

TopWorld

Episode I of the “Between the Worlds” Trilogy

A One-Round Living Force Adventure

by Morrie Mullins

Something is very, very wrong in the Asteroid Belt where Nirama and his smugglers make their base, and it's not something Nirama trusts his own people to sort out. Are you up to the challenge? An adventure for low-level Living Force heroes.

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

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

Scoring the game for RPGA points: The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use: *No-vote scoring*: The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

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

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

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

Character Earnings

Characters who are not employed but who have profession or craft skills may roll against those skills to see how much they have earned from their profession or craft in the last week. Use the method in the core rules (Craft: pg. 72 - *Check result times 20 credits*; Profession: pg. 80 - *Check result times 50 credits*). Note that characters may use only one of the above methods and must choose which before rolling (Employment, Craft or Profession).

General Notes to the GM

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

This is an adventure for low-level Living Force characters, and therefore characters levels 1 through 4 are appropriate. If a player brings a higher-level character to your table, explain that he or she must use a lower-level hero to play in this event. If your players do not have heroes, help them create new ones (see your event coordinator for hero creation instructions).

GM Overview

Ever since Nirama won control of smuggling in Cularin from Riboga the Hutt, he's had to deal with the politics of the system and threats to his power from various pirate factions. But in recent months, as the stability of the system has been threatened from other domains by the increased presence of the Metatheran Cartel, Nirama has begun hearing disturbing rumors, and seeing disturbing changes in his personnel.

Being the head of a smugglers' organization is not the kind of position he would have gravitated toward, however, if he'd been timid or unable to adapt. Still, the number of individuals within the organization whom he feels he can truly trust, he can count on one of his three nimble hands.

Nirama pays attention to goings-on in the system beyond what happens in the Asteroid Belt, though. He saw what happened on Cularin and realized immediately that a vast, untapped personnel resource had presented itself. So the citizens want to play at being heroic? Well, they just might do the trick.

As the adventure opens, the heroes have been summoned by Nirama to discuss a matter “of importance vital to the survival of Cularin.” The words are technically true; the smugglers are an integral part of the economy of Cularin, and Nirama provides stability in their ranks. If he’s overthrown, there’s no telling what will happen to shipping in Cularin.

Encounter 1: The Call

The heroes are sent individual requests for an audience from Nirama, head of the smugglers’ guild in the Asteroid Belt. They are told their skills are needed to assist in a matter vital to the system’s stability and asked to report to a landing platform a half-kilometer west of Gadrin for transport to Nirama’s base of operations. Along the way, Nirama’s ship comes under attack, and the heroes must assist in defending it.

Encounter 2: The Briefing

Upon arriving at Nirama’s public base in the Asteroid Belt, the heroes are escorted through a series of security barriers to Nirama’s central control area. Here, Nirama awaits. He explains the situation, details why the heroes were chosen, and does his best to convince them to assist him in uncovering the individuals who seek to overthrow him. The major point of dissatisfaction, it turns out, is that the smugglers are too reactive, and are not “making good use of system resources.” But Nirama has seen the balance of star systems upset too much already, and is not willing to interfere in the legitimate economy.

Encounter 3: The Insertion

The heroes are then put through a basic security screening in which they are assigned to work as a security detail in one of the low-security areas of the compound. This area, it also happens, is one where a great many rumors typically originate. Many of those rumors arise in conversations held in the “Hutt’s Tail,” a seedy bar located at the center of the region the heroes are patrolling. A disgruntled Twi’lek is among the contacts the heroes can make here.

Encounter 4: The Contact

Based on their interactions with the Twi’lek in Encounter 3, the heroes are contacted in the middle of the night by several masked individuals of varying builds. The fervor of this contact (i.e., do they get roughed up?) is dependent on whether the heroes impressed the Twi’lek with their competence. They are then taken to an interview setting, where their interest in “career development” is assessed, and they have a chance to ask questions of the individuals looking to depose Nirama. However, they have no clue as to any identity of the

individuals involved, they’re going to need to go deeper into the organization.

Encounter 5: The Trials

To get deeper into the organization, they must undergo a series of trials. One of these is a combat against a denizen of the asteroid, a juvenile rancor. The rancor, in actuality, is a pet of Nirama’s, so if the heroes can manage to not kill it while still defeating it, they will earn some points with him in the long run. There are then a series of one-on-one competitions in which the heroes’ skills in different domains are tested against individuals already within the anti-Nirama movement to determine their utility. A majority of the heroes must be victorious in their trials to gain full probationary acceptance.

Encounter 6: The Discovery

However, all is not well. Someone knows about the heroes and their true mission. A day after they are accepted into the clandestine organization, they are attacked in a large subterranean cavern by several hooded individuals. The heroes, who have been equipped with concealed holdout blasters by Nirama, shouldn’t have much trouble with this fight, but it does attract unwanted attention and they have to flee the area quickly.

Encounter 7: The “Arrest”

Nirama knows who has blasters within the compound. He does retain that much control over his organization. Moreover, if the heroes give the predetermined extraction signal, they will be “arrested” by other members of Nirama’s security detail and taken before Nirama himself. He will ask them what they have learned and thank them, then tell them that they will be publicly removed from their positions and sent back to their lives. If they like, they may consider themselves under his protection.

Important Note to Judges: Make sure the trials run in a timely fashion. If you’re cramped for time, don’t go 2 out of 3 with them! Also, keep an eye on the pacing of the event. Don’t get bogged down in the introduction. Get them on the ship and start shooting at them!

Opening Crawl

While the eyes of the system were focused on Cularin, life in the asteroid belt went on as usual. The smugglers, under the command of Nirama, have kept traffic high, and profits higher. However, they have seen things that others may have missed...

As the Metatheran Cartel vessels entered the system in larger and larger numbers, so too did other ships, sneaking off to land on desolate moons and planets. Now, a distraction has arisen within the smuggler organization. Nirama has been hearing disturbing rumors that there are factions, among his own people, who want to see him... removed. They broach the subject with several powerful individuals within the system, and it quickly becomes clear that the only way to truly fight a conflict within the organization is to infiltrate the infiltrators. But who can be trusted?

Encounter 1: The Call

Key ideas of this encounter: recruiting the heroes to come to Nirama's base in the asteroid belt; transporting them to the base in a small cruiser; an attack!

The unsmiling Twi'lek Jobril nods at you from the doorway. "Relax. The trip to the Belt will not take long." The door slides shut, and you are alone in the belly of the transport.

The entire party is here, plus one other rather timid-looking young human. You may provide **Player Handout 1** at this point, for them to review as you read (or summarize) the following. Make sure they know that after displaying the message for five minutes, the screen went blank, the message having erased itself from the datapad's memory. No amount of skill checks can bring it back.

The summons you received in the datapad was simple. A request to attend Nirama, and a guarantee of his personal protection if you did so. Since it's bad to turn down Nirama, and since there is almost no protection in the system that is safer than his, you left messages with anyone who needed to know and showed up at the landing platform. Now, on board the transport and ready to head for the asteroid belt for your meeting, you're just ready to be underway. Then, with a lurch, the ship takes off.

What the heroes know about Nirama: He is the head of the smugglers' guild in the Asteroid Belt, a strange creature who won control of the smugglers from Riboga the Hutt after serving the Hutt for a number of years. Nirama stabilized the Hutt's organization, and stopped several troublesome practices in the system. He was instrumental in ending attempts at slavery in particular.

Being under Nirama's personal protection is nothing to sneeze at, either. The organization Nirama heads is as powerful as most governments in the system, even if it does exist on the fringes of the law.

Moreover, Nirama has a reputation for honesty. Smuggler, scoundrel, malcontent, businessman – but when he gives his word, he keeps it.

If the heroes went to contact other folks to get advice, what they got is generally this:

If you've been summoned by Nirama, and there was no threat to your person involved, you'll be safe. If he said there's danger to the system, he's probably telling the truth. If he mentioned slavery, then there's probably someone working to reestablish slave trade in the system. You have to make your own decision, but it sounds like you should at least go and hear him out.

This basic information is what will be gained through probing anyone the heroes trust enough to ask, up to and including Jedi mentors. Make sure to emphasize that provided they don't do anything dumb, the heroes shouldn't be in any direct danger simply by virtue of going to hear what Nirama has to say.

The other individual in this section of the ship with them is Jasper. Jasper applied for membership in Nirama's organization almost a year ago, and has reapplied twice since. Truth be told, he has almost nothing to offer Nirama in terms of skills, but bringing him along makes it look like a legitimate recruiting trip, and he's such a poor candidate, it makes the heroes look like no-brainers to hire.

Jasper, human thug 2; IM +0; Def 10; Spd 10 m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, baton), +2 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ none; SV Fort +4 Ref +0, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Speak Wookiee.

Feats: Toughness.

Jasper isn't a friendly sort, and he doesn't much trust the other folks he's traveling with. He also HATES space travel, since he tends to get motion-sick – one of those traits that really doesn't make him seem destined for a life of smuggling. Once he gets started talking, though, he knows a lot about Nirama's organization. He's a wanna-be, after all, and has been learning everything he can. Play him as a know-it-all who really wants to show off how much he knows and how well he'll fit into the organization. He's also nervous about the amount of competition it looks like he has for the job, and will belittle the heroes if at all possible, but will not attack them. He's not **that** stupid.

Things Jasper can tell the heroes, with appropriate probing:

- Nirama's a fair boss, he pays people well. Always keeps his word.
- Not everyone likes him, of course. Nobody's liked by everyone.

- He hates slavery. There's rumors that wherever he's from, his people got slaved out when he was little.
- Yeah, he won control of the smugglers from a Hutt. Rumor is, he cheated. Can you imagine, cheating a Hutt?
- He doesn't go in for violence and such. He's a businessman, and while he don't always follow the same rules as everyone else, he's got his own rules.
- I shouldn't have much trouble fitting in. You folks, I don't know about.

If he's shown their datapad, he'll pull out one similar and show them the message he got, asking him to report to Nirama for an interview regarding his application. If the heroes try to explain what they're doing, Jasper will eye them suspiciously. *"So you don't wanna tell me, huh? Well that's fine. No one said you had to. But there's no reason to make up ridiculous, laser-brained stories like that. I know how intimidating it must be to be applying for the same job as me."* At which point, he'll lean over and just barely keep from getting sick as the transport accelerates.

After the heroes have had no more than ten minutes total for introductions and interrogating Jasper, read the following:

The transport suddenly rocks, and you hear the unmistakable sound of laser cannon fire, ricocheting off your shields!

Sections of the wall slide aside, revealing ladders, and the main door to the hold slides open. Jobril's voice comes over the com.

"It appears that someone has made the unfortunate decision to attack Lord Nirama's ship. If you would be so kind as to man the cannons, we will maneuver so that the idiots can be dealt with."

There are exactly as many laser cannon turrets as there are heroes interested in helping to repel the attacking force. If anyone wants to head for the cockpit to assist, they can do so.

There are three small fighters – spacer lore or other relevant skills will reveal them (DC 10 check) as Sorosuub G-59 Cannibalizers, a locally produced version of the Z-95 Headhunter. Cannibalizers have a defense of 20 (+2 size, +8 armor), and in other respects are identical to the Z-95 Headhunter (30 shield points, 120 Hull points, DR 10). The Cannibalizers do not have the firing power to get through the shields on Nirama's transport, but don't tell the players that.

Each of the heroes who so choose mans a double fire-linked laser cannon (5d10x2 damage, +4 additional attack bonus from fire controls).

This should be a cinematic combat. The Cannibalizers are an annoyance, but without someone

defending the transport, they will eventually cause real trouble. Basically, here's how it runs.

There are enough cannons mounted on the transport that the full 360° fire radius is covered, with the top and bottom of the ship covered by crew in other cannon turrets. The Cannibalizers are circling the transport, firing repeatedly. Treat each player's seat as their turret position, and feel free to wander around them as you describe where the fighters are maneuvering. Keep it fast and cinematic, and if it drags on too long, have a "lucky shot" just blow one of the little fighters to bits. The fighters are unmarked, but their attack patterns suggest pirates.

Anyone who wants to go to the cockpit can, and assist Jobril (making the DC 10 "Aid Another" checks). Jobril is an excellent pilot, but welcomes competent help.

After the fight is over, the rest of the trip is uneventful, and the heroes arrive at Nirama's central base of operations.

Encounter 2: The Briefing

Key ideas of this encounter: hustled off the transport, the heroes are led to Nirama's chamber; he explains the situation and asks for the heroes' help; ideally, they elect to pursue the mission

You are rushed from the damaged transport and ushered through the corridors by a very nervous guard detachment. Someone attacked a ship with Nirama's markings on it, and heads may roll! After several minutes of frantic walking, you reach a trio of doors. Jasper is rather unceremoniously shoved through one, then the middle door opens and the guards politely step aside.

The room in which the heroes find themselves is a rough hemisphere twenty meters in diameter. On the far side of the room, on a half-moon dais, rests a very strange figure.

Lounging on a long bed atop the dais is a creature unlike any you've ever seen. He sits up as you enter, fixing you with his four eyes, one pair right on top of the other. He stretches his three arms above his head, and while he finishes the stretch the rearmost arm on his left shoulder reaches behind him and brings around a bottle, which is passed to the front left arm and then on to his narrow mouth. He takes a swig and gestures you forward.

He doesn't get more attractive as you draw nearer. His flesh is bright pink, and his eyes would be disquieting even if there weren't four of them. The upper set of eyes are grayish-blue, with white pupils, while the lower set of eyes are black as night. He

absently leans back, resting on his rear hand as he waits for you to approach.

This, of course, is Nirama, head of the smugglers' guild and one of the major crimelords in the system.

Nirama: Male alien Scoundrel 6/Crimelord 9; IM 1 (+1 Dex); Def 22 (+1 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 90/15; Atk +9/+4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ Illicit Barter, Better Lucky than Good, Rear Hand Dexterity; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +10; SZ M; FP 6; Rep 17; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Equipment: blaster pistols, expensive clothing, blast vest hidden near him at all times, personal space yacht *Viper Wing*.

Skills: Appraise +19, Bluff +20, Computer Use +15, Diplomacy +19, Forgery +18, Gather Information +17, Intimidate +14, Listen +9, Knowledge (Alien species—Caarite) +7, Knowledge (Cularin system) +9, Knowledge (Streetwise—Cularin system) +12, Pilot +5, Profession (Accountant) +10, Read/write Basic, Read/write Caarimala, Read/write Huttese, Search +10, Sense Motive +20, Sleight of Hand +7, Speak Basic, Speak Caarimala, Speak Tarasinese, Speak Huttese, Speak Sullustan, Spot +10.

Feats: Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light), Infamy, Persuasive, Point Blank Shot, Sharp-eyed, Skill Emphasis (Forgery), Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

SQ: *Rear Hand Dexterity*—can use hand pointing rearward for tasks with only a –2 penalty.

“Welcome. I’m glad you accepted my invitation.” He gestures to a set of chairs in front of the dais. “Please, have a seat. We have much to discuss.”

Allow the heroes a chance to introduce themselves to Nirama. This isn't the kind of meeting that happens to them every day, after all. Once they're seated, Nirama will begin.

“I’m not much for formalities. Allow me to speak plainly. I have recently been made aware of a threat to my organization, from within. There aren’t but a handful of individuals whom I’m certain I can trust at the moment. Markus and a few others.”

DC 12 Knowledge (Cularin, or Streetwise, or whatever else may be relevant) checks will allow heroes to recognize the name of Len Markus, Nirama's right-hand man, a near-albino who alternately serves as an intermediary in negotiations and an enforcer when contracts go bad.

“I need to hire you. I’ve seen reports of what you and your friends did on Cularin. Very admirable. I applaud you. So I can’t help but think that you would be very much opposed to my deposition by those who would seek to ally themselves with the Metatheran Cartel, and open a slave trade centered out of the system.”

That is Nirama's major pitch. He can expand on it, but the simple truth is that he knows there are factions within his organization that aren't happy with his leadership. They think the smugglers should be working with the Cartel – who are clearly the most powerful trading force in the system – to create a trade monopoly. They also believe that the resources of the system are not being exploited fully enough, including the indigenous populations.

Nirama is more than willing to answer questions for the heroes.

What would we be doing? *You would be assigned as a security detail in Red Sector. You would be working together, gathering information, seeing what you could learn and report back to me.*

How dangerous is it? *I’m not sure. I believe there’s a substantial amount of organization that’s already been done against me. That’s what reports say. As long as you don’t announce that you’re working for me on this project, I doubt that you’ll run into more trouble than anyone else working here.*

What about weapons? *You can’t take your weapons in with you. We generally don’t allow weapons in the inner areas at all. I’ll need to have you leave your weapons with me. I will guard them with all the reverence they are due. However, I’m not about to send you out empty-handed. I’ve got hold-out blasters for each of you that can be easily-concealed in your uniforms. If you do get into trouble, you should at least have more firepower than anyone else in the compound. Be warned. You discharge one of these, and there will be twenty of my security force team members there in two minutes.*

Do you know who's behind this? *If I knew that, I wouldn’t need you.*

So what are we supposed to find out? *The extent of the discontent. Who’s involved. What resources they have at their disposal.*

Why do you think we can find this out? *Because new hires are always targeted quickly by someone. You’re relatively unknown in the system, and will become moreso when you’re put in a uniform. If it’s truly going to be a problem, I’m sure we can arrange some sort of suitable disguise. But I only know about you because I make it a point to know about those who involve themselves in public affairs.*

Why do you think they want slave trading? *Because it's lucrative, and because I won't allow it. I've had more complaints about not slaving than anything else.*

Oh, come on. The Republic wouldn't put up with that. *Do you really think representatives of the Republic aren't already on our payroll? This organization has the ties to get away with that, if I wanted to. However, I do not.*

What's up with someone attacking us on the way here? *I'm very perturbed about that. It's bolder than pirates will typically get. Stupider as well. Acting directly against one of my ships means that someone paid them a great many credits. But that wasn't aimed at you. That was a message to me.*

Why should we help you? *Because I stabilized the smugglers and organized them. They don't rampage like they used to, and like the pirates still do. While it may sound immodest, I've been good for the system. And I'm a Gungan's ears better than what happens if I'm removed.*

So we're choosing you because you're the lesser of the evils? *If you want to put labels on it, perhaps. But I serve a purpose within the system, as do we all. I don't believe anyone else could serve it as well.*

Is there payment involved? *I will be in your debt. If you would prefer credits, that can be arranged as well.*

Merchandise? *We'll talk if you succeed.*

Other questions will be met with variations on these answers. Nirama doesn't know who's responsible, but he knows that Red Sector is where a lot of the reports of trouble originate. When the heroes are willing to accept the mission (tell them whatever you have to, but remember, DON'T LIE; Nirama can't), Nirama will place their weapons in a vault, along with any other gear they can't keep with them, and issue them each a security uniform and a small, holdout blaster (damage 3d4) that can be concealed within the folds of their silver and black uniforms. They are then given an assignment, including directions on how to get there, and sent on their way.

As you're leaving, Nirama picks up a comlink and activates it. You can't hear the person on the other end, but the anger in Nirama's voice is apparent. "Have you found Bender yet? Well, keep looking!" And he abruptly shuts the comlink off.

The heroes are ushered out before they can ask about Bender, and no one in the organization seems to recognize the name. Various speculations will be offered, but no one knows for sure. Be creative.

Encounter 3: The Insertion

Key idea of this encounter: uniform fitting, then immersion into the new job by being inserted directly into Red Sector and beginning to patrol; learning that the best place to gather information is the Hutt's Tail, a bar where they can meet some interesting folks, and gather information

You are outfitted and given your uniforms, then rather unceremoniously dumped out to begin your patrols. "Anything out of the ordinary, you deal with," are the only instructions you received. Given the strangeness of the situation, nothing LOOKS particularly out of the ordinary, and your shift passes uneventfully.

Any attempts to gather information will be met (if successful) with a promise to meet and talk at the Hutt's Tail later. It's noisy and smoky and a perfect place to share tidbits. Out here in the corridors, there are too many ears to hear.

Particularly if bribes are offered, most folks are quite willing to talk to anyone about what it's like to work here. Later. At the Hutt's Tail. There's no particular distrust of security here, and lots of people ask lots of questions. Information is the best currency in the organization.

The Hutt's Tail

The heroes can go here whenever. Really, they haven't received good instructions on where to patrol, or for how long. Anyone with a relevant knowledge skill (anything related to smugglers, security, streetwise, etc.) will know that they're expected to do a sweep of the area at least 3 times during an 8-hour shift, but a full sweep of Red Sector only takes 40 minutes. It's a compact area. So they're going to have some down time, which they can spend at the Hutt's Tail – a seedy bar at the center of the sector. When they head there...

You've seen some rough bars in your time, and smelled some rough smells. But this one makes some of the darkest, nastiest bars on Tolea Biqua look like family vacation spots. A thick haze of smoke hangs in the air, acrid and tangy and mingling heavily with the musk of Wookiees, Rodians, Trandoshans, and unwashed humans. Through the haze, you can barely make out the circular bar at the center of the establishment.

There is all sorts of activity going on here. Gaming at most every table, of some form or other, including a couple of sabacc games and one too-happy Rodian shuffling three chips in front of him and collecting a great deal of money from anyone who sits down across

from him. (Why yes, he is playing 3-card monty with the chips. Feel free to roleplay this with your players if they're interested. The Rodian's name is Luco, and he is cheating like a maniac. His Sleight of Hand skill is +17, but heroes are welcome to try opposed Spot checks against his removal of the key chip and its replacement with another. If caught, he'll gladly pay out the 3 to 1 odds he typically gives, covering any bet up to 100 credits. But he won't play with that hero again.)

The bartender (Garnt) is a grizzled human with a patch over his right eye. He doesn't talk much – mainly grunts – and if asked about how people feel about Nirama, he shrugs. *“Different folks feel different ways. Me, I feel like I get paid, and that's all the feeling I need.”* However, there are plenty of folks in the bar who complain a lot. One of the loudest is old Vel Pastar, a grizzled Twi'lek who typically sits in the deepest, darkest corner of the bar. It's so smoky over there, no one can even tell if he's in right now.

As the bartender is explaining this, a lithe shape emerges from that section of the smoky room and walks gracefully toward the bar, head-tails swishing from side to side. This attractive female Twi'lek with light blue skin is Vel Pastar's daughter, Kor Pastar, and she has been sent by her father. And she's **really** cute.

The female Twi'lek saunters up to the bar, her loose clothes shifting suggestively as she leans against the rail and smiles at the bartender. Then she turns her attention to your group.

“New here?”

Emphasize how good looking she is. Gorgeous brown eyes, high cheekbones, a perfect, petite figure, and beautifully symmetric head-tails that wiggle as she talks. So, okay. She's only “hot” if you're into head-tails, but even if you aren't, she's still attractive.

Once the heroes have responded, she will smile winningly and nod toward the haze from which she emerged.

“Father likes to talk to all the new hires. Want to come with me?”

Vel Pastar is a bitter, wrinkled Twi'lek who's been working with the smugglers of Cularin since Riboga the Hutt took power years ago, and has watched the political maneuverings carefully. He can tell the heroes the following, in a grumpy way, if questioned properly.

- There are folks who don't much like Nirama. I'm not one of them.
- Nirama's short-sighted. Done some good stuff, but doesn't use all his resources.

- Slaving's kinda out of style, isn't it? Who's to say, sure, there's to be some money made there.
- I don't know for sure who's doing anything to organize against the boss. Maybe no one. But if they're out there, and you ask around enough, they'll find you.

He also has some questions for the heroes.

- Why are you interested? (Looking for something about wanting to make a better living, etc.)
- What makes you think it's something you could do? (Self-aggrandizing stories are good, even if they're lies. He won't know.)
- What's Nirama done to you to get you wondering all this? (Looking for anything indicating bitterness or resentment or just plain old greed.)

After a while, Vel gets bored and waves the heroes off. When they emerge from the haze, most of the bar has cleared out. Anyone who they specifically scheduled a meeting with is 50% likely to still be here, but will not have any more detailed information than what is noted above. Shift has changed, and there won't be anyone else in here for a while. The heroes aren't able to get any more detailed information – in fact, a lot of the folks now seem to be avoiding them – and must eventually find their bunks and go to sleep.

Encounter 4: The Contact

Key ideas of this encounter: the heroes are awakened in the middle of the night and taken to a darkened section of one of the storage facilities in Red Sector, where they are interrogated/interviewed from the far side of a pile of boxes by several individuals about their goals and aspirations; they can ask questions of admitted conspirators

If the heroes decide to post watches, that's fine. Around 3 in the morning, someone will knock lightly on the door and whisper that they all need to get up, there's something happening in Red Sector that they need to know about.

If the heroes DON'T post watches, then they get awakened, rather unceremoniously, by several individuals in black hoods. There are two humans, a Rodian, a Wookiee (no, shoulders are not shaven), and a Cerean. They're all wearing black shirts and pants (well, except the Wookiee), and there are no visible markings on any of them. The message is the same: there's something going on in Red Sector that the “security force” needs to know about.

These are, of course, the “recruiting squad” for the anti-Nirama movement. They're grunts who don't

know much other than that they've been told they will make more money with Nirama gone than they make with him in power, and they need to follow orders to make sure that happens. They are to bring in a batch of [number of people in the party] recruits tonight, who have been asking questions. All they know is that someone wants to talk to the heroes, and they're going to take the heroes to the meeting.

They will allow the heroes to gather whatever gear they want, although they should be careful to make sure to obscure the hold-out blasters if they're taking them (and **do** find out if they're taking them!).

Do NOT attack the party. You can push them around a little or be a bit rough if they just acted like complete morons with Vel, but don't let it escalate into a fight. If they impressed Vel (i.e., fed him a believable line), then the "recruiters" will have been instructed to treat the new group politely.

Your black-clad escorts lead you through the darkened corridors of Red Sector. You can hear sounds of people working in the distance, but to all appearances Red Sector is a two-shift portion of the operation. The only living creatures who are up this time of night are you and your guides – and presumably, whoever waits for you.

Droids do wander the halls, but they're the same low-sensation models that work the storage facilities, walking datapads who don't pay much attention to anything that doesn't have an identification code plastered to its corner.

It's fine to break up the box text by asking the players what they're doing, giving them spot checks to notice that all the droids have had their visual sensors deactivated and are operating solely on their code scanning lasers, or what have you. There is nothing wrong with the players interrupting box text, either.

You are escorted to the central of the three storage facilities, where it looks like things may have been slightly rearranged since your last patrol. The center of the room has been cleared of boxes, and they have been piled high on one side of the clearing, creating a wall eight meters high with no easy means of passage.

One of your human escorts turns to you and speaks in a muffled female voice. "You're going to talk to some of the bosses. Don't try anything. You seem to have some ideas about what's going on. Maybe that's good, maybe it's bad. That's for the bosses to decide. They're on the other side of that." She shrugs toward the wall of boxes. "If you try to go around or over the wall, you won't make it." She lifts her hand above her head and dim shapes stand atop the boxes all around the clearing. 40, 50, maybe 60

individuals all looking down at you. "You're not in any danger unless you do something dumb."

Now, the odds of the heroes doing anything truly dumb are minimal. There's no way to tell what these 60 thugs may have available as weapons, but there are so many that the numbers are overwhelming. All of the ones who come into visual range are wearing hoods. There really is no direct threat, and if the heroes are going to complete their mission, they need to find out what they can.

The figures settle back into the shadows, and your escorts step back. Then a low, almost hypnotic voice comes from the far side of the large pile of boxes.

"I understand that you have been asking questions. That can be dangerous if you ask the wrong people. If you want answers, go to the source. Us."

Realistically, I could write a long speech, but this is as far as players are likely to let you get. So we can go right to questions.

Oh, and if any of them can See Force, someone on the far side of those boxes is definitely Force-sensitive. At least one individual, maybe more. But they can't get a read on how strong the person is. Far seeing would allow them to see that all the individuals but one on the other side of the box stack are wearing hoods, and that last one's face is obscured and he or she is wearing all black. Even with the Force as their ally, they cannot make out any distinguishing characteristics of the person. This may make them a little nervous.

Are you planning to overthrow Nirama? *Let's just say that we've taken an unofficial vote of "no confidence" in his leadership.*

Who are you going to put in charge? *Not important. Anyone would be better.*

What do you think you can do better? *Make money. That's what it's all about, isn't it?*

How many of you are there? *Enough.*

Who are you? *The Cell.*

What kinds of improvements do you want to make? *Anything that makes us more profitable. The guild's good, but it could be better with a leader who wasn't scared of his own shadow.*

Do you have what it takes to get the job done? *We have ships. We have weapons. We have personnel. We have everything we need already. Now we just want the control that Nirama has.*

How do we get in on the action? *Same way everyone else does. Prove your worth.*

Fine. Bring it. *I like that attitude.*

“We have one question for you. Rumor has it you’re appropriately ... motivated ... to be part of what we’re doing. But what skills do you have? What is your value to the organization?”

This is key, since it allows the speaker to make assignments of personnel for the trials in the next encounter. Make a list of what each individual states is their key skill, because they get to prove their worth against someone already in the organization, with the same skill, very soon. Try to encourage the heroes to pick something other than combat. Anyone can fire a blaster, after all. But if combat is what they’re best at, well, then that’s what they can do in the trials.

“Very well. You’re going to be escorted further into the complex. We have a special area set aside for the testing of new recruits. And a treat.” He chuckles, and you can hear footfalls as the people behind the boxes turn and leave.

Encounter 5: The Trials

Key idea of this encounter: a series of tests to determine whether the heroes are worthy of joining the movement; first is a fight (potentially) with Bender, Nirama’s missing pet rancor; then is a series of individual tests in which the heroes test their skills against those of the malcontents

Your black-clad escorts reappear and lead you out of the storage area and away from Red Sector, deeper into the facility. The sounds of work of any kind, including droids, become fainter as you go.

If the heroes ask, they can get grudging answers about this being a portion of the asteroid that really isn’t used much any more. When it does get used, it’s for treatment of hazardous materials, but Nirama’s started subcontracting that since the work is dangerous to do on-site.

The corridor turns sharply, and ahead of you is a red archway stretching over a polished blue steel blast door. Faint remnants of writing can barely be made out on the door: Mokada’s Place. The Wookiee steps forward and punches a series of numbers into the datapad mounted beside the door, and it slides open. “Trials are in there,” the human woman says. “You come out, you’re one of us. You don’t...” She shrugs.

The trials are different every time, depending on what kind of mood the higher-ups are in. Tonight they’ve been promised a special treat, but no one knows what it is. From the heroes’ perspective, it will be clear that

there are at least 300 individuals in attendance. The Cell is clearly nothing to sneeze at.

Mokada’s Place is an abandoned restaurant. The map is included as **Player Handout #2**. The heroes will be entering through the door on the lower level, which will put them almost directly across from, and 1.5 meters below, the kitchen door. The entrance door will slam shut behind them, and there’s no mechanism for unlocking it on this side. (Neither Nirama nor Riboga care much about potential fire code violations!)

The contents of the restaurant are strewn all over the place. Broken glasses, broken plates, broken chairs and tables – all litter the floor. A few tables remain standing, and all of them are shown on the map. There are three small tables on the upper level, three mid-size tables and a banquet table on the middle level, and four long tables and one single person table on the lower level. Each level is separated by a set of stairs 1.5 meters in height. A railing runs along the edge of the upper level where it overlooks the lower level, but a gap in the railing (indicated by the partial “V” on the map) provides a space where climbing up or jumping down is relatively easy. Three meters above the upper level is a balcony level where over a hundred people have gathered to watch, milling about and elbowing for places by the railing. The only access to the balcony area from below is a staircase just to the north of the kitchen entrance that has been magnetically sealed. Almost all of the floor for all three levels is littered with refuse of one type or another.

The atmosphere here is very much one of “we’re going to see a show.” The assembled crowd is excited to see what the “treat” they’ve been promised might be. The lighting is such that the balcony is backlit, providing only silhouettes for the milling throng.

Once you’ve described the setting to the players, you may proceed to pummel them. First with box text, then with other things.

A hush falls over the individuals on the balcony as a familiar voice speaks. “Since you came to us as a team, you must first prove your worth as a team. Prepare yourselves.” And with that, the door opposite the one through which you entered slides open, and a hideous creature emerges.

It has dark, gray-green hide and a wide mouth full of rows of teeth. It walks hunched-over, its forelimbs dragging the ground, claws opening and closing as if it’s flexing long-unused muscles. It spies you and its eyes go wide. The crowd roars, and whatever sound the creature made when it opened its mouth is lost in the noise!

You may give the heroes checks against any relevant knowledge skill, or straight intelligence checks, to recognize that this is a VERY young Rancor. It’s young

enough that it's only size M, nowhere near as big as it's going to grow.

This is also Bender, Nirama's pet. He's been missing for a couple of days, but only Nirama and his closest associates know this to be the case, or even know that Bender is a pet. From here, you can give them a DC 20 spot check to notice that there is a strange marking on the creature's left shoulder. Closer inspection will reveal that it's a tattoo, with the creature's name written in Basic and Hutttese (Bender was a gift from Riboga for Nirama's last naming day). Once the heroes get closer to Bender, the DC to spot his identifying tattoo drops to 10.

Bender, juvenile Rancor: predator 3; Init +1; Defense 19 (+8 natural, +1 dex); Spd 20m; VP/WP 44/21; Atk +7 melee (1d6+6, claw) or +2 melee (2d6+6, bite) or +1 ranged (d4 for thrown garbage); SQ low-light vision, fast healing 2; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ M; Rep 5; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 7, Cha 4.

Skills: Climb +12, Intimidate +3, Spot +2.

Feats: Track, Power Attack.

Now, here's the thing with Bender. He's going to bound toward the party, but he's **not** trying to attack them. He wants to play! He's been cooped up for too long, and hasn't been treated nicely, and hasn't been fed, but Nirama's not started training him to be vicious yet. He's basically just a baby, and the only things he typically eats are small animals Nirama lets him hunt for himself. So Bender knows what food looks like, and the party ain't it! He will bound to the head of the stairs, stop, and stare at the heroes. At that point, the DC 10 spot checks can be made to notice the tattoo, and if they're made by 7 or more, this will let the heroes immediately read the name.

The creature sniffs the air and looks around, confused. Then it turns to the right and dashes up the stairs, to the upper level of the restaurant, roaring as it goes.

And the chase is on. Bender can outrun just about anyone. His base movement is 20m, after all, and he can climb like – well, like a Rancor. He's not that interested in the folks above who are shouting at him, but the people down here look like they might be fun to play with.

If the heroes go to attack Bender, they will automatically notice the tattoo. Even if they can't read, it clearly identifies him as someone's property, and he looks very healthy and well-fed (any hero with animal-related skills gets this information for free, others need to make a DC 10 wisdom check). If they do attack him, he'll think they're playing and swat back playfully with

his claws, but won't bite. It will quickly become clear that he's playing.

Bender can be calmed down by offering him food or water. He's very hungry, after all, and any kind of rations that smell like something edible will get his attention. If the heroes can subdue Bender without killing him, that's fine. It may irritate the crowd somewhat, but they will also be amused by any chasing that Bender leads the heroes on.

This is a situation where after a few minutes of taunting the heroes and having them run all over the restaurant, if they can give you a good plan for how they want to capture Bender, it will work. Again, think cinematic...

Once Bender is captured (or killed, though this will make Nirama VERY GRUMPY; feel free to point out to the heroes when they realize this is who Nirama was looking for that they think keeping him alive may get them in good with Nirama), you can move on to the rest of the trials.

“Well,” the voice says from the balcony, “it does seem you can work as a group. Now, to test your individual skills. All of you but one, take a seat at one of the tables on the upper level. And you,” pick a hero at random, or take a volunteer, “your specialty is [name specialty they spoke of in previous encounter back to them].”

This is a series of individual tests, designed to assess whether what the heroes can do is likely to augment existing personnel in the organization. Specific skills that heroes can claim as their specialties include piloting (in which case, a pair of simulators will be brought into the room), combat (though again, this is discouraged, if combat is all the hero does, a suitable opponent will be found and non-lethal weapons provided – padded spears, blasters set to stun, what have you), slicing (in which case, computers will be provided), information extraction (or something to do with bluffing, sensing motives, etc.), forgery, Force skills, healing, and so on. And anything the heroes claim proficiency in, someone else in the organization will be found for them to compete against.

A few NPC names and species have been generated, and you can assign these individuals whatever skills they need to have, in order to provide an appropriate challenge. The way it works is this: When a hero states his or her specialty, a member of the malcontents is sent down to compete. You can select a name and race from the list included as **DM Aid #1**, or make up your own, it doesn't matter. Secretly roll 1d6 as each NPC makes his/her appearance. If the roll comes up 1 or 2, then the NPC has one worse bonus for the skill than the hero (e.g., if the hero has +12 in forgery, the NPC has +11). If it comes up 3 or 4, they

are dead even, and if it comes up 5 or 6, the NPC has +1 beyond the hero.

You may get some bizarre things here. Feel free to roleplay them out. So if someone wants to have a diplomacy competition... go right ahead! But make the hero go first. Home field advantage and all that. Plus, it makes the hero roleplay their skill before you have to. In other words, make this about a little more than dice-rolling, even though what it comes down to is competing (or opposed) skill checks. (And sure, if the heroes want to go best 2 out of 3, go for it!)

At least half of the heroes must win their competitions in order to gain probationary acceptance into the organization. The crowd is going to enjoy this, and will generally cheer for their own when the person's name is announced (and yes, there will actually be an announcement of the name for each individual who is going to compete with a hero as they come out, so the heroes have **some** names, at least, to report to Nirama down the line.

When it's all over, the heroes will be escorted back to their quarters and told that they'll be contacted soon about their potential involvement. Make sure to note the names of the NPCs they competed with – since they turn up dead very shortly.

Encounter 6: The Discovery

Key idea of this encounter: early in their shift the next day, heroes receive a two-word message written on a napkin informing them that they're in; however, someone in the organization doesn't want them in, and they're attacked in one of the storage rooms, where they can safely use the blasters to defend themselves

Your shift the next day starts uneventfully enough, with no signs of the activity from the night before. You patrol the corridors and the storage areas of Red Sector just as you did before without incident, and without anyone looking at you or treating you any differently. As near as you can tell, everything seems perfectly normal.

Half-way through your shift, you stop back in at the Hutt's Tail to grab lunch.

You can go through ordering food as a roleplay activity if you want. No need to box-text 'em to death. When their food comes, there's a napkin folded in the center of the tray the waitress drops off. The napkin simply reads, "You're in," written longhand in Basic. There is no further contact from the Cell at this time, and no one knows who put the note on the tray. No one saw anything, so it must have been someone pretty nimble (and Luco is not here, though there were a couple of

Rodians off to one side when they entered, they've since left).

The meaning of "You're in," of course, is something the heroes can debate. It might mean that they're fully in the Cell, might mean that they're just in until they prove themselves more fully, it might just be a welcome to Nirama's organization. Let them wonder exactly what it means, but it actually is from a representative of the Cell, and it does indicate probationary acceptance. And yes, it's a handwriting sample from someone associated with the Cell.

The rest of the shift goes uneventfully, until the heroes are making their last round through the storage facilities. It's getting late, and a lot of the workers have already called it a day. The droids from storage area three have been taken out for maintenance, so things are quiet.

You've about decided that there's nothing of interest here, either, when a noise from behind a pile of crates catches your attention. A figure steps out, smacking a stun baton against his palm. Several other figures step out from behind boxes as well, surrounding your group. All of them wear black hoods.

"Saw you last night." His Basic is broken, and he speaks with a harsh Dosh accent. "Think you're pretty good. Did some checking. You're connected up the line, aren't you?" He activates the stun baton. "Gonna bring you in. Get some points with the bosses."

A Trandoshan in a hood is able to hide his race about as well as a Cerean or a Wookiee in a hood. It just doesn't work well. But, they don't care, they just want to make sure their specific identities are protected.

And with that, the Trandoshan thug squad attacks.

Trandoshan Thug Squad (6): Trandoshan Thug 3; IM +4; Def 12; Spd 10 m; VP/WP -/15; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, stun baton, DC 10 Fort save if hit or fall unconscious for 2d6 rounds), +4 ranged (1d2 thrown baton); SQ none; SV Fort +4 Ref +2, Will +0; SZ M; FP 1; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Bluff +1.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapons (simple), Armor (light).

Note that these are weak versions of the stun batons from the rule book; as with many black market items, these aren't quite as well-made as standard stun batons, so only require a DC 10 Fortitude save rather than the standard DC 12.

Because of the layout of the boxes, only 3 of the Trandoshans will be in position to attack during the first round. This means that **someone** should be able to get a

shot off and bring security running during the first round of combat. They will arrive after 3d4 rounds from the time of the first shot.

The Trandoshans are not in this to kill anyone. They have a theory that the heroes are working for the other side, based on information they, and only they, have gathered, and want to take the heroes back to Cell to turn them in. They haven't shared their theory with anyone else, because they don't trust others not to try to steal their glory. They're just trying to advance their careers. As such, creative talking can conceivably get the heroes out of this as well, but it better be good since the first trio of Trandoshans are moving to attack immediately.

If the Trandoshans manage to knock the entire party out with their stun batons (which is possible, with small parties and bad dice rolls), then let the players sweat for a couple of minutes. Describe the Trandoshans picking up and pocketing the hold-out blasters and beginning to haul off the unconscious bodies, and then have the other security forces arrive and do a mass arrest on everyone present.

And if the heroes are victorious, the security will also arrive eventually and arrest everyone who is still there. If the heroes are gone, they will be found and arrested by the security detail. Nirama knows that they are the only ones with blasters in the facility, and can trace the power cell signature of the weapons he gave the heroes and tell the security forces where to find the blasters.

Encounter 7: The “Arrest”

Key ideas of this encounter: the heroes are taken by a higher-level security detail, found either at the scene of the fight or elsewhere and arrested for possession of illegal firearms in the compound; they are eventually taken to Nirama, though they may be held in the local (unpleasant) cell block for some time first; Nirama is apologetic and very interested in what they have to tell him

One way or another, a security detail finds the heroes. Either unconscious, or victorious, or somewhere else entirely if they won fast and escaped.

Ten guards wearing the silver and black of Nirama's security detail surround you. Half of them hold stun batons, the other half hold force pikes. The leader – you assume her to be such, from the red bars on her shoulders – steps forward. She's a tallish Sullustan with piercing eyes, and she absently twirls her stun baton as she looks at you.

“You're under arrest. It would be unwise to resist. Turn over your weapons and come with us.”

This is Lira Mimb, one of Nirama's high-ranking security team members. The charges – such as they're even necessary, in Nirama's organization – have to do with unlawful possession of banned weapons, inciting unrest, and so forth. If necessary, she can show the heroes film recorded from the security sensors in the room where the fight just occurred if they've managed to ditch the blasters. She can also tell them that, provided they don't resist, they will not be harmed in any way, shape, or form until a full inquiry has been made. This order came straight down from Nirama.

The heroes are led back toward the upper levels of the asteroid, away from Red Sector. They're headed in the right basic direction to return to Nirama's chambers, but then they reach a familiar corridor and turn left instead of right. Less than fifty meters down, they come to the main security station, where the heroes are placed in a cell (think Death Star quality holding cells, only big enough for the entire party). They can see a pair of guards patrolling just outside the door through a small (10 cm square) viewport on the door.

They can ask any questions they want on the way to the cells. The security detail, and its Sullustan commander, are just doing their jobs and arresting some employees they were told to arrest. They're relatively disgusted to be arresting other members of the security force, but take some solace in the fact that they're new hires, and the fact that they were working in Red Sector. Everyone knows Red Sector's trouble.

It wouldn't be too surprising for the heroes to request an audience with Nirama at some point. If they ask Lira, she will simply shake her head and say something to the effect of, “*Every prisoner wants to talk to the boss.*” If they ask any of the other guards, their request will be met with outright laughter and pronunciations that no one sees Nirama, especially not scum who break the rules and get caught.

After stewing for an hour or so, however, the tune of their captors changes. Whomever they first asked about getting an audience with Nirama returns, nervously chewing at his or her lip.

A familiar face appears at the viewport in the door. “It looks like the boss wants to see you.” There's more than a trace of embarrassment in the person's voice.

And again, this can be Lira or any of the other personnel who the heroes asked about seeing Nirama, very embarrassed that after telling the heroes that no one sees the boss, the boss has now summoned them. Understandably, this makes them pretty concerned about their job...

You are escorted through the corridors to the blast doors leading into Nirama's personal chamber. Your

rather abashed escorts open the door and enter with you.

Nirama stops pacing the center of the room as you enter and trains both sets of eyes on your group. He glances at your escort and waves a hand. "Off. I will deal with them myself."

At this, the other guards' eyes get huge, and they back out of the room as quickly as possible.

As the door slides shut, Nirama shakes his head. "You can see now why I needed someone from outside. Tell me what you know."

The knowledge the heroes have is rather limited. Nirama will want to know:

How many are there? The heroes' best guess is over 300, since that's about how many they saw at Mokada's.

Aside from the ones who attacked you, who else is involved? The heroes should have the names of the individuals from the trials. Unfortunately, this isn't going to do much good, since all of those individuals were found dead a half-hour after the heroes were arrested. Someone didn't want the newbies leaking any information at all about the Cell, and Nirama will immediately recognize the names when the heroes begin reciting them.

Do you have descriptions for any of the rest? Probably nothing detailed, unless something bizarre happened. *IF* the heroes thought to check for Force sensitivity, they can tell him that there's at least one fairly powerful Force-user working against him. However, this is not a gimme. They have to think of this on their own, and whether or not they do should be recorded on the Critical Events Summary.

What is their resource situation? If the heroes asked, they were told that the Cell has ships and weapons and everything they apparently need to operate quite well.

What is their general mood? Very discontented. They lack confidence in Nirama's leadership, and want to take over. At this, Nirama will become reflective, and wonder aloud why they haven't tried to do so already. He will wander over to his chair and sit down.

Nirama snaps his fingers, and a panel on the wall slides open, revealing your gear. "Here it is. I'm going to have you removed from the compound. There will be a variety of rumors spread about you, but one common thread will be that I will deal with any punishment for you myself. You will not be in danger. I often put individuals who cross me to use throughout the system, so this won't seem odd at all." He sighs. "All of this, and Bender too..."

If the heroes haven't already bothered to mention the young Rancor, now would be a good time. If they killed him, Nirama will be very upset, but won't hold it against them – though he also won't promise them a favor at some future date. If they can tell him where they saw Bender, and that the creature was left alive, he will immediately send a detachment down to Mokada's, where they will find the young Rancor tied up in the kitchen. In this case, the heroes are awarded the Favor of Nirama (see Loot Summary). If they wish to use the favor to cancel an outstanding debt to Nirama they can do so. Just void or the debt, but don't give them a new favor.

If the heroes are concerned about the Cell coming after them, Nirama will assure them that as long as he is in power, that is unlikely, particularly if it looks as though he is watching them carefully. The dead members of the Cell found an hour ago were vulnerable because no one knew to watch them. But the Cell is too smart to go after someone who Nirama has an eye on. The heroes will be safe, precisely BECAUSE they look like a trap.

"I would like to be able to call on you again. You do good work. For now, it is enough for you to look like you're under my eye. I would like the option of asking you to return after some time, to, in the eyes of the public, test your loyalty to me. It's going to take more work than I originally thought to bring these individuals to the surface, but I believe that with your help, it can be managed. It truly is for the good of the system that stability be maintained."

Nirama will then tell the heroes that if he needs them he will send Jobril – his Twi'lek master of properties on Cularin – to find them. Jobril is one of the few individuals he still trusts, and if asked why, he'll simply shake his head and state that Jobril is no longer capable of betraying him. He'll then thank the heroes and give them 2000 credits.

The heroes will then be escorted back to their transport.

Conclusion

All the way home, the crew of the transport steers clear of you. They watch you nervously and always address you in tones of deepest respect. Or fear. In Nirama's organization, the two are so intertwined as to be virtually identical.

By the time you land, you're ready to be away from their groveling, yet as you depart the transport the docking bay crew gives you the same awe-struck response, backing away at your approach. It's clear that Nirama's rumor mill works quickly. However,

after a couple of days people stop looking at you strangely, and things basically return to normal.

Still, you can't help but wonder... what IS going on in the Asteroid Belt? And what are you now a part of?

Note on the player's log sheet that if they play this hero in the other scenarios in this trilogy, the hero should be treated as though they have the Infamy feat while they are within the Asteroid Belt for this trilogy only. This does not affect them elsewhere in the system, since there are so many rumors about so many people, they simply don't stay around long.

Here Ends *TopWorld*

Experience Point Summary

Experience is calculated as follows for Living Force events.

- 1) Experience awards in the SWRPG are not made for achieving objectives, but instead for successfully completing an adventure of a given length. Thus, if the heroes survived and accomplished the primary goal of the adventure, they receive full Adventure Experience (600 xp for core LF plot scenarios, 350 for non-core LF scenarios).
- 2) Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-300 points). These should reward accurate character portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially. Do NOT automatically award max roleplaying XP, consider carefully how well the players stayed in-character. This is your opportunity to reward appropriately cinematic behavior, so use it!

Adventure Experience Award:

Did the heroes locate the Cell and report what they found to Nirama? If so, each hero who survived receives 600 xp.

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

Total Possible Experience:	1,000 xp
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If the heroes did not complete the scenario because of time constraints, but were "on the right track," you may award ½ adventure experience. If the heroes succeeded in locating the Cell but did not tell (or lied to) Nirama (it's bad to upset the reigning crime lord for the system), award them ¾ adventure experience.

Loot Summary

If it's not on this list, the PCs cannot keep it. This is a house rule that overrides what they may actually acquire in the scenario. Certificates are not supplied for standard equipment, but it should be assumed that any equipment the heroes find that is not listed here cannot be kept or is non-functional for one reason or another.

Encounter 3 – The Insertion

- The heroes may keep any money earned gambling (and should be sure to deduct any spent for bribes). Odds in Living Force are never better than 3:1.

Encounter 6 – The Discovery

- 6 stun batons – note that these are inferior, black-market stun batons and do only 1d6+2 damage, DC 10 Fort save if hit or fall unconscious for 2d6 rounds. These are not certified.

Encounter 7 – The "Arrest"

- From Nirama - 2000 Credits
- If they found Bender and notified Nirama of his location they can earn a Favor of Nirama. If they wish to use the favor to cancel an outstanding debt to Nirama they can do so. Just void or the debt, but don't give them a new favor. This may not be used to cancel out a ship debt, but can earn them a respite from collection efforts for one adventure. If it is used for this purpose, make an appropriate notation on the ship certificate.

Favor of Nirama

[Character Name] has earned the favor of the crime lord Nirama. Nirama is indebted to this hero for locating his beloved pet and assisting in its return, unharmed, to him. Nirama will allow this favor to cancel an equivalent debt, or grant, instead, the ability to use his name, once, as a tool to influence someone into giving them what they want. [In game mechanics terms, this is a one-time +10 to intimidate or bluff. The use should be roleplayed, and the certificate should be voided once it has been used. A character who drops Nirama's name too often won't be taken seriously, but once...well... it could be true, after all.]

"You know, I was talking to Nirama a while back about just this kind of issue, and he was giving me advice on how to deal with it..."

Player Handout 1: Datapad Text

Your concern for the system is admirable. I am contacting you because you are uniquely qualified to deal with another threat to Cularin's stability. I ask that you consider attending me and listening to my request, since I believe you will agree that the situation we face is grave indeed.

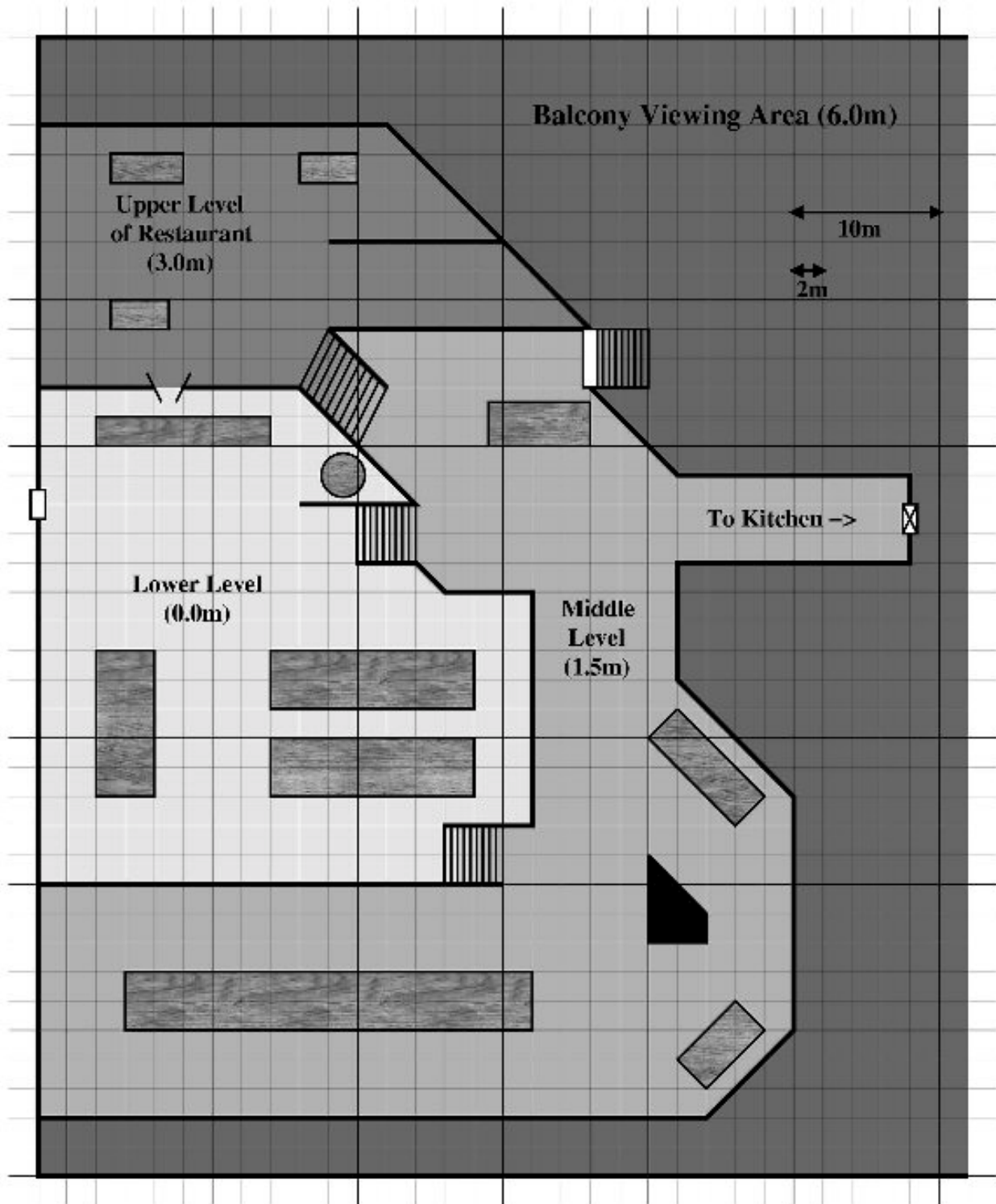
I cannot say more in this medium. If you elect to decline, I will bear you no ill will. I only ask that you come to me and listen to what I have to say. You may tell anyone you deem appropriate of your plans, although I encourage you to exercise discretion; be aware that I represent no threat to you, but others in the system may not be so kind. You have my word that if you attend me, you will be under my personal protection.

In the interest of preventing a return to the chaotic, slaving ways of old, I ask that you be at the landing platform 1/2 kilometer west of Gadrin by nine p.m. A transport will await you there.

May the Force be with you.

- *N*

Player Handout #2: Map of Mokada's Place



DM Aid #1: Some Malcontents to Play With

Mack Oides – Human Male

Blarg – Trandoshan Female

Horssk – Trandoshan Male

Janna – Human Female

Beebo – Rodian Female

Re’Nicu – Cerean Male

Gebs – Ithorian

Duus – Tarasin (left Cularin 3 years ago, was the object of a search, widely regarded as a traitor)

Hooded Wookiee – Random Combatant if you have a bunch of folks who just want to fight

You can assign any of these NPCs any traits you want, but basically, remember that they’re designed to be as close as possible to the heroes. So Janna could be a slicer, or she could be a forger, or she could be an entertainer, or she could be a combatant. It’s up to you, and if you want to give them personally quirks (taunting the heroes is always fun), feel free.

For combats, assign NPCs the same physical stats and levels as the hero, minus with any combat-relevant feats.

Critical Event Summary

Topworld

Return completed form to RPGA, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, Fax 425-687-8287, as soon as possible after your convention.

1. Did the heroes kill the rancor?

Yes

No

2. Did any of the heroes recognize that the non-Basic writing on the tattoo was Huttese?

Yes

No

3. Did the heroes tell Nirama where to find Bender?

Yes

No

4. Did the heroes "See Force" on any of the Cell members (or anyone else)? If so record below.

5. Did they try "Far-seeing" to figure out who the Cell leaders were? If so, record details (who, what the heroes did, what (if anything) those observed did about it) below.

6. Did any of the heroes go out of their way to antagonize Nirama? If so, record player name, character name and RPGA# below.

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Did any of the heroes go out of their way to curry favor with Nirama? If so, record player name, character name and RPGA# below. Also note what bizarre things they offered to do (we're looking for things like offering to kill enemies and other extreme offers).

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