

Ice Station Zulu

A Stand-Alone Adventure for the Star Wars: Edge of the Empire
Roleplaying Game by Fantasy Flight Games

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Star Wars

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Ice Station Zulu - Overview

Ice Station Zulu is a stand-alone adventure for the Star Wars: Edge of the Empire Roleplaying Game, designed to introduce new players to the rules, as well as give experienced players a fun adventure filled with intrigue and dangerous situations. It can easily be inserted into an existing campaign, to provide a unique adventure and story arc across a few sessions of play.

This adventure is intended for ADULTS. It contains mature themes and a rather excessive (and highly entertaining) amount of violence and horror-themed scenarios. The player characters also deal with addictions and other adult subject matter. This is a fun module, but strives to communicate horror – and all that implies. As such, it's written for mature players.

Included are six pre-generated player characters, whose abilities are well suited to the adventure. But if the players wish to come to the table with their own characters, they may create their own, following the rules for creating beginner characters in the Star Wars: Edge of the Empire Core Rulebook. The adventure assumes the use of the pre-generated characters, so player-created characters may necessitate adjustment of the scenarios in regards to the use of Obligation.

The pre-generated player characters are a group of former "fixers" forced into a job they'd rather not take, where environmental hazards await and investigation reveals horrors that they are not prepared for. If you are planning to act as Game Master, then read on. You should read through the entire adventure prior to the start of the first session. If you are planning to play a hero in the adventure, then STOP READING NOW to avoid spoiling the adventure for you and your group. Instead, turn to the last section of the adventure, where the Player Character biographies are located.

Adventure Summary

Ice Station Zulu involves a covert group of disreputable PCs who comprise a small, but effective, smuggling and grifting team, working jobs as specialist thieves for a crime syndicate on Bespin known as The Triumvirate. The Triumvirate has learned of an opportunity to deal a blow to the Empire by stealing a new and revolutionary Stimpack prototype, rumored to be ready for development inside an imperial penal facility on Hoth. The PCs are selected for this job, based in large part on the obligations the party has to one of the captains of the syndicate (due to an unfortunate loss at the sabacc tables, followed up by an ill-advised bet on a long shot in a pod race). The PCs are unaware that this mission is not what it seems, and The Triumvirate has an ulterior motive which they are not telling the PCs about.

Scene 1 – Arrival on Hoth

The adventure begins with the party leaving a local cantina on Bespin, after receiving their orders to steal the components and prototype of the Stimpack, as well as any all research notes - in return for completing this task, The Triumvirate will forgive a portion of the gambling debts owed by the party.

Arriving on Hoth, disguised as Imperials with prisoners for transfer, they are instead by security personnel who are confused and attempting to gain access to the prison facility, which has gone into lockdown due to an assumed prison riot. The platform personnel notice something

"off" about the party and engage them in a social encounter which may escalate to combat.

Unless the party is successful in the social encounter, they must fight their way through the dock, but will eventually find that the lockdown has overridden all external systems, preventing easy access to the facility. The team will be forced to use a maintenance entrance on the other side of the complex, but it requires the party to go outside and brave the elements.

Scene 2 – The Caverns

Traveling outside, the party will face survival in the icy conditions of Hoth – they could all suffer consequences that impact them for the rest of the adventure. As they arrive at the maintenance entrance, they discover that they must traverse an underground cave network to get into the proper facility.

Not only must they navigate through the maze of cavernous tunnels, they'll need to contend with a group of hungry wampas who've made the tunnels their home.

Scene 3 – Gaining Access

After dispatching the Wampas, the PCs can attempt to gain access to the facility, but if they fail, they'll trigger an alarm – which will lead to increased difficulties inside the penal facility. The interior of the prison will lead the team on a horrific series of grisly encounters, as they discover a dark facility filled with mangled corpses and biological terrors from another age.

Outside of a main detention area, they'll discover a wounded guard clinging to life outside of a locked door, who may transform into a ghastly figure – an attacking rakghoul!

Scene 4 – The Detention Area

Inside the detention area, the party must contend with an ever-increasing series of Fear Checks as they encounter monstrous rakghouls and mass carnage, eventually discovering a lone surviving prisoner. Who will reveal secrets about the facility and direct the team to an underground lab complex. But before they get there, they'll need to fend off another swarm of rakghoul monstrosities!

Scene 5 – The Lab

Trekking down a spiraling hallway leads to an expansive laboratory complex, filled with horrors of genetic and viral manipulation – and a few more threats to contend with.

The main lab has the answers the team seeks, along with a pair of dangerous guards driven insane by the events in the facility, who are “protecting” two of the worst specimens in the lab. The PCs will have to contend with the guards – and most likely the released specimens – while finding a way to deal with a triggered failsafe system designed to vaporize everything in the facility.

If successful, the team can recover the virus behind this insanity – and its cure. But the truth of their mission will leave them with more questions, and difficult decisions about what to do now.

Preparing for the Session

The majority of the action in the *Ice Station Zulu* adventure takes place in a very isolated location without access to the larger resources of the galaxy. Be sure to consider the following, perhaps reviewing necessary points with your players at the start of the game.

Planning for Healing

There is a great deal of physical danger in this adventure, and the pre-generated PCs have access to a fair number of Stimpacks as a part of their standard gear, but if they manage to expend these resources too early – they're not in an easy position to “go buy more”. The GM should consider the location of the party (a secret biological research facility) and can easily present the characters with accessible Stimpacks or even medical equipment, if it's truly needed. But the tense nature of this adventure should preclude the GM from allowing characters *too much* time to heal themselves through medical treatment.

Strain suffered during a scene can be removed through Resilience checks, after a character has had ten minutes of rest to attempt to shake it off.

Obligation

Roll obligation results for the party prior to the start of the session, as detailed in the *Star Wars: Edge of the Empire Core Rulebook*. An Obligation Table is provided at the start of the adventure, and assumes the game is running with a party of six PCs. (The Game Master should adjust the table according to the party makeup.) Accompanying the Obligation Table are suggested consequences for the party, should an obligation be triggered.

Destiny

At the start of the session generate a Destiny Pool by asking each player to roll a Force die \square .

Running the Adventure

As you read through the *Ice Station Zulu* adventure, you will notice several side-bars inserted throughout. These are designed to provide context and ready information for the Game Master.

Read Aloud Text

Several areas of the adventure will contain green side-bars (as seen below). These represent optional narrative text to be read to the players to establish mood, explain a scene, or relate events.

Read-Aloud Text will appear in a text box like this, and you are encouraged to read this text to your players. But feel free to substitute your own narrative description as needs arise. The Read-Aloud text is merely meant to provide an aid to the GM.

Rules Reminders

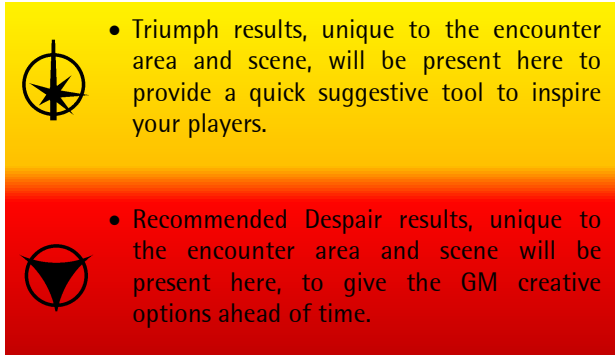
Sometimes, an encounter or scenario might involve certain rules that aren't commonly remembered off the top of your head. The adventure will sometimes include blue side-bars (as seen below) to provide quick references.

Quick Rule Summary

- These summaries are not meant to replace the proper rules, however, but to simply remind the GM of how a rule works.
- When in doubt, remember to err on the side of fun! YOU are the GM, and your rulings should be what are best for your group.

Triumph & Despair

In certain encounters and scenes, you might find a yellow and red side-bar (as seen below). This represents suggested Triumph and Despair results for the scene. Remember: while you, the GM, determine how Despair is spent, Triumph results are suggested by the Player. *The Triumph suggestions listed should simply represent solid suggestions you can offer your player, if they are having a tough time deciding what to do with their Triumph.*



- Triumph results, unique to the encounter area and scene, will be present here to provide a quick suggestive tool to inspire your players.
- Recommended Despair results, unique to the encounter area and scene will be present here, to give the GM creative options ahead of time.

Encounter Maps

All encounters are described throughout the module, but maps are not strictly needed to play this adventure. If you choose to use pre-created maps, or to create your own, simply follow the details laid out in the module.

STAR WARS

ICE STATION ZULU

Ten years after the end of the CLONE WARS, much of the galaxy is in the grip of the vast and powerful EMPIRE.

Working to consolidate its power, the EMPIRE has engaged in many secret research projects in the far-flung reaches of the galaxy.

Many of these endeavors are opportunities for the criminal underworld of the outer rim, who are eager to gain the wealth and power that these medical and military breakthroughs provide.

And the criminal underworld has no shortage of people to gain these secrets for them...

Ice Station Zulu

Obligation Check

For the start of the adventure, the party has a much higher obligation total than normally expected. This represents the PCs' situation (which led them into this adventure), and helps ensure the Triumvirate captain has the leverage he needs to gain the party's compliance. Prior to the start of the adventure, roll potential obligation effects on the chart below.

Obligation Chart

VALUE	TYPE	CONTROLLING CHARACTER
1-20	Debt	Brek Corsen
21-30	Addiction	Flyx Byx
31-40	Criminal	Mella Myson
41-60	Debt	Vor'la
61-70	Addiction	Soril Darkrider
71-80	Family	Yorbacca

Suggested Obligation Effects

If your obligation check is at or below the group's total threshold, the weight of their collective obligations is pressing down on their minds – leading to a great deal of stress. Each character reduces his Strain Threshold by 1 for the remainder of the adventure.

When a specific PC is indicated by the Obligation check, then that character's specific obligation is brought to bear against them, in an attempt to gain the compliance of the group. Brek and Vor'la have the largest obligations and are most likely to trigger – but even if another PC's obligation triggers, the Triumvirate will still appeal to outstanding gambling debts that are owed, but also offer to deal with that particular PC's issue directly. Should no obligation trigger, the Triumvirate will still offer a reduction in their collective obligations – which should be motivation enough to let the players know why they accepted the mission.

Setting up the Adventure

Before the adventure begins, the GM needs to set the stage and story for the group. Driven by the obligations of the party (which are quite high), the team has been offered the chance to work off a significant debt by doing a job for a criminal syndicate, the Triumvirate. The team just lost a *lot* of credits on some bad bets, and the Triumvirate will clear their markers in exchange for their successful completion of a dangerous job.

Should Brek or Vor'la's obligations trigger directly, it's not so much an "offer" as a demand – in lieu of a bounty on their heads for their outstanding gambling markers. If another PC's obligation triggers, the Triumvirate will target their specific obligations.

- Flyx: the Triumvirate will offer a free (rather large) supply of Booster Blue.
- Mella: the Triumvirate offers to use their influence to provide her with a new identity.
- Soril: the Triumvirate offers him exclusive membership with a core worlds escort service.
- Yorbacca: the Triumvirate knows the location of his sister, and will provide it.

Any of these secondary offerings by the Triumvirate will only be granted *after* the team's successful mission.

One of the Triumvirate's captains, Delagray, has tasked the PCs with infiltrating an Imperial prison facility on the remote and desolate ice world of Hoth, where the Empire is supposedly developing a new and powerful Stimpack. Masquerading as Imperials with a load of new prisoners, a Triumvirate agent will grant them access. It's up to them to find and steal the prototype and all research – then bring it back to Delagray. Read the following to the party to set the scene:

As you leave the cantina meeting with Captain Delagray, you feel lucky to be alive. The bad beat at the sabacc tables was one thing, but to lose another 10 thousand credits on that pod race was just foolish. You've avoided a bounty on your heads, for now, but must proceed to the remote planet of Hoth and steal some kind of new, advanced Stimpack that will help the Triumvirate deal a blow to the Imperial forces trying to gain a stronghold in the area. The only problem: the Stimpack is being developed by *the Empire*, inside one of their penal facilities on the desolate ice world.

With sets of counterfeit Imperial uniforms and prisoner's clothing – you are headed to your ship. The Triumvirate Captain's instructions were simple: Land and talk to the ground crew. Let them know you are there to meet with "Dr. Tui about the XR-12 deployment". A Triumvirate agent inside will grant you clearance into the facility. Once inside, find the prototype Stimpack and steal it, along with all the research on it. Simple. Right?

Scene 1 – Arrival on Hoth

This scene begins as the PCs land inside a covered hangar platform at Ice Station Zulu. As they disembark, they find that something is a little odd. There are no ground personnel meeting their ship, all of them seem to be tending to the entrance door to the facility and its adjacent computer terminal. Read the following to the PCs:

Flying through the swirling snows of Hoth, you transmit the landing codes provided by the Triumvirate, but get no response from Ice Station Zulu. You begin to grow worried that the codes aren't good – but soon realize that you can't hail the station *at all*. There are power and life readings, though. Scanning the area, you land in one of the covered hangars for the facility – the only one with the exterior doors open.

As you exit your vessel, something is not right; the platform personnel are huddled around a computer near the door that leads into the facility. They barely take notice of a ship landing, much less your group of "Imperials" with "prisoners" in tow.

You notice one massive, heavily muscled human guard standing at the computer terminal barking instructions, and you seek him out. *"I don't have time for you right now, we have a prison riot in progress and the facility has gone into lockdown."*

Considering the scenario – it's likely that only the three human PCs (in their counterfeit Imperial uniforms) are armed. The other three PCs in "prisoner" smocks would be unwise to carry weapons openly. Doing so will *immediately* force a confrontation with the security personnel.

However, the party does have a repulsor-sled crate (silhouette 1) aboard their ship with a keypad combination lock. It could be used to easily hide weapons on the way in – and the advance Stimpack and its research on the way out. It hovers about half a meter off the ground, and any character can move it as a Maneuver.

If any of the party wants to conceal weaponry in their clothing, they'll have ample time to do so aboard their ship. But there is a chance it may be noticed when interacting with the Guard Captain in the hangar. Concealing a weapon requires an opposed Skulduggery check, with a difficulty increased by the encumbrance of the weapon:

Weapon Encumbrance	Difficulty
<u>Encumbrance 0-1</u>	
• vibroknife	◆◆
• blaster pistol	
<u>Encumbrance 2</u>	
• heavy blaster pistol	◆◆◆
• truncheon	
<u>Encumbrance 3</u>	
• blaster carbine	◆◆◆◆
• vibrosword	
<u>Encumbrance 4+</u>	
• vibro-ax	◆◆◆◆◆
• blaster rifle	

Drawing a Concealed Weapon

The GM should feel free to constrain the easy drawing of a properly concealed weapon:

- Consider mandating that a concealed weapon requires a full action to draw it (or perhaps a full maneuver for a character with the Quick Draw talent).
- Multiple 🌀, or a 🌀 on the check to conceal the weapon may allow the character to draw it faster, or to conceal more than one weapon.

The ensuing encounter will hopefully not resort to combat. It is intended to be a social encounter between the party and the Guard Captain. The goal of the encounter is to simply get the guards to trust that the PCs really are a group of Imperial operatives there to transfer prisoners to the head of the facility's research team. The Guard Captain has been locked out of his facility with a prison riot alert in progress. He's highly agitated and annoyed – and doesn't have the computer access to verify the party's "Imperial identities".

The PCs may decide to immediately fight it out with the few guards that are there, and in their distracted state, the PCs will be given boost die (■) on their first actions if they initiate combat before the social encounter ends.

Convincing the Captain


The party can attempt to convince the Guard Captain and his men of their validity with a variety of opposed influence checks, as long as they can justify the narrative. Deception should require the least amount of justification, as it would represent a straight-forward lie; Negotiation is *extremely* difficult – as conditioned Imperial soldiers are nearly impossible to bribe. Coercion is possible, but a single failed check will immediately push the agitated guards into a firefight.

- The PCs must have 4 successful checks before 3 failed checks (except Coercion) to succeed in the social encounter.
- Any character can attempt a check, with the following difficulties (and potential consequences):


Skill	Difficulty
Coercion*	●●●●
Charm	◆◆◆●
Deception	◆◆◆●
Leadership	◆◆◆●
Negotiation	◆◆◆●■

*One failed check immediately leads to combat

- ☺ and ☹ on a check can be used to add Boost (■) and Setback (■) dice to subsequent checks, as normal. ☺ and ☹ have special consequences, as noted below.
- If the PCs fail 3 checks before succeeding on 4 checks, the guards will not assist them. They won't necessarily *attack* the party, but will insist that they all remain on the platform until the situation is under control.
- If the PCs are successful with 4 checks before they encounter 3 failures (except Coercion) then they gain the trust of the Guard Captain and his men. They'll allow the PCs to attempt to slice into the computer terminal – as they're anxious to get inside.



- The Captain accepts your credentials without question and you gain his trust immediately, ending the social encounter.



- You are immediately exposed as imposters and a fire fight begins, as well an alarm sounded.

If the party gains the Captain's trust, he'll allow them to slice the terminal to open the doors (see the "Slicing the Terminal" section, below). He'll also inform them of a secondary maintenance entrance, which his men haven't been willing to use, as it's through a cavern on the other side of the facility that requires a trek through the ice and snow to reach.

Combat Encounter Details

Should the party decide to fight, instead of talk (or if they fail the social encounter very badly), the guards will respond with violent force. The hangar platform is a relatively small area, protected from the elements by a completely enclosed alcove. Should combat break out, the following are the pertinent details of the area:

- The door to enter the facility is at long range from the PCs' ship as it lands on the platform.

- The entire area is well lit and there are no areas of darkness.
- 2 clusters of cargo crates dot the area, within Short and Medium range of the facility door – respectively.
- The Guard Captain (a huge, muscled human) starts behind the computer terminal. He commands a trio of guards (minions) who huddle near the door.
- If the PCs initiate combat before the social encounter is concluded, they'll surprise the guards, gaining a Boost die (■) on their first checks in combat.
- The guards (minions) will spread behind cover and use their pistols, if possible.
- The Guard Captain will first draw his rifle, firing from the cover of the computer terminal and switching to his Brass Knuckled fists if he becomes engaged.
- The conditioned Imperials will never surrender, and will fight to the death.

FACILITY GUARDS (3 MINIONS)

Brawn 2	Cunning 2	Presence 2
Agility 3	Intellect 1	Willpower 1

Skills: (for group of 3; downgrade by 1 for each dead minion): Cool (●●), Melee (●●), Ranged (Light) (◆●●)

Soak: 4 Defense: 0

Wound Threshold: 15 (5 each) (Crit deals 5 wounds)

Strain Threshold: – (Suffers wounds instead)

Equipment: Blaster Pistol - Integrated (Ranged [Light] [◆●●]); Damage: 6; Critical: 3; Range: Medium; Stun Setting), Vibro-knife (Melee [●●]); Damage: 3; Critical: 2; Range: Engaged; Pierce 2, Vicious 1)

GUARD CAPTAIN (RIVAL)

Brawn 4	Cunning 2	Presence 1
Agility 3	Intellect 3	Willpower 2

Skills: Brawl 2 (◆◆●●), Ranged (Heavy) 1 (◆◆●), Survival 2 (●●), Vigilance 1 (◆●)

Adversary 1: Upgrade incoming attack by 1

Soak: 5 Defense: 0

Wound Threshold: 15

Strain Threshold: – (Suffers wounds instead)

Equipment: Blaster Rifle (Ranged [Heavy] [◆◆●]); Damage: 9; Critical: 3; Range: Long; Stun Setting), Brass Knuckles (Brawl [◆◆●●]); Damage: 5; Critical: 4; Range: Engaged; Disorient 3)

Slicing the Terminal

Should the party gain the trust of the guards, they may suggest being allowed to slice the terminal and open the doors (perhaps even "forcing" one of their "prisoners" a "known slicer" to do the job). If combat occurs, victorious PCs might simply decide to slice the terminal on their own.

Slicing the terminal isn't easy to begin with, but with the facility on lockdown, the slicer would have to overcome a Daunting (◆◆◆◆◆■) Computers check with setback dice imposed by the lockdown security protocols.

If the attempt fails, the Captain (if alive) will suggest an alternate path inside the facility, but explains that it will be a journey through the ice and snow to a cavern at the far side of the complex. If the slicing attempt fails, and there are no guards left alive to communicate this, the GM should allow basic access to the terminal to communicate the "status" of the varying entrances into the facility, and their locations. All hangar platforms are on permanent lockdown; the only possibly accessible entrance is a maintenance dock (through a cavern) at the far side of the base.

In the unlikely event the slicing attempt succeeds, read this text to the players:

The door opens with a freezing whine to a horrific sight. In the darkness of the facility, you can see bodies strewn everywhere, and you hear the shrieks of animals in the adjacent security room.

A bloodied guard staggers out of the security room and stares at you with wild eyes – immediately slapping a large red button near the entrance. As the doors immediately begin closing, you see a shadowy clawed hand grasp the man's legs and yank him off his feet, dragging him back into the room!

The door slams shut just as you hear him scream with terror beneath that same animal shriek and a grisly sound of rending flesh which silences him...

If the Guard Captain and his men are still alive, they'll then refuse to allow the doors to be opened again (though they won't stop the PCs from heading to the maintenance entrance). After the direct lockdown from the (now dead) security man, any subsequent attempt to open this door should be discouraged by the GM. (Should players persist in trying, the new difficulty will be [◆◆◆◆◆■] to slice the door open).

Scene 2 – The Caverns

It's a 15 minute walk through the howling snows and ice storms of Hoth to reach the cavern entrance. The cold is beyond anything the PCs have encountered before, and they'll need to make checks to avoid Strain from the environment. Once inside, they'll face an unexpected threat before they gain access to the prison.

Dealing with the Cold

Traversing the snows of Hoth will require Survival or Endurance checks by each PC (or a group Survival check at a doubly upgraded difficulty).

A well spent destiny point by the party (or proper preparation before they left) might allow them to "have remembered" to pack cold-weather clothing onboard their ship, or perhaps to have "discovered" some at the guard station outside the hangar platform door. Any such clothing or gear will provide a Boost die (■) on any checks made to deal with the cold weather environment.

Each PC must succeed at a Hard (◆◆◆) Resilience or Survival check while traveling outside. Some team members may also consider pooling their skills for a group check. This will be possible for Survival (but obviously not for Resilience) – but will require a slower pace, careful planning, and execution, doubly upgrading the difficulty for any group Survival checks (◆◆◆).

Group Skill Checks

- When two or more party members make checks as a group, the GM may call for a single check combining the highest relevant skill rank and characteristic between the participating PCs.
- This will generate a "group dice pool" to be rolled against the difficulty.
- ALL participating PCs in the group check suffer the benefits and drawbacks of the roll, however.

Failure on a check will cause the PC to immediately suffer 2 Strain. This strain cannot be recovered through Resilience checks until the PC is in a warm location (even the caverns are too cold – the PC will have to be inside the facility). Each ☒ on a failed check forces an additional Strain on the PC. A ☹ on a failed check also reduces the PC's Strain Threshold by 1 until they can receive medical treatment (requiring an Average [◆◆] Medicine check to heal).

Success will allow the PC to make it to the caverns while resisting the biting cold of Hoth. Once inside the caverns, it's still frigid, but warm enough for the party to avoid having to make checks.

If the party managed to convince the Captain of their sincerity, and successfully maintained the illusion of "Imperials delivering prisoners", they could very well be hauling their repulsor-sled crate with them, stashed with weapons and gear. Once out-of-sight of the guards, they are free to gather their things and abandon it. Without adjustments to withstand the cold temperatures, the repulsor-sled will malfunction within a matter of minutes, requiring an average Mechanics check (◆◆) to fix in a proper technical bay.

Arrival at the Caverns

After their cold weather trek, the party will reach a cave entrance at the far side of the facility. Read the following:

Traveling even a few minutes outdoors on Hoth was very taxing on your bodies, and as you reach the cave opening you are relieved to find shelter from the wind and bitter cold – but it's still freezing in the cavern air. The caverns appear natural, but has also been excavated somewhat, and you see very sparse glow rods sticking out of the icy walls in various directions.

Your information didn't include which way to go once you got here, and there appears to be three distinct cavern paths: left, center and right. Each seems to open into more expansive cavern tunnels beyond, and it is not readily identifiable as to which path you should take.

There is some kind of small metal sign that looks chewed and tattered, tacked between the right cavern and the center one. But, as you move closer to it, you hear a faint noise echoing somewhere in the chambers ahead.

If the team heads the wrong way, they'll get ambushed – but they may have the chance to prepare for it. They'll have a few minutes to examine the scene. (Upon closer inspection, the sign between the right and center tunnels simply reads "BEWARE".) The GM should call for an opposed group Perception check (◆◆◆) for the entire party, to both ascertain the scene and sense the presence of the wampas stalking the caves.

If the PCs are successful, they notice a faint indentation where it seems vehicles have passed in the center cavern. With ○○ or more they also notice a partially frozen carcass hanging against the wall of the right cavern path and what appears to be a large amount of frozen blood pooled on the ice floor of the left cavern path – some distance ahead.

If the group manages ☆☆☆ or a ☺ on the check, then they also hear the hungry growl of a beast coming from the left tunnel – and recognize it as a wampa!

If the players gain the knowledge to guide themselves through the central cavern path, they'll avoid an ambush and face the hungry wampas with a bit of an advantage. If they head down either the left or right tunnel paths, they'll be ambushed by the wampas.

Group Skill Checks

- When the party makes checks as a whole, the GM calls for a single check combining the highest relevant skill rank and characteristic in the party.
- For the Perception check (if using the pre-generated PCs), the group Perception check would be ●◆◆ (using Brek's Cunning of 3 and Mella's Force Talent and Perception rank of 1).

When Wampas Attack

If the group did not succeed on their Perception check and chose either the right or the left caverns, they will immediately meet 2 wampas springing towards them out of the darkness. If they managed to succeed and move into the middle cavern, the hungry wampas will give chase. Read the following to set the scene:


Suddenly, you hear rushing steps behind you and turn to see two giant white-furred beasts racing towards you! Curled tusk-like horns extend down to blood-stained jaws that snarl as thick, clawed arms rise to attack. Wampas!

Moving toward you with unexpected speed, you see a cold and desperate hunger in their eyes. They are out for blood and you are definitely on the menu.


The following are the details of the encounter scene:

- If the wampa threat was recognized by the party, they're ready for trouble, and roll Cool for initiative – otherwise, Vigilance is used.
- If the party navigated to the center cavern path, both wampas begin at the entrance to the center cavern – at Medium range, behind the PCs.
- If the party chose the right or left path, both wampas ambush them from opposite sides of the cavern wall – at Short range. The wampas also receive a Boost die (■) on their initiative checks.
- The center cavern is free of obstructions or cover (vehicles regularly pass through it), but the left and right caverns have numerous stalagmites and columns of ice, which can provide cover.

- The wampas are hungry, and very deadly. But if one is killed, the other will flee if has suffered wounds at or greater than half its threshold.



- A powerful attack shatters part of the ice floor, sending one of the wampas prone.
- Stray snow and ice particles fly into one of the wampa's eyes, temporarily blinding it.



- An ice stalagmite falls and smashes into a PC, knocking him prone or knocking his weapon away.
- One of the wampas howls, calling a third to the fight (it arrives the following round).

WAMPA (RIVAL)

Brawn 5 Cunning 3 Presence 1
 Agility 2 Intellect 1 Willpower 1

Skills: Brawl 2 (◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆), Perception 2 (◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆), Stealth 2 (◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆), Survival 2 (◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆)

Feral Strength 2: +2 Damage to all Brawl and Melee checks

Adversary 1: Upgrade incoming attack by 1
 Soak: 5 Defense: 0

Wound Threshold: 22
 Strain Threshold: – (Suffers wounds instead)

Equipment: Claws and Teeth (Brawl [◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆]);
 Damage: 7; Critical: 3; Range: Engaged; Pierce 1)

The Aftermath

After defeating the wampas, if the party lingers in an attempt to ascertain which way to go, they begin hearing more noises similar to the wampas they just fought that come from the depths of both the left and right caverns, making the path obvious down the center cavern.

Once committed to moving down the central cavern path, the PCs will reach the maintenance access door after about 10 minutes of foot travel. At this point in time, they've "rested" for a good bit, and should be allowed to make Resilience checks to recover Strain (including Strain they may have suffered in the snows outside).

It's entirely possible, considering what they've seen (especially if they caught a glimpse inside the security room after they first arrived), that they party will assume the prison facility has been invaded by wampas. The GM should encourage this speculation! Because, as the PCs will soon see, the truth is far more sinister.

Scene 3 – Gaining Access

As they arrive at the maintenance dock entrance, the team finds no presence at the door at all, only a computer terminal. They'll need to gain access – and they risk sounding an alarm when they do so. The PCs can make the choice to try and open the door by slicing into the computer, or by forcing the door open. Read the following to the PCs:

As you reach the maintenance entrance, there is a dock about a meter above you, clearly designed for land speeders. There is a step ladder to access it from the floor of the cavern.

Once up on the dock, you can see a loading door which is closed, but there is a small computer terminal next to it that appears to be operative. There is also an access panel to the right of the door, but the indicator on it is blinking red. The access panel has a series of code symbol keys on it, which are most likely used to open the door.

Slicing the computer is the most straightforward option – and can give the party additional information with a good check. The terminal is linked to the main facility system, and thus has its difficulty upgraded by the lockdown protocols – but it's an isolated terminal and much easier to slice.

- Success on an Average (◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆) Computers check, upgraded due to the lockdown will unlock and open the door.
- With 🙄🙄 or more (or a 🙄) on a successful check, they can also gain access to the layout of the station. It indicates a grid of corridors and cell blocks, with a laboratory complex beneath it all (where the team will most likely find what they're looking for). Access to the layout will show them a direct path to this laboratory area.
- 🙄 on the check will trigger a perimeter alarm (which will alert the inhabitants of the facility to the PC's location).

If the team fails to (or decides not to) slice the terminal, then their only option is forcing the door open by hotwiring the door panel.

- This requires a successful Easy (◆) Mechanics check which immediately grants access.
- However, opening the door in this fashion (easy as it is) will automatically trigger the perimeter alarm. It's a loud claxon that will make the first encounter just inside the station more difficult by drawing in more threats.

Once Inside

After the PCs have opened the doors, they are treated to a gruesome sight, and the GM reads this out loud to them:

As the door opens, the stench of death hits you first; unmistakable. Stepping inside, you are shocked to see half-eaten corpses of what used to be support staff, guards and some prisoners strewn about. Fear begins to take hold as you hear animalistic shrieks coming from the distance, you know not where.

In front of you is a long dark corridor, and the room you are now in is a square receiving bay that has very little light, only provided by the arc shorts of the exposed wires that used to be light fixtures. Everything in this room has been destroyed in what looks like a terrible fight. On the floor you see a figure that looks like an animal – but nothing you've ever seen before.

Bi-pedal, but with long, loping arms ending in sharp claws; a grotesquely wide, fanged maw; and splotchy gray skin slick with mucous. The thing is clearly dead, after being impaled with what looks like shelving that was fashioned into a spear. Perhaps the most disturbing thing about the creature is its garb; it appears to be wearing a torn prison uniform, or at least pieces of it.

This shouldn't be what the party is expecting. PCs can make individual checks (with the following difficulties) to learn more from the carcass:

- Knowledge (Xenology), Hard (◆◆◆): Success will reveal that this is likely a "rakghoul" – a near mythic creature from the days of the Old Republic. Each 🌀 on a successful check can reveal one of the following additional pieces of information:
 - Rakghouls are not "born" but created when a humanoid is exposed to a virus – which is transmitted by the creatures themselves. Legend has it that the virus was first created by a deranged Sith Lord.
 - There was supposedly a cure developed for the Rakghoul Virus; a "Rakghoul Serum" – but no known samples survived (if they ever existed).
- Medicine, Hard (◆◆◆): Success will reveal that the carcass was originally human, but underwent some kind of radical physical transformation. Each 🌀 on a successful check can reveal one of the following additional pieces of information:
 - Scans show the subject underwent rapid metamorphic change at a genetic level – most likely the result of some kind of retro-viral infection.

- The subject's cranial capacity has been reduced by half, and its stomach is filled with human flesh.
- Traces of the mutagenic retro-virus are in the subject's saliva and the mucous on its claws.

Fear of the Unknown

At this point, the group should be stricken with fear (even more so if successful checks give them insight into what they're facing). But even without that knowledge, they know there's some kind of monster(s) rampaging through the facility – and probably packs of hungry wampas in the caves outside. And if the team doesn't make good on their deal with the Triumvirate, they've got a life-threatening bounty waiting for them. The situation is grim, and could take an immediate toll on the team.

Each PC must make a Fear Check of upgraded Average (◆◆) difficulty. The effects of the PCs' Fear Checks will take hold in the subsequent encounter with the prison guard, detailed in the "A Man in Need" section, below.

Fear Checks

When making a Fear Check, the character can decide whether to use Cool or Discipline, with various effects, depending on the results:

- ▼: The character adds ■ to any check he makes during the encounter.
- 🌀: The character suffers Strain equal to the number of ▼. If the check generates 🌀🌀🌀 or more, the character can instead be staggered for his first turn (unable to take any actions).
- 🌀: The character is so frightened, all checks he makes have their difficulty upgraded by 1 until the end of the encounter.
- ✨ or multiple ✨: The character avoids any fear effects, except those triggered by 🌀.
- 🌀: Gain ■ on your next check in the encounter. Spend multiple 🌀 to grant ■ to other character's next checks.
- 🌀: Cancels all penalties from Fear Checks for the rest of the encounter – no matter the source.

A Man in Need

As the party continues down the corridor, just a few meters from the corpse of the creature, they'll see a guard lying on the floor, shaking, and obviously wounded. At first glance, he has gashes across his chest and a wide bite mark on his thigh. The instant he notices the PCs, the guard begins screaming to them for help. (Within a few moments, he'll begin his transformation.)

- To help the man, a PC can attempt first aid with a Formidable (◆◆◆◆) Medicine check. If the check fails, the guard will utter the words "They change or kill

everything... everything..." He'll then drop a code cylinder, motion down the corridor, and then start convulsing violently. (He then immediately begins to transform.)

- If the PCs attempt to question him about what happened, he will only utter the words noted above, drop the code cylinder, and then start convulsing violently. (He then immediately begins to transform.)
- If the PCs are successful with the Medicine check, they will have abated the flow of the virus (and the guard's transformation). He'll give them the code cylinder and explain that it's a guard-key to the detention area. He'll pass out from his strain momentarily, but will be able to answer a few questions before then.
 - He's just a prison guard, recently out of the academy.
 - He'll tell them that "monsters" are killing everything and changing some people *into* monsters.
 - If asked about the Stimpack research or "XR-12", he'll reveal that there are labs in the lower levels, and that the researchers were using the prisoners as test subjects. But he doesn't know what they were working on
 - If the PC's mention "Dr. Tui", he'll respond that Dr. Tui is the lead researcher at the facility.

If the guard begins convulsing, he then starts to change into a monstrous being like the corpse the party saw in the receiving area. If this occurs, read the following:

Suddenly, his shaking turns into violent convulsions! He groans and his eyes roll back into his head as his skin grows wet, clammy, and begins to dull. He howls as you hear bones and sinews pop and snap; his arms and legs lengthen and his fingers erupt with sharp claws! The corners of his mouth split open to reveal a gaping maw filled with needle-like teeth! He stares at you with what are (for now) still human eyes – and gives you a look of pleading fear...

Reacting quickly, the PCs may elect to kill him immediately. But if they wait, he will become a rakghoul and will immediately attack them.

If the party triggered the perimeter alarm when entering through the maintenance bay – then the noise will also have attracted another group of rakghouls, which will arrive via a maintenance duct while the guard transforms (or after the PCs save him). If this occurs, the GM should use the stat block for a Rakghoul Pack (in Scene 4 of the adventure). The trio of rakghoul minions will burst into the room at Medium range from the PCs.

RAKGHOU (MINION)

Brawn 3 Cunning 2 Presence 1
 Agility 3 Intellect 1 Willpower 2

Skills: Brawl (◆◆◆), Perception (◆◆)

Rakghoul Disease: If a triumph is rolled on any attack against a humanoid, the target must make a Resilience check (◆◆◆). Failure means the target is infected and will begin feeling the effects of the virus in one hour

Feral Strength 1: +1 Damage to all Brawl and Melee checks

Soak: 3 Defense: 0
 Wound Threshold: 7 (Crit deals 7 wounds)
 Strain Threshold: – (Suffers wounds instead)

Equipment: Claws and Teeth (Brawl [◆◆◆]; Damage: 4; Critical: 3; Range: Engaged; Vicious 1)

The Rakghoul Disease

When a rakghoul successfully attacks a humanoid with its teeth or claws, and rolls a ⊕, it has passed the virus to its target.

- The targeted character must immediately make a Resilience check (◆◆◆).
- If they succeed, they have fended off the virus.
- If they fail, they have become infected; and within 1 hour, the transformation may begin.
- 1 hour after infection, the target can attempt another Resilience check (◆◆◆) to hold off the transformation for a time. If successful, they keep the transformation at bay – but must attempt another Resilience check every hour, with an upgraded difficulty each time.
- If the infected target fails one of these checks, they immediately transform into a mindless rakghoul.
- In lieu of a Resilience check, a Daunting (◆◆◆◆◆) Medicine check can be made to slow the spread of the virus and hold off transformation for an hour, but the infection cannot be cured without administering the Rakghoul Serum.
- Even with the Rakghoul Serum, a fully transformed rakghoul cannot be "cured."

After the encounter, the party can use the guard's code cylinder to open the detention area door at the far side of the corridor. Make sure the PCs do not discard this cylinder as it will access many areas of the prison, acting as a guard's key to move about.

Scene 4 – The Detention Area

Entering the detention area, the team will find more chaos and grisly violence than any of them have seen in their careers. The stench of blood is everywhere, thick enough to permeate everything in the environment. Heaven knows how many of these monsters are in the facility. Read the following to the PCs:

The area is poorly lit; and you hear more shrieks of animals that you know to be monstrously consuming any flesh they can find.

Fear courses through you as a few flashes of light illuminate the detention area. You also hear a steady tapping noise coming from the right side of the room, but you cannot see far enough to know what it is. You are aware that the entrance to the lab is in that general direction, but there is no way to know if that entrance is blocked or if you will find more monsters there.

Fear of a Gruesome Death

Trapped in an enclosed space with monsters that don't just kill and eat you – but can turn you into one of their own kind – is a terrifying proposition. Throughout Scene 4, the party runs the risk of encountering groups of rakghouls. Each time they do, every PC must make another Fear Check of doubly upgraded Average (●●) difficulty at the start of that encounter. The effects stay with them until they make a new check (at the start of a new encounter) or they leave the detention area.

Fear Checks

When making a Fear Check, the character can decide whether to use Cool or Discipline, with various effects, depending on the results:

- ▼: The character adds ■ to any check he makes during the encounter.
- ☠: The character suffers Strain equal to the number of ▼. If the check generates ☠☠☠ or more, the character can instead be staggered for his first turn (unable to take any actions).
- ☹: The character is so frightened, all checks he makes have their difficulty upgraded by 1 until the end of the encounter.
- ☆ or multiple ☆: The character avoids any fear effects, except those triggered by ☠.
- 👉: Gain ■ on your next check in the encounter. Spend multiple 👉 to grant ■ to other character's next checks.
- ⊕: Cancels all penalties from Fear Checks for the rest of the encounter – no matter the source.

Navigating through the Cell Blocks

The PCs have entered the detention area from the south. If the party elects not to follow the tapping sounds to the west, they can wander the length of the detention area in search of the entrance to the lower-level labs. The detention area is constructed like a grid, with lengthy corridors crisscrossing between squares of four cell blocks. This provides plenty of cover, for both the PCs and the rakghouls. Each cell they pass is deserted. Many of the cell doors are open, blood caking the floors. Most are filled with bodies (or pieces of bodies) too mangled to make out.

Off of the east wall is an access causeway that will ultimately lead back to the landing platforms (and the party's ship); but it is filled with rakghouls. The northern wall of the detention area has numerous corridors that lead to barracks, offices, and other maintenance sections of the prison. But to the west is the sound of that tapping – and the direction where the team will find the entrance to the lab levels below.

Heading that direction is the smartest thing to do – but if the PCs persist in exploring elsewhere, the GM should present an encounter with 1 to 2 Rakghoul Packs (detailed below) each time the group decides to explore away from the tapping sounds. Each encounter will require a new Fear Check (●●) from all PCs.

The Panicked Prisoner


If the PCs follow the tapping sounds, they will find a solitary cell in the northwest corner of the detention area that has a prisoner inside, quite panicked. He appears uninjured, but his eyes are hollow with fear. He spastically bangs his head on his cot (the tapping sound they heard) and wrings his hands constantly. Though nearly insane with terror, he is coherent, and can communicate. A brief exchange with the prisoner will reveal several pieces of information:

- He was in his cell when the lights went out. He watched the first monster come and attack the guards, biting several before they killed it. Just before lunch time, he watched the first guard return from the infirmary – then transform into a monster just outside his cell.
- More monsters came, and the guards opened the cells to give them "new targets" – but they forgot about him.
- If asked about "Dr. Tui" or "XR-12", he'll have no knowledge of either.
- If asked about the "research" going on in the labs, the prisoner will point the way to the lab entrance (down a nearby hallway) and admit that several prisoners were often taken down there – though he never was. Some never came back.


- He'll also relate that a group of surviving guards locked themselves inside the lab after all this started – no one's come out since.
- The PCs' new code cylinder will open his cell door – but he will resolutely REFUSE any attempt to be let out of his cell. It has kept him safe, and he won't leave it. If the party chooses to open it anyway – he won't leave and will demand they close the door and lock it again.

Any discussion with the prisoner will eventually attract the attention of two Rakghoul Packs and another combat encounter will ensue. The following are the pertinent details of the scene:

- 2 Rakghoul Packs will come rampaging down the northern and western hallways, heading toward the corner cell. Both begin at Medium range from the PCs.
- The PCs must begin the encounter by making Fear Checks (●●), as normal.
- If the prisoner's door is open, one of the rakghouls will attack and kill him as soon as they can reach his cell.
- Nearby corners and open cells can provide cover for the PCs.



- A PC's attack forces or lures one of the rakghouls into a nearby cell, then slams the door shut on it.



- With a barking cry, one of the rakghouls alerts another pack (it arrives the following round).

RAKGHOUL PACK (3 MINIONS)

Brawn 3	Cunning 2	Presence 1
Agility 3	Intellect 1	Willpower 2

Skills: (for group of 3; downgrade by 1 for each dead minion): Brawl (●●●), Perception (●●)

Rakghoul Disease: If a triumph is rolled on any attack against a humanoid, the target must make a Resilience check (●●●). Failure means the target is infected and will begin feeling the effects of the virus in one hour

Feral Strength 1: +1 Damage to all Brawl and Melee checks

Soak: 3 Defense: 0

Wound Threshold: 21 (7 each) (Crit deals 7 wounds)

Strain Threshold: – (Suffers wounds instead)

Equipment: Claws and Teeth (Brawl [●●●]); Damage: 4; Critical: 3; Range: Engaged; Vicious 1)

Getting to Safety

After being clued in to the location of the entrance to the lab, the PCs should be eager to get there – and away from this nightmare. But as they make their way down hallway to the lab entrance, they hear more shrieks and the sound of Rakghouls advancing toward them. Read the following to the PCs:

As you plod down the hallway towards a white access door marked "Laboratory", you hear a piercing shriek and turn to see three more of the monsters loping towards you, drool streaming from their mouths!

Turning, you race towards the Lab door – only to find it locked...

If the players immediately ask to open the door by using the code cylinder, then the GM should allow them to immediately open it, scramble in, and lock it behind them before the rakghouls reach them.

But if they take too long or make any attempt to open the door other than using the guard's code cylinder, they'll be forced into another encounter with 1 Rakghoul Pack. They'll need to make *another* Fear Check (●●) and take on the rakghouls in a cramped hallway with no cover.

After (or during) the encounter, if the PCs don't think to use the code cylinder on the door, the lock can be bypassed with a Hard (◆◆◆) Mechanics or Skullduggery check.

Scene 5 – The Laboratory

Finally gaining access to the Laboratory Complex under the facility, the team finds it mostly well-lit and empty. A wide stairwell extends deep into the ground, with branching offices and medical facilities along the way. At the bottom of the stairwell is the main "Experimental Lab", where the team will find their answers. Read the following to the PCs:

As the door seals shut behind you, you turn to see a stark white and very well-lit stairwell. It's wide, and leads down over 50 meters into the ground. You spy an exit corridor about halfway down; and a sign across from you on the wall lays out a simple iconic map that labels that area as "Research Offices" and "Infirmary". At the bottom of the stairwell, the map indicates a large area marked with a Biohazard symbol, labeled "Experimental Lab". You hear nothing but your own breathing, and there doesn't appear to be anyone in sight...

Fear of Becoming a Monster

By now, the party has probably figured out that those attacked by the monstrous rakghouls are likely to *become* rakghouls; and that one or more of the party has probably been infected with the virus after fighting their way through the detention area. At this point, the GM should drive home that fear for the PCs. If they can't find some kind of cure – they could be doomed to transform into mindless wretches that feed off the flesh of the living.

The laboratory may hold some hope, but the innate fear of the situation should slam them like a crushing weight. This includes PCs who were wounded, but not actually infected (because their attacker didn't roll a Triumph, or because they made their Resilience check). Their *characters* don't know any of that. All they know is that those wounded by the creatures can end up becoming those creatures – and in their minds, the fear is the same.

Any PC who took Wounds from a rakghoul bite or scratch will need to make a doubly upgraded Hard Fear Check (◆◆◆◆) when they enter the Laboratory stairwell. The consequences of these checks will stay with the character *for the rest of the adventure* – or until they discover and administer the Rakghoul Serum.

Fear Checks

When making a Fear Check, the character can decide whether to use Cool or Discipline, with various effects, depending on the results:

- ▼: The character adds ■ to any check he makes during the encounter.
- ☹: The character suffers Strain equal to the number of ▼. If the check generates ☹☹☹ or more, the character can instead be staggered for his first turn (unable to take any actions).
- ☹: The character is so frightened, all checks he makes have their difficulty upgraded by 1 until the end of the encounter.
- ✨ or multiple ✨: The character avoids any fear effects, except those triggered by ☹.
- 🙏: Gain ■ on your next check in the encounter. Spend multiple 🙏 to grant ■ to other character's next checks.
- 🛑: Cancels all penalties from Fear Checks for the rest of the encounter – no matter the source.

The Mid-Level Facilities

The team will most likely stop mid-way down the stairwell to explore the branching "Research Offices" and "Infirmary", and the GM should encourage them to. Several clues are to be found there – though there is

danger, as well. If the party decides to stop and explore, read the following:

Mid-way down the stairwell, you come to a branching corridor, which the map labeled as "Research Offices" and "Infirmary". You see two office doors on the left, two on the right, and a door at the end of the hall marked with a medical symbol. The area looks to be deserted, and the lights in all the offices are off, except for the 2nd office on the left.

In truth, the area is *almost* deserted. The infirmary doctor, bitten by an infected prisoner he was treating, transformed several hours ago. After shedding his clothing, he was unable to leave (the top and bottom doors of the stairwell were sealed) and found a dark spot to hide. He's currently lurking in the shadows under a desk in the first office on the right – but won't attack the PCs until he is discovered, or until they've gone past his office hiding place.

- If the team chooses to search every office, simply turning on the lights in the first office on the left will reveal the rakghoul, and he'll immediately attack.
- The office is fairly small, and anyone inside is within Short or Engaged range of each other.
- If the PCs proceed to the Infirmary, the rakghoul will creep out of the office and sneak up behind the rear-most PC for an attack.
- If this occurs, each PC can make an opposed Perception check (◆◆◆) to notice the creature as it exits the office door at Medium range from the PCs.

RAKGHOUL (MINION)

Brawn 3 Cunning 2 Presence 1
Agility 3 Intellect 1 Willpower 2

Skills: Brawl (◆◆◆), Stealth (◆◆◆)

Rakghoul Disease: If a triumph is rolled on any attack against a humanoid, the target must make a Resilience check (◆◆◆). Failure means the target is infected and will begin feeling the effects of the virus in one hour

Feral Strength 1: +1 Damage to all Brawl and Melee checks

Soak: 3 Defense: 0
Wound Threshold: 7 (Crit deals 7 wounds)
Strain Threshold: – (Suffers wounds instead)

Equipment: Claws and Teeth (Brawl [◆◆◆]);
Damage: 4; Critical: 3; Range: Engaged; Vicious 1

The party should be able to make short work of the creature; and can then fully explore the offices and infirmary. Without the need for skill checks, the team can easily discover several pieces of data, clues, and computer files in each of the offices and the Infirmary. If the party spends time searching each room, they discover the following:

- There is torn and discarded lab coat under a desk in one of the offices. Clipped to it is an Imperial ID card for the infirmary doctor, and in the coat pocket is an unmarked code cylinder (which will open, among other things, the Experimental Lab door at the bottom of the stairwell).
- In the lit second office on the left, there is a secure cabinet labeled "Fox Echo Tango Tango 1". But it is locked.
 - The code cylinder in the lab coat will open it.
 - A PC could also force the cabinet open with a Hard (◆◆◆) Mechanics check.
 - Inside is a tiny, portable freezer unit with a vial of liquid, labeled "Juliet Foxtrot Alpha".
 - No more details are apparent, but the freezer unit looks portable (about the size of a datapad) and has plenty of power.
- Examining purchase orders and transfer papers logged in the offices, it's clear the penal facility was transporting more prisoners *in* than out; and far more than the facility could support.
- The doctor's personal terminal in the Infirmary logs several internal communications to a "Dr. Tui".
 - They note frustration at "being unable to treat the rakghoul infection in the prisoners without the antigen" and requests that samples of the "antigen" be made available.
 - A single reply is saved from "Dr. Tui", explaining that the antigen is not fully tested, and cannot be clinically administered at this time.

To Your Health

The Infirmary is also well stocked with state-of-the-art medical treatment equipment – even a bacta tank. Realistically, there won't be time for a dip in a bacta tank for any of them. But the PCs may attempt to use the facility perform First Aid. Any such checks will take at least 10 minutes, each – so the party must be wary. Some may have less than an hour before they succumb to the rakghoul virus. (Checks to heal critical injuries require at least an hour to attempt.) Use of a liter of bacta *from* the tank, in conjunction with a Medicine check for First Aid, will automatically provide a Boost die (■) to the check, and reduce the time needed to make the check by half.

Though much of the day-to-day infirmary supplies were exhausted during the outbreak, the GM may also consider

allowing an Average (◆◆) group Perception check to discover a stash of 6 normal Stimpacks hidden behind a drawer in the Infirmary doctor's desk.

Group Skill Checks

- When the party makes checks as a whole, the GM calls for a single check combining the highest relevant skill rank and characteristic in the party.
- For the Perception check (if using the pre-generated PCs), the group Perception check would be ◆◆◆◆ (using Brek's Cunning of 3 and Mella's Force Talent and Perception rank of 1).

The communication from "Dr. Tui" should clue the team in on the fact that there *is* a cure for the virus, even if it is "untested". And that should be their primary motivator to get to the lower lab.

Accessing the Experimental Lab

If the party is ready to move on, a trip to the bottom of the stairwell will take them to the large, medically sealed doors of the "Experimental Lab". The doors are locked, and there is no computer terminal – though there is a code cylinder access panel beside the doors.

If the players use the code cylinder discovered in the lab coat, they'll find that the doors immediately open. If the party bypassed the mid-level facilities or did not discover the doctor's code cylinder, the one they have from the guard will not work. They can attempt to bypass the lock with an upgraded Hard (◆◆◆◆) Mechanics or Skullduggery check. If they fail, the GM may suggest searching for additional clues in the offices and guide the players back to the lab coat.

Experimental Abominations

Entering the "Experimental Lab", the PCs will finally discover the truth about their mission, and the ultimate fate of "Dr. Tui". Read the following to the PCs as they enter:

With a soft puff of air, the laboratory doors open to a startling research facility. The room is circular, with a massive, pulsing power conduit that stretches from the floor to the ceiling, ringed by computer terminals.

Lab stations and unrecognizable medical equipment are placed with some strategic purpose, leaving walkways to two unmarked doors at opposite ends of the room. Several flat tables with restraining cuffs lay empty, and banks of test tubes and vials crowd the area. But the most disturbing sight is the "tanks" which dominate the far wall.

A dozen massive tanks, filled with what looks like bacta, house a grotesque menagerie floating in their depths. Clearly rakghouls, like those you encountered in the levels above, some appear smaller and partially developed. They look much different from the others, sporting patches of fur, scales, and extra limbs – almost as if they'd been "infused" with the DNA of other creatures.

What draws your eye immediately are the 2 center tanks, much larger than the rest. They house normal looking rakghouls – as "normal" as these creatures can get, at any rate – except for their increased size; they're almost a meter taller than the others, and lack the hunched stature and elongated arms. One is clearly wearing the torn remnants of a lab coat, the other, an Imperial Officer's uniform.

The very last tank, next to the far door to the right, has clearly been shattered. Shards of glass surround it, and the nearby floor is still wet with the tank fluid. You see no sign of an occupant, and it suddenly occurs to you how all this undoubtedly started.

It's here the PCs can begin their search. But they must be careful, as they're likely to alert a pair of insane laboratory guards behind the left door, both bent on protecting the contents of the lab.

The PCs will not have to search too hard to find what they seek. Success on an Average (◆◆) Perception check will lead them to notice a closed glass storage unit labeled "XR-12". Inside are 20 vials in two neat rows: the top row of 10 vials are labeled "XR-12 Virus" and the bottom row of 10 vials are labeled "XR-12 Antigen". Any ☞ generated on a successful check can also reveal one of the following details:

- From the research notes, it's clear that "Dr. Tui" is (or was) the research head of Ice Station Zulu – and had extensive knowledge in genetics and virology.
- The team discovers a message from "Cpt. Delagray" (their Triumvirate handler) to Dr. Tui, arranging for a "group of agents" to arrive and take possession of "XR-12 samples" – though it's not clear why the Doctor would have agreed.
- Based on medical logs and personal notes, it seems that one of the "subjects" (in the busted tank) unexpectedly awoke from stasis 6 days ago and attacked 2 lab technicians before it was killed. Dr. Tui knew the subject was contagious, but his research notes make it clear that he elected to "not administer the antigen" to its victims, hoping for the chance to watch the progression of the virus in an uncontrolled environment.

Much of the above information can also be gleaned with an Average (◆◆) Computers check at the lab's terminals.

If a ☞ is rolled on the check, the PCs notice a crucial detail. The XR-12 vial case is not locked, but it does have a nearly invisible alarm mechanism. Disabling the alarm will require a Formidable (◆◆◆◆) Mechanics or Skullduggery check. But in their rush to access the "antigen" (Rakghoul Serum), the PCs are likely to throw caution to the wind and immediately open the case to administer it.

Opening the case without disabling the alarm will have two very bad (and very likely, considering the need for a ☞) consequences. The first will be to alert the pair of Laboratory Guards in the next room, who will enter and confront the party. The second will be the triggering of a station-wide failsafe system intended to prevent an outbreak. If the PCs trigger the alarm, read the following:

As you open the door to the case, a chirping alarm begins to sound in the lab. You then hear the pulsing power conduit in the center of the room begin to thrum faster, along with the sound of an opening door at the far side of the lab.

Stepping out of some kind of lounge, you see a pair of security guards in black Imperial armor, wielding force pikes, with carbines slung at their sides. They wear no helmets, and their muscled necks twitch with fear and confusion. Blood-shot eyes with vacant stares peer at you with a manic insanity as they speak to you in a low monotone.

"You must not wake the sleepers..." one says.

"We protect them," says the other, "They are changing. They will change us. They will change the galaxy..."

The first one stares at you, his eyes finally coming into focus, *"Will... you be changed as well?"*

You swallow, and pause – just now noticing a small countdown timer that has blinked to life on the main console of the power conduit: 10 minutes, and counting down. You're not sure what that means, but it can't be good, as the conduit begins growing warmer and thrumming faster and faster.

Meanwhile, the two large rakghouls in the center tanks appear to be stirring at the sound of the alarm, their claws twitching and bubbles escaping from their mouths. This is just perfect.

The 10 minute countdown to a station-wide incineration has already begun, and the PCs are faced with two nasty rakghoul fiends about to "hatch" and heavily armed crazy guards intent on protecting them. Their ultimate goal is to get back to their ship with samples of the XR-12 Virus and Antigen (after most likely dosing themselves), but getting out alive is a much bigger concern right now.

The guards are confused, but won't attack the PCs until they are convinced of their motives. Or, if one of the PCs attempts to remove any of the XR-12 vials or destroy the rakghouls, the guards will grow enraged and attack. But if the PCs can hold their cool – and make no sudden movements – they can attempt to talk down the Laboratory Guards and convince them to abandon this insanity.

If the Party Gets Very Lucky...

It's *possible* (but highly unlikely) that the PCs noticed the alarm on the XR-12 case, and managed to successfully disarm it. If this occurs, not only does the station failsafe not begin, but the lab guards are not immediately alerted. The team can abscond with the vials, and if they don't disturb the lounge where the guards are, they could escape via the emergency hatch. If this occurs, the GM will need to modify the above narration and skip directly to the "Conclusion" of the adventure.

But even in the above scenario, it's likely that the PCs will stumble upon the guards in the lounge as they explore. In that event, proceed as normal with the sections below, just without the threat of the station failsafe. Additionally, if the team is unable to talk down the guards, the rakghouls will awaken at the sound of combat (not the alarm) and emerge from their tanks in the 3rd round of initiative.

Talking down the Guards

The Laboratory Guards have spent the last few days in a horror unlike anything they've experienced – and it's broken their minds. Their Imperial conditioning forced them to devote themselves to a mad scientist who viewed the rakghoul outbreak as a "gift" to the galaxy, so much so that he subjected himself and the prison warden to a modified version of the virus, indoctrinating the guards with his perverse philosophy and commanding them to protect him while he "slept".


Breaking the mental fugue of the guards can be accomplished with a variety of opposed influence checks, as long as the PC can justify the narrative. Charm, lies, threats, or appeals to the "chain of command" are all possible avenues; but Negotiation is nearly an Impossible option – as the guards care little for money or reward.


In their conditioned state, this will be a difficult task, and the threat of the countdown timer will also upgrade the difficulty for the PCs.

- The PCs must have 4 successful checks before 2 failed checks to succeed in this social encounter.
- Any character can attempt a check, with the following difficulties:

Skill	Difficulty
Coercion	◆◆◆◆◆
Charm	◆◆◆◆◆
Deception	◆◆◆◆◆
Leadership	◆◆◆◆◆
Negotiation	◆◆◆◆◆

- ☺ and ☹ on a check can be used to add Boost (■) and Setback (■) dice to subsequent checks, as normal. ☺ and ☹ have special consequences, as noted below.
- If the PCs fail 2 checks before succeeding on 4 checks, the guards will immediately attack.
- If the PCs are successful with 4 checks before they encounter 2 failures then they'll talk down the guards and break them out of their mental delusion.

-  The guards are immediately brought back to reality, and abandon their delusion, ending the social encounter.

-  Your words enrage one of the guards, who screams, "YOU WILL NOT STOP THE CHANGE!" They immediately attack.

If the guards attack (due to a failed social encounter, or a too-soon action by the PCs), refer to the "Combat Encounter Details" section, below.

If the guards are talked down, they'll allow the PCs to leave with the XR-12 samples, as long as they can come with them. They'll also point to the other door out of the lab, explaining that it leads to an emergency hatch to the docking platforms up top. The PCs might also decide to immediately focus on disarming the station failsafe. But before they can get too far, the pair of rakghouls awake and burst forth from their tanks! Refer to the "Combat Encounter Details" section, below.

Combat Encounter Details

If combat breaks out, the PCs may face multiple dangerous threats. Without the guards on their side, this encounter is *extremely* difficult; and is complicated by a looming self-destruct countdown that could vaporize everything if not dealt with quickly. The following are the details of the encounter scene:

The former doctor and prison warden are now rakghoul fiends, possessing enough intelligence to fight with real tactics and strategy. Believing themselves to be superior life forms, they will not stop until everyone in the lab is dead or infected. (However, they don't have the presence of mind to realize that the failsafe countdown is in effect).

If the PCs are unable to stop the countdown, they may elect to leave through the emergency hatch in the midst of combat. Depending on the scenario, this could be entirely reasonable, and could create an exciting scene! The emergency hatch door opens onto a 50 meter ladder that climbs to an escape hatch (secured from the inside) at the perimeter of the docking platform the PCs' ship is on.

The Aftermath

Ideally, the PCs will have disabled the station failsafe during the combat encounter – but if the encounter ends before they can finish (and there's enough time left), the GM should allow the team to complete the disabling of the failsafe – or race to the emergency hatch and take off before the station explodes.

It's up to the team whether they honor their bargain and return with samples of the XR-12 virus and antigen – but they'd be wise to take samples of both with them.

A clever party might also suggest re-setting the station failsafe, after they've disarmed it, giving them time to get to their ship while ensuring every remnant horror on Ice Station Zulu is destroyed. The GM should allow this as a narrative action, if the PCs suggest it.

Once the party returns to their ship, advance to the "Conclusion" of the adventure.

Conclusion

Once the PCs emerge from the emergency hatch from the lab, they'll find themselves back in their original landing bay, with ready access to their ship; though the platform is deserted and the facility doors are wide open. Read the following to the PCs:

Climbing out of the emergency hatch, you find that it opens up into the floor of one of the exterior hangar platforms; and with amazement – you realize it's YOUR platform! You are meters away from your ship.

Scrambling up, you notice the platform is completely deserted. No personnel, or even bodies, can be found;

and the heavy door to the facility is wide open. From this distance, you stare into the blackness of the interior security room, but see nothing.

Moving towards your ship, you spy tiny droplets of blood leading across the platform, past your ship, and out into the snow and ice. At a glance, you can almost make out several sets of tracks heading off into the wilds of Hoth – but you don't spend much time pondering it. Unlocking your ship, and ensuring it's unoccupied, you punch up nav controls and begin the pre-flight warm up. In minutes, you've departed Ice Station Zulu and fly through the eerily peaceful snows of Hoth until you reach orbit.

You struggle with what you just saw and experienced, and ponder the uses of this mysterious virus that you were obviously misled about. You will be faced with a decision when you return, and must decide whether to dig deeper into the Triumvirate's plans for the virus – and whether to give it to them at all.

And then there's the "cure"... If any of the rakghouls survived, or if the Empire has a secondary facility, then the serum could fetch a hefty price on the black market. But if the mythical rakghoul is really back to terrorize the galaxy – after all you have just seen – could you live with yourselves if you sold the cure to the highest bidder?

You shudder as your nav computer finishes its calculations and rockets you to light speed.

Plot Hooks and Further Adventures

Obviously, the PCs will need to decide just what to do with both the virus and the serum. Their deal with the Triumvirate will require closer scrutiny, and the team will have to face the decision of handing over such an abominable plague to a criminal syndicate. Complicating matters further, it's possible the Triumvirate may not even know there's a serum, giving the team an extra bargaining chip or opportunity for credits.

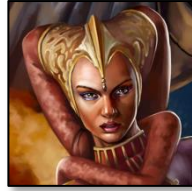
Some players may be wondering about the frozen vial ("Juliet Foxtrot Alpha") taken from the "Fox Echo Tango Tango 1" storage cabinet. In truth, it has nothing to do with the rakghoul virus – but is a relic of Dr. Tui's. A prized possession of historical value to any geneticist: one of the last known samples of the original DNA of Jango Fett, a bounty hunter who provided the source for DNA for the Republic's Clone Army during the Clone Wars. This could create a whole new series of events and dangers for the team to follow (or a new bargaining chip for the Triumvirate).

Ice Station Zulu

Player Characters

Vor'la

Vor'la is a consummate gambler, winning a freighter at the sabaac tables when she was only 17. She still owns it. Her beauty often distracts men as she proceeds to rob them for everything they have, disarming them with charm and guile. She'll admit that she has a bit of a gambling problem. She met Brek and his "side-kick", Mella, a couple years ago when he got into trouble on Tatooine and needed to head off-world as quickly as possible. At the time, she was also running from Maggo the Hutt, whom she borrowed money from, and then lost it on a pod race (fixed by Maggo). She has a vendetta and a score to settle with the Hutt, but she is still on the run.



Mella Myson

From a long line of moisture farmers on Tatooine, Mella cared little for the family business. Racing skyhoppers through the canyons was her passion, and she became a preternaturally gifted pilot (though she often questioned where her abilities came from). But after growing enraged with a racing opponent who flashed her into the canyon walls, she suddenly lifted him with her mind and hurled him into his ship, wounding him very badly. She was rescued from the ensuing mob by a smuggler named Brek. Mella's been with him ever since, and as a teenager, she's now working on developing her burgeoning gift of force sensitivity.



Brek Corsen

A smuggler's life is usually one of mistrust, but Brek is the one smuggler who has a trusted contact in every port of call. He ran afoul of a powerful crime lord recently, after he was discovered running spice to Tatooine – without paying tribute. He turned to the Triumvirate for help, and they gladly assisted, in exchange for a rather large debt owed. Brek is a good shot, but an even better liar, which comes in handy when shooting fails. He has a knack for smelling trouble before most others see it. He's fairly devoted to his crew – especially Vor'la – though it's purely platonic. At least... he's pretty sure of that. Probably...



Soril Darkrider

This soldier has only two things that he's passionate about: his weapons and his sex life. Addicted to both, Soril has often been told that he's one of the best hired guns in the galaxy, unless he's around women he finds too distracting; which, it turns out, is most women. One of the few women who has failed to succumb to his dark good looks and mercenary demeanor is his current captain, Vor'la, who's made it quite clear that her *ship* is the only thing he'll be boarding. Though he knows his constant advances annoy her; he views it as a fun challenge. And he knows his skill with a rifle makes her hard pressed to get rid of him.



Flyx Byx

Expelled from school on Sullust at age 8 for attempting to reprogram the classroom protocol droid to pummel a local bully, Flyx's family sent him to the shipyards to tutor under his uncle, and develop his burgeoning technical skills. Flyx spent the next ten years learning to fix machines better than anyone, and his passion drove him to a rather nasty addiction to Booster Blue, which he still struggles with. Striking out at 18, he fell in with a Twi'lek named Vor'la, who used Flyx to machine skifters for her. The pair have been criminal partners for the past six years, and have been through numerous scrapes. Through it all, Flyx maintains his sense of good humor and wonder – which his current crew appreciates.



Yorbacca

Yorbacca was born 32 years ago in a slaver camp. After he and his younger sister lost their parents in an uprising, he vowed to always take care of her. A few years ago, she was sold to a different master, and he lost track of her. After several escape attempts, his master grew tired of it, put him up as stakes during a sabaac game, which he lost. But meeting his new "master", a Twi'lek named Vor'la, he quickly learned she had no interest in "owning" him and promptly set him free – but asked that he remain on her crew as a free, fully paid body-guard. In exchange, she'd help him search for his sister. Pleased with the offer (and his freedom), he readily agreed and relishes throwing his furry bulk around for his new captain.

