



PRISONERS OF APHEX

Prisoners of Aphex is a Dragonstar adventure for four characters of first level. The party should have at least one character with Open Locks, one with Heal, and one with the Repair skill will be useful. This adventure should bring the characters close to 2nd level and help them establish contacts that will benefit them in the future.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

It is no secret that many drow despise the Empire and the subservience that many show toward it. A large group of these drow have established a base in the outlands, where they plot to destroy the credibility of the ISPD in an attempt to wean their people off their dependence on the Empire. This consortium is known as the Drak Syllan. They are building huge living spider ships called araknos to help them police their areas. In reality, this group is nothing but an organized crime unit utilizing their contacts, knowledge, and a ream of stolen equipment to cause trouble in the region. If they manage to breed the araknos, that may change.

One of their plots involved a medical doctor who worked in an outworld prison colony called Aphex. The doctor had become addicted to a drug that only the Drak Syllan can supply, and thus was coerced into aiding them using his knowledge and the unique opportunities that the backwater prison afforded him. They had him using prisoners for experiments of all kinds, the most important being the development of a trauma symbiote that could be implanted in the araknos, making them incredibly powerful and resilient.

Unfortunately for the doctor, one of his experiments went terribly wrong, causing the symbiote on which he was operating to grow to an unearthly size, trapping he and a few patients in the medical wing of the prison. When several of the guards went up to investigate, the prisoners saw their chance to escape the prison and began rioting. The battle that followed lasted several hours. Many of the prisoners simply fled the scene, but more stayed behind to take over the prison. They used the prisoner transport elevator to attack the first floor of the prison, forcing the guards to take positions in the prison's core. The communications officer at the prison sent a short message, but this message was warped as the prisoners cut power to the building. The party is being sent to take a dangerous prisoner to the prison, and investigate any problems that they find. Unbeknownst to the characters, their prisoner is actually an agent of the Drak Syllan, sent to check up on the doctor's progress. He has no knowledge of the riots or the mishap in the medical wing.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The characters arrive on Aphex with no clue about the riots except that there is no comm response from the prison, and the hangar bay doors do not open to accept the landing vehicle. After seeing the prisoner transfer elevator broken halfway up the rails, the characters enter the building and search through the carnage and wreckage of the first floor. They can either convince the holed up guards to let them in or find the keycard from the dead comm officer in order to gain admittance to the upper level of the prison. From there they must subdue several prisoners and find a way to gain access to the



medical wing, located high in a tower above the central building.

After they find a way up, they must confront the doctor and his creation. They find the monster far too powerful and must search for a way to destroy it. Finally, they determine that the creature cannot stand extremes of heat, so by turning off the prison's climate controls they destroy it and perhaps save the doctor. Meanwhile, their prisoner has escaped and stolen the doctor's plans, using a computer in the control tower across the tarmac. The characters can chase him to the hangar area, where he powers up a space freighter and makes his escape.

THE DRIFTER CLANS

The drifter clans were originally comprised of several hundred people whose world had been destroyed by an Imperial excavation. These few had escaped in a stolen imperial troop transport and wandered the system aimlessly for years. As time went by these refugees started to scatter to planets around the galaxy, keeping in contact via regular communication to the mother ship. The descendants of these first refugees, led by an incredibly long-lived elven patriarch, decided to leverage their network by providing mercenary services to the Empire. Although the Empire usually gave them the worst jobs, transporting prisoners to outworld prisons or guarding self-important half dragon bureaucrats, the drifter clans slowly built up a galactic network of informants, allies, and suppliers. The fact that most of their missions were of little importance helps them by ensuring their activities go unnoticed by their imperial employers.

In the present day, the drifter clans provide thousands of mercenaries to the Empire all over the galaxy. They utilize imperial ships to smuggle goods from planet to planet, and act as information carriers and brokers to any that will pay them. Despite this, they are not an evil organization, only one that cares not for political intrigue or righteous causes. Their only concern is making a living, and if they can do so at the expense of the Empire that destroyed their planet, so much the better. The chiefs run the loosely organized operation with amazing efficiency, mostly due to the loyalty of the members. This loyalty is especially important to the sifters, shady middlemen that arrange missions for the mercs under the clans' employ.

The drifter clans are an excellent way to introduce your party to the Dragonstar universe. Their wide variety of jobs and destinations makes it easy to integrate into your

campaign, and the clans' network of informants and suppliers are an easy way to keep the players going in the right direction. The characters need not even know of the clans' more illicit business dealings, thinking they are simply in the employ of the largest independent mercenary guild in the Empire.

GETTING STARTED

The characters could be a drifter clan merc unit, hired by the Empire to take Dy'ssyth to Aphex.

The characters could be hitching a ride to another world, with only a quick stop off at Aphex to "unload some cargo."

The characters could be prisoners themselves. If this is the case, have the inmates shoot the pilot of their ship before the landing. When they awaken, only they are alive and they have no clue what is going on. Figuring to prove their innocence or win a reprieve, they take up arms against the other inmates and help the guards take back the prison.

INTRODUCTION

"...transmissions....communications....down....*screech*....broken...patches...recover soon...*screech*"

That is the last communication from the prison on Aphex, received just over 20 hours ago by most of the starships in the sector. The operator's voice did not sound strained or frightened, so most have dismissed it as a commlink malfunction that will soon be fixed. In reality rioting prisoners have shut down the prison, and the medical wing is under attack by some unknown organism. The players should not be told this immediately, only after they find the prison unresponsive should this be shared. As far as they know they are on a routine mission to take a prisoner, the dark elf Dy'ssyth, to the prison. After that they will return to their home planet to await the next mission from their sifter.

At their landing, one of the pilots will come back and tell the party that the prison is not responding, so they are landing on the helipad next to the guards' entrance. When further communication fails, the pilots insist that the party go in and find out what is wrong, leaving Dy'ssyth under their watchful eye. At this point the pilot will hand the PCs the final Aphex transmission.

GENERAL PRISON FEATURES

The prison is shaped like a ziggurat, slightly sloped with a smaller block placed upon the large ground-level structure. Barbed wire covers the outside walls making them impassable except for the external lift, which is currently stuck about 10 ft. from the top of platform.

The prison's primary power source and communications have been cut. The backup system has come online, meaning that the red emergency lights that run along the walls at ceiling level provide the only illumination. The environmental controls have been stabilized, except where noted, and the video cameras are all still working where they are intact.

None of the prison's internal communicators are online, though a Repair check (DC 25) could get them working again. The only problem is that each terminal would have to be repaired separately, of which there are nearly 100 in the complex. A similar check could be made to get any broken system (such as the external elevator to the cellblock level) working, but only a mechanist may attempt this without the proper equipment (which can be found in areas 15-17).

The thick outer walls prevent personal communicators from functioning, as do the thick metal plates in the ceilings and floors of the prison. This means that personal communication only works between two people on the same prison level.

Doors all have standard keycard locks, requiring an Open Locks (DC 30) check to bypass without security clearance. They are made of steel and have a Hardness of 25 and 60 hit points. During a power outage, most doors in the complex may only be opened from the inside, so the players may have to bypass these locks to get into places they wish to go.

Hacking into the prison's central computer is very difficult, requiring a series of three Use Device checks (DC 30) to access the network. A final check at DC 40 is required to grant the user admin-level access.

ON THE TRANSPORT SHIP

The ship that transports the characters and their prisoner to Aphex is an Imperial class corvette, the Wingman, piloted by Captain Jervus Makillian. The co-pilot is a half-elven recruit named Salazar Blocht. They are cor-

dial with the players but it is obvious they don't care to talk much on the mission. They will not say anything about Dy'ssyth except that he is an Imperial prisoner. They do not know anything about his crime. Salazar offers a warning that Dy'ssyth has contacts in the ISPD, and despite his current status, is a very dangerous fellow. He advises the party to merely stay away from him until they reach Aphex. Makillian is also the one that changes the party's orders once they arrive on Aphex.

Dy'ssyth on the other hand talks to any character that approaches him, but his manner is very terse and almost mocking. A Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals that the dark elf seems to know something the characters do not. No amount of compulsion will cause the dark elf to reveal anything else. The dark elf appears to be in phenomenal shape, with a slightly larger frame than most drow. His eyes are bone white with no visible pupils, and his white hair is shaved close to his head. He is restrained by sophisticated electronic handcuffs that restrict the ability to escape as well as cast spells with somatic components. The party should feel completely safe that he will not escape.

Once the Wingman starcasts into the system, it takes about 5 hours to reach Aphex. Two hours into the trip the pilots receive a strange transmission from the planet, but they don't alert the players at this time. Only after they get to the planet and find the prison unresponsive do they give the players the transmission log. It is a two-day trip to the nearest space station, so the pilots are loathe to turn around before depositing their cargo. If need be, they threaten to leave the PCs in this system if they don't at least go in to the prison to find out what is happening. If the DM is using the Drifter Clans hook, he can point to the clause in the charter that bids their mercenaries gather information when they cannot fulfill their missions.

OUTSIDE THE PRISON

Two prisoners that have yet to escape are fighting on the platform outside the 2nd level of the prison. When the PCs arrive they hide until the PCs leave their vehicle, at which point they start taking potshots at them with the autopistols they took from a pair of overpowered guards. At that range the prisoners are unlikely to hit anything, but it is just the welcome the PCs need to get them in the mood. Use the average prisoner stats found at the end of the module for both of these prisoners. They retreat back into the building if fired upon or chased.

The prison's walls are barbed in places, extremely smooth in others. This makes them nearly impossible to climb either up or down (Climb DC 35) without suffering wounds. Any character failing his Climb check suffers 1d8 points of damage and falls to the ground below. Climbing up where the turbolift negotiates the building is equally difficult.

PRISON ADMINISTRATION COMPLEX (AREAS 1-13)

This portion of the prison was partially destroyed by the rioting prisoners. Some of the more technically proficient prisoners forced access to the communications and security control room, locking access to the system and destroying much of the system's capabilities. Until then the prison guards had the upper hand in controlling the riot, but many of them were trapped in rooms 9-13 by the power outage and the prisoners were able to overtake those trapped on the outside. The warden was killed trying to get to the Comm Center, sending out one last message before slipping into unconsciousness. Those who received the message mistook his voice, weakened by the wounds inflicted on him by the rioting inmates, for calm.

The remaining guards have holed themselves up in areas 9-13, and will not open the doors for any reason. One of them has been trying to restore power and communications to the prison from within, but so far has been unsuccessful. Hours of being locked inside their own prison have frayed the nerves of some of the guards, leaving them skittish and terrified. That they have seen the effects of whatever now lives within the medical wing has not aided in their recovery.

1. ENTRY HALL

This angular room was obviously once a receiving room, but all the furniture has either been overturned or incinerated. One sturdy table remains standing just opposite the entry doors. A holographic sculpture on the table has been knocked on its side. Two doors stand on opposite walls, to the left and right of you when you enter. The door to your right is crushed and melted, hanging open revealing a dark room beyond.

The entire place is lit only by red lights that run along the walls at ceiling level.

The emergency lights have kicked in and give the entire place an eerie glow. The burnt furniture and overturned sculpture complete the effect. Several grenades set off by rioting prisoners melted the door to the right, and the door to the left is sealed. It will take an Open Locks check (DC 30) or the code found in the warden's datapad to open.

Treasure: The holographic sculpture can be taken, and would fetch 350 cr in the right market.

2. WARDEN'S WAITING ROOM

This room has a desk opposite two plush chairs, a small table covered by a few very outdated smartpaper 'zines in between. On the desk is a computer whose monitor has been smashed. Another door lies partially open, blocked by the motionless body of a human male.

As the warden tried to exit his office two prisoners accosted him. He shot this one, and chased the other outside, where he was killed. The computer in this room has been smashed beyond repair.

Treasure: A pack of three ration bars sits uneaten in one of the desk drawers.

3. WARDEN'S OFFICE

This office is completely blown apart; scorch marks and blast holes are everywhere. The remains of a desk and computer system lay smashed on the floor, and several paintings hang broken on the wall. A closed door leads out of the room to your right.

This is the warden's office, where he was working when the riot occurred. A half-finished report is still active on his datapad, which can be found among the rubble (Search DC 15). Stuck in the datapad is a damaged keycard, requiring a Repair check (DC 15) to get working. This is the confiscated keycard from a drunk guard, not the warden's personal key. It has enough clearance to open every door on this level except the door leading to areas 9-13.

4. WARDEN'S CLOSET (EL 1/2)

This closet holds a guard's uniform, a pack of gum, several smartpaper magazines, and a cleaning kit for guns. A gun-rack on the back wall of the closet is empty.

This innocuous-seeming closet actually holds a great danger for any character doing a thorough search. Any character spending more than a round in the closet is subject to attack by a native vermin called a *snat*. The *snat* drops onto the character and uses its chameleon ability to blend in with the character's clothing or armor. If the character has exposed skin, the *snat* anesthetizes and begins draining blood from the character. Should it drop onto a fully armored character, it will ride along and look for the opportunity to attach to another target.

5. OFFICES

These offices are all trashed, broken computers and personal effects scattered everywhere amidst blaster marks on the walls and floor. Exceptions are noted below.

- A: This is the deputy warden's office. It has been looted, but a nameplate with his name and title can be found among the debris.
- B: This is the prison records room. This room is mostly intact, though it contains only cabinet after cabinet of files. The computer here is working, but it is not connected to the network. A Research check (DC 20) can turn up any mundane piece of information about the prison, such as duty rosters, prisoner lists, supply invoices, etc.
- C: Trashed office.
- D: Trashed office.
- E: A prison guard named Ted left the main control room (area 10) to help bring the sensors and communication systems back online. Unfortunately he failed, and on his way back an escaping prisoner bludgeoned him to death. Now his body lies in the corner of this trashed office, his head crushed by some blunt object. Ted had a keycard with clearance for the door in 5f, but he dropped it in the security control room (area 7) before retreating here.
- F: This is the first intact room the characters have encountered in the prison. A clean desk covered with office supplies and a 2-way communicator on the desk. A very sophisticated security door is on the opposite wall. The confiscated security pass from the warden's office will not open this door, but Ted's pass will work if the characters have found it. It requires an Open Locks check (DC 40) to bypass without the proper codekey. If the characters speak

into the communicator or attempt to bypass the security door a voice will ring into the comm.

"Ted, is that you?"

This is Arnie, the guard posted to the door at the moment. He's not the brightest guard in the building, and he has been instructed to open the door for no one. Despite this if one of the characters pretends to be Ted or can convince him that Ted is hurt, he will open the door for them. Roll a Bluff check against Arnie's Sense Motive (he has +1 to that skill) to determine success. He will not be very happy at their deception, but won't cause them any trouble since they are not prisoners.

6. SECRET LOCKER

This area holds an emergency flare gun, two gasmasks, 2 sleep gas grenades, 2 holdout blasters, and a medkit.

The guards forgot this emergency locker during the riot, and the inmates never found it. It requires a Search check (DC 20) to spot the panel and an Open Lock check (DC 35) to break through. The medkit is masterwork and contains two *dermpatches of cure light wounds* in addition to its normal items.

7. SECURITY CONTROL ROOM

This room looks like it was locked down and appears to have escaped the violence evident in many of the other rooms. A computer flashes a bright red ribbon with the words "Network lockdown enacted." Dozens of security screens here show nothing but static.

This room is intact, having been locked at the first sign of the riot. The characters cannot bypass the computer security here, and the cameras are all down until main power is restored. A Spot check (DC 15) shows something moving in the medical ward on one screen. Another screen shows a faint impression of a destroyed mess hall. If the characters watch for several minutes they may see a figure flash by momentarily. The monitors are functioning fine, it is the cameras that lack power. Therefore the characters are not able to get them working any more than they are.

Treasure: Ted's security pass may be found here underneath a chair (Search DC 10). It gives the PCs access to any door in the prison, including the secret locker (area 6) assuming they found it.

8. COMM CENTER

This room contains a communications panel and a chair, nothing more. A radar screen glows faintly, but the system is locked down. Scrolling across another screen is the message that the pilots received as you flew into the system:

“There has been a security breach at the prison, internal communications down. The prisoners have broken free of the main cellblock. External communication received in patches, I hope this goes out. Will recover soon, please send help.”

The communications center has been sealed since just after the rioters knocked out the power, so it remains intact much like the adjacent security room. The computers here are sealed just like in the security room, and will not grant network access until after the server has been fixed (see area 10).

9. SECURITY BYPASS

Two tired-looking and bloody men wearing the uniforms of prison guards stand in this security bypass. They look at you with a mixture of suspicion and hope as you walk through the room.

Vils and Gregg were on the cellblock level when the rioting began and are two of the only guards to have escaped that level. They are exhausted and cannot give the characters much information. They will express hope that the characters can bring the prison under control, and they will both hit the characters up for a smoke.

10. PRISON CONTROL ROOM

This L-shaped room is a much larger version of the control rooms that are found outside this area. Computers and security monitors line the walls, though none of them seem to be online. Halfway into one of the panels is a man in a dark blue jumpsuit. He appears to be working on the unit. Three other guards mill about the room anxiously while two more play cards in a corner by the room's only other door.

The man in the blue jumpsuit is Tucker, the highest-ranking prison official still alive. He was the prison's logistics officer, responsible for tracking prisoners and other shipments such as food and equipment. He has a modicum of technical ability, but not enough to get the computer systems back up and running. He appreciates any help on that front, although he is more concerned about getting the prison back under control. It takes three Repair checks (DC 24) to get the computer and security cameras up and running. Tucker can accomplish this, but it takes him about an hour to do so without help. It takes ten minutes per check for a PC to repair the systems.

Once up and running, the PCs are able to see anything in the prison compound as well as the control tower across the tarmac. A Spot check (DC 10) allows them to notice the drow downloading files from the control tower network. A Use Device check then allows them to track his usage, including the fact that he downloaded files from the medical drive. Files about the trauma symbiote experiment are among the files he downloaded, though he took much more information from the drives (as a way to throw off anyone trying to determine his mission).

He knows everything that happened at the prison in the last 24 hours, including the presence of something strange in the medical wing. However, since no one has come out of the medical wing and they haven't been able to get the monitors working they have no idea what is up there. Tucker believes that getting the cellblock level under control is the first priority. Whatever is in the lab is not leaving, and he is close to getting the computer systems up and running. He offers to lend the party several air rifles with stun darts with which to subdue the prisoners, as he would prefer not to have them killed. Whether or not the party accepts his help, he tells one of his men (Arnie if he brought the PCs to the control room) to escort them to the elevator at area 13.

11. ENERGY CORE

This is the main power source for the prison. There is nothing wrong with the cell itself, it is the connections that have been tampered with. The room to this door will not be opened under any circumstances, and anyone entering will suffer the effects of radiation. For each minute a character spends inside this room without wearing radiation shielding, he suffers one dose of radiation. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) for each dose or suffer 1d4 points of permanent Constitution damage after 4d6 hours. When the initial damage sets in, the character must make another Fortitude save or

suffer an additional 1d4 points of permanent Constitution damage.

12. ELEVATOR LOBBY

Every surface of this room is made of shiny, spotless steel. The walls are seamless, and the only feature in the room is an elevator door with a control pad next to it on the wall. It resembles the panel on the door into this area.

This elevator is the only internal transport to the cell-block level of the prison, and the control pad has the same security as the door in area 9.

13. ELEVATOR

This elevator is made of seamless steel like the room outside it. An LCD readout displays the elevator's controls.

A Use Device check (DC 25) allows a character to access a real-time infrared scan of the entire prison through the LCD pad.

HANGAR COMPLEX (AREAS 14-18)

This area was locked down at the first riot alert and remained that way until a particularly clever inmate found out how to open the hangar doors and made out with the only starship class vehicle in the complex. The rest of the vehicles lie dormant here, and the equipment rooms are all locked with standard locks. There is currently no one here.

14. HANGAR

This cavernous hangar has high ceilings and a 50 ft. wide sliding door on the north side of the building. Two utility hovercrafts and a hovertank are all parked in the hangar, and one docking bay lies empty, signs of recent use evident all around it. Two doors lie near each other on the southern wall, and a thick, metal lattice guards a room along the far wall. This room is shadowy and quiet, the red security lights barely lighting the area.

A control pad in each docking bay controls the ship doors, and a Use Device check (DC 15) is necessary to work the controls. The bay doors can also be opened from these panels, or by the panel on the wall to the right of the doors.

15. STORAGE ROOM

Equipment of all kinds lies scattered about the tables of this room, and boxes are stacked everywhere.

This storage room holds mundane (no armor or weapons) equipment and supplies for the entire prison. There is a 30% chance that the characters can find any piece of equipment valued at 300 cr or less.

16. STORAGE ROOM

This room is identical to area 15.

17. PARTS AND EQUIPMENT CAGE

This cage contains a variety of small and large ship parts and tools. Parts hang from hooks on the walls and tools and smaller parts can be found in a variety of drawers and tubs scattered around the room. The whole area smells of grease, and almost everything feels oily to the touch.

Treasure: Enough pieces for two masterwork toolkits can be scavenged from this place. Doing so takes 1d6x10 minutes.

18. TOOL SHOP

This area is a shop, complete with large saws, grinders, and other non-portable tools set up around the room. A blown out robot husk can be seen laying in a corner of the room.

This area contains little of interest to the characters, though the non-functioning robotic body could be valuable to anyone with an interest in such things.

EMPLOYEE GYMNASIUM (AREAS 19-24)

This area was the lounge for employees and guests of the prison. There is no one here now.

19. SECURITY BYPASS

This security bypass is completely empty except for a door on the opposite wall and a control panel on the wall next to it.

This is a standard security panel, requiring an Open Locks check (DC 30) or a proper passkey to bypass.

20. GYM LOUNGE

This room is filled with couches, chairs, and tables full of smartpaper magazines. A window on the south wall reveals an area with balls, games, and other diversions, probably an activity checkout room for bored employees and guests of the prison staff.

21. EQUIPMENT ROOM

This room is filled with balls of all types, electronic and old-style board games, and other diversions.

Unless the characters are in the mood for a game of electrobiggle, there isn't much here for them.

22. LOCKER ROOM

This room smells of sweat and deodorant. There are around two dozen lockers along one wall, many of them having padlocks on the doors.

This is the men's locker room. If the characters break or bypass the locks on the locker doors they will find a variety of toiletries and other items.

Treasure: One of the lockers contains, among the normal toiletries, a gold pendant set with a single diamond (a gift for Ted's fiancée) worth 800 cr.

23. LOCKER ROOM

This room smells of sweat and deodorant. There are around two dozen lockers along one wall, many of them having padlocks on the doors.

This is the women's locker room. If the characters break or bypass the locks on the locker doors they will find a variety of toiletries and other items. There is nothing of value here.

24. GYMNASIUM

This large gym has several courts for playing sports of different types. One section of the gym is filled with tables and chairs used for various activities.

This is a standard gym, and nothing of interest can be found here.

CELLBLOCK LEVEL (AREAS 25-30)

The rioting prisoners hit this portion of the prison the hardest. Scorch marks and other signs of destruction can be found everywhere and the dead bodies of both prisoners and guards still lie in several areas. Several prisoners still mill about here, unsure of what they would do if they escaped.

25. SECURITY BYPASS

This room is completely empty except for a door on the opposite wall and a control panel on the wall next to it. Bloodstains are evident on the floor and walls.

This is a high security panel, requiring an Open Locks check (DC 40) or a proper passkey to bypass. A successful Listen check (DC 15) reveals movement and activity on the other side of the door.

26. CELLBLOCK CENTRAL (EL 2)

This open room shows several signs of battle. As you look into the room, four prisoners move to attack!

This room serves as the focal point for the cellblock level, as well as housing the elevator that goes up to the medical wing. The prisoners here move to attack as soon as the door from area 25 is opened. Three of the prisoners are armed with stun batons that they picked up off some of the dead guards, and one of them has a laser pistol. They are all wearing combat vests pilfered from dead guards. As soon as any combat begins one of the prisoners will break off running toward the gymnasium at full speed to bring the ogre to their aid.

Creatures: Inmates (4): 10, 9, 7, 7 hp;

Treasure: Aside from the weapons they are carrying the prisoners have no treasure.

Development: If the characters do not stop the fleeing prisoner, he goes to area 29 and gets the ogre to come back to reinforce the battle. They return at the end of the third round of battle. Upon returning, the ogre attempts to hurl his weight plates at the PCs before engaging them in melee. If the prisoner with the laser pistol has been defeated, the returning prisoner will attempt to pick it up and begin firing at the PCs.

27. SUPPLY ROOM

This room contains an assortment of cleaning supplies: mops, water buckets, brushes, etc.

There is nothing of value in this room.

28. GUARDROOM

Several chairs and tables are scattered about this room, seemingly abandoned mid-activity by the guards. A holo vid plays for a non-existent audience and books and magazines sit open about the room. Four security monitors show nothing but static and a communications headset hangs by a wire off the console.

This console is the same as those in the prison's main control room (area 10) and will not work until those are fixed. The communications headset allows the PCs to communicate with Tucker without going back down the elevator, but must remain attached to the console to continue working. A Search check (DC 20) reveals a hidden weapons locker that still contains several useful items.

Treasure: Two stun batons, three air rifles, six stundart clips, one pair of nightvision goggles, five filter masks, two nausea grenades, four zipcuffs, and four laser pistol minicells.

29. PRISONERS' GYMNASIUM

This area smells strongly of sweat and other odors. One corner of the room contains weight sets and another contains striking dummies and mats. The right half of the room is a multi-court for use in playing several popular sports from around the Empire.

Several weights are conspicuously missing from the free weight rack, being used by the ogre as projectile weapons. (Note: if the character's stopped the prisoner in area 26 from coming to get the ogre, he will be encountered here instead.) Otherwise the place looks reasonably intact since most of the prisoners were trying to get out rather than trap themselves inside.

Creatures: Ogre: 27 hp.

30. SECURITY BYPASS

This room looks like the other security bypass stations in the prison except it is completely destroyed. The smell of burning steel and charred flesh hang pungent in the air.

This bypass suffered heavy damage as the prisoners escaped via the external lift. Its door hangs permanently open and the accompanying security panel is non functional.

MEDICAL WING (AREAS 31-34)

This portion of the prison was partially destroyed by the rioting prisoners. Some of the more technically proficient prisoners forced access to the communications and security control room, locking access to the system and destroying much of the system's capabilities. Until then the prison guards had the upper hand in controlling the riot, but many of them were trapped in rooms 9-13 by the power outage and the prisoners were able to overtake those trapped on the outside. The warden was killed trying to get to the Comm Center, sending out one last message before slipping into unconsciousness. Those who received the message mistook his voice, weakened by the wounds inflicted on him by the rioting inmates, for calm.

The remaining guards have holed themselves up in areas 9-13, and will not open the doors for any reason. One of them has been trying to restore power and communications to the prison from within, but so far has been unsuccessful. Hours of being locked inside their own prison have frayed the nerves of some of the guards, leaving them skittish and terrified. That they have seen the effects of whatever now lives within the medical wing has not aided in their recovery.

31. HOSPITAL (EL 3)

This room was obviously once the hospital wing for the prison, but a large creature now dominates the room. The creature is the color of whipped flesh and several writhing tentacles whip about its body. Mucous covers the entirety of the creature's body, and large blobs of it drop to the floor as it moves. Yet, this is not the most horrific sight. About five feet off the ground a man is attached to the creature by several smaller pseudopods that have melded with his torso. He appears to be in great pain and does not immediately notice your arrival.

Several dead prisoners and guards are scattered about the room.

This is the mutant trauma symbiote that inadvertently caused the prison riot. Damaging it causes damage to the doctor as well, so the players may very well hurt the doctor very badly before they realize what they are doing. If the doctor takes more than 20 points of damage he awakens and yells for them to stop. He begs them to take his datapad and find a way to kill the symbiote without killing him as well. He has no information that they can help them. The datapad can be found on a table behind the doctor, causing anyone that moves to get it to suffer attacks from the flailing limbs of the symbiote. The symbiote itself is non-intelligent and cannot be reasoned or communicated with.

Creature: Mutant trauma symbiote: 137 hp.

Treasure: a medkit and two diagnostic monitors are scattered about the room.

32. PRIVATE ROOM

This room has a bed with several restraint mechanisms, a side table, and a general diagnostic machine. It currently has no occupants.

This room was used to house very contagious or dangerous prisoners. It was empty at the time that the doctor's experiment went awry.

Treasure: a *dermpatch of cure light wounds* and a medkit can be found on a tray beneath the diagnostic machine.

33. PRIVATE ROOM

A woman in a nurse's uniform is slumped over the bed in this room. A grotesque wound on her face oozes blood onto the bedsheets.

Aside from the nurse and the treasure, this room is identical to area 32.

34. MEDICAL SUPPLY ROOM

This supply closet holds a variety of general medical tools and items.

This closet contains quantities of gauze, minor painkillers, braces, laundry, and other mundane supplies necessary for the everyday running of a hospital.

CONCLUSION

The party will return to their ship either to find Dy'ssyth and the pilots awaiting them, or Dy'ssyth will have used a sophisticated EMP device to escape from his electronic handcuffs and knocked the pilots unconscious.

Dy'ssyth's fate and the party's role in that are up to the DM. If you are running this as a one shot adventure, Dy'ssyth might just truly be an ordinary prisoner. If you plan to use the campaign ideas given above, then the party might chase Dy'ssyth to his ship, only to be outflown as the drow escapes. It is left to the DM to contrive what happens with this extraordinary prisoner. Dy'ssyth's stats are not given here, but he is far more powerful than the PCs and would likely kill them if they confronted him directly. If the PCs are able to give chase in their vehicle, Dy'ssyth will have disabled all of their corvette's weapon systems so that they cannot just shoot him out of the sky.

If the party returns to the starbase without securing the prison or saving the doctor, they will be given 500 credits each and put on notice that they are being watched very closely. The drifters expect more from their merc units. If they were able to secure the prison but could not save the doctor, they are given full hazard pay (1500 credits each) and a good report on their first mission together. If they managed to save the doctor he will offer to install *trauma symbiotes* in them as long as they cover the cost of the procedure (3000 credits). This offer stands if they do not have the available cash. Of course, they could always take a loan from the Drifters at a reasonable interest rate.

NEW MONSTERS

MUTANT TRAUMA SYMBIOTE

Huge Aberration

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | 12d8+60 (129 hp) |
| Initiative: | -4 (Dex) |
| Speed: | 0 ft. |
| AC: | 9 (-4 Dex, -2 size, +5 natural) |
| Attacks: | Slam +12 melee |
| Damage: | Slam 1d3+7 |
| Face/Reach: | 20 ft. by 20 ft./15 ft. |
| Special Attacks: | Attach, Improved Grab |
| Special Qualities: | None |
| Saves: | Fort +11, Ref +0, Will +10 |
| Abilities: | Str 20, Dex 3, Con 20, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 11 |
| Skills: | Spot +2 |
| Feats: | Blind-Fight, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Toughness |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any temperate |
| Organization: | Solitary |
| Challenge Rating: | 1/2 |
| Treasure: | None |
| Alignment: | Always Neutral |
| Advancement: | — |

The doctor at the prison on Aphex has mutated this trauma symbiote in a way he never expected. It has grown much larger and forcibly attached itself to him.

Attach (Ex): If the mutant trauma symbiote successfully grapples an opponent, it may attach them to itself as a full round action. The attachment does not become permanent for one minute, though the trauma symbiote can do other things during this time. The trapped character can make an opposed Strength check to detach himself from the symbiote. Once permanent, the victim takes half of the damage inflicted to the trauma symbiote, and the symbiote takes half of the damage inflicted on the victim. At this point separating the victim from the symbiote without proper care would kill the victim. It requires a Profession (doctor) check (DC 25) to remove a patient from symbiosis.

Improved Grab (Ex): The mutant trauma symbiote can use this ability if it hits with its slam attack.

SNAT

Tiny Vermin

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Hit Dice: | 1/2d8+2 (4 hp) |
| Initiative: | +2 (Dex) |
| Speed: | 20 ft.; Climb 20 ft. |
| AC: | 16 (+2 Dex, +2 size) |
| Attacks: | Bite +4 melee |
| Damage: | Blood drain |
| Face/Reach: | 2 ft. by 2 ft./0 ft. |
| Special Attacks: | Blood drain |
| Special Qualities: | Vermin |
| Saves: | Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0 |
| Abilities: | Str 2, Dex 15, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 6 |
| Skills: | Climb +4, Hide +8, Move Silently +8 |
| Feats: | Weapon Finesse (Bite) |
| Climate/Terrain: | Any land |
| Organization: | Solitary, or colony (9-20) |
| Challenge Rating: | 1/2 |
| Treasure: | None |
| Alignment: | Always Neutral |
| Advancement: | — |

Snats are a nuisance found on many of the planets in the Empire. They resemble fire ants except their shell is light grey in color and they grow to between six and eight inches in length. Snats attach themselves to the skin of their victims and use a powerful anaesthetic to insure that their presence is not felt. Then they create a small, circular wound in the skin of their victims through which they draw the victim's blood. No more than two snats will attach themselves to any one target at a time, ensuring most targets live to provide future meals. Snat attacks are not deadly in most cases, though small children and the ill might find themselves weakened enough to die.

Snats usually climb to the top of walls, ceilings, and high shelves so they can drop on potential victims and immediately use their anaesthetic to mask their presence. They are typically found hunting alone, but occasionally a nest may be stumbled upon in which more will be present.

Blood Drain (Ex): If a snat hits an area of exposed skin with its bite attack, it automatically begins draining blood on the next round. Each minute that it is attached thereafter, the character takes one point of temporary Constitution damage. Every time this occurs, allow the character a new Spot check to find the hidden snat.

NEW TECH

| Item | Cost | Weight |
|--------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Air rifle | 75 cr | 6 lb. |
| Dermpatch of cure light wounds | 50 cr | — |
| Stundart | 10 cr | — |

NEW TECH

Dermpatch of cure light wounds: Dermpatches are small patches that automatically inject fluid into the user's bloodstream. Using a dermpatch is a move-equivalent action that provokes an attack of opportunity. Medicines, antitoxins, and antidotes can all be placed in a dermpatch as well as spells of up to 3rd level.

Caster Level: 1st; **Prerequisites:** Brew Potion, cure light wounds; **Market Price:** 50 gp.

Air Rifle: These guns are used to propel darts at close range and are often used by prison guards and riot officers to stun or subdue rowdy individuals. Air rifles have a range increment of 50 ft.

Stundart: These small darts are fired from an air rifle and are filled with a weak paralytic poison. They stun their targets for 1d3 rounds. The target can make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid being stunned.

NPCs

Tucker, male human Com2: CR 1; Size M; HD 2d4-2; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16; Attack +3 melee (1d6+1+stun stun baton), +2 ranged (1d10 light autopistol); SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +1; AL NG; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Languages Spoken: Common.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Profession +4, Repair +4, Spot +4; Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Repair), Technical Proficiency.

Possessions: Light autopistol, two magazines, armor vest, and mechanics toolkit.

Prison guard, male human War1: CR 1; Size M; HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15; Attack +2 melee (1d6+1+stun stun baton), +1 ranged (1d6+stun taser pistol); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; AL NG; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Jump +5, Listen +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Point Blank Shot, Technical Proficiency.

Possessions: Taser pistol, magazine, stun baton, armor vest, and personal communicator.

Inmate, male human Thug1: CR 1; Size M; HD 1d6+1+3; hp 8; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16; Attack +2 melee (1d6+2+stun stun baton), +1 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; AL CN; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Languages Spoken: Common.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Climb +4, Hide +3, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +4, Spot +4; Great Fortitude, Technical Proficiency, Toughness.

Possessions: Stun baton and armor vest.

Pilot, male half elf Ftr1/Pil2: CR 3; Size M; HD 1d10+2d6; hp 14; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18; Attack +2 melee (1d6+2+stun stun baton), +1 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; AL CN; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Languages Spoken: Common, Draconic, Elven.

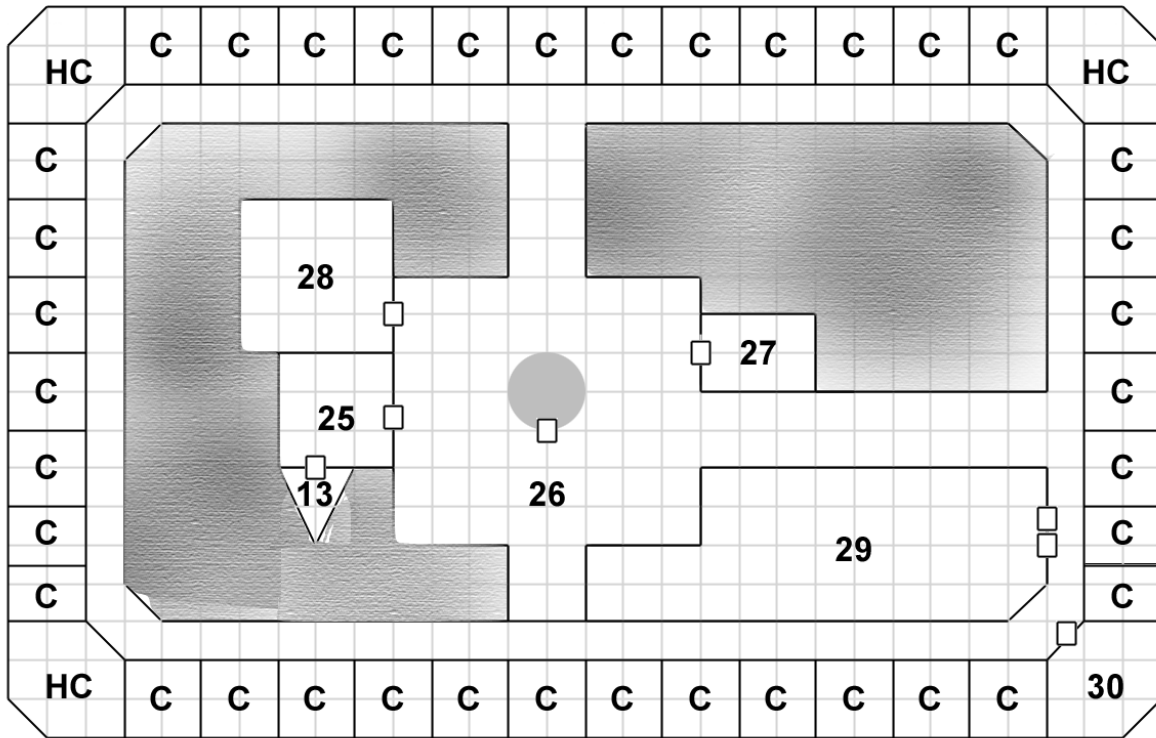
Skills and Feats: Bluff +3, Climb +3, Freefall +5, Intuit Direction +5, Navigate +5, Pilot +8, Repair +4, Spot +3; Evasive Piloting, Improved Initiative, Space Jockey, Starship Piloting, Technical Proficiency.

Possessions: None.

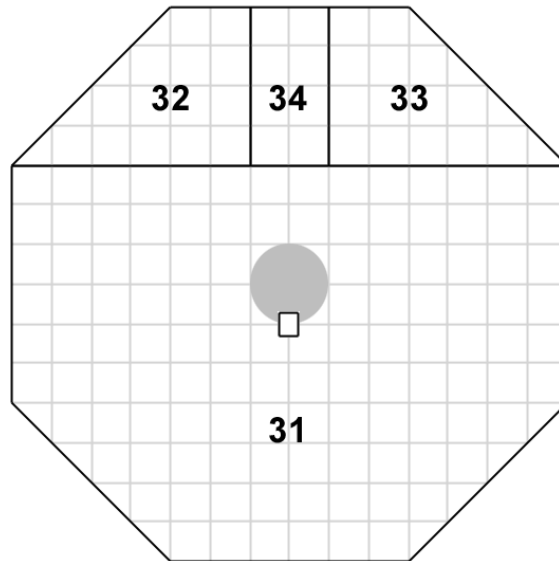
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1 square = 5 ft.

Prison Complex (Cellblock Level)



Prison Complex (Medical Wing)



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