

STAR WARS

ROLEPLAYING GAME



The Nebula Assassin

A Tempest Feud Web Enhancement

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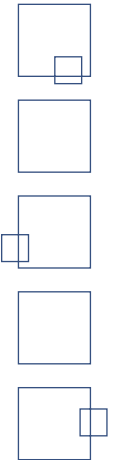
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"The Nebula Assassin" is a mini-adventure for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* suitable for use during any era of play. The scenario, which is designed for four 10th-level heroes, takes place on the *Lost Lady*, an old space barge that makes trips between the Hutt world of Nal Hutta and its satellite Nar Shadda (also known as the Smuggler's Moon).

Although designed for use with the Hutt homeworld, "The Nebula Assassin" can be inserted in any fairly wild system with a decent amount of starship traffic. It provides a good side trek to get groups out of their own ships and more involved in underworld figures. It could be used as a stand-alone encounter or as part of a larger adventure centered around the Hutts.

This bonus material, intended to complement *Tempest Feud*, is exclusive to the Wizards of the Coast website: www.wizards.com/starwars.

Introduction

Deggar Feps is in trouble. The Human scout has angered a powerful Hutt crimelord, and, to make matters worse, he's done it on Nal Hutta, the homeworld of the Hutts. Feps has been in hiding for weeks, dodging bounty hunters and laying low. In order to feel safe, he has to get off Nal Hutta, but the planet's spaceports are crawling with guards and cameras, making any escape attempt a certain deathtrap. Or so Feps thought. After searching desperately for a way off Nal Hutta, he's recently discovered the *Lost Lady*.

The *Lost Lady* is an old space barge owned by Vir Nurb. It makes regular trips from Nal Hutta to Nar Shadda and charges very little for carrying passengers. It's also a smuggling ship, taking illicit cargo to Nal Hutta from the Smuggler's Moon, and as a result, Nurb manages to avoid any Hutt inspection by foregoing official Nal Hutta spaceports, instead landing and taking off from an old junked building in the planet's lower levels. The Hutts know about this, of course, but as long as Nurb continues to pay the right bribes, they look the other way.

Unfortunately for Feps, catching a ride on the *Lost Lady* isn't as safe as he believes. A spy droid, NEK-01, has been following the scout's movements for some time. NEK-01 has placed a homing beacon on NEK-072, a protocol droid reprogrammed with NEK-01's own personality. NEK-072 is broadcasting a homing beacon to several Hutt patrol ships, allowing them to track Feps and the *Lost Lady*. Once the Hutt patrol ships destroy the *Lost Lady*, Feps, and NEK-072, NEK-01 gets a big fee from the Hutt crimelord Feps angered.

Unfortunately for the heroes, they also happen to be on board the *Lost Lady* . . .

Preparation

As the Gamemaster (GM), you need a copy of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* core rulebook to use this adventure. It might be helpful to have a copy of the *Tempest Feud* super-adventure, which contains details about Nal Hutta, but it's not necessary. Although "The Nebula Assassin" can serve as a side adventure to *Tempest Feud*, it's also possible to run this scenario separately as an independent adventure.

Text that appears in shaded boxes is player information,

which you may read aloud or paraphrase when appropriate. Unshaded boxes contain important information for you, including special instructions. GM character statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form, though, where appropriate, the text might just point you to the proper section of the core rulebook instead.

You may want to draw a few simple maps of the inside of the *Lost Lady* before running "The Nebula Assassin." The ship has a fairly small passenger area and can be mapped with little effort.

Getting the Heroes Involved

The characters can be aboard the *Lost Lady* for any number of reasons, but one of the following character hooks might work for your campaign:

- ☉ If the heroes are in trouble with a Hutt themselves, they may also hear about the *Lost Lady* as a safe way to get off Nal Hutta. By making it to Nar Shadda, they'd be much more likely to find a way out of the system, or at least be able to hire help or contact allies.
- ☉ The heroes might be contacted by Feps directly (especially if they have underworld contacts) or indirectly (through superiors, assuming they work for the same employers). In this case, Feps claims to have information that could be used to destroy an entire criminal organization, blackmail its agents, or even take the operation over. Groups ranging from the Jedi Council to the Empire to other Hutts would be very interested in obtaining the scout's secrets, but he'll pass them over only on neutral ground—the *Lost Lady*.
- ☉ The heroes could just be in the wrong place at the wrong time, taking the *Lost Lady* because it's the cheapest way to get from Nal Hutta to Nar Shadda. Even if they have their own ship, taking the *Lost Lady* means they won't have to pay docking fees twice. This is also the easiest option for adapting "The Nebula Assassin" for use in another system.

Scene 1: All Aboard

The *Lost Lady* docks in the wreckage of an abandoned building deep in Nal Hutta's sprawling cityscape. As the heroes arrive at the makeshift landing site, read the following aloud:

In the dark gloom of Nal Hutta's lower levels, you see harsh spotlights illuminate the top of a broken building. Black metals and transparisteel have been melted into a vaguely flat surface at the top of the building, and catwalks connect it to the dilapidated structures nearby. An ancient and battered starship sits atop the slagged roof, the vapors coming from its engines adding to the foul and harsh acrid smell of the air.

The starship itself looks almost as ruined as its makeshift dock. It once may have been a mighty space yacht, but its barge-like form is now covered in mismatched replacement parts and oddly shaped patches, and an ugly turbolaser turret sticks out of the ship's top like a boil. Faded letters spelling out *Lost Lady* can barely be made out on the side of its battered hull. A lopsided

gangplank leads up to an airlock in the side of the ship, and at the top stands an equally battered-looking old Sullustan.

He waves you on, his jowls contorting in what might be a smile. “Come, come,” he says in Basic. “I am Vir Nurb, owner of the *Lost Lady*. We depart immediately. Do not worry, my friends—this old lady is the sturdiest ship in the system.”

Assuming the heroes get on board the *Lost Lady*, Nurb gives them a quick tour of the ship. A four-person cockpit sits at the front of the ship, just in front of the turbo-laser turret. Behind that is the passenger area, with 13 state rooms lining a corridor (cabins 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 13 are on the port side of the corridor, and the other rooms and airlock are on the starboard side). Each 4-by-6-meter room has comfortable, if ragged, seating for four passengers. Aft of the cabins is a turbolift leading to the cargo areas, and aft of that is a small engineering bay.

Nurb introduces the heroes to the other passengers and allows them to pick their cabin. He then proceeds to the cockpit, and the *Lost Lady* takes off.

Cabins 1 through 4, toward the fore of the ship, are empty. Cabin 5 contains Skerrick Das, a Corellian pirate on his way to rejoin his ship on Nar Shadda (for statistics, use the generic 12th-level Outlaw from Chapter 14 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* core rulebook). Cabin 6 is empty. Cabin 7 has Degggar Feps (whose stats appear below). Cabin 8 contains four Rodian commoners—Aald, Gredori, Keesi, and Vosso—who deal in weapons; each has a case of blaster pistols and collapsible blaster rifles. Cabins 9 and 10 are empty.

Cabin 11 has a protocol droid who claims to be R-DPO, a protocol and diplomatic negotiation droid on his way to a meeting of rare-creature exporters on Nar Shadda. In fact, the droid was R-DPO once, but he’s since been reprogrammed and is properly designated as NEK-072 (see his stats, below). NEK-072 is here to ensure that Feps, anything he has with him, and anyone he meets with while on board the *Lost Lady* is destroyed.

Cabin 12 is taken up by Currsk and Keerag, two Trandoshan bounty hunters (whose stats appear below). They’re also on board to kill Feps and whatever conspirators he meets with, but they don’t know anything about NEK-072.

Finally, cabin 13, situated directly across from the airlock, is empty.

Currsk and Keerag

Currsk and Keerag are brothers, almost identical in appearance (Spot check at DC25 to tell them apart), though only Keerag speaks basic. They work as enforcers, bounty hunters, and assassins for a number of crimelords. The Trandoshan killers are not generally subtle. Their preferred method is extremely straightforward—find the targets in a lawless area, move in close, quickdraw their carbines, and begin shooting. Currsk has a slight preference for fighting with his vibro-ax and will switch to it if given the opportunity to engage in melee.

The assassins trust their own toughness to bring them through a fight and will seek cover only if they’re badly outnumbered or lack the element of surprise. As paid killers, however, both Trandoshan will flee rather than die, and if an encounter goes badly, they surrender if given the opportunity.

Currsk & Keerag: Male Trandoshan, Scoundrel 4/Soldier 4; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Def 19 (+1 Dex, +1 natural armor, +7 class bonus); Spd 10m; VP/WP 76/18; Atk +12/+7 melee (dmg 2d10+5, vibro-ax), +8/+3 ranged (dmg, 3d8, blaster carbine); SQ better lucky than good; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +1; SZ M; FP 1; Rep 4; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11.

Equipment: Blaster carbine, blaster pistol, breath mask, comlink, medpac, vibro-ax.

Skills: Bluff +7, Climb +4, Computer Use +6, Forgery +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +7, Gather Information +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Pilot +12, Speak (Basic) [Keerag only], Speak (Dosh), Speak (Huttese) [Currsk only], Spot +7.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Starship Operation (starfighters, transports), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quickdraw, Skill Emphasis (Spot), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster rifles), Weapon Group Proficiency (heavy weapons), Weapon Group Proficiency (vibro weapons).

Degggar Feps

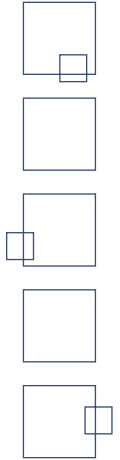
Degggar Feps is a weasel, but he’s a fairly *smart* weasel. It doesn’t really matter what he’s done to anger the Hutt from whom he’s fleeing. If your campaign doesn’t lend itself to anything in particular, assume that he stole a record of bribes paid by Sonnos the Hutt, a mid-level crimelord. With this information, Feps would be able to blackmail officials who’ve been paid off by the Hutt, or bribe them himself to look the other way while he commits his own crimes. Unfortunately, Feps was seen sneaking out of Sonnos’ headquarters, and he’s been a wanted man ever since.

If the heroes are on board to meet with Feps, he demands that they promise to protect him before he’ll tell them anything else. If questioned about who might want him dead, he mentions just the one Hutt crime family—and the “weird nebula droids.” If asked what he means by that, Feps explains that several times over the past few days, when someone greeted him by name, a nearby droid said “nebula” and started shooting at him. None have injured him so far, but they do have him spooked.

Degggar Feps: Human scout 5; Init: -1 (-1 Dex); Def 14 (-1 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 26/10; Atk +1 melee (1d6-2, baton) or +2 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ trailblazing, skill mastery (Computer Use, Hide, Spot), uncanny dodge; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +6; SZ M; FP 1; Rep 1; Str 6, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton, comlink.

Skills: Climb +5, Computer Use +11, Diplomacy +5, Hide +7, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (Nar Shadda) +11, Knowledge (streetwise) +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +7, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Huttese, Read/Write Rodese, Search +11, Speak Basic, Speak Calamari, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodese, Spot +11, Survival +6.



Feats: Point Blank Shot, Skill Emphasis (Gather Information), Skill Emphasis (Survival), Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster rifles).

NEK-072 and the "Nebula" Droids

NEK-072 is a modified and reprogrammed protocol droid with a built-in homing beacon. It was programmed with the personality of NEK-01, a cold and calculating spy droid that operates throughout the galaxy. However, NEK-072 has one important difference in its programming—it's suicidally dedicated to completing its mission to ensure that Feps and the *Lost Lady* are destroyed. NEK-072 hopes that its beacon, which will broadcast a destroy-on-sight bounty for the *Lost Lady*, is enough to get some bounty hunter to take out the ship. Once that occurs, NEK-01 will collect the bounty placed on Feps.

For several days, NEK-01 has been keeping track of Feps by means of numerous other reprogrammed NEK droids. But due to a fault in NEK-01's programming, whenever it hears the name of its current target (in this case, Feps), the droid automatically says "nebula." Since NEK-072 and all other NEK droids have a version of NEK-01's personality, they also suffer this quirk.

If NEK-072 becomes convinced that the *Lost Lady* isn't going to be destroyed by bounty hunter ships, it breaks into the engine room, hoping to overload the engines. This sets off numerous alarms, giving the heroes plenty of time to reach the engine room and stop the droid, which fights to the best of its ability to complete its mission.

If NEK-072 is destroyed, a Computer Use check (DC 25) on his memory chips reveals his basic program, true call number, and odd programming quirk.

NEK-073 (R-DPO): Walking protocol droid; Diplomat 4/Thug 8; Init +4; Def 18 (+0 Dex, +8 armor), Spd 8 m; VP/WP -/10; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d4, hand), +11/+6 ranged (hold-out blaster, 3d4) SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +6; SZ M; Rep 3; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Equipment: Built-in armored spacesuit, comlink, locked access, improved sensor package, infrared vision, internal storage (2 kg), translator unit (DC 5), self-destruct system (thermal detonator), vocabulator, weapon mount (concealed, hold-out blaster).

Skills: Computer Use +10, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (etiquette) +10, Knowledge (Hutt culture) +10, Knowledge (security codes) +7, Listen +8, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Hutt, Read/Write Rodian, Search +8, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Rodian, Spot +11.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Weapon Group Proficiency (blasters), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

Scene 2: All Hell Breaks Loose

It takes the *Lost Lady* three hours to make the trip from Nal Hutta to Nar Shadda. None of the GM characters takes any particular action during the first third of the voyage, although they react if the heroes start something.

One hour into the trip, NEK-072 turns on its built-in homing beacon, identifying the *Lost Lady* as a ship with a destroy-on-sight bounty. This draws the attention of the *Dorsal Killer*, a bounty hunter ship. The *Dorsal Killer* immediately approaches the *Lost Lady* and, without warning, opens fire.

If, for some reason, the heroes are in the cockpit, they see the *Dorsal Killer* approach to short range before the attack. Otherwise, they won't have any warning before the first shot, in which case you should read the text below.

The hum of the ship is louder than on most starships, and an occasional thump suggests that a pump somewhere isn't working properly. Suddenly, the ship shudders and heaves, throwing loose objects against the bulkheads. An explosion can be heard against the ship's exterior, and the *Lost Lady* heaves again. The voice of Nurb comes over the ship's comm, sounding panicked.

"We're under fire! They're crazy! Somebody get to the turbolasers!"

At about this time, the Trandoshan bounty hunters decide to make their move on Feps and try to blow the door off his cabin. If the heroes are rushing out to see what's going on, the Trandoshans might wait until the corridor is clear, but they won't wait long. The scout's cabin door has a Hardness of 10 and 150 wound points, so it takes Currrsk and Keerag quite a bit of time to get through—and they make quite a bit of noise doing it.

If the heroes choose to help fight off the *Dorsal Killer*, which is to the port of the *Lost Lady* at short range, they can be useful in several crew positions: the turbolaser turret, the ion cannon control board in the cockpit, the pilot chair, or the computer board (controlling communications and sensors). Nurb and his Sullustan crew are more than willing to let a hero take over any of these positions if they seem more competent. To see if a hero is better at a given position than Nurb's crew, use the *Lost Lady*'s Crew rating as a comparison. If you need to know other stats for Nurb and his crew, treat Nurb as an 8th-level generic smuggler and his crew as 4th-level generic fighter pilots with Starship Operation (space transport) instead of Starship Operation (starfighter). (For details, refer to Chapter 14 in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* core rulebook).

The More the Merrier

The *Dorsal Killer* keeps fighting until it loses half of its hull points, at which time it withdraws. However, within minutes, another bounty hunter ship appears at sensor range, making a course straight for the *Lost Lady*. (This other vessel can have the same stats as the *Dorsal Killer* or those of a Guardian light cruiser from Chapter 11 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* core rulebook).

When the second ship appears, Nurb (or another member of his crew) suggests that there must be a homing beacon on board the *Lost Lady*, and that their only hope is to leave the regular flight paths between Nar Shadda and Nal Hutta. If they do this, no new bounty-hunter ships arrive (NEK-072's homing beacon doesn't have the range), but the *Lost Lady* is still in trouble. The ship can't return to Nal Hutta or Nar Shadda without having a new bounty-hunter vessel

arrive at sensor range within a few minutes. The *Lost Lady* has no hyperdrive and lacks the fuel to reach another planet in the system. Unless the homing beacon is found and destroyed, the *Lost Lady* is truly lost.

The heroes might be able to locate it with a sensor pack (Search DC 25), or a conversation with Feps might allow them to discover NEK-072. If the droid hasn't been found within two hours of the *Lost Lady* leaving the standard flight paths, NEK-072 tries to overload the engines, setting off numerous alarms in the process.

Of course, during all of this, the heroes may also want to prevent the Trandoshan assassins from killing Feps.

The Lost Lady

The *Lost Lady* is a battered old space barge that's fallen on bad times. Far too ragged for even the poorest Hutt to use as a personal transport, the *Lost Lady* has fallen into the hands of Vir Nurb, an old scavenger and con man who came to Nar Shadda decades ago. He uses it as a shuttle between Nar Shadda and Nal Hutta. He also uses it to smuggle goods and people right under the noses of the Hutts, beating them at their own game. Hutts are great smugglers and crimelords, but they're not so good at patrolling their own borders.

Craft: *Lost Lady* (Heavily modified Ubrikkian Dartiss-5 Caravel); **Class:** Space transport; **Cost:** Not available for sale (likely valued at 1,255,000 credits); **Size:** Small (50 m long); **Initiative:** (+1 size, +2 crew); **Crew:** 5 (Highly Skilled +6); **Passengers:** 65; **Cargo Capacity:** 150 metric tons; **Consumables:** 1 week; **Hyperdrive:** None; **Maximum Speed:** Ramming; **Maneuvers:** +7* (+1 size, +6 crew); **Defense:** 21 (+1 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 150; **Hull Points:** 350; **DR:** 10.

Weapon: Turbolaser cannons (4); **Fire arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +13 (+1 size, +6 crew, +6 fire control); **Damage:** 2d10 x 5; **Range modifiers:** PB +0, S +0, M -2, L -4.

Weapon: Concussion missile launchers (4, 12 missiles each); **Fire arc:** 1 front, 1 left, 1 right, 1 rear; **Attack Bonus:** +7* (+1 size, +6 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 8d10 x 2; **Range modifiers:** PB +0, S/M/L n/a.

* These values assume that the crew of the *Lost Lady* are operating the ship. If a hero takes over a position, use that character's Pilot skill or ranged attack bonus, as appropriate.

The Dorsal Killer

The *Dorsal Killer* is a fairly typical bounty-hunter ship. It won't communicate with the *Lost Lady* at all, although someone manning the communications station might overhear the crew of the attacking vessel warn other ships not to interfere in the fight and claiming the destroy-on-sight bounty for the *Lost Lady* for themselves.

Craft: *Dorsal Killer* (modified Corellian Engineering Corporation YT-1930); **Class:** Space transport; **Cost:** Not for sale (likely to be valued at 610,000 credits); **Size:** Small (31.5 m long); **Crew:** 2 (Master Expert +12); **Passengers:** 8 (prisoners); **Cargo Capacity:** 40 metric tons; **Consumables:** 1 month; **Hyperdrive:** x 1 (backup x 8); **Maximum Speed:** Ramming; **Maneuvers:** +13 (+1 size, +12 crew); **Defense:** 21 (+1 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 90; **Hull Points:** 150; **DR:** 10.

Weapon: Blaster cannons (2); **Fire arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +19 (+1 size, +6 fire control, +12 crew); **Damage:** 5d10 x 2; **Range modifiers:** PB +0, S +0, M/L n/a.

Weapon: Ion cannon (2 sets of 2 fire-linked); **Fire arc:** Front, rear; **Attack Bonus:** +17 (+1 size, +4 fire control, +12 crew); **Damage:** Special; **Range modifiers:** PB +0, S +0, M -2, L n/a.

Wrapping Up

One way or another, the heroes should eventually discover and destroy NEK-072, which will allow them to re-enter the normal flight paths and finish their trip. If the heroes were sent to contact Feps, he'll give them the information they seek just so he's no longer a target. If they had no prior knowledge of Feps, the scout is extremely thankful (assuming he survives the troubled voyage) and becomes a good underworld contact for them later in life. Similarly, Nurb promises anyone who helped save his ship free passage between the Hutt world and the Smuggler's Moon whenever they want.

Of course, NEK-01 eventually learns who stopped his plan to destroy Feps and may target the heroes for further investigation. As long as it can send reprogrammed droids in its place, NEK-01 is a very dangerous opponent, as it never exposes itself to direct harm. If NEK-01 reports the heroes' interference to the Hutt who put the bounty on Feps' head in the first place, the characters soon may find *themselves* the targets of some very dedicated hunters . . .

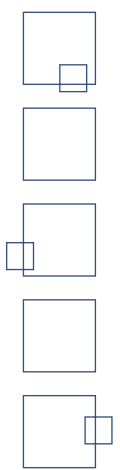
About the Author

Owen Kirker Clifford Stephens was born in 1970 in Norman, Oklahoma. He was introduced to gaming by his uncle in 1978 (though his uncle now claims no memory of the event) and was instantly hooked. While attending the local high school and the University of Oklahoma, Owen became interested in creating novels and short stories and took every English and writing course he could. He later enrolled in creative writing courses taught by FORGOTTEN REALMS novel author Mel Odom.

During the early years of his freelance career, every piece of fiction Owen wrote was rejected, and every gaming article accepted. Taking the path of least resistance, he continued to write articles, many of which were accepted by magazines that went bust before his work could be published. In 1997, he attended a TSR Writer's Workshop, and his first professional work to see the light of day (an article on elven names in issue 250 of *DRAGON Magazine*) was published shortly afterwards.

Owen moved with his wife and three cats to the Seattle area in 2000 after accepting a job as a Game Designer at Wizards of the Coast. While there, he worked on numerous *Star Wars* projects and the *Wheel of Time Roleplaying Game*. Fourteen months later, he returned to Oklahoma and picked up his freelance career. He has written freelance for numerous companies, including White Wolf and Steve Jackson Games. Owen now works out of a tiny cabin behind his house surrounded by books and computers, and he eats nothing but cheese and meat.

Owen loves hearing from other gamers. You can reach him at <OStephens@aol.com>.



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