yuuzhan Vong military—bred and bioengineered to be the best at what you do. Accordingly, word passed quickly through the ranks that an important commander, Malik Carr, was seeking commandos who spoke the tongue of the enemy for a special mission.

Aboard Yuuzhan Vong battleship *Yammka*, you receive your orders: Use a captured Republic shuttle to board the refugee freighter *Chilastra*, hiding among the asteroids of the Druckenwell



system. Once aboard—by any means necessary—capture a Cerean Jedi named Ka-Tu-Un and return him to the Yuuzhan Vong fleet in orbit over Druckenwell.

In Commander Carr's words, "There is no failure, only glorious success or a glorious death." He then sends you to equip yourself for the mission.

HEROES AND EQUIPMENT

The players should have generated 6th-level heroes according to the normal hero creation rules; rules for Yuuzhan Vong characters are in Chapter 14 of the core rulebook. Yuuzhan Vong can't use the Force, so they can't take levels as Force adepts or Jedi. The Yuuzhan Vong's caste-based society places limits on which classes warriors can multiclass into, but because this team is assembled quickly, it's possible that other castes are represented among the commandos. (*The New Jedi Order Sourcebook* explains the Yuuzhan Vong caste system in greater detail.)

Make sure that every hero speaks Basic. Furthermore, the Yuuzhan Vong variety of soldier receives the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (amphistaff) feat instead of the Weapon Group Proficiencies for blaster pistol, heavy weapons, and vibro weapons. These devices do not exist among the Yuuzhan Vong—and are in fact considered unclean. Likewise, Computer Use and other technical skills are unheard of among the Yuuzhan Vong, because such technology is abhorrent to them.

VONDUUN CRAB ARMOR

The Yuuzhan Vong breed vonduun crabs specifically for the purpose of providing armor for their warriors. Layered plates of living armor can shift to adjust to the musculature of their bearers. Spiky growths protrude from the knees, elbows, wrists, and neck, growing as the armor ages.

For elite Yuuzhan Vong troops, a wider variety of Vonduun crab-shell armor is available. Heroes can choose from the following:

Armor	Defense Bonus	Max. Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Damage Reduction	Speed	Weight
<i>Light Armor</i>						
Warrior's	+4	+4	-3	3	10m	2kg
Subaltern's	+5	+4	-3	5	10m	3kg
<i>Medium Armor</i>						
Sub-commander's	+6	+3	-3	8	10m	4kg

The following Yuuzhan Vong gear found in Chapter 14 core rulebook is available to the heroes.

- Amphistaff
- Blorash jelly
- Gnullith
- Oogllith Cloaker
- Razorbug
- Thud Bug

Two additional pieces of Yuuzhan Vong biotech are also available.

Yuuzhan Vong Claws: The implantation of retractable bone spurs—usable in combat as melee weapons—is fairly common. With slight muscle contractions, a warrior can thrust them from knuckles, elbows, or, in rare instances, knees. To deploy claws, a warrior must make a DC5 Will save. The warrior can choose to deploy one or both sets of claws. The claws are piercing melee weapons that inflict 1d8 points of base damage.

Yuuzhan Vong Cuffs: These restraining devices are small creatures with long outward-curving claws. When properly commanded by a Yuuzhan Vong, they lock around a humanoid's wrists.

The creature is designed to tighten its grip if anyone tries to slip out of the cuffs. The wearer can attempt an Escape Artist check (DC 40) to slip free. If the check fails by 5 or more, the cuffs tighten so much as to cause physical pain (1d4 points of damage).

The creature releases its grasp when a proper command word is issued or when it is killed. It has 10 wounds and DR 10,

and if it isn't killed with a single attack, it tightens its grip to inflict 2d4 points of damage per round until dead. Once the creature has been injured, it no longer responds to verbal commands.

SHUTTLECRAFT YORVA-9

The Yuuzhan Vong have captured a Lambda-class shuttle that the commandos will use to approach the *Chilastra*.

Because using dead technology is considered unclean, the commandos must use a thrall pilot. This Human New Republic pilot has had surge-coral implanted, so he'll follow the order of any Yuuzhan Vong. The pain from the surge-coral will kill him in a few weeks, and already he's forgotten his name and most of his previous life—anything other than how to fly a shuttlecraft and take orders from his new masters.

So the commando team can communicate with each other, the Yuuzhan Vong have installed a young bioengineered telepathic creature called a yammok aboard the shuttle. By relaying the thoughts between commando team members, the yammok functions like a secure radiolink for the commandos.

The yammok is a genetically engineered creature vaguely resembling an octopus. It serves as a living communications system, sensor array, and unit coordinator that efficiently relays command orders or reacts independently to changing situations more efficiently than simple machines can. They are often referred to as "war coordinators."

Yammoks are semi-intelligent beings capable of some degree of independent thought and action. They reproduce by budding with newborn yammoks. This yammok has a head roughly one meter in diameter, with tentacles ranging from a few centimeters to about three meters.

Yammoks have a dozen or so sticky tendrils, some thick and stubby, others slender and elongated. Massive black eyes glare from a bulbous red head. A blue pulsating communications vein runs over the top of this ponderous growth.

The yammoks are mildly telepathic and empathic. They can project thoughts and emotions to other beings, and they stay in near-constant contact with other yam-

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mosks within a few thousand kilometer's radius of their present location.

For more information and game statistics for the Yammok, see Chapter 2 of *The New Jedi Order* sourcebook.

Chilastra

The *Chilastra* is a container freighter that loads cargoes from smaller ships landing in its docking bay or engages up to four modular cargo habitats in its ventral docking clamps. The ship's current configuration includes four cargo habitats, one holding supplies and three others housing refugees from Druckenwell. Three decks house the main docking hangar, the crew, command, and engineering sections, and the four cargo habitats. Two banks of lifttubes and two large cargo lift-tubes provide access to all decks.

CHILASTRA

Craft: Loranar MOD-17 Container Freighter;
Class: Capital; **Cost:** 6 million (new), 3 million (used); **Size:** Gargantuan (550 m long); **Crew:** 50 (normal +2); **Passengers:** 30 (troops); **Cargo Capacity:** 200,000 metric tons; **Consumables:** 6 months; **Hyperdrive:** x2 (backup x12); **Maximum Speed:** Cruising; **Maneuvers:** -2 (-4 size, +2 crew); **Defense:** 16 (-4 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 100; **Hull Points:** 400; **DR:** 20.

GETTING ABOARD THE CHILASTRA

After countless hours moving slowly through the asteroid belt, the shuttle's sensor array starts to identify the liners, yachts, and merchant vessels that make up the refugee fleet. There are a number of small craft flitting among the larger starships hiding in the belt, so it's relatively easy to join their number and make your way toward your target.

A burst of static comes across the communicator. "Yorva-9, this is the *Chilastra*. You're cleared to land in Bay 1. What's your business, by the way?"

The *Chilastra* isn't expecting anything out of the ordinary, because shuttle flights between the larger vessels of the refugee fleet are routine. Furthermore, the crew is disorganized and exhausted after their

flight from the main starport. Many of the regular crew didn't make it aboard before the ship had to flee, so those who remain have been pulling double shifts.

The commandos can attempt a ruse at this point, if they wish, or simply remain silent and glide into the bay.

» **Ruse:** A Bluff check on the part of the heroes is opposed by the landing bay chief's Sense Motive check. Because she's untrained, she has a bonus of +1. Depending on the nature of the ruse, the GM should assign a circumstance bonus (for a particularly clever or believable bluff) or a penalty (if the attempt is particularly clumsy or the ruse is outlandish). The shuttle can still land unless the ruse goes particularly badly.

» **Forcing a landing:** Neither the shuttle nor the *Chilastra* is armed, so if the heroes reveal themselves to be Yuuzhan Vong or botch a Bluff attempt, combat doesn't start right away. The landing bay chief orders the landing bay blast doors closed, which takes two rounds. If the shuttle pilot receives immediate orders from a Yuuzhan Vong to fly into the shuttle bay, he succeeds at the necessary Pilot check (although the shuttle scrapes one of the doors and lands with a jolt).

If the heroes don't take advantage of that opportunity, they are locked out of the *Chilastra*. In about 10 minutes, a pair of Z-95 headhunters from one of the other ships in the fleet arrives to blast the shuttle into space debris.

» **Going EVA:** If the heroes are using ooglith cloakers, they can slip out of a hatch on the shuttle and launch themselves toward the *Chilastra*. It's a DC 10 Dexterity check to safely jump across to the *Chilastra*, and the usual penalties apply to heroes without the Zero-G Combat feat. Heroes who fail go sailing off into space, and they'll continue to float there until someone picks them up. Heroes who successfully make it to the exterior of the *Chilastra* can slip through the magnetic field holding the atmosphere in the docking bay as long as the *Chilastra* hasn't closed the bay blast doors. Heroes can also access

one of the airlocks on the crew deck (hardness 5, 720 WP).

» **Staying Silent:** The heroes don't have to respond to the landing bay's message. If they don't, the crew of the *Chilastra* just assumes that the shuttle communications systems are down (not unlikely, given the number of damaged ships in the refugee fleet). They let the shuttle land normally.

Landing Bay Chief: Sol 2/Nbl 2; Init +2 (Dex); Def 16 (+4 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 27/12; Atk +2 melee (2d4-1, vibrodagger) or +5 ranged (3d8, blaster carbine); SQ Call in a favor (1), inspire confidence +1; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 4; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Equipment: Uniform, vibrodagger, blaster carbine, comlink, datapad.

Skills: Astrogate +4, Bluff +5, Computer Use +7, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (New Republic) +5, Listen +3, Pilot +6, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Point Blank Shot, Starship Operation (capital ship), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons).

THE CHILASTRA INTERIOR

Unless noted otherwise, ceilings aboard the *Chilastra* are 3 meters high. Interior walls typically have a hardness of 10 and 120 wound points. The exterior hull and major structural walls have a hardness of 20 and 720 wound points.

It's unlikely that the *Chilastra* loses power completely; even extensive damage to the bridge or engineering sections leaves enough power for emergency lighting. But it is possible that the ship's crew disables the artificial gravity. If they do (see The Bridge), use the rules for zero-G combat in Chapter 8 of the core rulebook.

It's also possible that one side or the other will void the air out of part of the ship (either on purpose or through overly enthusiastic weapons fire). If this happens, it takes three rounds for all the air to escape the ship; emergency systems prevent truly explosive decompression. Emergency blast doors (built in airlock-like sets of two, with hardness 5 and 720 WP) will cut the airless section off from the rest of the ship.

Ship locations: The *Chilastra* deck plans show major locations, blast doors, and access corridors. Crew deck passageways have intermittent blast doors used to seal off areas of depressurization and hull breach (or for defensive measures: see "Bridge" below). The security officer can monitor holovid sensors placed in all major locations and sensors tied to the data terminals controlling each blast door, lift, or airlock.

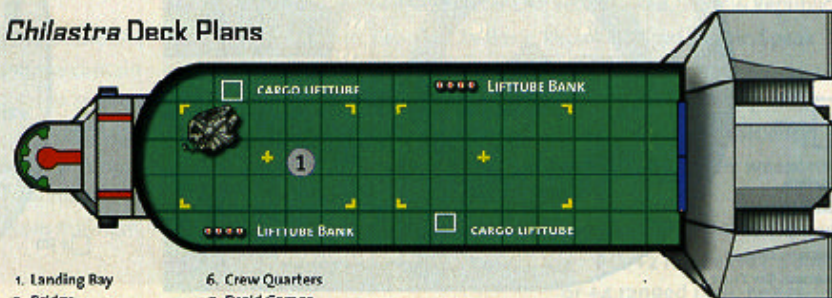
Data Terminals: Heroes can find data terminals at lifttube banks and cargo lifttubes on each deck. Data terminals also reside in the walls on both sides of blast doors leading to the bridge, airlocks, engineering section, and each cargo habitat. The crew and refugees can use these to communicate with other data terminals or bridge personnel, most likely to report a security warning or major alert (see "Alerts" below). A DC 5 Computer Use roll allows access to the terminal's intercom and alert features. A DC 15 Computer Use roll provides access to technical specifications about the ship: status of the engines, shields, power supplies, blast doors, and environmental controls, plus the vessel's deck plans. Since the *Chilastra* departed Druckenwell hastily, the data terminals show old cargo, crew, and passenger manifests, possibly leading the heroes astray when they find old records that the four cargo habitats are filled with tanks of processed food gel. If the crew locked any portals or lifts, the heroes can bypass the controls through the nearest data terminal on a DC 25 Disable Device roll.

Alerts: The *Chilastra* isn't a military ship (although it has some military personnel aboard). Accordingly, security is lax. There are two general kinds of alert:

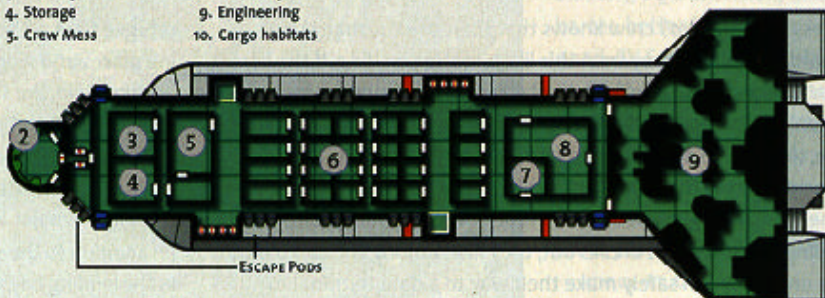
» **Security warning:** If a refugee or one of the *Chilastra*'s crew sees something dangerous or finds an intruder, he or she can initiate a security warning by spending a full round at any data terminal and making a DC 5 Computer Use check. This immediately sends a six-member security team to the site of the alert. The security officer on the bridge also starts scanning the holovid monitors in each of the ship's locations. If neither the security team nor the bridge officer finds anything warranting a major alert, the security warning ends after 10 minutes.



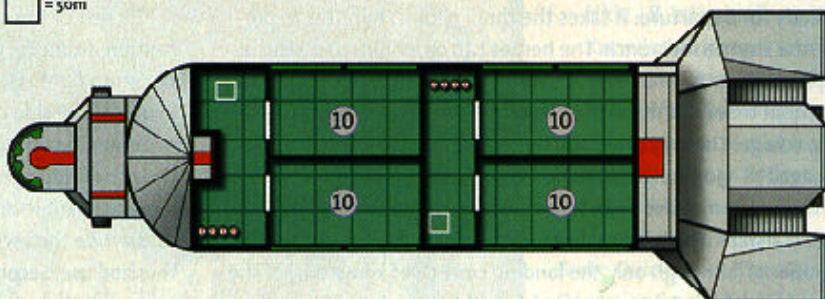
Chilastra Deck Plans



- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Landing Bay | 6. Crew Quarters |
| 2. Bridge | 7. Droid Garage |
| 3. Sick Bay | 8. Tech Shop |
| 4. Storage | 9. Engineering |
| 5. Crew Mess | 10. Cargo habitats |



□ = 50m



» **Major alert:** A major alert is triggered if a security team member discovers evidence of a security breach (like a dead body or coming under fire) or if a second security warning is triggered while the first one is in effect. A major alert seals off the engineering and bridge decks, starts internal sensor sweeps by the security officer on the bridge, and mobilizes all security personnel, who'll begin scouring the ship in six-member teams. Major alerts last two hours or until the situation is dealt with. Because the crew is short-staffed, exhausted, and unfamiliar with one another, it takes 10 minutes to assemble the security teams and seal off the critical decks.

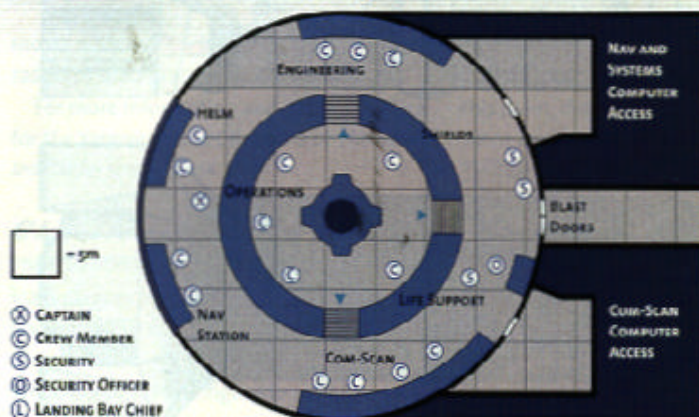
Major alerts are broadcast to the rest of the refugee fleet. However, few of the refugee ships are armed, and even those that are won't fire at the *Chilastra* for fear of spoiling their hiding place. No matter how desperate the situation sounds aboard the *Chilastra*, the other ships silently wait for the chance to get out of the system.

1. LANDING BAY

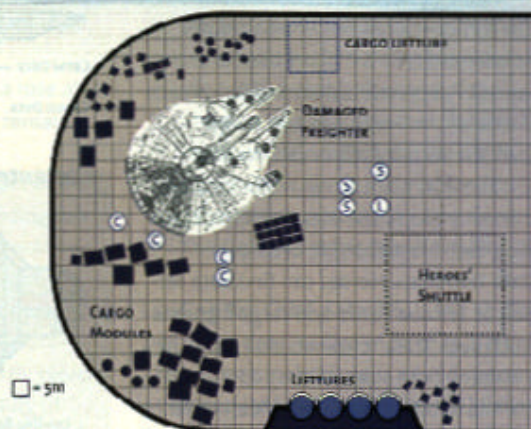
With a hiss, the shuttle airlock opens. Outside the shuttle you see a woman holding a datapad, shading her eyes as she peers into the dim interior of the shuttle. Behind her stand three men with pistols in their holsters.

Hive of the Infidel

Bridge Map



Landing Bay Map



Unless the *Chilastra's* crew knows that there are Yuuzhan Vong aboard the shuttle, they treat this like a routine landing. If the heroes attack, they can gain surprise. If attacked, the security guards return fire unless it's apparent that they have no chance to win. If this is the case, they flee to a data terminal to sound a major alert.

In addition to the landing bay chief (described above) and three generic security guards, there are four other crew members in the landing bay. If combat breaks out, they hide among the cargo modules until they can safely make their way to a data terminal to sound an alarm.

Ready for Departure: It takes the thrall pilot 10 minutes to prepare the shuttle for launch. The heroes can order him to start the preparations as soon as they arrive. If they do, the shuttle can take off within three rounds of their return.

Wreckage: The only other starship in the landing bay is a badly damaged YI-1300 freighter. Its hull has several gaping holes in it, and the drive systems have been torn apart to provide spare parts for other starships. The belly-mounted blaster cannon, however, is still operational (although only the landing crew chief know this). If she can get into the freighter, she can begin firing the following round.

2. BRIDGE

This massive room slopes downward to the center, like a shallow bowl. Along the edges of this dimly lit room are about a dozen Humans and other aliens working away at their strange "computer" machines. Next to the door are two security agents, and most of the other workers are armed. This room is the most complex collection of Human machines you've seen yet.

At the center of the room is a large window displaying a starfield and the asteroid belt. Doorways lie on either side of you.

The security agents immediately swing into action upon any intrusion, closing the bridge door on their action and locking it with a security code. Like the other iris valves, the bridge door has hardness 15 and 720 wound points.

The bridge crew fights to the death, although they maximize their use of cover and attack from a distance if possible. A few members of the bridge crew send a distress signal to the rest of the

refugee fleet, although the other ships are loath to leave their hiding places and won't respond.

Noor Shan, the ship's security officer, has a good view of the door from her workstation. She has the Quick Draw feat, so if she's not surprised she might be able to sneak attack an intruder. Once the opportunity for sneak attacks has passed, she spends two rounds putting the ship on major alert and summoning the rest of the security detail (in addition to the six-member teams in the habitats and the guards in the landing bay, she has three more six-member squads patrolling the ship or resting. A new squad arrives every 1d10 rounds.

The rest of the crew does everything in their power to protect the captain, Yesha Bergeron, even putting themselves in harm's way. Bergeron fights fiercely but barricades herself and fellow survivors in one of the side chambers if need be.

Commandeering the vessel: If the Yuuzhan Vong commandos can clear the bridge, they might try to steal or destroy the vessel, but it's harder than it looks. First, a Disable Device check (DC 25) is required to override the security features on the controls that prevent unauthorized use. Second, a pilot must make a successful Pilot check (DC 25) to exit the asteroid field safely and return to the Yuuzhan Vong armada. It takes two hours to return to the Yuuzhan Vong fleet around Druckenwell.

The thrall pilot succeeds at this task automatically, although any surviving crew try to attack anyone leaving the bridge or the landing bay. If the heroes try to pilot the *Chilastra* themselves, they suffer a -8 competence penalty on the check (-4 if they can Read/Write Basic) because New Republic controls are completely different from their Yuuzhan Vong counterparts.

Defending the *Chilastra* from the Bridge: If alerted, Noor Shan can do quite a bit from his security workstation, including:

- **Observing the ship via closed-circuit holovid.** Shan can see any corridor, the landing bay and each of the habitats via holovid. She watches them only if there's a security alert, however. The last 12 hours of recorded images are archived, so once she knows there are intruders onboard, she can replay the landing bay camera and learn who she's facing.
- **Decompressing part of the ship.** Shan can void the air out of any part of the ship. Shan won't decompress the habitats if

there are refugees in them, and she'll void other parts of the ship only if there aren't crew members there—unless the situation is dire, in which case she'll grit her teeth and sacrifice her comrades.

» *Closing or opening the iris valves.* Shan can't lock them in place remotely, however—they all have manual cranks that open them if the power goes out.

» *Turning off the gravity.* Shan can do this across the whole ship or one section at a time. She knows that she and the captain are the only ones on the crew who can really fight in zero-G, so she'll only try this trick if she first can "experiment" and turn off the gravity remotely and watch how the Yuuzhan Vong react. If the commandos don't handle zero-G well, she'll selectively employ this tactic, trying to cause maximum mayhem with her timing.

3. SICK BAY

As soon as the door opens, you can tell that this room is full of the New Republic's strange dead technology. It seems designed to fix their weak bodies.

From behind a doorway come two empty Ithorian hands—there's someone crouched around the corner. "Don't shoot!" says a quavering voice. "We can make some kind of deal."

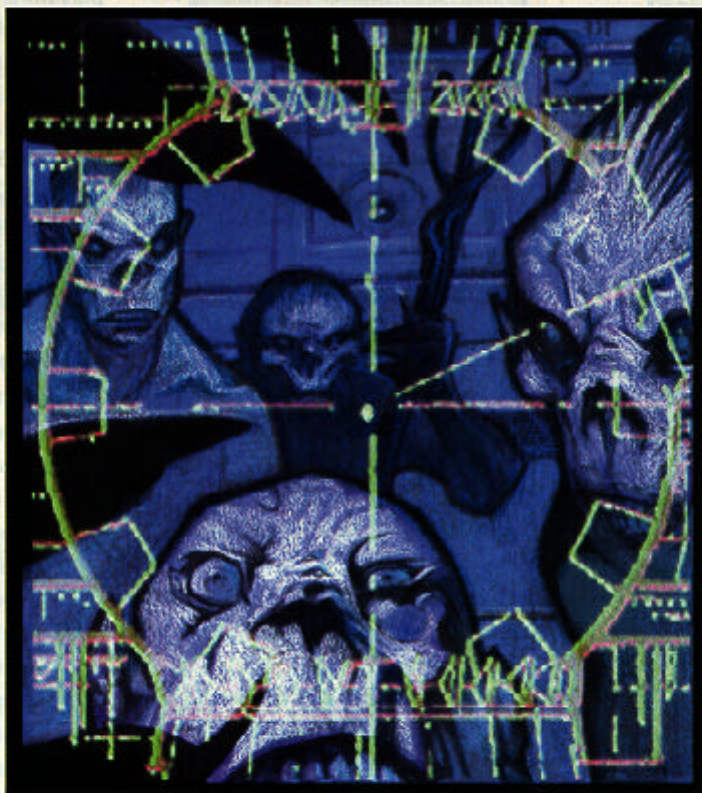
Dr. Vlohei is behind the voice, and he has a pathological fear of the Yuuzhan Vong because he was briefly captured by them months ago during the campaign for Ithor. He'll do anything to get the Yuuzhan Vong as far away as possible—including selling out Ka-Tu-Un or the crew of the *Chilastrea*.

Vlohei does anything and promises anything for the Yuuzhan Vong. Furthermore, he does his best to carry through on what he promises.

He tries to get assurances from the Yuuzhan Vong first, saying things like, "You'll leave the ship alone, won't you? You'll at least let some of us live..." If pressed, however, he does whatever the Yuuzhan Vong ask, hoping for a reward. He can help by doing any of the following things:

» *Heal any wounded commandos.* The bacta tanks won't work on Yuuzhan Vong because their biology is too dissimilar, but Vlohei is talented enough to use the contents of the sick bay as if a medpac on the commandos.

» *Identify Ka-Tu-Un.* Vlohei knows Ka-Tu-Un by sight, although he isn't sure which habitat he's quartered in. Vlohei also



Generic Bridge Crew: Male or Female Human Sol 2; Init +2 (Dex); Def 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 18/12; Atk +2 melee (1d3, punch) or +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Equipment: Flight suit, blaster pistol.

Skills: Astrogate +6, Computer Use +6, Knowledge (New Republic) +4, Pilot +10, Read/Write Basic, Repair +6, Speak Basic, Speak Shryllwook, Spot +3, Treat Injury +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Skill Emphasis (Pilot), Starship Operation (capital ship), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons).

Noor Shan: Female Sullustan Sol 3; Init +2 (Dex); Def 17 (+5 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 10/9; Atk +2 melee (1d3, punch)

or +4 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster); SQ Darkvision, illicit barter, better lucky than good; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Equipment: Datapad, heavy blaster pistol.

Skills: Bluff +8, Climb +2, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +4, Gather Information +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (spacer lore) +5, Listen +2, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Sullustese, Search +5, Sense Motive +3, Speak Basic, Speak Rodese, Speak Sullustese, Spot +4, Tumble +6.

Feats: Quick Draw, Starship Operation (capital ship), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Yesha Bergeson: Female Human Sct 3/Sol 4; Init +4 (Dex); Def 19 (+5 class, +4 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 53/14; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+1, crit 20, punch) or +10/+5 ranged (3d8, blaster carbine); SQ Trailblazing; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

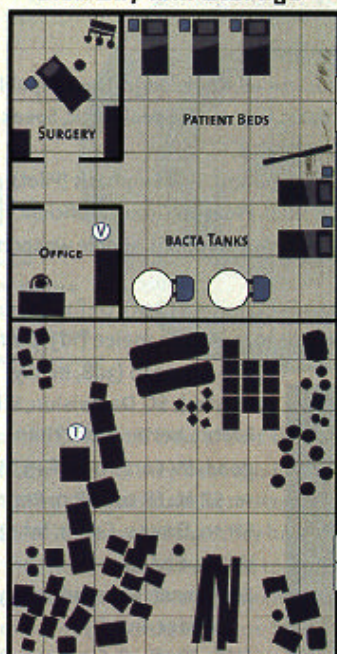
Equipment: Comlink, blaster carbine.

Skills: Astrogate +11, Computer Use +11, Diplomacy +6, Jump +3, Knowledge (New Republic) +7, Knowledge (spacer lore) +7, Pilot +17, Read/Write Basic, Repair +11, Speak Basic, Tumble +9.

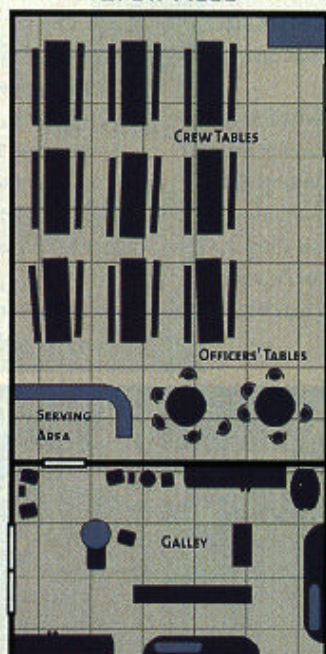
Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Martial Artist, Skill Emphasis (Pilot), Starship Operation (capital ship, space transport), Weapon Finesse (punch), Weapon Focus (punch), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons), Zero-G Combat.

Hive of the Infidel

Sick Bay and Storage



Crew Mess



implement is a light repeating blaster and that any shots in the cramped storage room will ignite the barrels of "explosives" piled against the wall.

5. CREW MESS

Long tables and metal chairs crowd this room, while the adjacent chamber contains various instruments of infernal technology used to systematically exterminate organic material and prepare it for consumption by other living beings.

The crew mess and nearby kitchens stand empty. Having lifted off with minimal crew, personnel keep busy undertaking additional duties to maintain the *Chilastra's* operations in flight. Normally the crew uses the mess hall as an informal lounge.

6. CREW QUARTERS

This network of corridors is eerily empty. Most of the doors are unlocked, but the small spaces beyond contain only bunks, storage lockers, and sanitary facilities.

Dr. Vlohei: Male Ithorian Expert 8; Init +0; Def 12 (+2 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP —/9; Atk +6/+1 melee (1d3, punch) or +2/-3 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +8; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster.

Skills: Computer Use +13, Craft (electronics) +12, Craft (medicine) +13, Diplomacy +2, Knowledge (spacer lore) +13, Knowledge (medicine) +16, Knowledge (nature) +4, Profession (doctor) +15, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Ithorese, Sense Motive +6, Speak Basic, Speak Ithorese, Speak Rodese, Speak Shryiiwook, Survival +5, Treat Injury +17.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Knowledge: medicine, Profession: doctor, Treat Injury) Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

knows that he's not technically a Jedi. He might not volunteer this information, because he doesn't want to be the bearer of bad tidings.

» **Lure security guards into a trap.** He can page security and invent crises for the crew to distract them or lure them from one location to another. Vlohei won't think of this himself, however, and he's not a convincing liar.

» **Provide a map of the ship.**

» **Operate computer terminals.**

Suddenly an enraged Human leaps out from behind several crates, brandishing a formidable-looking weapon of dead technology. It whirrs and hums as he points it at you. "Stay back!" he cries. "I'm warning you, come any closer and I'll shoot you! One stray shot from this and the explosives in this room will vaporize us in an instant!"

Tyvius is an unstable refugee who managed to sneak up to the crew deck from the cargo habitats below (use Human commander stats). He's completely paranoid after having escaped the Yuuzhan Vong attack on Druckenwell. He threatens anyone who enters the ship's stores with his Industrial-sized sonic blender—he thinks the cooking

Because the *Chilastra* is short-staffed, the crew quarters are mostly vacant (everybody's on duty). A detailed search of this area occasionally turns up sleeping crew members (see the Appendix for their statistics), but otherwise there's nothing here.

This area is a maze of doors and twisting passageways, however, so it's possible that combatants might retreat here. It's excellent terrain for a cat-and-mouse game. Depending on the situation, the Yuuzhan Vong commandos might be the hunters or the hunted.

Emergency Equipment: The *Chilastra's* escape pods are located in three places: adjacent to the bridge, along the crew quarters, and near engineering. Heroes who've lost their chance at taking the shuttle back to the Yuuzhan Vong fleet could use the escape pods. They'll float among the asteroids until the Yuuzhan Vong fleet picks them up. If that happens, they better have captured or killed Ka-Tu-Un, or destroyed the *Chilastra*.

The crew quarters also have a number of iris valves designed to compartmentalize the ship in case of decompression. These can be manually operated from the valves themselves or remotely from the security

4. STORAGE

Canisters, crates, and strange equipment line the walls of this room. Organic goop leaks from one barrel, though it doesn't seem to possess any detrimental effects.

station on the bridge. If a control panel takes 5 points of damage, the iris valve becomes stuck in whatever position it's currently in, even if the bridge tries to open or close it remotely.

7. DROID WORKSHOP

Compartments in this chamber house independent, non-living servants to the crew. The droids rest in their sockets, recharging their power supplies. One of the small units rolls out of its alcove, stops at your feet, and spits a long invective of beeps and whistles at you.

The *Chilastera's* droid workshop houses several astromech, power, repair, and labor units, though it contains alcoves for several more. The uppity astromech unit that accosts the heroes waits for a response—if the heroes don't destroy or disable it, the droid whistles an insult and rolls out the door. This unit's a little smarter than the others. If it succeeds a Spot check (+3) to see through the heroes' Ooglyth masquers, it knows it can't stop them and plans to roll down the passageway and personally alert someone on the bridge. Use the R2 Series droid stats found in Chapter 15 of the core rulebook.

8. TECH SHOP

Evil-smelling technology litters this work area. Some of the machinery is so huge that several crew members might be waiting in ambush behind them, while smaller instruments sit on work tables.

The crew is too short-handed for any personnel to work in the *Chilastera's* tech shop. Normally the machinery here helps the crew fashion basic replacement parts and repair damaged components for the ship's systems. Several crates of spare parts line one wall, while various work tables contain hand tools and smaller bins of tiny components for repairing electronic devices.

9. ENGINEERING

This must be the heart of this abhorrent ship. Soulless machines cover the walls, their cold lights blinking like predatory eyes. More weak-looking Humans scurry as they hear the door open. Worse, the life-mocking monsters the Humans call

"droids" are present, though they aren't smart enough to flee.

If there hasn't been an alert yet, the six crewmembers here are unarmed and hide as best they can.

If there has been a major alert, the six crewmembers and three R2 astromechs have jury-rigged traps for the commandos to face. They still run away as soon as the doors open, but they try to lure the Yuuzhan Vong into the engineering area. The engineering crew can construct one trap (chosen from the list below) for every 20 minutes after a major alert starts.

» Chamber fills with caustic vapors.

Heroes must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 19) each round for five rounds, or take 2d6 points of damage each round from the acidic fog. The vapor actually attacks the skin, so holding your breath doesn't help. A Disable Device check (DC 24) will plug up the vapor emitters, ending the need for Fortitude saves.

» One of the R2 units is actually a bomb.

It scoots toward the greatest concentration of Yuuzhan Vong, then blows up, dealing 7d6 points of damage to those within 10 meters. Heroes who succeed at a Reflex save (DC 24) take half damage.

» A 4-meter by 4-meter section of the floor has been electrified, dealing 2d6 points of damage per round.

A Disable Device check (DC 24) will shut off the current.

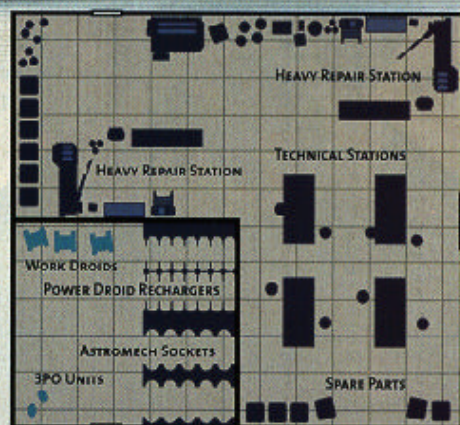
» A 4-meter by 4-meter section of the floor has six times normal gravity.

Treat this as a grapple attempt from a Large foe with 20 Strength and a base attack of +4 (+13 grapple check total). A Disable Device check (DC 27) returns gravity to normal.

» Sharp metal spike-balls called caltrops cascade from the ceiling, covering a 6-meter by 6-meter area.

Each time a creature moves into an area covered by caltrops (or spends a round fighting

Tech Shop and Droid Garage



while standing in such an area), the creature may step on one. The caltrops make an attack roll (base attack bonus +0) against the creature. Armor and dodge bonuses don't count for this attack, but the commandos' heavy boots give them a +2 armor bonus to Defense. If the caltrops succeed at the attack, the creature has stepped on one. The caltrop deals 1 point of damage, and the creature's speed is reduced by one-half because its foot is wounded. This movement penalty lasts for one day or until the creature is successfully treated with the Treat Injury skill. A charging or running creature must immediately stop if it steps on a caltrop. Any creature moving at half speed or slower can pick its way through a bed of caltrops safely.

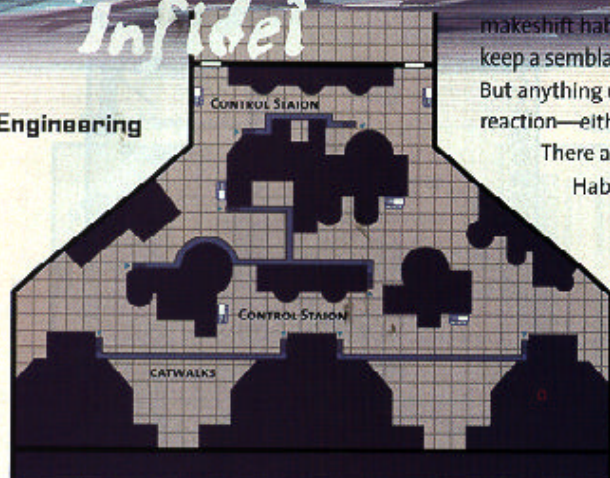
» The platform at the top of the gantry stairs has been weakened.

The second hero to reach the top of the stairs must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 19) or take 7d6 points of damage—3d6 from the fall, and 4d6 when the collapsing staircase lands. If the Reflex save succeeds, the hero at the top of the stairs has managed to make it to the sturdy part of the gantry platform, but anyone else on the stairs automatically takes 1d6 or 2d6 points of damage from the fall (depending on how high they were) and 4d6 from the staircase landing on them.

The one thing the engineering crew doesn't have are any weapons. They hope to lure the Yuuzhan Vong into the engineering sec-

Hive of the Infidel

Engineering



makeshift habitat to break up fights and keep a semblance of order at mealtime. But anything unusual provokes a strong reaction—either fear or anger.

There are about 200 refugees in Habitat 1. Ninety percent of them are commoners, the other 10 percent are 3rd-level noble refugee leaders. All were told to turn in their weapons, but ten of the commoners—kept hold-out pistols or vibrodaggers.

tion and loop around to the main doors while the Yuuzhan Vong are being incapacitated or delayed by the traps. If they escape, they join the bridge crew, who decompress the engineering section.

Blowing up the Ship: If the commandos clear the engineering section, they can rig the *Chilastra's* engines to explode. It takes a Disable Device check (DC 25) to get past the security safeguards, and a Demolitions check (DC 25) to initiate a self-destruct sequence. Once the sequence starts, the heroes have 10 minutes to get off the ship—if they want to, that is.

10. HABITAT 1

This large bay teems with people of all species—Humans predominate, but the occasional Ithorian or Gungan is here. Most simply sit on the deck, talking to their neighbors, playing cards, or dozing. Along the walls, curtains provide a scant measure of privacy. On a platform on the far bulkhead, six bored-looking security guards scan the crowd.

The four habitats usually serve as cargo bays, but three were quickly converted into makeshift living space for the refugees.

These are all refugees, people whose luck, connections or money was sufficient to get them aboard the last flight out on the *Chilastra*. They represent all walks of life on Druckenwell—high-ranking politicians now rub shoulders with spaceport custodians. All are hungry, tired and a little worried: perfect conditions for a “mob mentality” to emerge. After a near-riot at dinner two days ago, the security guards were stationed in each

security guards try to get to the data terminal in the habitat. But the crowd of refugees makes that difficult, and they can move at only half speed if the refugees still crowd the floor.

There are two Cerean children among the refugees, but apparently Ka-Tu-Un isn't here.

11. HABITAT 2

This cargo bay is full of refugees crowded in the back half of this vast space. In the front sit a circle of Rodians with blaster rifles, watching and laughing as two of their fellows wrestle on the cargo deck.

Among the refugees in this habitat is Velsey, a Rodian crimelord of some repute on Druckenwell, and members of his “family.” Unlike the rest of refugees, they refused to give up their weapons, and they have the other inhabitants of the cargo bay thoroughly intimidated. There's no security presence here because the *Chilastra's* captain doesn't want to provoke a confrontation.

Velsey and his guards open fire as soon as they see Yuuzhan Vong. If there's a drawn out battle or a major alert elsewhere in the ship, Velsey makes common cause with the crew of the *Chilastra* and has his “family” hunt down the Yuuzhan Vong, but only if the situation is dire.

12. HABITAT 3

Crates, barrels, and sacks form small mountains in this vast cargo bay. A massive hulk of dead technology stomps toward you on its mechanical legs, challenges you with sound burped through its speaker, and stares at you quizzically.

The binary load-lifter assumes that anyone entering the cargo habitat expects it to move something. It's not the brightest machine on the ship; it waits impatiently for five minutes before returning to its post near a stack of crates. It does not understand concepts that have nothing to do with moving cargo between the habitat and the landing bay.

Velsey: Male Rodian Scl 5/Nbl 2/Crimelord 1; Init +2 (Dex); Def 21 (+9 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 23/9; Atk +4 melee (2d4, vibrodagger) or +6 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit barter, better lucky than good, bonus class skill (Intimidate), call in a favor (1), Inspire confidence +1, contact; SV Fort +0, Ref +9, Will +7; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 10; Rep 10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14. **Equipment:** Blaster pistol, vibrodagger, briefcase full of New Republic credits. **Skills:** Appraise +12, Bluff +13, Computer Use +6, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +4, Forgery +7, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (criminal organizations) +13, Listen +10, Move Silently +4, Pilot +4, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Rodese, Search +6, Sense Motive +11, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodese, Speak Shryllwook, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Fame, Point Blank Shot, Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Velsey's Thugs: Male or Female Rodian Scl 2; Init +3 (Dex); Def 18 (+5 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 12/13; Atk +3 melee (2d4+2, vibrodagger) or +4 ranged (3d8, blaster rifle); SQ Illicit barter, better lucky than good; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 3; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Equipment: Comlink, vibrodagger, blaster rifle.

Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +2, Gather Information +5, Hide +8, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (streetwise) +3, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Read/Write Rodese, Search +8, Sense Motive +2, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodese, Spot +9.

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



Binary Load Lifter: Walking Labor Droid
Expert 1; Init +0; Def 14 (+5 armor, -1 size);
Spd 4m; VP/WP —/14; Atk +5 melee (2d6+6,
loading fork) or -1 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref
+0, Will +1; SZ L; Rep 0; Str 23, Dex 10, Con 14,
Int 4, Wis 8, Cha 4.

Equipment: Armor, tool mount, vocabulator.

Skills: Computer Use +1, Hide -4, Listen +1,

Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic.

Unspent Skill Points: 2.

Feats: Endurance, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

The containers stored in this habitat hold food and other supplies, plus a large cache of electronic components the *Chilastra's* captain "liberated" from a warehouse left unguarded in the final hours before the Yuuzhan Vong invasion.

13. HABITAT 4

This habitat is full of refugees. A meal is being served, so many of them stand in a line that leads to a table where security guards hand out shiny packages, then stamp each refugee's hand.

Six security guards are so occupied with watching the food line that they won't notice the door opening. Once alerted, they immediately draw weapons, kicking over the table to provide cover.

Standing near the end of the line is Ka-Tu-Un, a Force adept who follows the obscure Cerean tradition of Ner Yan

("mind chord" in Cerean). While he's not a Jedi, he's still a formidable foe, and he's smart enough to know that he can't directly affect the heroes with his powers.

When he sees the heroes, he'll cower among the other refugees and spend a full-round action to turn his quarterstaff into a Force weapon. In the second round, he uses Enhance Ability to boost his Dexterity. Then he'll start using Move Object to throw some of the cargo and food crates at the heroes. To hit, Ka-Tu-Un's Move Object check plus Ka-Tu-Un's Dexterity modifier must equal or exceed the heroes' Defense. Each thrown crate deals 4d6 points of damage, and costs Ka-Tu-Un 4 vitality points.

After a few rounds of throwing crates, Ka-Tu-Un spends a round using Heal Self, then wades into battle with his quarterstaff if he thinks he has a realistic chance against the heroes. If the tide of battle turns against him, he activates Burst of Speed to get out of the habitat. Then he holes up, rests, and heals before offering his services to the security guards.

Finding Ka-Tu-Un

The commandos don't have much to go on: Just a name and species. Furthermore, they can't directly search a crew manifest or query the *Chilastra's* computer because the Yuuzhan Vong abhor such technology. But there are a number of ways for clever players to find Ka-Tu-Un among the refugees.

» *Flush him out.* While he's no Jedi, Ka-Tu-Un is altruistic enough to come to the aid of defenseless refugees if they're threatened. Ka-Tu-Un prepares himself as best as he can first, but he'll be drawn into the fray eventually.

» *Interrogate a prisoner.* The Yuuzhan Vong commandos all speak Basic, and they can put the question to anyone they've subdued but not killed. Treat

Ka-Tu-Un: Cerean FA 9; Init +4 (Dex, species); Def 18 (+6 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 44/10; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1/1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +8/+3 ranged; SQ Force weapon +1d4, comprehend speech, Force talisman +2; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9; SZ M; FP 6; DSP 1; Rep 3; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 10.

Equipment: Quarterstaff.

Skills: Diplomacy +2, Listen +9,

Read/Write Cerean, Sense Motive +9, Speak Basic, Speak Cerean, Speak Rodese, Speak Sullustese, Spot +9.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +4, Battlemind +6, Empathy +9, Enhance Ability +12, Force Push +14, Friendship +4, Heal Another +9, Heal Self +12, Illusion +4, Move Object +14.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Force-Sensitive, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Rinses (quarterstaff), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

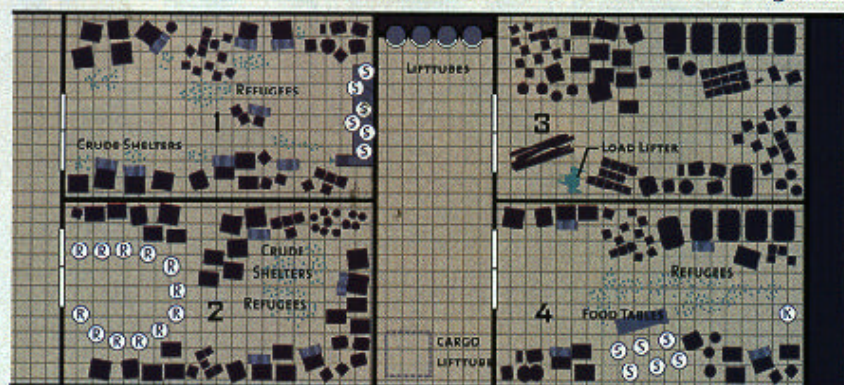
Force Feats: Alter, Burst of Speed, Control, Sense.

Hive of the Infidel

Cargo Habitats

□ = 5M

Ⓡ RODIAN
ⓧ KA-TU-UN
Ⓢ SECURITY



this as an Intimidate check, giving the Yuuzhan Vong whatever circumstance modifier you feel appropriate given the nature of the questioning. There's a 10% chance any refugee knows Ka-Tu-Un, a 20% chance a crew member does, and a 30% chance that a security staffer does. Anyone who knows Ka-Tu-Un knows that he is quartered in Habitat 3.

» *Seize all the Cereans.* There are two Cerean children in Habitat 1, Ka-Tu-Un and a Cerean female in Habitat 3, two Cerean technicians in engineering, and a Cerean navigator on the bridge. If the Vong can round up all the Cereans, it won't be hard to flush out Ka-Tu-Un.

» *Ask Dr. Vlohel.* The Ithorian ship's doctor is so frightened of the Yuuzhan Vong that he'll do anything they ask.

Ending the Mission

Due to the nature of the Yuuzhan Vong, this mission can end only honorably with a blaze of glory. Theoretically the heroes will either succeed or die trying. Under no circumstances would normal Yuuzhan Vong retreat, even if they're facing long odds. If the heroes have captured or killed Ka-Tu-Un or set the *Chilastra* to self-destruct, they could retreat or escape having completed their mission. Commander Malik Carr would rather see them die gloriously, or become consumed in the *Chilastra's* destruction, than save their own hides. Going out in a blaze of glory is what Yuuzhan Vong warriors are all about.

Hero Casualties: if some players lose their heroes early in the adventure, it might be worthwhile giving them replacement heroes so they don't sit around the gaming table all glum while everyone else has a good time. It's reasonable to posit that the commandos would have left one or two of their number in the shuttle to guard the thrall pilot. Those commandos could be a strategic reserve that'll let players without heroes back into the game quickly. ☐

Appendix: NPC statistics

Generic Security Guard: Male or Female Human Sol 2; Init +1 (Dex); Def 15 (+4 armor, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 18/12; Atk +3 melee (special, stun baton) or +4 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Equipment: Comlink, heavy blaster, stun baton, blast vest and helmet, uniform.

Skills: Computer Use +6, Diplomacy +1, Intimidate +5, Listen +3, Profession (security guard) +6, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Speak Shryiiwook, Spot +3, Treat Injury +6.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (heavy blaster), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Generic Security Officer: Male or Female Human Sol 3; Init +2 (Dex); Def 15 (+3 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 24/13; Alk +4 melee (special, stun baton) or +6 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster); SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Equipment: Comlink, heavy blaster, stun baton, blast vest and helmet, officer's uniform.

Skills: Computer Use +8, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +7, Listen +4, Read/Write Basic, Search +5, Speak Basic, Speak Shryiiwook, Speak Sullustese, Spot +4, Treat Injury +7.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Dodge, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (heavy blaster), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Generic Crewmember: Male or Female Expert 1; Init +0; Def 10; Spd 10m; VP/WP —/10; Atk -1 melee (1d3-1, punch) or +0 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 12.

Equipment: Comlink, uniform, tool kit, utility belt.

Skills: Computer Use +4, Knowledge (varies) +4, Pilot +4, Profession (varies) +3.

Read/Write Basic, Repair +4, Speak Basic, Treat Injury +1.

Feats: Starship Operation (capital ship), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

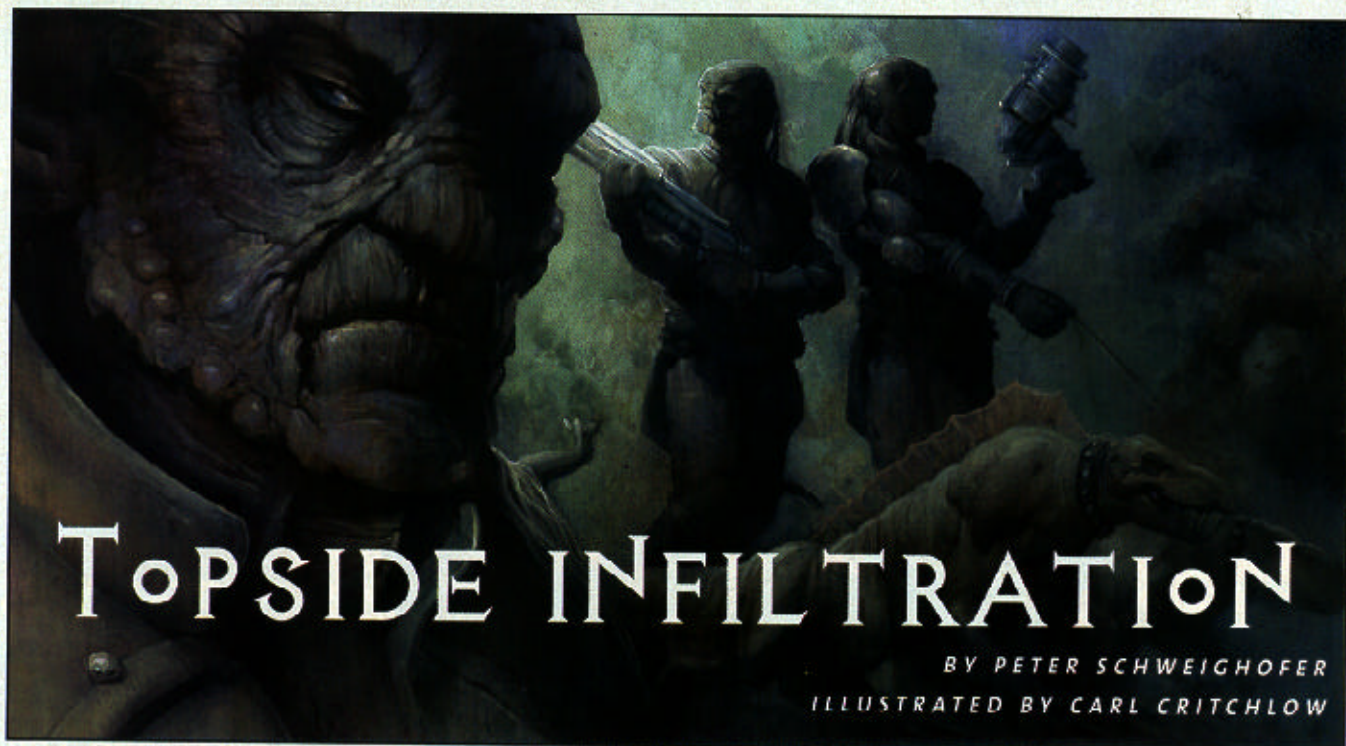
Generic Refugee: Use the appropriate commoner stats for each species.

Generic Refugee Leader: Male or Female Nbl 3; Init +0; Def 14 (+4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 13/11; Atk +2 melee (1d3, punch) or +2 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Bonus class skill (Gather Information), call in a favor (2), inspire confidence +1; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 7; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Equipment: Datapad, hold-out blaster.

Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (Druckenwell) +7, Knowledge (Galactic Politics) +7, Profession (bureaucrat) +7, Read/Write Basic, Sense Motive +7, Speak Basic, Speak Shryiiwook.

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



TOPSIDE INFILTRATION

BY PETER SCHWEIGHOFER

ILLUSTRATED BY CARL CRITCHLOW

Vaynal's nobles jealously guard their topside estates, shooting down starships that violate their airspace and ruthlessly evicting trespassers. Gallo Memm is no exception. Although he allows visiting "pilgrims" to meditate overnight in the ruined Temple of Kooroo on his grounds, he keeps them far from his villa's well-protected gallery. If you could somehow make your way onto the island's surface, sneak across the estate, and infiltrate his mansion, you might make off with some of the priceless works of art in his collection—including a suit of fabled Fenelar armor.

"Topside Infiltration" is a *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* scenario for four to six heroes of 5th–8th level. Since the Vaynal system is far from the galaxy's major political events, Gamemasters can easily set this adventure during any era.

The heroes plan to break into Memm's villa and raid its gallery filled with precious artwork, ancient artifacts, and a renowned suit of Fenelar armor. They might have heard rumors of this treasure-trove while gambling at the Illuminated Aquean or from some of the more impressionable and imaginative young orphans working at Preena's repair bay. If the heroes require Doctor Guzerre's services, he might withhold treatment until they can pay with an

item stolen from the gallery. Oneron Fil'vee might have hinted to them how much he envies certain pieces in Memm's collection, but he would certainly deny hiring or even encouraging the heroes to trespass on the estate. A visiting freighter captain who heard rumors of Memm's gallery might wish to impress his ambitious collector friends by seeking out the heroes to acquire pieces for him to sell to his contacts.

GETTING INSIDE

Gaining access to Memm's collection proves a formidable challenge. His Weequay sentries and a host of security devices guard the lifttube running from the caverns to the island surface—a frontal assault would force the guards to retreat behind the lifttube's armored blast door and anticipate any further attacks on the surface. Clearly this requires a more subtle approach.

Climbing up to the estate from the promenade might seem like a good approach at first. The heroes might try ascending the cliff face (requiring several DC 20 Climb rolls), preferably with climbing gear. Memm's estate guards, however, remain particularly vigilant along the island's perimeter. During their ascent, the heroes remain exposed to detection and subsequent attacks from above. A sentry path runs along the entire perimeter with

a good view down the cliffs. Weequay patrols pass any given spot once every 20 minutes—heroes must make opposed Move Silently rolls against the guards' Listen skill should a patrol pass their point of ascent. A cliffside battle presents many challenges to heroes, including a very long fall if they lose their footing.

Heroes with access to jet and rocket packs might use them to speed their cliffside ascent, but the Weequay sentries need only a DC 10 Listen roll to detect noise from such engines.

Heroes might use a vehicle to propel them up the cliff and onto the topside estate. This tactic exposes them not only to wandering patrols but also to the island's defensive turbolaser emplacements. Monitored and crewed around the clock by gunners in Memm's villa, they quickly hone in on any vessel violating the island's airspace and open fire. Captains must make DC 30 Pilot rolls to avoid detection, though guards patrolling on foot easily hear the whine of the craft's engines. Any weapons discharge immediately puts the entire estate on alert.

Weapon: Surface-mounted turbolaser platform; **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (+4 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 5d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0; S +0; M -2; L n/a.



The most roundabout way to gain access to the grounds takes advantage of Memm's allowance for pilgrims to visit the shrine of Kooroo on the estate. The heroes can don blue robes and tunics characteristic of such pilgrims, assume an appropriately meditative attitude, and leave their heavy weapons behind. Before ascending topside, Memm's guards search each pilgrim, keeping any weapons discovered until the heroes complete their meditation. If heroes want to try concealing a weapon in their costume, they must make a Hide check (DC 27 for Small or smaller items, DC 40 for Medium-sized, larger items are automatically found) for each item. The guards do not allow pilgrims to carry any specialized equipment (such as armor, medpacs, security kits, or macro-binoculars), only materials to aid them in their meditations.

The heroes and other pilgrims ride the lifttube to the surface, then are accompanied by a squad of Weequay guards to the temple. Their general impression of the island is brief—the lifttube pavilion sits near a lake surrounded by surreal statues, with rolling green lawns stretching toward dense forests. The crushed-stone path the guards take leads toward the temple. Peering back, the heroes notice Memm's villa off in the distance, at the other end of the island.

If the heroes choose to infiltrate the estate masquerading as pilgrims, start them off at the "Temple of Kooroo" below. If they manage to trespass on the grounds by some other means, allow them free reign to explore the various locations on the estate.

1. TEMPLE OF KOOROO

Memm's guards lead the pilgrims and heroes to an ancient ruin standing within the thick foliage:

The temple stands as a massive stone dome with a small cupola on top: a smaller dome supported by four short pillars. Vines creep along its cracked outer walls, with dense underbrush crowding around its base. As the sun sets, the Weequay guards herd the pilgrims through a small pillared portico and down worn stone steps.



The stairs lead to the domed shrine chamber. A low stone platform runs along the sanctuary perimeter, the only furnishing in the otherwise bare space. Dim light filters through vents beneath the cupola above, leaving the room's edge in shadow. The pilgrims arrange themselves in one great circle along the stone ledge. They assume meditative positions and continue their chants.

If they're ever to reach Memm's villa, the heroes must first leave the temple unnoticed. The pilgrims don't care about them as long as the heroes do not disturb their meditations. The six Weequay sentries posted outside guard the temple entrance and environs to prevent intruders like the heroes from trespassing on the estate.

The heroes have several means of escaping the temple:

Light Cupola: The cupola above covers a one-meter wide opening in the temple's stone dome, permitting light and air to flow into the sanctuary chamber. Reaching the opening requires a DC 25 Climb check. The heroes might use teamwork to reach the ceiling. The opening is 7 meters above the chamber floor. Should they reach the opening, they must squeeze through the space between the roof and the cupola, a scant 0.3 meter. Medium-size heroes must make an Escape Artist check (DC 15) or

What's My Motivation?

The heroes could have various reasons for trying to break into Memm's gallery:

Money: Memm's art collection represents a small fortune. Heroes could finally pay for those expensive projects—buying passage off Vaynai, funding clandestine operations, or even purchasing a starship.

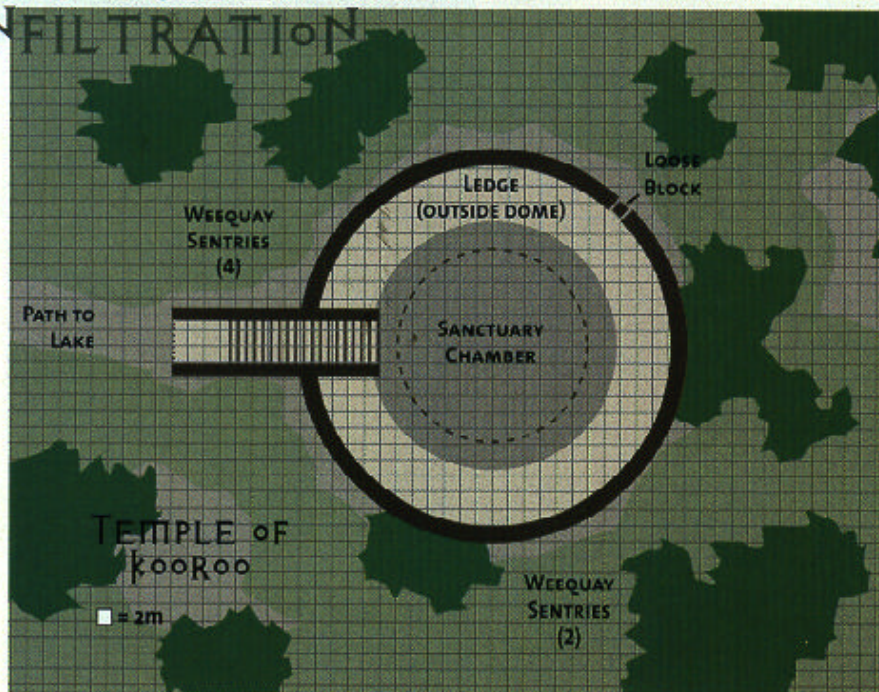
Personal Armor: A hero might want the Fenelar armor for herself. Although crafted long ago by the now-extinct Fenelar, the armor supposedly inspires fear in opponents.

Preemptive Strike: One of the heroes feels the armor or some other arcane artifact in Memm's collection poses a threat if abused. With the help of his friends, he intends to steal and destroy the item before anyone uses it for evil.

Revenge: If they've spent time on Vaynai, the heroes could have run afoul of Memm's customs and security agents. If they disregarded flight regulations, his gunnery emplacements might have destroyed their ship. Raiding Memm's art collection is the perfect vengeance.

Mercenaries: A wealthy patron might hire the heroes to infiltrate Memm's estate and raid his collection. Perhaps he wants a particular artifact for himself, or simply seeks to embarrass Memm and violate the sanctity of his estate.

TOPSIDE INFILTRATION



become stuck, requiring further efforts from others to free them. Descending the temple's exterior face unnoticed requires a DC 20 Climb roll.

Loose Stone: Heroes making a DC 15 Search roll while examining the temple walls discover a loose stone in the dome. Removing this stone from the wall to create a narrow passage outside requires a DC 25 Strength check. If they can inflict 30 points of damage on the block (hardness 8), the heroes can hasten its removal; they erode it enough to lower the Strength check DC to 15. This activity, however, arouses the ire of the meditating pilgrims and might alert the Weequay guards.

Deceive Sentries: The Weequay guards aren't too bright. They're ordered to escort pilgrims here, stand guard all night, and bring them back to the lifftube pavilion in the morning. They don't usually receive requests from pilgrims inside the temple. If the heroes can concoct a plausible plan, they might lure some of the guards inside (in case of an emergency) and disable them. A drastic situation might backfire, though—the sentries call for assistance, or the pilgrims become angry that the heroes interrupt their meditations.

All-Out Assault: Four Weequay sentries stand guard near the shrine entrance. The other two wander the paths near the temple. If the heroes burst from the sanctuary

and attack, they must disable the four sentries quickly and quietly (within one round) before the other two return or respond to sounds of a skirmish. Discharging any blasters automatically alerts the other two Weequay, who sneak back to survey the situation before attacking from the cover of the dense underbrush.

2. LAKE AND PAVILION

The island's lake provides fresh drinking water for the estate and a pleasing landscape feature. The lifftube pavilion sits nearby, offering access to the caverns and city below.

Moonlight reflects off the lake waters, illuminating the six imposing statues on its shore. The tall sculptures represent strange, four-armed aliens on pedestals, each brandishing two oversized pikes. The reflected light shimmers on their features, creating the illusion that they turn their heads to watch your every movement. The lifftube pavilion sits near the shore along the gravel path leading to various locations on the island. A single armored blast door denies access to the lifftube within. The path leads uphill past the terraced gardens to the distant villa.

Controllers in the villa lock the pavilion at night—they set the lifftube in the upper

Gunnery Emplacements

During their intrusion, the heroes might encounter the island's defenses.

As you near the island's edge, you hear the surf pounding against the cliffs far below. A large turbolaser gunnery emplacement looms through the trees ahead. Ghostly moonlight reflects off its dull metal finish. You hear motors whine as the massive gun slowly rotates on its foundation, scanning the skies for any vessel that violates the island's airspace.

These turbolaser emplacements protect the island and preserve its privacy from unwary starships. Operators in the villa's control center area monitor sensors housed in a dome on the building and in each gun turret, operating the targeting systems by remote (both comm-signals and underground wire conduits). The turrets have no internal control spaces for gunners, though several exterior panels provide access for maintenance. Opening a panel requires a DC 25 Disable Device check—failure by more than 5 triggers an alert. Within 2d6 rounds a Weequay patrol comes by to investigate.

Even if they manage to reconfigure the turbolaser fire control circuitry to allow them to position and fire the weapon (a DC 35 Computer Use check with a DC 40 Repair roll), the turret's mechanical construction does not allow it to turn to aim at targets on the island.

Weequay patrols pass gunnery emplacements once every 20 minutes. The longer heroes dally here, the more they risk a sentry spotting them.

position and power down the entire structure. The blast door is 20 centimeters thick (hardness 15, WP 240, DC 45). If the heroes try rerouting power through the portal's simple control panel, they must make a Disable Device check (DC 25) to avoid raising an alarm.

Patrols avoid the area around the lake because they know the eerie statues conceal guardian droids. Memm likes to disguise his

defenses whenever possible—for him it's easy enough to recast the statues with the droids inside later, after he's enjoyed surprising unsuspecting trespassers. Sensory receptors in the statues' eyes allow the droids to use their Improved Infrared vision and motion sensors to detect and react to any unauthorized activity: specifically anyone loitering around the lifttube pavilion at night. As soon as the heroes enter the area, and particularly if they skirt the lake shore or stop near the lifttube pavilion, the droids slowly break out of their statuary coverings, step down from the pedestals, and quietly closes in on the heroes.

The two droids closest to the heroes (or the pavilion, depending on their position) attack first, while the others maneuver into position. Although armed only with melee

weapons, the guardian droids have sufficient armor protection against energy weapons. Discharging blasters alerts nearby patrols and sentries at the villa. If the heroes don't dispatch the droids and flee the area, they might find themselves surrounded by Weequay sentries and nashtahs.

3. LANDING FIELD

The estate's landing field consists of a leveled and cleared section of lawn with beacon lights marking the perimeter. Although impressions in the grass indicate a ship frequently lands here, no vessel is currently docked. A metal door bars entry to a nearby maintenance shed. Carefully landscaped trees screen the landing area from view of the lake, terraced gardens, and the villa.

Attack Droids (6): Walking Security Droid Sol 4; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 20 (+9 armor, -1 size, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 47/20; Atk +9 melee (2d8+5, 2 force pikes) or +5 ranged; SQ: SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +2; SZ L; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Equipment: Heuristic processor, locked access, improved sensor package, infrared vision, motion sensors, rust inhibitor, 2 force pikes.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide -2, Intimidate +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Read/Write Basic, Search +4, Speak Basic, Spot +8.

Unspent Skill Points: 0.

Feats: Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (force pike), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Wandering Topside

Once the heroes escape from the temple, they can wander through Memm's topside estate to reach his villa. The heroes have the advantage of night. Although the moon offers enough light for basic navigation, the darkness provides some cover for their activities. The estate staff sleeps in the villa, so security personnel are the heroes' only main adversaries unless the sentries call for help.

Most of the grounds consist of heavily wooded forest and open lawns. Gravel paths link the temple with the lifttube pavilion, landing field, terraced gardens, and villa, though these pass through open and frequently patrolled terrain. Heroes must make opposed Move Silently rolls against the sentries' Listen skill to slip by unnoticed each time they wander across the open

lawns. The forest circles most of the island, providing the best means of traveling its length unseen.

The heroes should still maintain caution. Weequay patrols follow footpaths that weave through the woods. These pose little danger to heroes proceeding quietly and using the brush as cover. Guards respond quickly to sounds of combat, confusion, and argument. The sentries travel in groups of four, with one holding the leashes of two particularly nasty watch-beasts called nashtahs.

Sentries use the nashtahs to search for intruders. At the first sign of an attack, the handler releases the beasts—which charge their prey—while the others take cover and ready their blaster rifles. The Weequay signal for help only if the skirmish goes against them.

When he visits the estate, Memm lands his luxury yacht in this field—the absence of a ship indicates he isn't in residence. Heroes can open the door to the maintenance shed (hardness 10, WP 120, DC 35) on a DC 20 Disable Device check (this also bypasses security sensors). The materials stored inside are mostly geared toward servicing Memm's vessel when he's in port: an assortment of spare parts, fusion generator tanks and cable, a tool kit, and canisters of fresh water, hydraulic fluid, and grease. Memm keeps several technicians on retainer, billeting them in his villa. For major repairs or overhauls he hires the gifted kids from Preena's repair bay and tips them generously.

Nashtah: Domesticated Predator 5; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 17 (+5 natural, +2 Dex); Spd 20m; VP/WP 31/13; Atk +7 melee (1d3+4, barbed tail), +5 melee (1d6+4, 6 claws) or +5 ranged; SQ Leap attack, low-light vision, scent; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 5, Wis 19, Cha 10.

Skills: Jump +14, Listen +7, Spot +7, Survival +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Track.

Special Qualities: **Leap Attack**—A prodigious jumper, the nashtah is capable of leaping at an opponent and making six claw attacks as a full-round action. The creature can move up to 10 meters while making a leap attack.

Sentry: Male Weequay Sol 3; Init +3 (Dex); Def 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 24/12; Atk +4 melee (2d8+1, vibro-ax) or +6 ranged (3d8, blaster rifle); SQ Pheromone communication; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blast helmet and vest, blaster rifle, vibro-ax, comlink, glow rod, 19 credits.

Skills: Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +4, Listen +2, Read/Write Sriluurian, Ride +5, Search +2, Speak Basic, Speak pheromonal Sriluurian, Speak Sriluurian, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness, Animal Affinity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

TOPSIDE INFILTRATION

Weequay patrols check the landing

field once every 30 minutes. Heroes who damage the maintenance shed or work noisily risk a squad of sentries stumbling onto them.

4. TERRACED GARDEN

Memm's landscapers built a terraced garden on a hillside overlooking the lake and his villa. Stairs lead to each level. The gardens feature fancily trimmed shrubs, manicured lawns, rows of lush blooms, and a few imposing statues of strange four-armed aliens brandishing pikes. The terraces provide a good vantage point to covertly reconnoiter the house: shrubs, balustrades, and flower beds offer camouflage against the sentries no doubt posted in the villa's two towers.

The Weequay patrols shun the garden as they avoid the lake area, for this part of the island has its own defenses against intruders. The alien statues appear identical to those positioned around the lake, but they do not conceal guardian droids. A small gardener's shed near the top contains basic materials for maintaining the plants (fertilizer, shears, trowel and shovel, watering system, and so on).

Every five minutes the heroes spend in the gardens they have a 20% chance of attracting the notice of its residents: a hive of Vaynai pollinators. Although mostly a daytime insect, the pollinators begin their activity cycle in these early morning hours. The territorial insects stay within the gardens, pollinating the flowers and plants from their hive in the uppermost levels. They swarm and attack any intruders. When Memm and the gardener stroll here, they use a specially designed sonic transmitter that nullifies their intruder status by emulating pollinator wing frequency. At first the heroes notice a few chunky insects flying nearby, some even landing to crawl across their clothing. Eventually they fly back and alert the hive that intruders have violated the gardens.

Vaynai Pollinators Swarm: Vermin 4; Init +3 (Dex); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 15m fly (good); VP/WP 22/14; Atk +2 melee (special, sting) or +6 ranged; SQ DR 15; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will -2; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 4, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +1, Search -1, Spot +1, Survival +4.

Feats: Toughness.

Treat the cloud of insects as a single creature. The hearty pollinators make difficult targets (even in a crowded swarm). The swarm ignores the first 15 points of damage from each successful attack against it. Any heroes stung suffer 1d4 damage and must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or suffer an additional 1d6 points of wound damage.

The insects retreat once the swarm loses all its Vitality Points. The pollinators do not follow heroes fleeing the terraced gardens. Even as a swarm the insects aren't very effective attackers, but efforts to fight it off might reveal the heroes' presence to Memm's guards. Any energy weapon discharge or loud commotion eventually brings a patrol to the garden's edge to investigate.

5. MEMM'S VILLA

Memm's villa consists of a blocky structure topped by various peaked roofs, dormers, and domes, many of which have transparisteel panels to allow sunlight to illuminate the interior. Two sentry towers rise from corners, the Weequay on duty scanning the open lawns leading to the building. The large blast door in the side overlooking the gardens and lake is the only entrance. The wide windows stand several meters above the ground, preventing easy access.

To approach the villa the heroes must avoid the notice of the single Weequay house guard in each tower. Once they reach the building's outer wall, the tower height and angle prevent the sentries from noticing any movement; they can still detect.

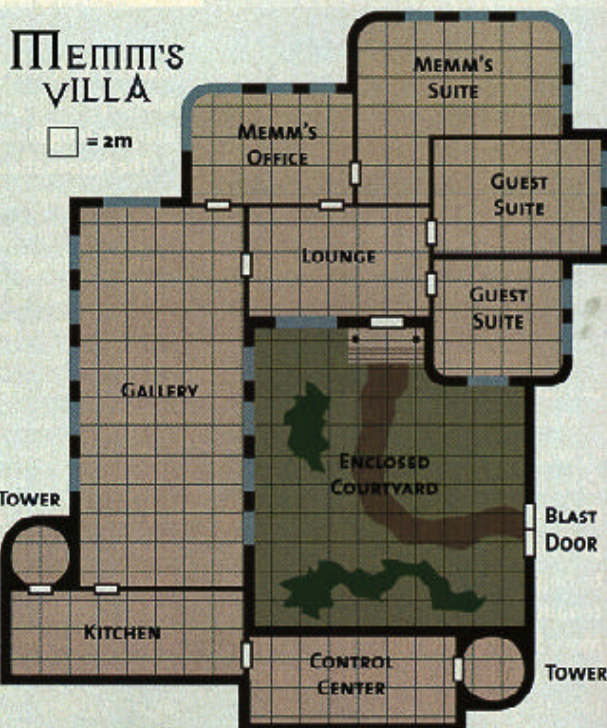
Villa House Guard: Male Weequay Sol 4; Init +3 (Dex); Def 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 31/12; Atk +6 melee (2d8+2, vibro-ax) or +6 melee (1d6+2, crit 20, punch) or +7 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Pheromone communication; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Equipment: Blast helmet and vest, blaster pistol, vibro-ax, comlink, glow rod, 23 credits.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Listen +5, Read/Write Sriluurian, Search +2, Speak Basic, Speak pheromonal Sriluurian, Speak Sriluurian, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Martial Artist, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

The main entrance consists of a heavily armored and monitored blast door (hardness 15, WP 240, DC 45). A Disable Device check (DC 30) opens the door without setting off the alarm but



exposes the heroes to the guards on duty in the enclosed courtyard.

The villa's walls (hardness 18, WP 90, DC 40) consist of an inner metal shell five centimeters thick faced with another five centimeters of stonework. Any blast or substantial attack on the wall raises the alarm. The stonework provides a rough enough surface that Climb attempts only require a DC of 20.

The transparisteel windows are set three meters off the ground, requiring a Climb check (DC 20) to reach and some support to attempt any sabotage. The architects set them flush with the outer wall and did not design them to open (hardness 12, WP 36, DC 30). Any substantial attack on the windows sets off the alarm. A Disable Device check (DC 30) allows heroes to remove one pane, but they must make an Escape Artist (DC 25) check to wriggle through the opening.

The villa's numerous gables, dormers, and domes provide the best means of entry. Although the tower sentries have a clear view of the roof, the heroes have two advantages: the guards focus their attention on the grounds, and the architecture helps conceal activity. The heroes gain a +7 bonus to Hide and Move Silently rolls here, and gain a +7 Defense bonus for three-quarters cover if they come under attack. The dormers and clerestory windows over the enclosed courtyard, suites, office, and gallery were not designed to open, but the roof provides a more stable platform to covertly remove panes of transparisteel (hardness 12, WP 36, DC 30). Heroes making a Disable Device check (DC 30) can loosen

and remove one pane, but they must make an Escape Artist check (DC 25) to wriggle through the opening. Failure on either roll sets off internal security sensors and sounds the alarm. The com-scan dome over the control center contains no exterior access—a hatch from inside allows entry for maintenance.

The control center coordinates security inside the villa. Concealed sensors monitor every room and corridor except Memm's suite and office. Every five minutes they spend within the villa, the heroes have a 10% chance of coming under direct observation from one of the control center sentries. See "Alarm and Escape" below for guard reactions to intruders.

Enclosed Courtyard

The main blast doors open up on an interior courtyard enclosed by a peaked transparisteel roof. The wide space allows personnel to turn vehicles around and park them at the back of the chamber, which serves as a vehicle bay. Three landspeeders and one cargo skiff are parked against the back wall. Eight Weequay sentries lounge around the landspeeders, guarding the vehicles and the villa's main entrance. Since the blast door dominates one wall, they'll notice it open and scrutinize anyone entering or leaving. They also have a chance to spot any heroes sneaking along the transparisteel roof.

A small pillared foyer provides the villa's official entrance. The door opposite leads to the control center and the staff sections of the building.

Control Center

All sensor data and communications from the estate pass through computers in this room. The center also houses the comm array for the subspace transceiver in the dome above, as well as controls for the lift-tube pavilion power, access, and operation.

Four security specialists continually monitor the sensors, while three Weequay house guards mill about, prepared to respond to any emerging crisis. Their captain, Chyvalle, lurks in the corner near a security station from which she monitors and supervises all guard operations.

Stairs in one corner lead to the underground living quarters, storage bays, nash-tah pens, and technical facilities that support the estate.

Chyvalle maintains a loose schedule that allows her an hour to rest in the control center, then an hour to wander the villa to ensure its security personally. She begins her patrol by making sure the Weequay in the enclosed courtyard are awake, then proceeds to check the lounge, suites, office, gallery, and kitchens. On every other circuit she checks the rooms in reverse order, using her security codes to access the normally sealed areas.

Kitchens

At an early hour, the cooks have not yet risen, though they might appear if the heroes stay here too long. Havaal, Memm's Duros steward, putters around before dawn making sure everything is in order. His office occupies one corner, though he often lodges in one of the guest suites when his master is away.

Security Specialists: Male or Female Human Expert 3; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 12 (+1 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/9; Atk +2 melee (1d3, punch) or +3 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +5; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, commlink headset, datapad, 50 credits.

Skills: Computer Use +8, Demolitions +7, Disable Device +7, Forgery +6, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (security) +7, Listen +4, Profession (security engineer) +8, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Sriluurian, Repair +8, Search +4, Speak Basic, Speak Nimbanese, Speak Sriluurian, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Chyvalle: Female Weequay Scl 6; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 20 (+7 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 36/14; Atk +6 melee (2d8+2, force pike) or +7 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster); SQ Pheromone communication, illicit barter, better lucky than good, sneak attack +2d6; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +3; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 3; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Equipment: Heavy blaster, force pike, commlink, 100 credits.

Skills: Bluff +6, Computer Use +6, Demolitions +3, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +5, Disguise +3, Gather Information +6, Hide +14, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +17, Read/Write Sriluurian, Search +8, Speak Basic, Speak Nimbanese, Speak pheromonal Sriluurian, Speak Sriluurian, Spot +9, Tumble +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Move Silently), Stealthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Memm's Collection

The gallery contains more than 40 works of art, some as large as the armor, other small enough to palm. An Appraise check (DC 20) gives heroes a close estimate of a piece's true value. The following items represent some of the highlights of Memm's collection.

Fenelar Armor: Craftsmen long ago fashioned this armor suit from choice materials for maximum protection, mobility, and artistic effect. Although it provides a +8 Defense bonus, it handles like medium armor (maximum Dex bonus +1; armor check penalty -4; weight 20 kg). The helmet contains motion and sound sensors (+2 to Spot and Listen checks), a comlink, and an infrared imaging system. The elaborately carved bracers contain concealed combat knives (1d6 damage). The armor's overall design and luridly engraved surfaces give the wearer a +4 Intimidate bonus. *Worth:* 55,000 credits.

Bust of Canivar: A life-like bust of the famous Cerean philosopher Canivar adorns a niche in Memm's gallery. The sculpture core consists of titanium, which shows through the gold electroplating in several overly polished, raised surfaces on the bust. *Worth:* 10,000 credits.

Kooroo Sundial: This metal disk has a wedge cut from it and propped up along its radius. This gnomon and the disk's intricately engraved symbols, geometric designs, and notations give the mistaken impression that this artifact is an ancient sundial. Early explorers discovered it in the Temple of Kooroo on Vaynai. *Worth:* 11,500 credits.

Prophecy of Vaal: A protective frame houses a single illuminated manuscript page inscribed with black ink, cobalt chalk, and gold leaf. The ancient characters depict the final prophecy the seer Vaal delivered centuries ago. *Worth:* 85,000 credits.

Gusepp's Hand: A grotesquely mummified hand sits palm-up in a hermetically sealed glass dome. Legends describe how the Jedi guardian Iunist fought the infamous Trandoshan tyrant Gusepp and severed the appendage midway along the forearm. *Worth:* 60,000 credits.

Havaal: Male Duros Expert 5; Init +2 (Dex); Def 13 (+1 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP -1/8; Atk +2 melee (1d3-1, punch) or +5 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +5; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 12. *Equipment:* Hold-out blaster, comlink, datapad, 1,500 credits.

Skills: Appraise +7, Bluff +5, Computer Use +8, Diplomacy +7, Forgery +9, Gather Information +9, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +8, Knowledge (business) +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Pilot +4, Profession (bureaucrat) +8, Read/Write Durese, Speak Basic, Speak Durese, Speak Huttese, Speak Nimbanese, Speak Sriluurian, Spot +4. *Feats:* Spacer, Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Lounge, Suites, and Office

Memm's living and entertaining quarters consist of a master suite, two guest suites, and a lounge filled with comfortable furniture. The decorations here—paintings, artsy holographs, tapestries, and sculptures—might prove valuable to the lower-class buyer, but their sale wouldn't amount to more than 250 credits apiece. Memm keeps his real treasures in the gallery.

Memm's office computer contains records of his art dealings across the galaxy, including names, systems, prices, and provenance of each piece he ever considered purchasing. Other files pertain to running his estate on Vaynai. Heroes can bypass the security codes on a Computer Use check (DC 25). Failure by more than 10 wipes the computer's memory and sets off the villa's alarm.

Gallery

Locked and monitored metal doors protect all entrances to the gallery. Heroes can open the portals (hardness 10, WP 60, DC 30) without setting off the alarms on a Disable Device check (DC 35).

The gallery serves as Memm's grand entertaining room. Comfortable furniture surrounds a holographic projector at one end, and a vast dining table and sideboard sit at the end near the kitchens. A varnished, greel-wood parquet floor shimmers in the dawning light from the windows. Priceless works of art stand at carefully

chosen locations to cultivate the most stirring Impressions. Paintings, tapestries, and smaller decorative items hang on the walls under spot lighting. Several transparisteel cabinets display smaller knick-knacks of artistic or archaeological significance. Removing any item from its mounting or case requires a Disable Device check (DC 30) to disarm the security sensors.

The Fenelar armor stands in a small clearing in the gallery's center section. A special security precaution protects Memm's prized possession. Those trying to remove the armor and failing a Disable Device check (DC 40) trigger the alarm and set off a trap: the four floor panels drop, sending anyone within 2 meters of the armor falling into the nashtah pen below. Five of the beasts voraciously attack anyone plunging into the pit. Heroes making a Reflex save (DC 25) manage to grab onto the pit edge or the pedestal supports. The alarm and the enraged nashtahs set the entire villa complex on alert.

ALARM AND ESCAPE

If heroes trigger the villa security system, all personnel go on alert. Security specialists in the control room track down the heroes' location and dispatch a squad of six house guards. If the heroes make it to the roof, this squad packs into the skiff and speeds out, circling the heroes and attacking. The longer the heroes delay, the more likely reinforcements arrive.

After Chyvalle sends more Weequay reinforcements to harass the heroes' flanks, she quickly evaluates the situation and sneaks up behind them, approaching from the opposite entrance the guards take into a room, or heading up to the roof to surprise anyone escaping through the dormers and clerestory windows. Chyvalle presents a cunning and adaptive challenge for the heroes—she appears where they least expect her and uses her ingenuity and combat prowess to the best advantage in familiar surroundings.

Leaving topside with their loot and lives proves challenging. The control center makes sure the lifftube pavilion is locked down in emergencies. The heroes might try climbing down the cliff to the towers and promenade (requiring several DC 20 Climb checks), but they remain exposed to attacks



from above. Jumping would only crush their bodies against the rocks and structures far below. If they have some means of even limited powered flight (the skiff or landspeeders), the heroes can try flying it off the cliff. A Pilot check (DC 25) allows them to gain speed, jump the cliff, and make a rapid yet controlled descent over the towers and into the deeper water beyond. Although the repulsors are on full, the craft still dunks into the ocean before bursting to the surface. Failure results in a fiery crash, with heroes suffering 2d8 collision damage and 25d6 falling damage.

Those who successfully rob Memm's villa and escape with the loot soon find a hefty bounty on their heads, along with a band of Weequay eager to hunt them down.

Heroes who fall into Chyvalle's hands, back into a corner, or surrender to the Weequay sentries find themselves objects of admiration for Gallo Memm, who (assuming he is in residence at the time) steps forward to inspect the people brave or foolhardy enough to steal from him. He applauds anyone who managed to evade his defenses long enough to gain access to the gallery. Depending on how good an impression they make on him, Memm might even offer them rather lucrative employment in similar ventures... assuming they return anything they pilfered from his collection.

Gallo Memm: Male Nimbanel Nbl 11; Init +1 (Dex); Def 18 (+7 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 41/10; Atk +8/+13 melee (1d3, punch) or +9/+4 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Call in a favor (3), Inspire confidence +3, command +4; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +7; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 4; Rep 8; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, comlink, datapad, fine clothes, 5,000 credits.

Skills: Appraise +15, Bluff +11, Computer Use +17, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +4, Forgery +8, Gather Information +14, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +17, Knowledge (business) +15, Knowledge (galactic history) +14, Listen +2, Profession (bureaucrat) +11, Read/Write Nimbanese, Sense Motive +14, Speak Basic, Speak Hutttese, Speak Nimbanese, Speak Ryl, Speak Shyriiwook, Speak Srilluorian, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Persuasive, Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons). □

New Species: Nimbanel

Nimbanel are a species of humanoid reptiles with bald heads, round, dark eyes, and snouts framed by tufts of cheek hair. Known for their ability with complex mathematics and intricate bureaucracies, the Nimbanese prefer to resolve conflict by befuddling their opponents with official procedures, puzzling rules, and a general runaround of administrative particulars. They put their organizational talents to work serving major business concerns like the Hutt clans, Corporate Sector execs, and the Bureau of Ships and Services. Through the Hutts the Nimbanese rose to prominent administrative positions in the galaxy and preserved their way of life. They excel at electronic technologies, from data storage and computer systems to hyperdrives and droids. All Nimbanels speak Basic, Nimbanese, and Hutttese, as their snout structure allows them to articulate a wide range of languages easily.

A few Nimbanese, such as Memm, make their own way in the galaxy, often after years of servitude and a lucky break from their masters. They have reputations as fussy entrepreneurs, obsessed with form and procedure—but they invariably get the job done in an efficient manner, even if they inconvenience others along the way. Memm uses his many connections and his bureaucratic abilities to find, verify, and acquire the works of art he displays in his villa gallery.

Nimbanel Commoner: Init +0; Def 10; Spd 10m; VP/WP —/10; Atk +0 melee (1d3, punch) or +0 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Computer Use +4, Craft (varies) +2, Knowledge (varies) +2, Profession (varies) +0, Read/Write Nimbanese, Speak Basic, Speak Hutttese, Speak Nimbanese.

Species Features: +2 Int, +2 Wis; +2 species bonus to Computer Use and Knowledge (bureaucracy) checks.

GALAXY'S MOST WANTED

LUKE SKYWALKER, JEDI MASTER

BY BILL SLAVICSEK WITH MICHAEL MIKAELIAN

ILLUSTRATION BY ASHLEY WOOD

While most heroes would get a well-deserved rest after saving the galaxy, Luke Skywalker's life since the death of the Emperor has been one of nearly nonstop adventure. With all of the other known Jedi gone and his own knowledge of the Force not yet complete, much of Luke's life since the Battle of Endor became an unending quest to learn everything he could about the secrets of the Force. What little time he did not devote to plumbing its mysteries he spent dodging the revenge of the Imperial survivors, including Grand Admiral Thrawn and the beautiful but deadly Mara Jade, the Emperor's personal assassin.

As Luke began encountering more and more people with some knowledge of the Force—or more rarely, those with some knowledge of the Jedi arts—he realized that completing his own understanding of the Force was a selfish task. He began

training students of his own, including his own sister, Leia Organa, who by now had married Luke's best friend, Han Solo. In time, Luke petitioned for the right to open a formal academy on Yavin 4 (the jungle moon from which the Rebel Alliance had launched its attack against the first Death Star), and began training several apprentices, including Jaina and Jacen Solo, his niece and nephew. Although the Jedi academy had its difficulties—not the least of which was an ancient Sith evil named Exar Kun—the school survived, and Luke was well on the way to reestablishing the Jedi Order in the galaxy.

But with so many apprentice Jedi training their own apprentices, the Jedi began to spread across the stars far too quickly and without any organization. Reports began to trickle into the New Republic Senate of Jedi Knights acting as self-appointed police,

even judge, jury, and executioner. Although their activities rid the galaxy of much evil—pirates, smugglers, and the like—these rogues did so without the foreknowledge or authorization of the Senate. The new Jedi, in their zeal to restore peace and justice to the New Republic, were now seen as the biggest threat to both.

As Luke Skywalker pondered the place of the New Jedi Order in the New Republic, the alien Yuuzhan Vong began their conquest of the galaxy. At first the invaders seemed both invincible to New Republic technology and invisible in the Force. Luke reached out to the rogue Jedi led by Kyp Durrone, his former apprentice, to present a unified front against the invasion force. As more worlds fell to the Yuuzhan Vong, Luke's efforts to fight as one were constantly thwarted by the Senate, the rogue Jedi, and Yuuzhan Vong sympathizers.





After countless battles that left whole worlds in ruins, the New Republic and Yuuzhan Vong arrived at a temporary cease-fire. The Yuuzhan Vong offered a permanent solution to the Senate: Turn over all Jedi and potential Jedi, and New Republic will be left in peace. Whole planets turned against the Jedi hoping to appease the invaders. The Jedi academy on Yavin 4 was evacuated and the students moved to a secure location. To protect Jedi scattered across the galaxy from persecution, Luke and Mara formed a "great river" through which they could escape. Trusted volunteers acted as rescue pilots, seeking out Jedi-in-hiding and transported them to a secret Jedi base.

With Luke's help, Mara overcame a debilitating disease inflicted by the Yuuzhan Vong and gave birth to their first son. They named him Ben, after Luke's first Master Obi-Wan Kenobi.

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Luke Skywalker has a variety of new special abilities derived from his Jedi guardian and Jedi Master classes.

DEFLECT: Luke can deflect blaster bolts and other ranged weapon attacks with his lightsaber. He must be carrying an activated lightsaber to use this special ability. The ranged attack must be from an antipersonnel weapon (blaster pistol or rifle, bow and arrow, slugthrower pistol, and so on); this ability can't deflect fire from heavy weapons or ship weapons.

Defense: Deflecting a ranged attack is a reaction that costs a move action in his next round. For example, if Luke uses his activated lightsaber to deflect any number of blaster attacks in Round 3 of a combat, in Round 4 he loses a move action to account for the effort extended to defend against the ranged attack in Round 3.

Deflect can be used in conjunction with a total defense

action to gain the dodge bonus to Defense provided by this ability as well as the +4 dodge bonus provided by the total defense action. In this case, deflect blasters is not a reaction. Instead, it is an attack action used in a round when Luke expects to come under heavy fire.

Attack: Luke has a +3 dodge bonus to Defense when using his lightsaber to block blaster or other ranged attacks.

Extended Defense and Attack: Luke has the ability to block a blaster attack and deflect the bolt toward a target within one range increment of his position. (The weapon being deflected determines the range increment.) He can deflect 8 attacks (one-half his Jedi level, rounded up) in one round. The attack being deflected back must miss Luke; if an attack succeeds, he can't deflect it toward a target. After a missed attack, Luke immediately rolls an attack with his lightsaber's bonus and a -3 penalty. If the attack succeeds, the deflected shot hits and deals damage to the target.

Luke can extend this defensive ability to others within 2 meters. That character gains the dodge bonus to Defense, and Luke can block and deflect back attacks made against anyone within 2 meters of his position.

Block: Luke has the ability to deflect blasters without a lightsaber, provided he has some form of protective gear (such as armored gauntlets) or an item that can withstand the ranged attack.

FORCE SECRET: Luke has discovered two Force secrets in his experiences as a Jedi Master. Improve Battlemind increases the Force bonus of Battlemind by +1. Improve Force Skill (Battlemind) gives him a +1 bonus to Battlemind skill checks. **E**

Luke Skywalker: Male Human Fringer 2/Jedi Guardian 13/Jedi Master 3; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 25 (+13 class, +2 Dex) or 32 (when using Deflect: Defense and Lightsaber Defense); Speed 10; VP/WP 116/12; Atk +21/+16/+11/+6* melee (5d8+2/19-20, lightsaber) or +19/+14/+9/+4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Barter, Block, Bonus class skill (Repair), Deflect (Attack -3, Defense +3, extend defense and attack), Force Secret (Improve Battlemind, Improve Force Skill: Battlemind), Skywalkers use Force Points as though they were three levels higher. They also get the Force-Sensitive feat for free. Skywalkers ignore the "Force level 1st" prerequisite when selecting primary Force feats (Alter, Control, Sense); SV Fort +13, Ref +13, Will +10; SZ M; FP 9; DSP 1; Rep +6; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12. Challenge Code: H.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, lightsaber*, tool pouch, flightsuit, X-wing, R2-D2.

*Luke Skywalker has constructed his own lightsaber.

Skills: Astrogate +5, Climb +6, Computer Use +8, Craft (lightsaber) +8, Intimidate +3, Jump +12, Knowledge (Jedi lore) +4, Knowledge (politics) +6, Knowledge (world lore) +8, Pilot +14, Profession (moisture farmer) +6, Read/Write Basic, Repair +7, Search +7, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Jawa Trade Language, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +8, Survival +7, Tumble +8.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +11, Battlemind +10, Empathy +12, Enhance Ability +8, Enhance Senses +7, Farseeing +10, Force Defense +8, Heal Self +7, Move Object +11, See Force +12, Telepathy +7.

Feats: Acrobatic, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber), Force-Sensitive, Skill Emphasis (Pilot), Starship Dodge, Starship Operation (starfighter), Weapon Focus (lightsaber), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Attuned, Control, Force Mastery, Knight Defense, Lightsaber Defense, Sense.

DICE, CAMERA, ACTION!

Structure and the Character Goal

BY ROBIN D. LAWS

WELCOME TO THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF "Dice, Camera, Action!" In this new column we'll look at various cinematic techniques and mine them for use in the Star Wars Roleplaying Game.

Roleplaying games aren't movies; there are things that work in film that you could never get away with in a game session, and vice versa. Still, every GM should expect players to show up at her *Star Wars* game expecting a jolt or two of the cinematic excitement that made them love the movie series in the first place.

The first element of filmmaking to look at is the screenplay. No breed of writer expends more brainpower to keep the audience at all times absolutely riveted to their seats than the movie screenwriter. TV writers work on the assumption that viewers are only halfway paying attention, and episodic television is often radio with pictures. Novelists know that people read for leisure as much as for stimulation, and they enjoy the leeway to examine the ideas that matter to them.

The screenwriter never catches a break. He has to lay the foundation for a film that captures the audience's attention and holds it. If he's working on an adventure movie, he must balance thrilling action sequences with character scenes that make us care about our heroes. Think about how well *Star Wars* accomplishes this feat, compared to dozens of forgettable space fantasy films that followed in its wake. You couldn't ask for a better model of adventure movie construction than its screenplay.

In the columns that follow, we'll look at screenplay techniques mostly from a GM's point of view, to find ways of making adventures feel more like movies. On these pages, "you" means the GM, but players can learn a lot by peeking behind the curtain. By understanding a movie character's function in a script, players can make better decisions for their heroes. By figuring out when the GM's plot is apt to give them a boost, and when temporary failure is necessary to the plot, players can slice their way through the obstacles put before them with the speed and aplomb of Jedi Knights.

STRUCTURE

Structure, important in telling any kind of story, rules the screenplay world with an iron fist. Structure is the art of making a story build in excitement and momentum. Structure is the process of taking the original images, concepts, characters, and premises that spring to mind in our moment

of first inspiration and giving them shape. As we find our structure, we identify the material that's central to our story. At the same time, we hunt down and remove the bits that really belong in some other story altogether. (These irrelevant bits can be insidious; they're often fun, colorful, and painful to cut.) Structure is the clear, simple idea that defines our story and helps us tell the crucial bits from the irrelevant ones.

What structure is not, in a roleplaying context, is something the GM imposes on the players. *Star Wars* games come to life with on-the-spot input from the players. Imposing a structure on the game as it unfolds is a deadly mistake. It kills spontaneity, making players feel they're just spectators instead of the participants they need to be.

What you want to structure is the underlying idea you bring to the table. Expect the players to bend it out of shape as they add their own side trips, tangents, and departures. Where's the fun in sending players through a series of paces you've already predicted? In adventure creation, structure is a springboard, a strong foundation that you should be ready to abandon in response to unexpected player choices.

The adventure that you write is not really the story. The story is what happens when the players interact with your adventure. Still, your group will find their exploits more satisfying when it's a clear, solid idea they're veering off from.

Screenwriters use several basic structures. The most prevalent is the three-act structure, in which the action falls into a trio of distinct segments separated by major plot twists that change the story's direction. Another is the set-piece structure, which takes the characters on a journey through a whole series of linked sequences, each with its own separate look and mood. Then there's the serial structure, used in the cliffhanger series of the thirties and forties. We don't see much of it in movie theaters these days, but you can't talk about *Star Wars* without it. We'll look at each of these structures in more detail in future issues. For the moment, what's important is the element they all share.

THE CHARACTER GOAL

Whatever the structure a screenwriter chooses, it's



almost certain that his story arises from the main character's pursuit of a goal. In dramas, the goal might be an abstract thing, like inner growth. The character might not even be aware of it.

Fortunately for us, adventure movie structures tend to be simpler. The hero takes action to achieve his

Luke Skywalker never turned around to tell George Lucas that attacking the Death Star seemed too risky and that he'd rather try an alternate plan!

We don't even get to determine our main characters' central goals; that's up to the players, too. If we were to recreate the storyline of *The Phantom Menace*, we couldn't guarantee that our Jedi Knights would take a shine to young Anakin and champion his cause with their fellows.

What we do know is that, like the *Star Wars* films but unlike most other movies, our games focus not on a single hero but on an ensemble cast. Luke is clearly the focus character for the first trilogy, but we spend plenty of time on

The story is what happens when the players interact with your adventure.

goal. An antagonist responds by taking actions to thwart him. The hero undergoes a series of ups and downs, with the stakes growing ever higher, as he heads toward a final confrontation with the villain. The confrontation is resolved; the hero almost always achieves his goal.

"But wait!" you say. "The *Star Wars* films don't follow this structure at all! *The Empire Strikes Back* ends with Han frozen in carbonite!" You're right: The *Star Wars* films break the usual rules by bringing back elements of the old-time serials. They prove that you don't have to follow the rules to create a hugely entertaining story—and that's a great lesson in itself.

When you decide to break rules, however, it helps if you know which ones you're breaking and why. And even though they aren't necessarily resolved at the end of every film, *Star Wars* characters always have strong and specific goals that drive their stories:

- » Leia wants to contact Obi-Wan and get him to help the Rebel Alliance.
- » Han Solo just wants to keep making a shady living as a smuggler, until his involvement with Luke and Leia inspires him to heroic action.
- » Luke wants to escape from his humdrum existence on Tatooine and become a starship pilot.
- » Qui-Gon wants to end the Trade Federation blockade of Naboo.

Without character goals, we don't have a story, and the audience doesn't know who to cheer for. This point brings us to the most important way in which roleplaying games differ from screenplays.

DESIGNING CHARACTER GOALS

WHEN YOU DON'T DESIGN THE CHARACTERS

We poor GMs, unlike screenwriters, don't get to control our lead characters. We know that our players will question our plot developments at every turn, looking for the cleverest ways to accomplish their goals.

Han, Leia, and the large cast of supporting characters. This makes the *Star Wars* movies an ideal inspiration for roleplaying, where players each expect an equal amount of time in the spotlight.

To start with, you should treat the party as a sort of composite lead character. That is, for your first adventure or two, worry about the party's goal, not those of individual heroes. Further, you should start out by giving the party a goal to pursue. This is okay at first, because you're preparing for a game without knowing what kinds of heroes the players will bring to the table. You can make the following assumptions about the heroes:


- » They're the good guys (even though those built on the Han Solo model might not admit it yet).
- » They're risk-takers, willing to do adventurous things to get what they want.

If you have good reason to think that some of your players won't accept these key elements of a *Star Wars* character, you need to have a talk with them ahead of time to make sure that your game isn't headed for a big clash of expectations. If they're determined to play selfish or cowardly characters, structure might be the least of your worries.

Aside from those two basic assumptions, you won't know, in advance of the first session, what it is that drives each individual hero to go out and risk his life for the good of the galaxy. In fact, your players might not even know: Many improvise their way through their first few sessions, getting a real sense of their heroes only after several sessions of play.

So, deprived of the fundamental tool that screenwriters use to kick off their stories, what do you do? Why, you reach into the kit bag of a Hollywood master, Alfred Hitchcock, and pull out an invaluable storytelling tool he termed the McGuffin.

What is a McGuffin, you ask?

Well, that will have to wait until next time. How's that for a cliffhanger? 



THE PRIAPULIN

BY CRAIG R. CAREY, JASON FRY & DANIEL WALLACE

SPECIAL THANKS TO GREG BEAR

ILLUSTRATED BY DENNIS CRAMER

FROM THE DESK OF PROFESSOR ELISS ...

I had evacuated my office a mere 37 Sanbra hours prior (barely avoiding an Imperial death squad) when I found myself at the Priapulid colony on Krinemonen III, a small outpost in the Mon Calamari Shipyards.

Were I not a fugitive, I likely would have viewed the respite as a well-deserved vacation: the amenities for aquatic species were, of course, superb. Scores of Priapulid, Mon Calamari, Quarren, and Iy'la starshipwrights (including my young school-cousin, Tam) lounged in immaculate brine- and kelp-laden pools, massaged by the lapping waves and warm breezes.

Resting in this splendid environ, imagine my cousin's shock when our Priapulid host swam up and devoured the young being with whom Tam had been discussing the latest shockball scores! His reaction is a memory I shall long cherish (though I suspect in the future I would do well to better prepare my young cousin for inter-species gatherings such as those).

Eras of Play

During the Rise of the Empire era, the Priapulins are largely content to roam the galaxy as emissaries, pilots, and explorers. Many also serve in executive or academic functions in many regions.

With Palpatine's ascension and the imposition of anti-alien laws and rise in anti-alien sentiment, most Priapulins have turned to non-violent resistance against the Empire. Some have joined the Rebellion as advisors, leaders, or freighter pilots; others avoid the Alliance altogether and work as smugglers, targeting only Imperial or Imperial-aligned ships and cargoes.

In the era of the New Republic, the Priapulins have begun the long process of rebuilding their world, much of which fell into disrepair and neglect during the Empire's rule. In one particularly inspiring event, a large contingent of Republic-allied crews, most of them Quarren, Aqualish, Kian'thar and other aquatic sentients, landed on Pria and dove into the North Flows to begin reparations.

During the New Jedi Order, and in the face of the ravages of the Yuuzhan Vong, the Priapulins have reaffirmed their commitment to pacifism but have also taken an active role in aiding those stricken during the invasion. Many Priapulins have also enlisted as Jedi auxiliaries in the tradition of the great Charza Kwinn—they are baffled by the current animosity toward the new generation of Jedi Knights.





Appearance

The aquatic, worm-like Priapulins are a species rarely encountered but impossible to forget. By galactic standards they are an imposing species—adult males can reach a length of over four meters. Their appearance can startle even the well-traveled.

The long, tubular body of the Priapulin is supported by five notochords—rings of flexible cartilage that encircle the body. In place of a spinal column (Priapulins do not have any true bones), a hollow nerve cord runs the length of the being's dorsal side.

On the Priapulin's ventral side is a brush-like mass of stiff spines and bristles. These bristles are particularly thick at the base of the body's end; Priapulins move by shifting the bristles and contracting the tail. The tail is equipped with thick muscular tissue that allows Priapulins to move surprisingly well for creatures of their size and build. They typically carry themselves upright, though not completely erect. The common posture for a Priapulin in the company of other Republic species is roughly a flattened "S" shape. When swimming, their movement is like that of the sea serpents of Ando or any other creature of similar build.

The ventral bristles extend all the way to the head-tip of the body and obscure the Priapulins' pharyngeal gill slits from plain view. Adapted for oxygen filtration both in the open air and under water, the slits serve both as a mouth for feeding and—when a Priapulin is speaking Basic or other verbal language—for communication. If conversing to humans or other species with spoken languages, the Priapulins are able to position any number of the spines in specific positions, and with the air passing in and out of their feeder tube, replicate the given language fairly well. Though the Priapulins are capable of speaking a wide variety of Republic languages, their native tongue is a complex combination of tones generated by scraping their tip-end ventral bristles with those of its tail-end.

On both "sides" of a Priapulin is a seemingly random mix of digits, which the species uses as others would use fingers or talons. The digits are disparate in appearance and nature; some are hook-like, some thorny balls, others spatulate devices.

Priapulin

The Priapulins are an aquatic worm-like species known for their extreme pacifism and curious symbiotic relationships.

Personality: The Priapulins are a thoughtful, often misunderstood species who strive for peace above all else. They are rarely given to anger and even in the most extreme circumstances will not engage in combat, even if it means their lives.

Physical Description: Long, bristle-laden worms that can reach lengths of over four meters, Priapulins move much like upright snakes.

Homeworld: Pria

Languages: Priap, Basic

Example Names: Charza Kwinn, Tala Shorin, Massac Shaloq

Adventurers: Priapulin adventurers can be any class that does not engage in physical violence. The vast majority of Priapulins encountered are scouts, with some fringers and others encountered every so often. While some Priapulin are Force-sensitive and supportive of the Jedi, they do not serve as Knights, in keeping with their strict adherence to absolute pacifism.

PRIAPULIN SPECIES TRAITS

- » +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma. Priapulin are wise creatures but not well-adapted to life outside their native seas.
- » Large. As Large creatures, Priapulin suffer a -1 size penalty to Defense and

attack bonuses and a -4 size penalty to Hide checks.

- » Priapulin base speed is 6 meters on land, 15 meters in water.
- » Amphibious. Priapulin breathe both water and air. They also receive a +10 species bonus on Swim checks, but suffer a -20 penalty to skill and Constitution checks in dry conditions.
- » +2 species bonus to Diplomacy and Handle Animal checks. Priapulins' pacifistic philosophy gives them a natural affinity for dealing with both sentient and non-sentient beings.
- » Low-light vision. Priapulins can see twice as far as a Human in dim light (such as moonlight or underwater). They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under such conditions.
- » Automatic Languages: Priap and Basic.

Priapulin Commoner: Init +0; Def 9 (-1 size); Spd 6m, 15m swim; VP/WP —/10; Atk -1 melee (1d3, unarmed), -1 ranged; SQ Amphibious, low-light vision, -20 skill check and Constitution check penalty in dry conditions; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1; SZ L (4m long); FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Equipment: Food-kin, variety of personal belongings.

Skills: Hide -4, Knowledge (Priapulin culture) +2, Profession (any) +2, Read/Write Priap, Speak Priap, Speak Basic, Swim +10.

Priapulins have three pairs of eyes, typically silver- or copper-rimmed, with lenses varying in color, though pale yellow, orange and a range of purples are the most common.

History

Though little is known of their background, xenobiologists believe that the Priapulins have evolved from burrowing worm-like creatures on Pria, a tectonically active Core world. The planet is a chaotic jumble of shifting land masses reeling from accelerated plate drift, polar cap growth, and a rapid cycle of ice ages. (Geologists estimate that Pria's ice ages occur every 10,000 standard years).

The oceans of Pria are a briny, stormy maelstrom inhabited by a variety of both harmless and exceptionally lethal creatures. Though the Priapulins have established some outposts and research facilities along the ocean floors and trenches of their world, the majority of the population inhabits a series of atolls and tidal flats. Though meteorologically and tectonically turbulent, Pria is a temperate world. As a result, Priapulins do not fare well in even cool climates and are uncomfortable in dry conditions (a typical room that a human would find comfortable would be too dry for a Priapulin's comfort). Priapulins usually require special accommodations for their physiology when

Charza Kwinn, Jedi Auxiliary

The Priapulid pilot Charza Kwinn has ably served the Jedi Knights for many years, first as simply a pilot, and then also as an information agent. Kwinn's reputation as an able pilot prompted the Jedi Council to request him more often than any other auxiliary (with perhaps the exception of auxiliary Tropam Givar, the Rellarin observer recently pulled in to some of the Coruscant and Naboo intrigues).

Charza left Pria at a relatively young age, intending (as many youths do) to find his destiny somewhere out in the vast galaxy. Many of the beings he encountered, however, were an affront to his Priapulid upbringing: They used violence to achieve any end, no matter how trivial. Disheartened, he began to seek out those who were bent on doing good for the galaxy. While the Jedi did certainly engage in combat, their order was the most compatible with his belief system, and in short time he began to assist various Jedi in their tasks.

Initially Charza ferried supplies to and from various points on Coruscant, and with his considerable starshipwright skills, he helped attend to some of the Jedi's more complicated craft. Later, he escorted Knights and their companions throughout the galaxy, even into the most perilous environs.

Charza's reputation was cemented during the Montitian Extraction, one of the final campaigns of the Extorin Minor skirmishes in which a group of Jedi Knights and their Padawans were struggling to rescue the last of Montitia's refugees from the Extorin aggressors. Kwinn burst onto the scene—in an unarmed freighter, and under heavy fire—and guided the *Coral Fin* to the besieged refugee camp and was able to board the Montitians and their Jedi protectors. While the legend has undoubtedly grown in the telling, Charza's piloting that day was nothing short of genius. No matter how much the tale has been glorified by the holocrews, refugees and Jedi alike, Charza led the beings to safety.

Charza's legend has only continued to grow since the Montitian Extraction. While details have not been made available to the Institute or, apparently, any other party, Kwinn figured prominently in the recent campaigns of Jedi Knight Obi-Wan Kenobi and his Padawan, Anakin Skywalker. In conducting his recent interviews on Kwinn's current craft, the YT-1150 *Star Sea Flower*, it was obvious to Professor Eliss from the carbon scoring on the *Flower's* port side alone that Kwinn's recent sojourn was an eventful one.

For more about Charza Kwinn and his adventures, read *Star Wars: Rogue Planet*, by Greg Bear.

away from Pria: Priapulid-owned starships are damp, mollusk-filled crafts with floors often covered ankle-deep in saltwater. Their abodes are of similar design.

Society

Though their outward nature often surprises others, Priapulins are exceptionally social and congenial. Those familiar with the species know the Priapulins have an extraordinary sense of humor (who *hasn't* heard the one about the three-armed Jawa?).

Priapulins are also regarded for their loyalty: if you've got a Priapulid for a friend, you have a friend for life. They are fiercely loyal to their causes, their friends, their constituents and patrons, and even the companies from whom they typically purchase wares.

Priapulins engage in little sport or competitive behavior, though they often find the competitive tendencies of other species of interest. Priapulid society is based largely on cooperative communities: cooperation is the very foundation of their culture. Operation without cooperation within Priapulid society is seen as wasteful and ignorant. The Priapulins have established complex symbiotic relationships with several non- and near-sentient creatures that exemplify their devotion to cooperation. Even inanimate objects—

such as tools and machinery that serve them well—are accorded great respect by Priapulins, and they are sometimes even considered friends.

Many of the creatures with whom the Priapulins have established their mutually beneficial relationships assist the beings in day-to-day tasks, from maintenance of community properties to more complex duties, such as starship operation and navigation. One of the most fascinating is their relationship with the crast, a small crustacean that reproduces within the Priapulins' digestive tract. While consumption results in the parent crast's death, the unborn young are nurtured by Priapulid digestive fluids. The Priapulid ultimately regurgitates the progeny, effectively giving birth to a new litter of crasti (food kin). This relationship is key to the crast's survival; as their gestation and reproductive cycles are peculiar, and they must reproduce at precise intervals. As such, it behooves them to be in constant company of a Priapulid so as to ensure the continuation of their species. Not all young are eaten upon adulthood; only the few who carry eggs are consumed.

Though exceptionally strong, the Priapulid abhor violence. Theirs is a society devoted to peace: most Priapulid would sooner die than engage in open conflict. Some sentientologists have surmised that

this strict adherence to pacifism is the result of a near-catastrophe, which might have brought the species to the brink of extinction.

That the Priapulins are pacifists is not to say they cannot work outside the law. In the era of the Empire's rise, several prominent Priapulins, the legendary Jedi auxiliary Charza Kwinn included, turned to a life of piracy and smuggling once they and nearly all nonhumans lost their rights.

While most Priapulins speak Basic quite well, their dialogue is often laden with Priapulid-specific terms, many of which a non-Priapulid might find confusing. Travel distances, for example, are expressed in "salt pans," a unit of measure believed to have been derived from early Priapulid explorations of dry sea beds. A salt pan equals approximately 1.2 kilometers.

Time is also another measure expressed differently from the Republic norm: instead of standard hours, the Priapulins typically mark time by their homeworld tides. Pria tidal cycles have equalled almost exactly 10 standard hours for the last few decades (Pria's sole moon maintains what the Priapulid term "a perfect orbit"), and standard hours are therefore referred to as a tenth of a tide, 5 hours a half-tide, and so on. The Pria day is 20 standard hours and three seconds. ☐

THE SECTOR RANGER

BY JAMES MALISZEWSKI

ILLUSTRATED BY

MICHAEL AVON-OEMMING

THE SECTOR RANGERS ARE A UNIQUE ORGANIZATION IN THAT THEY HAVE EXISTED VIRTUALLY UNCHANGED SINCE THE DAYS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC.

Originally established as a law-enforcement agency capable of operating over the vast distances of interstellar space, the Rangers fulfilled similar functions during the times of both the Empire and the New Republic. The organization's ability to navigate the currents of galactic politics without falling prey to its excesses has ensured the Rangers' place in

the hearts and minds of those they serve. Even during Emperor Palpatine's reign, they exemplified their motto—"What Others Abandon, We Protect"—through their impartial application of the law and their reluctance to become involved in military or political matters. It is only the name of the Rangers' governing body that changes much over time (from the Republic Office of Criminal Investigations to the Imperial Office of Criminal Investigations).

Under both the Old Republic and the Empire, the Sector Rangers existed to carry the force of law from one star system to another. Nevertheless, individual Rangers (with the exception of Special Enforcement Officers, described below) are assigned to a single sector, such as Tapani Sector or Corellian Sector. Within that sector, a Ranger is authorized to pursue criminals and apprehend them by whatever means are necessary. A Ranger can also freely draw upon local law enforcement resources in pursuit of her investigations. A Ranger's authorization includes the power to demand the extradition of prisoners from local authorities, as well as the rarely used ability to suspend local officials suspected of aiding and abetting criminals. A Sector Ranger can also deputize a select number of civilians to act as legal agents for the duration of an investigation. Because their duties often include rapidly moving from world to world within a sector, all Rangers are expected to be capable pilots (typically starfighters or space transports).

Requirements & Class Features

To become a Sector Ranger, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +4

Feats: Starship Operation (any), Track

Skills: Diplomacy 6+, Gather Information 5+, Pilot 4+, Sense Motive 6+

Weapon Proficiency: The Sector Ranger has the feats Weapon Group Proficiency for blaster pistols, blaster rifles, and simple weapons.

Class Skills: The Sector Ranger's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are: Astrogate (Int), Computer Use (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier

1d8 Vitality per Level



In fact, pursuing fugitives and escorting prisoners to a proper trial are two of the most common responsibilities of these law enforcers. Rangers are also expected to be accomplished diplomats and observers of their surroundings. Each of these areas gives them the edge they need in undertaking their assigned tasks.

At the pinnacle of achievement within the Sector Rangers are the Special Enforcement Officers (SEOs). SEOs are much like their lower-level counterparts, but they possess a wider jurisdiction. SEOs are empowered to cross sector boundaries in pursuit of a wanted criminal and may operate far from their nominal headquarters. Many a holodrama is centered on a SEO pursuing his quarry across the length and breadth of the galaxy. Because of the expanded jurisdiction, some SEOs head up teams of Rangers dedicated to particular types of crimes, such as terrorism and espionage. The infiltration of underworld gangs is another area in which SEOs frequently become involved—much to the chagrin of mobs like the Black Sun Syndicate or the Sabrin Ring.

CLASS FEATURES

Target Bonus: Beginning at 1st level, the Sector Ranger gets a +1 attack bonus against a selected criminal, typically one chosen by her superiors. The Ranger gets the same bonus on Listen, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks when using these skills against or when tracking this specific target. The bonus goes up by 1 at every odd-numbered level (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th).

The target bonus normally applies only to a single individual. The player of the Ranger must announce the target before the game session begins. Generally, this is someone her superiors have asked the Ranger to bring to justice. However, the Ranger may select a small group as her target (a number of individuals equal to her class level in size), or a large group or species (such as the Black Hole Gang or Hutts). In such cases, the bonus is one-half or one-third normal respectively (round fractions down). Whatever the choice, it must be approved by the Gamemaster.

Authority: As an agent of the law, a Ranger has the ability to detain, arrest, and interrogate suspects. She can also expect reasonable cooperation with local authorities within her area of jurisdiction. For the purpose of convincing an uncooperative local official, she can add her class level to her ranks in either Diplomacy or Intimidate. This ability functions only within a Ranger's area of legitimate jurisdiction and cannot be used against officials elsewhere (such as outside the borders of the Republic or the Empire, for example).

Resource Access: Beginning at 2nd level, the Sector Ranger has access to law enforcement resources in the pursuit of fugitives from Imperial law. Once per game session, the Sector Ranger can make a Charisma check to use those resources during the game session.

The value of the resources gained equals the Sector Ranger's class level \times the result of her Charisma check \times 20. Thus, a 5th-level Ranger who got a check result of 15 would

gain ($5 \times 15 \times 20$) 1,500 credits' worth of resources. These resources can take virtually any form the Ranger chooses (within reason) and are hers to use for the duration of her current assignment, after which she must return them to their source.

Impartiality: Because Sector Rangers have a reputation for fairness and aloofness from petty politics, most citizens speak with them more willingly than other law enforcement agents. This allows the Ranger to add her Diplomacy skill ranks to Gather Information checks when dealing with individuals within her assigned sector.

Deputies: Beginning at 6th level, the Sector Ranger can deputize a number of civilians of a lower character level whose total levels do not exceed her class level plus Reputation score. These deputies may legally act in the name of the law by detaining, interrogating, and arresting suspects for the duration of an investigation (which might last longer than a single game session), during which time the Ranger cannot deputize any other civilians.

Exceptional Deputies: Beginning at 8th level, the level limit of the Sector Ranger's deputies is equal to her class level plus twice her Reputation score.

Special Enforcement Officer: At 10th level, the Sector Ranger earns the rank of Special Enforcement Officer, giving her the authority to cross sector boundaries in pursuit of wanted criminals. This ability also extends the effects of the authority and deputies class features to Include Individuals in any sector in which she operates while in pursuit of a fugitive. \square

The Sector Ranger

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Target bonus +1, authority	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+1	+2	Resource access	+1	+2
3rd	+2	+2	+1	+2	Target bonus +2	+2	+2
4th	+3	+3	+1	+3	Impartiality	+2	+3
5th	+4	+3	+2	+3	Target bonus +3	+3	+4
6th	+5	+4	+2	+4	Deputies	+3	+4
7th	+6	+4	+2	+4	Target bonus +4	+4	+5
8th	+7	+5	+3	+5	Exceptional deputies	+4	+6
9th	+8	+5	+3	+5	Target bonus +5	+5	+6
10th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Special Enforcement Officer	+5	+7



The concept of multiclass heroes is no longer new in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. Players and Gamemasters alike know that they're an unparalleled tool for creating new hero archetypes. The skills, feats, and special abilities of the standard classes allow for tremendous versatility by themselves, but there are hero concepts that, while workable, aren't exactly right for heroes with levels in just one class. The multiclass rules solve this problem nicely, allowing roleplayers even more freedom when designing hero concepts.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The *Star Wars* galaxy is full of conflict. Villains terrify and oppress, while heroes seek to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Causes, both noble and nefarious, are often at odds, and those who believe in them or fight for them are in turn brought to conflict. Between clashing ideals or organizations stand those who see conflict as a way to make a living. These mercenaries fight for those who can pay the bills,

turning another's noble cause, or even another's tyranny, into a paycheck.

Many characters fall under the broad definition of mercenary, but true mercenaries combine some small amount of training as a soldier with a lot of luck. Some find part-time work as criminals or explorers when they're between contracts. Mercenaries are common foes of many adventuring heroes, but heroes occasionally arise from their ranks as well. With his training, it is often a nearby mercenary who lends aid to the unfortunate when a more legitimate protector is nowhere to be found.

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

A mercenary is ultimately after only one thing—money—but not all find it necessary to be amoral along the way. Mercenaries are as varied as the members of any profession. Although many end up working for some crimelord trying to build a power base on the galactic fringe, some manage to find an honorable living protecting important people and locations of

the core worlds. Regardless of how choosy a mercenary is, those who stay in the profession long share one trait: They stay bought. Selling out to a rival employer might sound like a good deal in the short term, but any scrub new to the profession finds a grizzled veteran willing to explain how hard it soon is to find another contract once you've sold out.

Most mercenaries have at least some formal training in the military. One of the first questions you'll have to answer when designing a mercenary hero is, "Why didn't he remain in the military?" Whether your hero found military rules too confining, just wanted more money, or even had a taste for exploration that couldn't be satisfied as part of a larger army, you'll want a compelling background story.

Variant Abilities

Although the chart below shows the typical level progression with abilities granted according to the multi-class rules found in the core rulebook, your GM might allow



you to substitute some of the existing special abilities for abilities that stick closer to the Mercenary archetype.

Variant 1: Looking for Trouble

Instead of gaining the Illicit Barter ability, mercenaries have a knack for finding people in need of muscle. In any large urban area, or any other area prone to conflict, a mercenary can find a lead for work with a DC 10 Gather Information check. The work might not pay well, and it might not be worth taking, but a mercenary can almost always find an offer in the conflict-torn *Star Wars* galaxy.

Variant 2: Close Call

Instead of Armor Proficiency (heavy), the mercenary gains the Close Call ability. Once per game session, the mercenary can attempt to avoid an attack that would knock him unconscious. The Mercenary must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + damage suffered) to avoid the damage. Mercenaries rely more on instinct and luck than on heavy armor.

Variant 3: Quick Draw

A mercenary never knows when some past conflict is going to come back to haunt him or when his present assignment will erupt in violence. Instead of gaining the Skill Emphasis feat at 7th level, a mercenary earns the Quick Draw feat.

THE BROTHERHOOD MORTALIS

Few large groups of mercenaries exist in the *Star Wars* galaxy. A place of polar opposites, there is little room in many eras for an unaligned force of any size. During the Rebellion Era, for instance, the Empire would have employed or quickly wiped out any sizable mercenary force it could find. Even in other eras, the forces of the galaxy tend to pull those with large military might into conflict too regularly for mercenaries to exist in organized companies. Instead, individual operatives form loose brotherhoods. Members can easily find themselves fighting against one another from time to time, but when the contract is over (providing they live through it...) the brotherhood takes precedence. Such organizations are rarely more than loose networks of contacts and contract makers, but they provide some measure of camaraderie among members of an otherwise lonely profession.

The most successful of these, the Brotherhood Mortalis, was founded twenty-five years before the battle of Yavin. The Brotherhood is unique not only for its size (at times, it numbers over 20,000 members spread across 100 worlds) but also for its loose-knit success. The principles are simple. If a Brotherhood member identifies himself, provided it is safe to do so, another Brotherhood member will lend medical aid. Although rarely taken to extremes, this simple pact has made Brotherhood soldiers less likely to flee a conflict and more reliable to their employers. Many smugglers and successful local governments hire only Brotherhood members, trusting the organization's reliability.

The Mercenary

Level	Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	Scl1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Starting feats, Illicit barter	+4	+0
2nd	Scl2	+1	+0	+3	+0	Better lucky than good	+5	+1
3rd	Scl2/Sol1	+2	+2	+3	+0	Starting feats, feat	+5	+1
4th	Scl2/Sol2	+3	+3	+3	+0	Armor Proficiency (medium), bonus feat, +1 to attribute	+5	+1
5th	Scl2/Sol3	+4	+3	+4	+1	Armor Proficiency (heavy)	+6	+2
6th	Scl3/Sol3	+5	+4	+4	+2	feat	+6	+2
7th	Scl4/Sol3	+6	+4	+5	+2	Skill Emphasis	+7	+3
8th	Scl5/Sol3	+6	+4	+5	+2	+1 to attribute, +2d6 sneak attack	+7	+3
9th	Scl6/Sol3	+7	+5	+6	+3	feat	+8	+4
10th	Scl7/Sol3	+8	+5	+6	+3		+8	+4
11th	Scl8/Sol3	+9	+5	+7	+3	Skill Emphasis	+9	+5
12th	Scl8/Sol4	+10	+6	+7	+3	Feat, bonus feat, +1 to attribute	+9	+5
13th	Scl8/Sol5	+11	+6	+7	+3		+9	+5
14th	Scl8/Sol6	+12	+7	+8	+4	Bonus feat	+10	+6
15th	Scl9/Sol6	+12	+8	+8	+5	feat	+10	+6
16th	Scl10/Sol6	+13	+8	+9	+5	Bonus feat, +1 to attribute	+11	+7
17th	Scl11/Sol6	+14	+8	+9	+5		+11	+7
18th	Scl12/Sol6	+15	+9	+10	+6	Feat, skill emphasis	+12	+8
19th	Scl13/Sol6	+15	+9	+10	+6		+12	+8
20th	Scl14/Sol6	+16	+9	+11	+6	+1 to attribute, +4d6 sneak attack	+13	+9

continued from page 12
guidelines were printed in *DUNGEON*
magazine at some point last year, but I
can't find them.

Thank you and great work!

Rick Miles
Chatham, Ontario
Canada

Nobody's slapped a metal bikini on you,
Rick. There's no reason why you need to
worry about every last detail of The New
Jedi Order novels. Your players won't call

you to the mat if you do something now
that a book makes impossible in four
months. If you want to cover your bets,
though, run short adventures that last a
few sessions. This way, you can adjust your
campaign as you read each new story.

You can use this issue's "Hive of the Infi-
del" adventure for "good guys" instead of
Yuuzhan Vong players. Put the heroes in
the role of hunted, and you're all set.

Our pages are too precious to print sub-
mission guidelines. They're available
online at www.wizards.com/magazines. If
you're unable to use the Internet, send a
self-addressed stamped envelope to: Sub-
mission Guidelines, *Star Wars Gamer*, PO
Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707.

That's Disturbing

Wow! Spectacular mag! I would love to see
more species from the movies. Gamorre-
ans were my personal favorite from West
End's game. I had a big "Pig" Swoop rider
that didn't talk much but was a great char-
acter. And speaking of swoops... hellol
Where are some stats? They were a main-
stay in D6. We have speeder bikes, but
swoops are meaner and faster with cooler
paintjobs. A speeder bike isn't something
your hero can pamper and paint scantily
clad women on. Yup, those Gamorrean
girls... oh baby!

Anyway thanks for a great job and keep
them coming.

A'thon "Rogue" Baddeley
Bridgeview, British Columbia
Canada

I've seen two d20 swoops so far: the Air-2
and the Flair-S. There are hardly any differ-
ences between the two. How many more
swoops do you think we can make before
they all start looking the same? My advice:
tinker with the stats until you have a
swoop you like. As a rule of thumb, every-
thing you improve by 10% increases the
cost by 10% of the base cost. For instance,
if you increase the Flair-S swoop's speed
from 105 to 125 (about 20%) the cost would
go from 6,500 to 7,800 credits. You can
bring the cost down by reducing features
the same way.

Anyway, why couldn't he have said
Twi'lek women?

Can We Rebuild Him?

Would you please either do one of the fol-
lowing things?

1. Explain if it is possible to be a cyborg in
the *Star Wars* RRG.
2. Do an article about cyborgs in the RPG.

Floris Groenewald
Pretoria, Gauteng
Republic of South Africa

1. Yes, it is possible to have cyborgs in the
Star Wars galaxy. Darth Vader, Luke Sky-
walker, Dengar, and Lobot are a few of
the many characters that are cyborgs
to one degree or another. There are cur-
rently no rules for cybernetics.
2. Though I can't promise where or when,
there will be source material on cyber-
netics some time in the future, and
we're also looking into acquiring some
great articles on cyborgs.

The Rest Must Be Perfect

When I got toward the end of *Star Wars*
Gamer #6, I was surprised to find that
there was no prestige class this issue, just
an archetype. I always enjoy seeing what
new type of prestige classes you guys
come up with, and I assumed one was in
every issue. Is there a reason one was left
out of #6?

I find your adventures interesting as
well. I would like to see some low-level
adventures. There are many 3rd-, 4th-, and
5th-level adventures, which are great, but
no one seems to create 1st- or 2nd-level
adventures. After all, heroes have to start
somewhere.

Peter Ferguson
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

Creating adventures for specific hero levels
is tricky. Even the recommended levels
don't always match the true difficulty. If
you're the GM, you should always consider

STAR WARS Gamer

In Two Months
Star Wars Gamer #8

Starfighters

EMISSARY OF THE VOID PART II
Uldir Lochet's adventure continues,
and his troubles double!

CAMPAIGN GUIDE TO ENDOR AND THE MODELL SECTOR

Rescheduled from this issue because
we loved it so much we demanded an
adventure to go with the article.
Search the entire sector for a fabled
artifact, the Tesseract.

ON WINGS OF ROGUES

Fly with (or against) Rogue Squadron
in your campaign.

THE DIRTY DOZEN

The Rogues might rule the skies, but
Wrath Squadron has them beat
when it comes to covert ops. See
how they do it.

EXPANDED LUCASARTS COVERAGE

In-depth reviews and strategy for Jedi
Knight II, Rogue Squadron II: Rogue
Leader, Starfighter Special Edition,
and a *Star Wars* Galaxy update.

Plus: Deck Plans
Special Ops
Dice, Camera, Action!
Light Side/Dark Side
... And more

if an adventure is too tough or too easy for your players. Adjust the numbers of minor villains and the levels of major villains if you think one side will have it too easy.

There are a few 1st-level adventures available: The Invasion of Theed boxed set and the sequel "The Predators" in *Star Wars Gamer #2*; *Shadows of Coruscant* from the core rulebook; *Secrets of Tatooine* and *Secrets of Naboo* each have an adventure suitable for low-level characters.



Alien Anthology Assessment

I love your magazine, especially "The Crystal" by Elaine Cunningham (*Star Wars Gamer #5*). So far all the new gaming material has been great... until now. I just picked up *Alien Anthology*. It has some great content, but... (You knew that was coming, right?)

I'm disappointed that the book does not contain some species listed in the core rulebook and from The New Jedi Order series. It would be more convenient to have all the species and creatures in one book rather than spread through multiple books.

Will we see write-ups for Ryn and Codru-Ji? A player in my NJO campaign is playing one. So far we've just tried to estimate what he has for species bonuses based on the novel and the

Essential Guide to Planets and Moons.

Also, unless I missed it, a write-up for the Krayt Dragon would be cool.

Until next time, keep up the great work.

Matt McIntyre
Winter Park, FL

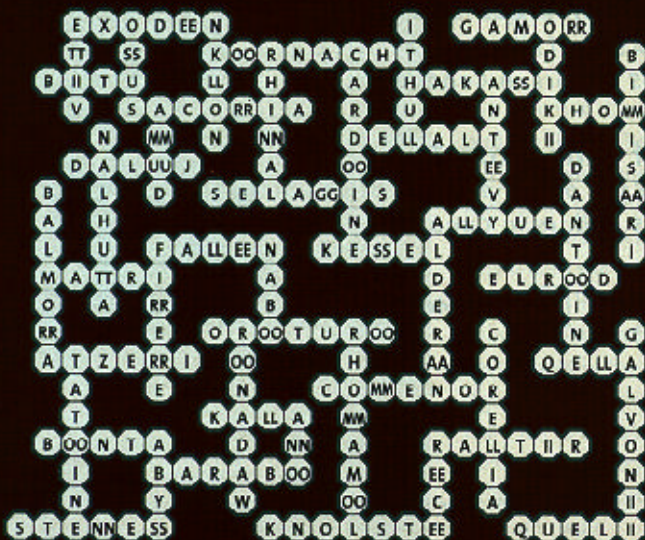
As you already know from reading *Gamer #7* (you did get *Gamer #7*, right?) there was so much material for *Alien Anthology* that some of it got left out. Rather than repeat material you can get elsewhere, the editors decided to keep the book as affordable as possible. Your wallet will thank you.

For even more *Star Wars* aliens, check out wizards.com/starwars.

You can be sure that the Ryn will be in *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*. The Codru-Ji, on the other hand... they're not. The Krayt Dragon appeared both in *Secrets of Tatooine* and in *Gamer #3*. There's so much exciting stuff coming up with *Attack of the Clones* that going back to "old school" books like the *Crystal Star* (even if the Codru-Ji were in a NJO book) is going to be pretty rare for a while. Maybe they'll show up in the lull between *Attack of the Clones* and Episode III. ■



Jedi Mind Tricks Solution



Next
Month

STAR WARS
INSIDER

#58

Home on the Range

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

Joel Edgerton (Owen Lars), Bonnie Piesse (Beru Whitesun), and Billy Dee Williams (Lando Calrissian) talk about their lives, work, and *Star Wars* experiences.

THE FANS OF *Star Wars*

The *Insider* infiltrates the ranks of the 501st legion and takes a look at some of the faces beneath those stormtrooper helmets.

Attack of the Clones UPDATE

The clock is ticking, but we aren't quite there yet. See all-new images from *Attack of the Clones* and hear what Executive Producer Rick McCallum has to say.

Plus: Star News

Scouting the Galaxy
Behind the Magic
Comics Link
... And more