STAR WARS AGE EGE REBELLION BLOOD INHERITANCE



SPHERE'S FATE SERIES ADVENTURE #01 JEFF GREENING





Following receiving the sad news of a previously unknown (but very wealthy) relative passing away, a formal will reading has to occur.

Now invited to the reading at a large estate, the players must find out what happened to the relative while dealing with other greedy relatives, jealous of the players share in the estate.



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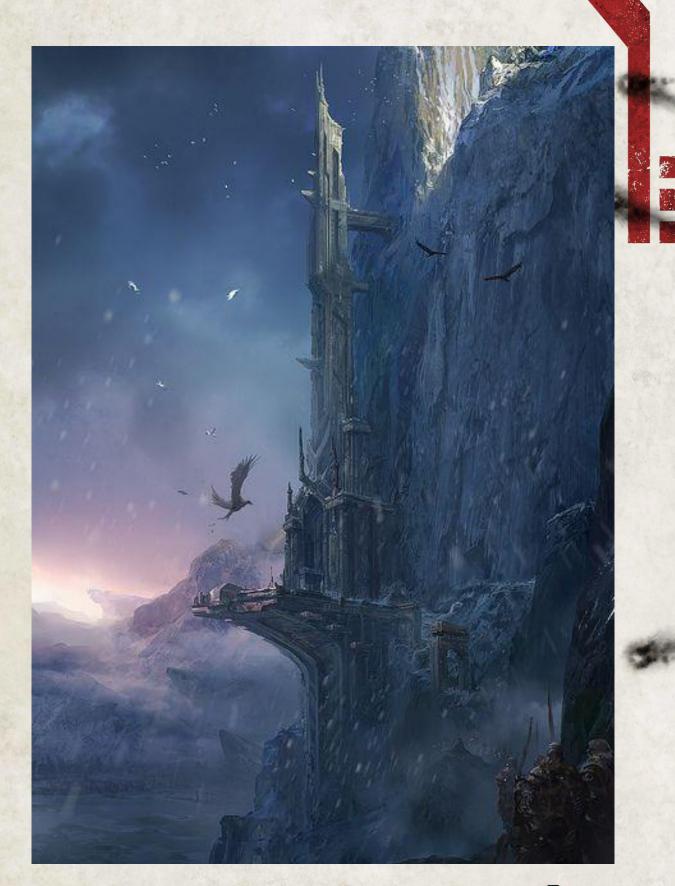
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CREDITS

Converted from "Blood Inheritance" by West End Games Conversion by Jeff Greening





Introduction

This adventure is designed for four to six player characters of virtually any type. It is recommended that at least one character be familiar with Tapani Sector. Additionally, one character should be a "fringe" character (such as a pirate or smuggler); the shadier that character's background, the better.

One of the characters-preferably the "fringe" character-receives notice that he or she is related to a powerful-and recently deceased-noble. Invited to the reading of the noble's final wishes to his inheritors, the characters are drawn into danger and intrigue from rivals who stand to inherit the noble's fortune and position of power.

This adventure provides an excellent opportunity to introduce a group of characters to the intrigues of Tapani Sector and its various Houses. The background of the characters doesn't matter much; even a group of Rebels or bounty hunters can be brought in with relative ease.

You should choose one of the characters as the lucky long-lost relative. The character should ideally be human.

QUICK START OUTLINE

Episode 1:

One of the Characters learns that an unknown relative has died and is invited to attend the reading of the Baron's last testament. The characters are not well received in the brooding Hejaran Castle; to most of the Baron's close relatives the characters are unwelcome outsiders. They participate in a hunt for a dangerous creature called a nightsinger. At the reading of the Baron's will, it is revealed that the character stands to inherit the title and power of the Baron, much to the surprise and consternation of the family.

Episode 2:

characters The must clear themselves of suspicion, as the members of the family do not trust them. A noble who believes the inheritance is rightfully his challenges the character to a duel with ancient virbo-weapons. The noble is actually being manipulated by Lady Brigta, a protégé of one of the Emperors advisors – Sate Pestage – who does not want her secret connection to Pestage revealed.

Episode I

The characters are relaxing in a starport located outside the Expanse. With a noticeable sound of humming repulsorlifts, a small shiny droid appears before the characters. It is a personal courier droid. The hovering droid turns its singular photoreceptor "eye" upon the character you have chosen as the relative and states in a droning voice:

"Salutations. My master is the Solicitor of Inheritorial Claims of the Tapani House of Mecetti (or other appropriate House). You have been identified by my records as a bloodrelative of his liege, Baron Lucian Hejaran. It is with regret that I must bring sad tidings. The honorable Baron passed away not long ago, entitling you to an inheritance from his estate. The inheritance includes a large monetary compensation and a noble title with all rights and privileges. To receive this title and compensation, you must identify yourself-in person-at Hejaran Castle on the moon of Nightsinger's Orb located in the Pella system. My memory module contains astrogation information should you wish to make this journey. You may bring along any companions you wish."

The messenger droid knows nothing about the contents of the Baron's will or who else is attending the reading. All necessary information will be provided by the Solicitor upon the character's arrival at Nightsinger's Orb. The only information the droid has on the Hejaran family is restricted to general knowledge about the noble House the family has connections to. You might want to limit the amount of information the characters can learn about the noble Houses at this point.

If the characters decide to turn to other sources, there is no information available about Nightsinger's Orb except that it is privately owned-the Hejarans must be very rich indeed.

The best way to find out whether the inheritance is real or fake-in fact the *only* way to find out-is for the characters to travel to the moon. The astrogation coordinates provided by the messenger droid plots a course from the Shapani Bypass, up the Procopian Shipping Lane, and thence to Mecetti Province. The characters can bring whatever equipment they believe is suitable for the trip; the droid indicates Nightsinger's Orb is a densely forested, rain-drenched planet with temperatures ranging on the cool side for most humans.



Galemus Hejaran

There is more to the oldest member of the Hejaran family than meets the eye. Galemus is a practitioner of the fine art of subterfuge and manipulation who understands the workings of the family. He knows well that his nephew Themion is little more than a temperamental blowhard. His niece, Lady Brigta, is plainly dangerous to anyone who stands in her path. Ever since she returned from Coruscant, Galemus has known she has maintained a strong connection to the Emperor's inner circle.

Galemus Hejaran

Melee

Command

Medicine

Lady Brigta Hejaran

Lady Brigta is as attractive and alluring as any of the beautiful flowers seen on Nightsinger's Orb and just as deadly. She has spent the past few seasons representing the family on Coruscant.

Unbeknownst to her family and House, the Emperor's Dark Adepts under the personal direction of Advisor Sate Pestage have tutored her in disciplines suitable for an assassin. Upon her return to the Sector, she was recruited by the Mecrosa Order. Once she realised the former Baron began lovalties, to suspect her new she assassinated him. It is Lady Brigta who takes measures to ensure that the character does not become head of the Hejaran family.

Lady Brigta Hejaran

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Force Rating: 2 (Dark Side Force User)

Bind, Enhance; Move; Battle Meditation

Damage 6; Critical 2; Breech 1; Sunder

Coercion

Athletics

Computers

Deception

1

25

Lightsaber

Discipline

Coordination

Piloting [Planet]

Adversary 3

Parry 3: Reflect 2

EQUIPMENT: Armoured Robes [+2 Soak, +1 Defense] Lightsaber

5

SKILLS:

TALENTS:

ABILITIES:



SKILLS:

TALENTS:

ABILITIES:

20

Charm Computers

None

None

EQUIPMENT: Noble Robes [+1 Soak]

Ranged Light

Pershon

Despite his age, Pershon is still quick witted. Having endured several generations of serving the Hejaran family, he knows its innermost secrets and shames all too well. Several of the Hejarans kept close ties to the Empire and the Emperor. The late Baron Lucian tried to put an end to these practices, but died under strange circumstances. Pershon was loyal to his master the Baron, and blames himself for his inability to prevent his death.

Themion Hejaran

Themion Hejaran considers himself directly in line to receive the title of Baron and a majority of his late brother's estates and holdings. An avid hunter, there is a moody. predatory look about him. Themion regards the character identified by the Solicitor's droid in contempt, commenting he or she is, "merely another pretender to my brother's title and holdings." Themion has lived his entire life immersed in court intrigues and family squabbles, his view of the characters is dim at best. Ordinarily a careful man, with the stakes this high, he is prepared to cheat to obtain what he believes belongs to him - and honor be cursed.











Meetings and Greetings

Not long after the journey through hyperspace, the characters reach the mottled brown and green moon of Nightsinger's Orb. Most of the surface details are shrouded by a dense layer of clouds, but a landing beacon directs the characters to the only major structure on the moon: Hejaran Castle. The Castle is a veritable fortress, poised on the rim of a vast canyon. The sheer slopes of the canyon wall make any approach nearly impossible. The other side of the castle is ringed with escarpments and other natural obstacles. Armies of an older era would have a difficult time approaching, let alone, besieging, such a place.

The characters' ship is directed toward a courtyard landing pad on the castle grounds. Despite the castle's are visibly modern there age, additions including an enhanced sensor detection system, power grid, defense batteries. Flags and air representing a dozen different visiting families fly from banners. As is tradition, the Hejaran family flag flies above all the others, its field of stars animal crests reversed and in mourning black.

A frail-looking family attendant, Pershon, greets the characters. Leading the characters inside, Pershon remarks, with strange foreboding, how much the one character picked by the Solicitor's droid resembles the late Baron Lucian Hejaran.

The characters are lead to the Great Hall where the Solicitor and some of the family have gathered. The Solicitor is an ancient husk of a man who has obviously been in this line of work for quite some time. Concerned only with the Baron's last testament and the law, the Solicitor speaks in rasping tones. Other members of the Hejaran family are also in attendance, most regard the characters as unwanted guests. Some of the more prominently involved family members are:



Family Affairs

The characters, especially the one identified by the Solicitor's droid, are coldly received by most of the family. Galemus takes the first step towards making them feel welcome. He invites the characters to participate in an important family tradition. The Hejarans were once recognized as great hunters. Since it is rare for the whole family to be together as it is now, a hunt in the ancient tradition is organized.

The hunt is for the giant nightsinger, a creature which gave the moon its name. Found flying along the crags in the canyon beside the fortress, the nightsinger can only be hunted by para-wing gliders. Once tracked, it must be brought down by hunting blaster. The avian is considered a great delicacy, but only one is ever hunted to feed the gathered family that night in tribute to the heroism of the fallen Baron.

Themion especially protests Galemus' open invitation to the player characters. He wants only family to participate because he knows he is the best hunter of the family. Strangely enough, Lady Brigta comes to the characters' defense. She admonishes Themion for acting less like the next Baron and more like a spoiled infant. Grumbling, Themion finally relents. It's clear he already hates the characters.

The Hunters Prepare

The characters are brought to the staging area, where the colorful gliders are being readied. The gliders use the wind to provide lift, but also carry a small repulsorlift engine in case of emergencies and to provide additional thrust. Up to two persons can sit in the saddles slung underneath the central wing. The typical mode of operation is for one to pilot the craft while another carries a hunting blaster. The characters can pair up among themselves or with other members of the noble family.

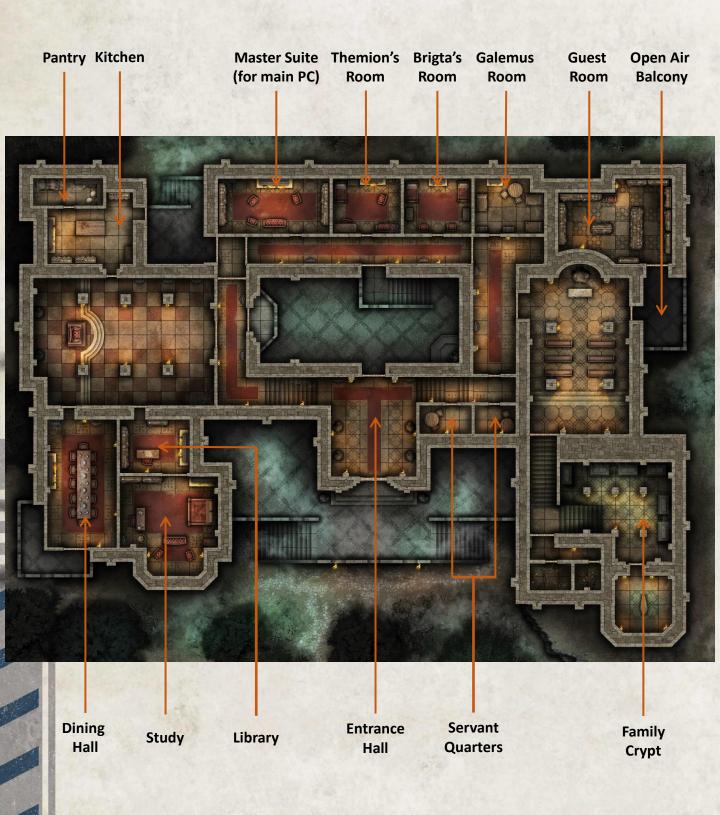
Themion rides with a servant, alternating between piloting and shooting to gain greater glory. Galemus also flies with one of the family servants, although he claims to be a bit more cautious. Lady Brtgta does not mind accompanying any of the characters, especially the one identified by the Solicitor's droid.

Pershon has also befriended the character named by the Solicitor's droid. Although he does not fly ("Heights make me dizzy," he explains) he makes certain the character is sitting correctly in the saddle and warns the character to watch out for the uncertain winds. Many a family member chasing a nightsinger has crashed into a canyon wail.

Themion regards Pershon's sentimentality with contempt: "He's just an old fool without a master. He's useless."



HEJARAN CASTLE:



The Hunt is on!

Themion immediately takes the lead, flying dangerously close to the crags. His intent becomes clear enough as a pair of the immense nightsingers swoop down to protect their disturbed nesting sights. These bat-winged predators have elongated heads which they use as rudders, sharp talons and a hooked beak.

Nightsingers are known for their eerie calls and whistles. Their high-pitched screams are used for communication and as a form of sonar to maneuver the windswept canyon and locate prey. Themion pursues the largest, hoping for the prize as he relinquishes the controls of the glider to concentrate on shooting with the hunting blaster. The characters can either follow Themion or the smaller of the nightsingers. Pursuit is difficult, as the nightsinger swoops and barrel-rolls closely with the canyon walls to avoid their attacks.

After a few passes, it becomes clear that Themion's chance to bring down the larger nightsinger has failed. The large creature manages to come between Themion and Galemus' para-wing. Trying the Themion target creature. to accidentally hits Galemus' para-wing with blaster fire, damaging its control flaps and repulsorlift engine. The para-wing starts to circle downward. out-of-control, The characters can try to save him either by using their own para-wings to support the damaged one (a Hard [Planetary check), or by transferring Galemus and his pilot to other







Once Themion misses his chance, it is the characters who ultimately succeed in wounding and bringing a nightsinger down. They are heralded upon their return to the castle. Ground parties go out to retrieve the downed creature and soon prepare it for the evening meal. Galemus thanks the characters profusely for their quick thinking. Themion, his mood foul and his honor besmirched by his failure, retreats to his room until dinner. Lady Brigta is especially impressed with the characters and seems drawn to them.

CINEMATIC PLAY

This scene is best played out cinematically rather than using structured initiative. Have the players make checks as the scene is described, giving them plenty of opportunities to use the terrain and good positioning to their advantage.





Will of the Baron

The evening meal is a glorious repast filled with celebration and toasts. The family cannot hear enough of the characters' spectacular rescue of Galemus in mid-air, or the skill by which they brought down the nightsinger. Themion sits at the other end of the table in stoic silence; he is occasionally consoled by Lady Brigta. With the meal finished, all members of the Hejaran family retire to the Grand Hall to hear and see Baron Lucian's testament. There is nothing but respectful silence as the Solicitor activates the holo-recording of Baron Lucian Hejaran. Read aloud the following:



"I am Baron Lucian Hejaran. In accordance with House law and tradition, let this holo-recording witnessed by the family Solicitor serve as my last will and testament."

"Many knew I wanted to bring honor back to the Hejaran family name. Yet, there is a taint of darkness and evil among these halls. It is an evil brought here by those closest to the foul Emperor. If this holo is being played, then I was probably unable to stop it."

"Therefore I decree that my brother, Themion, shall be granted only fifteen percent of this estate's holdings. That should be enough to suit his flamboyant ways. Lady Brigta, my cousin, is granted nothing, for reasons that should be all too clear to her. Both are forever banned from Hejaran Castle and Nightsinger's Orb."

"As for the rest of the Hejarans in attendance, you shall receive nothing, as you did nothing to prevent this catastrophe which has sullied our family's honor. The remainder of the estate shall be entrusted to the care of my uncle, Galemus, who's wise ways and beliefs shall lead a new Baron to the head of the Hejaran family. That new Baron shall be [insert name of player-character here.]"

"So I have decreed. In accordance with all House laws, so It shall be done."



Naturally, the holo-recording creates an uproar-all attention and surprise is directed to the character named by the late Baron. Themion accuses the characters of fraud and unsheathes his ornate sword in anger - a deliberate violation of family tradition according to Galemus. He orders him to return the weapon to its scabbard, there will be no honor dueling on this night. Lady Brigta sniffs angrily, all charm and warmth dissipated from her. Improvise the situation with additional threats and saber-rattling from other guests.

Before things get too far out of hand, the Solicitor bangs his huge walking stick on the floor. The holo-recording is valid, as are the Baron's wishes. He directs Themion and Lady Brigta that they have until the end of the following day to remove their personal belongings and vacate the moon. If they do not comply, forces from the House shall remove them - at great embarrassment to what little honor they have left.

With the rest of the family dispersed and angry, the characters are led to chambers to spend the night. Galemus offers them guards from his own personal cadre to protect them; the characters can accept them or not. Pershon checks in the characters, assuring them everything will be made right in the morning.

In the footsteps of His Master

As night unfolds, the naming of Nightsinger's Orb becomes all too clear. The nightsingers call out to one another through a series of eerie howls, as if the great castle was not dark and foreboding enough.

The characters are unable to sleep. Restless dreams and the strangeness of their surroundings add to their insomnia. Make secret Hard []] Perception or Discipline checks for characters who are Force sensitive. Those that make the roll detect a slight tremor of the dark side in their dreams. Those characters who exceed the Difficulty with []]]] or receive a vision: the character named in the Baron's will is flying a para-wing glider over the head of a raven-black nightsinger. The giant creature suddenly bites the flyer in half.

A scream awakens all the characters, drawing them to another wing of the castle. Directed by one of the minor house-servants to the Baron's study, the characters find Pershon dead across his master's desk. The room's desk has been ransacked and the contents knocked down from library shelves. The cause of death is determined by the manor's medical droidasphyxiation by constriction of the throat. Yet there are no visible markings on Pershon's throat. It's as if an invisible hand clamped down on the poor man and killed him. Galemus and Lady Brigta arrive on the scene shortly after the characters arrive.

Galemus is stunned by the news and begs the Solicitor to commence an investigation into the family's personal records. Lady Brigta is surprised and saddened by the death, she immediately takes to the side of the character named by the Baron as his successor. She offers her guards to stand watch over Pershon's body until he can be properly buried.

Eventually Lady Brigta wonders aloud why Themion has not arrived to investigate (assuming the characters have not yet noticed themselves). Themion is eventually found. staggering through the halls like a ghost, clutching his chest. After a brief investigation, the family doctor determines that Themion has been poisoned. The poison is traced back to a bottle of wine found in his chambers. Fortunately, the poison is slow acting, and the doctor administers an antidote.

Themion is furious and summons the Solicitor. He believes the characters have been opposed to him from the start: that it was they who took away his rightful inheritance, that they conspired to embarrass him during the nightsinger hunt, and that he was poisoned by them to silence any further claim he might have to the Barony. Standing before the Solicitor, Themion claims his right to ascendancy by combat. Galemus and the Solicitor reluctantly agree. According to family law, Themion is permitted to reclaim his noble title and regain his honor despite what his brother's will dictates. He calls for a honor duel: he versus the character named as the Baron's successor! The Solicitor explains that the challenge can either be accepted or ignored. If it is ignored, the characters are permitted to leave Nightsinger's Orb without question or harm. If the challenge is accepted, the character must face Themion armed with only a vibroweapon and his or her courage.

Galemus warns the characters not to be too hasty in their acceptance of the challenge, Themion has won several championships dueling among the various Houses. Still, the mysterious deaths of the Baron and his servant leave the characters wondering if they should let the Hejarans sink into dishonor by Themion's selfishness ... and let someone get away with cold, calculated murder.

As the challenged character prepares to duel Themion in the castle's Great Hall, the other characters can unravel the mystery of Pershon's death. Below are a few more clues they might uncover.



Episode II

As the challenged character prepares to duel Themion in the castle's Great Hall, the other characters can unravel the mystery of Pershon's death. Below are a few more clues they might uncover.



More Clues

The Solicitor has delved deeper into the family records and provides characters with additional information. Alternatively, you can have the characters uncover the information by interviewing various servants and family members (many of whom will be reluctant to talk to outsiders who are suspected of committing the crime).

• Every year, members of each House must live on Coruscant, the capital of the Empire. The purpose of the stay is twofold: it allows the noble families to maintain their strong ties to the Empire, while at the same time the Emperor can prevent the Houses from rising against him.

• Lady Brigta only recently has returned from such a stay on Coruscant. After this she travelled to Byss, for reasons unknown. The characters can compare this with the entry in the Baron's journal, where he notes how strange the lady has been acting since her return.

• Baron Lucian specifically names Lady Brigta in the latest version of his will, exiling her from Nightsinger's Orb and family matters. The characters may conclude (correctly) that the previous Baron realized, too late, that Lady Brigta has been consumed by the dark side of the Force and has been recruited into the Mecrosa Order.

The Duel

At some point during the investigation, the honor duel takes place. Themion and the character are offered a variety of hand weapons: from ring-fighting weapons to ornate vibrorapiers - even an immense vibro-ax. Since Themion put forth the challenge, the character must declare how the duel must end. The rules are strict: the combatants may call the duel either to the first blood, the taking of an appendage, or to the death. The character must stress any one of these rules before the duel begins. No matter what the character declares, Themion warns that he intends to make the character suffer.

SCENE OF THE CRIME

Characters who search the scene (rather than the body), may discover certain clues depending on how well they succeed. Allow several players to assist the main searcher, then make one Hard [\diamond] Perception check.

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Characters find a piece of ripped clothing on the floor which could belong to a member of the noble family. Apparently Pershon struggled with his attacker before he was killed. It might be possible to search family members for the ripped clothing. However many members of the noble family will not agree to such a search.

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Early holotapes of the Baron's will are found in what once were locked drawers of the desk. These tapes are dated well before the last version of the will, but in each tape the Baron firmly states that Themion should not receive more than 15% of the estate. Noticeably missing from the earlier versions are the Baron's concerns about Lady Brigta.

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The characters discover the writing desk is not flush against the wall; a small book is found inside a hidden niche, when the writing desk is pulled away. The book is a simple journal and does not seem to contain anything of relevance about the Baron's death. The last log written before his death specifies the return of Lady Brigta to Hejaran Castle after some time spent on Coruscant. The Baron's passages convey feelings that she has somehow changed.



From the beginning it's clear that Themion is fighting as if possessed. He deflects impossible blows and comes to lopping off the character's head. On an **Easy** [] **Perception** or successful sense Force power check, Force sensitive characters detect the dark side at work here.

Characters who make Hard [Perception checks see a figure in one of the balconies of the Great Hall. From the figure's hand gestures, the detecting characters sense that the figure is making the same motions as Themion, as if somehow guiding him. Rushing to the upper level, the characters discover the figure is Lady Brigta!

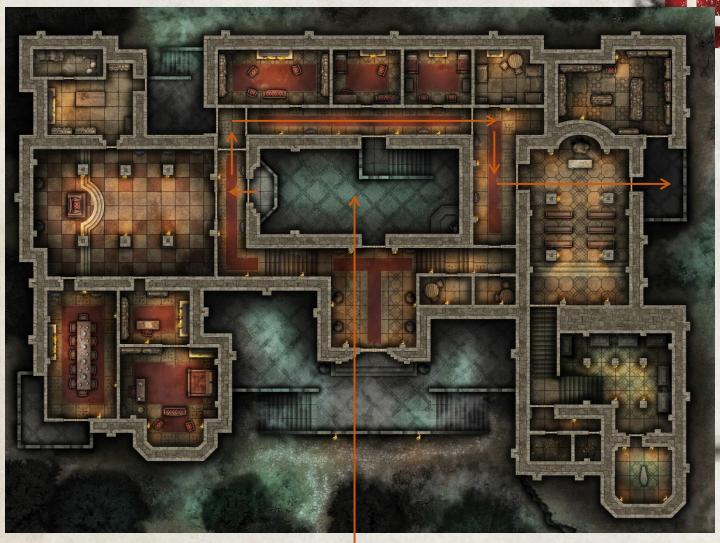
Lady Brigta releases Themion, her concentration broken. The maddened noble suddenly snaps out of his rage as if awaking from a dream. Galemus orders the duel stopped until the situation can be sorted out. Realizing that he has been tricked by his cousin, Themion drops his weapon and apologizes profusely.

Her duplicity revealed, Lady Brigta flees. She was watching from the balcony overlooking the Duel Area, but flees along the route shown to the balcony overlooking the valley. She then force drops down the valley to her waiting TIE Advance. The players could try to stop her, depending on where they are, but Brigta will avoid them if possible.





Lady Brigta's Escape Route



Duel Location



Resolution

With the help of the Solicitor and Galemus, the mystery is soon solved. After killing the Baron for sensing her descent into evil and her recruitment into the Mecrosa Order, Lady Brigta murdered Pershon using her dark side powers to prevent him from revealing his master's journals.

Realizing she had been exiled from the family by the will, she used Themion's hatred to try to destroy the characters and reclaim her status as family leader. If the players have trouble piecing the plot together, the gamemaster characters might make a few leading comments or spell the whole thing out for them.

If the party investigates the Baron's notes, they find he had done more than suspect her, but had begun investigating the Mecrosa Order as a whole. He has notes on a possible plot the Order is involved in to manipulate the Empire into invading the sector.

LADY BRIGTA

If Lady Brigta successfully escaped the players after the duel, she takes charge of the plot to destroy the Torpedo Sphere orbiting Tallaan. She will return guarding the techs on board the sphere during the Final Fight of the mission.

Spawning a Campaign

If the adventure is part of an on-going campaign, there are two ways to resolve the fact that you now have a titled player character running around:

Mistaken Identity.

The Solicitor's droid contacted the wrong person and the character has no rightful claim to the Baron's inheritance. The actual heir shows up, thanks the characters for protecting his seat, gives them a nice banquet, then asks them to leave.

• Authentic Title.

The title is proven accurate. The character is now a Tapani baron! If you are bringing preexisting characters into a Tapani based campaign, this is a good way to do it. The characters have a title, a new estate and wealth. As new nobles, they will create quite a stir among the Houses (especially their own). Because they are outsiders, they might be approached by groups inside the House looking for new allies.

No matter what the characters do, they are bound to make enemies. Such enemies might be very interested in learning what the characters did before they moved into the sector.

Character Rewards

The characters receive 15 XP for completing the mission successfully.



