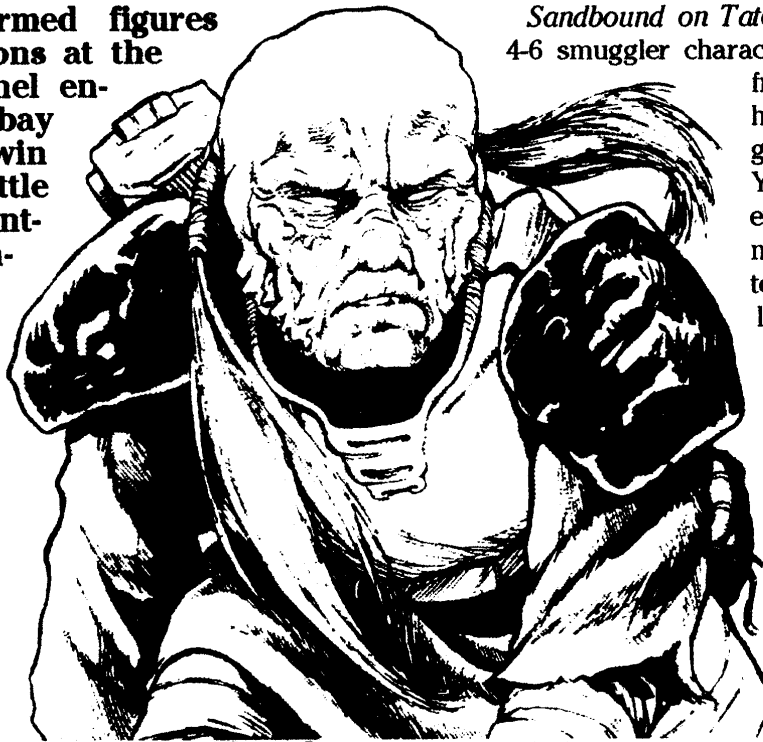


STAR WARS®

Sandbound on Tatooine

By Peter Schweighofer

Several well-armed figures slipped into positions at the cargo and personnel entrances to docking bay 92. Tatooine's twin suns provided little shade, but the hunters' quarry was inside and could not see them anyway. Torrak, the leader, waved to a pair of Weequay, ordering them to climb the wall and prepare positions looking down onto the unsuspecting smugglers and their ship. He checked the power pack on his blaster rifle, then looked to see that the other Weequay were in position. On his signal, they'd attack, hopefully just wounding the smugglers and taking enough prisoners to cash in on the generous bounty his employer offered. He raised his hand, two fingers pointing into the sky: when they pointed toward the main cargo door, the bounty hunters moved in...



Sandbound on Tatooine is an adventure for 4-6 smuggler characters with their own light freighter. (If they don't have a ship of their own, give them one of the stock YT-1300s or Ghtroc freighters with a few dice of modifications.) The characters have been in Mos Eisley spaceport for a few days setting up deals, loading cargo and planning their next freight run. They've just returned to their landing area, docking bay 92, to secure their cargo of expensive Tanadon cigarillos and prep their ship for lift-off. Make sure all or some of them have bounties on their heads for past crimes (or were set up for them). The characters could be in debt to a crime lord, have flagrantly violated Imperial law, or upset someone else with power and money. If they don't have any prior record of making trouble, you might mention that during their time in Mos Eisley they made a few enemies and embarrassed some powerful people (possibly envoys of Jabba

Running Time:
4 hours

the Hutt or the Whiphid Valarian, owner of the Lucky Despot).

Just as the smugglers are making the final check on their ship, bounty hunters show up and begin firing. They're supposed to capture the characters, but they're not that smart. These hunters (mostly Weequay) prefer to blast first and ask questions later. Their strategy can be varied for the experience of both the players and characters. Initially they just burst through the low, wide cargo entrance, but a few might pop out of an alcove where a personnel entrance leads to the street, and a few more might show up on the docking bay wall to fire down at the smugglers. Their leader, a human named Torrak, stays behind, waiting to use his grenades should the characters need some "encouragement" to get in their ship and blast out of

there.

Torrak. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 7D, dodge 5D, grenade 5D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation 4D, Perception 3D+2, command 5D, investigation 4D, sneak 4D+2, search 4D+2, Strength 3D+1, brawling 5D.* Move: 10. Character Points: 3. Blast vest and helmet (+1D physical, +1 energy), blaster rifle (5D), comlink, 4 grenades (5D), syntherope.

Weequay Bounty Hunters. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 6D+1, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D+2, running 5D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation 4D, Perception 3D, sneak 4D, search 4D, Strength 4D, brawling 5D.* Move: 10. Blast vest and helmet (+1D physical, +1 energy), blaster rifle (5D), comlink, knife (STR+1D).

Episode One: Crash Landing

The smugglers should lay down cover fire and retreat into their ship, probably to power up weapons and force the bounty hunters out of the open and behind heavier cover. They can blast out of the landing bay and head for open space and their next port.

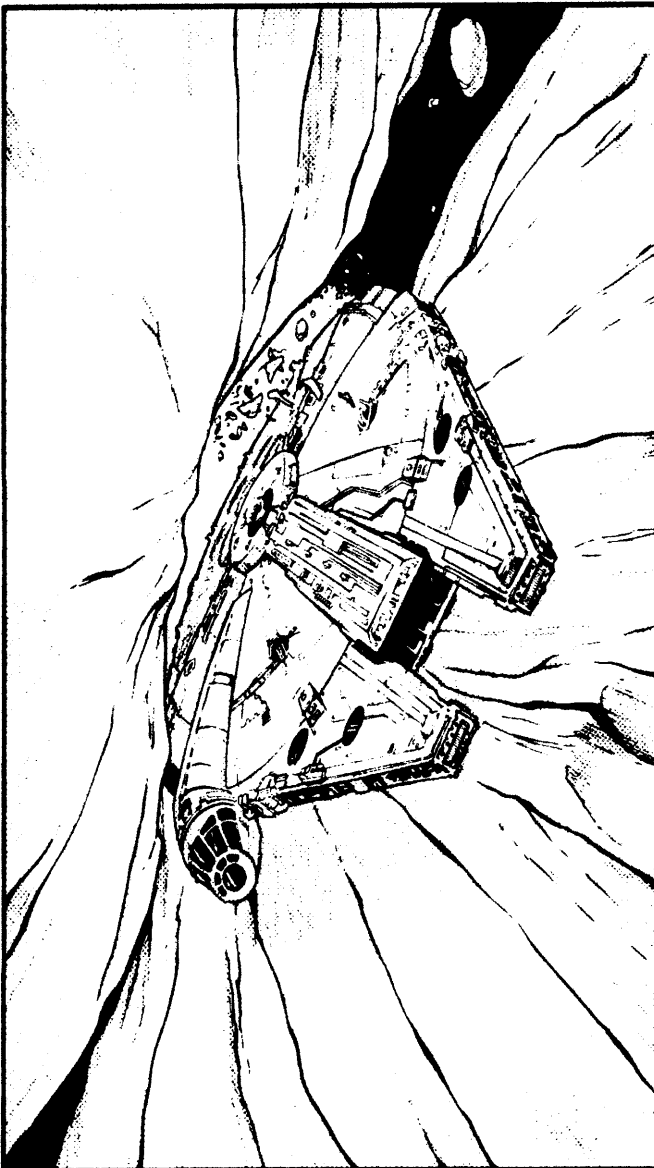
Unfortunately, the bounty hunters were prepared for this strategy. The smugglers notice on their sensors that another ship has taken off and has already begun pursuing them. It has the profile of a Guardian light cruiser, one the bounty hunters use for transport and cornering prey. Before they're even clear of the starport, the other ship opens fire.

Bounty Hunter Cruiser. Starfighter-scale, *space transports 4D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 4D.* Maneuverability 1D, space 9, atmosphere 400; 1,150 kmh, hull 5D, shields 2D. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire control 2D+2, damage 5D).

Generic Character YT-1300. Starfighter-scale, maneuverability 1D, space 4, atmosphere 280; 800 kmh, hull 4D, shields 1D. Weapons: 2 laser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 4D).

This shouldn't be much of a challenge for the characters. The few hits here and there barely scratch their ship; however, the pilot suddenly notices that his ship's systems begin failing one after another for no particular reason. First the hyperdrive goes, then the life support (including the lights), then the main drives. The ship, which hasn't had time to leave the atmosphere, begins plummeting back down toward Tatooine...and the Dune Sea.

The bounty hunter cruiser takes a few more shots, then veers away back toward Mos Eisley. The characters soon see why. Their current crash trajectory is taking them down right in the middle of a



fierce sandstorm which seems to blanket the terrain below them from horizon to horizon. The cockpit instruments are going haywire. It's going to take a very good *space transports* roll to land the ship. Allow the pilot to add the ship's *maneuverability* dice to his roll. A relatively safe landing is going to require a Heroic (31) result. For every 5 points below that, the crash inflicts 1D damage to the ship and to every character (2D if they're not securely strapped in somewhere).

The crash takes them through several dunes (not that anybody sees anything; the front viewport is obscured entirely by blowing sand). When the ship finally comes to a stop, every viewport shows them buried under sand. The roaring wind above tells them that the storm is still raging.

The characters have an opportunity to check out the damage to their ship (internally, at least). But as soon as they enter the freighter's engineering spaces, they discover they have pests aboard: scurriers native to Mos Eisley who are responsible for tearing apart the components to the systems which blacked out.

Scurriers. *Dexterity 3D, running 4D, Perception 2D+2, sneak 3D+2, Strength 2D+1, climbing/jumping 3D+2.* Special abilities: bite inflicts STR damage; male horns do STR+1D damage; forepaws can manipulate small objects and pick at machinery as if *repair* skill of 4D. Move: 15.

The scurriers hiss and bite back should the characters come too close. If they're suitably frightened, they might bolt from their hiding places and scurry throughout the ship, seeking cover. The pests must be hunted down. Once the storm ends and the dorsal hatch is finally opened, any remaining scurriers flee from their nests, push past the characters and leap out into the bright Tatooine afternoon.

Episode Two: Where Are We?

The storm dies down in a few hours. The roaring subsides, though the viewports are still blocked with sand. The only hatch capable of opening is the upper one. As soon as the seal is released, sand streams in, covering the lead character. It eventually stops pouring in. When the smugglers emerge, they see their entire ship is covered in about one to two meters of

sand; the Dune Sea stretches forever in every direction.

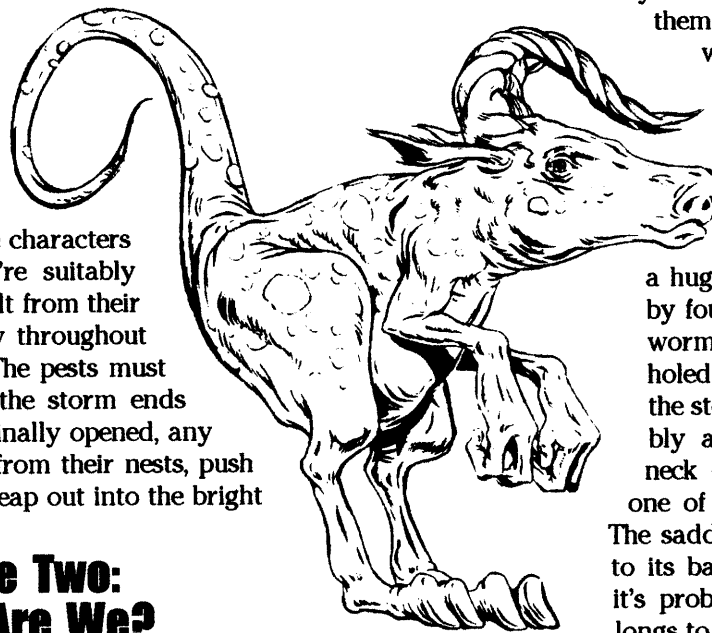
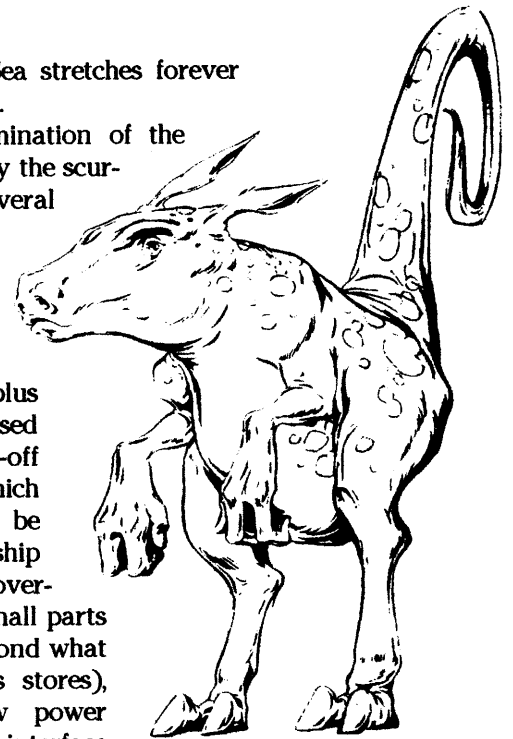
Further examination of the damage caused by the scurriers reveals several systems are temporarily disabled, including the hyperdrive and main engines, plus the repulsorlifts used for initial take-off and landing (which would normally be able to lift the ship above the sand covering it). Several small parts are required (beyond what are in the ship's stores), including a few power couplings and interface plugs the scurriers pulled to pieces and gnawed on.

Meanwhile, any characters surveying the area outside are in for a nasty surprise. Once they've wandered a little ways from the ship, the sand beneath them begins to tremble. Sand

worms are known to burrow through the Dune Sea, bursting to the surface when prey is near. As the characters stumble back, they see a large head emerge, then

a huge body behind it supported by four tree-like legs. It's no sand worm, but a lost ronto who holed up near a dune to wait out the storm. The creature isn't terribly afraid, and arches its long neck down to affectionately lick one of the characters in the face. The saddle and bridle still strapped to its back and snout indicate that it's probably domesticated and belongs to someone not too far away.

The smugglers must use the ronto to head for the nearest settlement. (Even if they have vehicles in their hold, they're not going to fit through the upper hatch.) The beast is more than happy to oblige, and allows them to climb onto his back; everyone can fit. If they don't choose to use the ronto, it gets the picture and begins wandering off toward the horizon (the same





direction the scurriers headed). Hopefully the characters figure out it's heading for home ... and civilization.

"Civilization" shows up after about two

hours riding on the ronto. It

consists of a cluster of moisture farmer dwellings, both above-ground access domes and many underground chambers, garages and open dwelling pits. Many farmers and their droids are out repairing vaporators around the compound's perimeter. It doesn't seem like they were severely hit with the storm, but some flying debris damaged most of the vaporators.

The farmers aren't too thrilled to see the smugglers. They're a suspicious bunch, anyway. A group approaches them and asks who they are, what they're doing out in the Dune Sea, and where they found the ronto. This last question is answered by a little boy, Bippi, running from one of the dwellings. "Bashful!" he cries. "You found Bashful." The boy is excited the characters found and returned his pet ronto, who is also used for heavy labor tasks on the farm. The boy's joy puts the other farmers at ease, and they invite the characters inside to share some refreshments and to tell their story.

The poor moisture farmers have little in the way of starship parts; any technical equipment they have is sorely needed to maintain the dilapidated moisture vaporators they depend on for support. One of them, the oldest and seemingly daftest, steps forward. "I can

give them a lift over to Bakash Station," the old man known as Gaffer says. "I'm sure the technical shed there has some parts these fine people could use." Since the others are busy, he offers to drive them over to Bakash Station in his antiquated loader speeder (a two-seater speeder with a large payload area behind the passenger and driver seats). He strides off to the garage to warm it up and grab his "blast-fire gun," an antique (if not jury-rigged) weapon like a sawed-off shotgun which fires an explosive chemical blast (and any debris loaded into the barrel).

Gaffer. All stats are 2D except: *archaic guns* 3D, *dodge* 3D, *melee combat* 2D+2, *Knowledge* 3D, *Mechanical* 3D, *beast riding: ronto* 4D, *repulsorlift operation* 4D. Move: 8. Character Points: 5. Blast-fire gun (six shots only; 6D damage), loader speeder.

Bippi wants to go, too, as expected, but his parents put him to work on some droids instead. He's still excited that the characters returned his pet ronto, so he gives one of them his most prized possession: an old, corroding blaster power pack he found once. It's not much, and the character knows enough not to really plug it into his blaster, but it does have some use. The corrosion can be used as a mild acid to burn through soft material (syntherope or clothing), or slowly corrode metal. The sturm dowel is still in place; if removed, the power pack explodes 10 seconds later, though it only inflicts 1D character-scale damage at Point-Blank Range.

Episode Three: Showdown at Bakash Station

Bakash Station is a slightly larger assembly of sandstone buildings than the moisture farmer settlement. About 10 structures huddle around a central domed building: the local cantina. Several people and aliens mill about the streets, but nobody is terribly friendly. A few rontos are tied up in a paddock near a dewback stable, and several junky landspeeders are parked in front of the cantina.

Gaffer pulls his loader speeder up to a long, low building: the technical shed. Inside it's filled with piles, shelves and crates of all kinds of machinery and parts. The two lazy humans inside have no clue what the characters need, nor what it looks like, so they let them browse. Setting a price on their discoveries (which amount to one small crate) is another matter entirely. Set a higher-than-usual price and let everyone bargain it down. The proprietor has a 4D *bargain* skill, and quite a few debts to pay off...

Some characters might want to check out the rest of Bakash Station. There isn't much. Most of the buildings

are residences, though the other businesses include a small droid and speeder repair shop, dewback stables, a badly-stocked general outfitters (everything's three times as expensive), and the Wet Dewback Cantina.

The cantina is just a large room with a bar and distillery equipment along one wall. Droids are allowed inside, though there aren't any here at the time. Makeshift tables and chairs are made from old shipping crates and polished chunks of sandstone. No music filters through the air, just the muted conversation from the patrons. The bartender and his one waitress are both human, though the characters notice quite a few aliens in here taking shelter from the Tatooine suns.

Once the smugglers get settled in and order drinks (or a chunky, stew-like meal), the room suddenly goes silent. A pack of aliens (either at the bar or a table, where ever the characters aren't) turns to face them: a crowd of well-armed Weequay bounty hunters. They've been waiting here with their backs to everyone, expecting the characters to come here looking for supplies and replacement starship parts. Now they're ready for a fight.

Weequay Bounty Hunters. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 6D+1, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D+2, running 5D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation 4D, Perception 3D, sneak 4D, search 4D, Strength 4D, brawling 5D.* Move: 10. Blast vest and helmet (+1D physical, +1 energy), blaster rifle (5D), comlink, knife (STR+1D).

If none of the smugglers check out the cantina, the Weequays soon hear about their visit to the technical shed and surround it, preparing an ambush. In either case, Gaffer is ready to help out, stuffing all sorts of debris (nails, bolts, rocks) into the barrel of his blast-fire gun and shooting it with explosive, short-range results. There are just enough Weequay to scare off the characters. Just as the smugglers are escaping in Gaffer's loader speeder, they see other Weequays scurrying about, commandeering a cargo skiff and heading off after them.

Episode Four: Into the Canyons

As the characters narrowly escape the bounty hunter ambush in Bakash Station, Gaffer, who is driving the loader speeder everyone has piled into, gets an exciting idea: "I know a short-cut! We can head for



those rocks on the horizon and lose those hunters in the maze of canyons!" The idea sounds great...at least until the battered old landspeeder enters the first canyon with a skiff-load of bounty hunters hot on its tail.

This isn't exactly the easiest way to lose the Weequay, but the smugglers are sure in for one interesting ride. Unless someone wrests the landspeeder's controls from Gaffer, use his stats for driving (and avoiding obstacles). Meanwhile, the characters can return fire at the skiff, which is never far behind them in the labyrinthine canyons. Maneuvering through the narrow gullies requires a few *Moderate repulsorlift operation* rolls for both sides. Failure of any one roll results in 2D-3D damage to the vehicle (depending on how bad the *repulsorlift operation* roll was). Firing weapons is one difficulty level higher than normal. Since the canyons curve, any brief opportunity for a shot is probably going to be at Close to Medium Range.

Gaffer's Loader Speeder. Speeder-scale, *repulsorlift operation 4D, maneuverability 1D, move 80; 230 kmh, body strength 2D.*

Weequay Skiff. Speeder-scale, *repulsorlift operation 4D, maneuverability 0D, move 70; 200 kmh, body strength 3D.*

If you choose, you may add some extra obstacles the skiff and speeder must overcome. Some of these might include:

- Avoid jagged rocks which will scrape repulsorlift coils: Difficult.
- Canyon walls narrow ahead: Difficult.
- Rocks fall down slope: Very Difficult to avoid, or each character takes 4D damage.

Feel free to add your own challenges to this speeder chase. For flavor, you may decide to mention that this is the infamous Beggar's Canyon, though flying through this in Gaffer's dumpy old loader speeder is nothing like Luke Skywalker and his friends racing through here blasting womp rats.

Episode Five: Jawa Deal Gone Bad

The chase through the canyons works; the Weequay skiff is either slowed or seriously damaged. But more bounty hunters are on the way. The characters don't see the Weequay skiff or reinforcements until they return to their own ship. The wind has blown some of the sand away, exposing the sensor dish. Unfortunately, there's a much larger obstacle there, too. A Jawa sandcrawler has pulled up to the sensor dish (not quite over the ship, yet), and several of the diminutive creatures have emerged and are tugging on the exposed metal.

While several characters jump down into the ship to begin repairs (a few Moderate *space transports repair* rolls), others must bargain with the Jawas. The creatures want the dish; they found it, and it's theirs by common salvage rights. If the smugglers want it back, they must pay or trade. If not, and if the characters resort to force, the Jawas scurry back into their sandcrawler, rev up the engines, and slowly urge it forward: almost on top of the ship. And while the immense sandcrawler won't completely crush the freighter, it'll do a good deal of structural damage. Hopefully the characters realize this and open negotiations again. The Jawas double their opening bid in this case, but accept anything from hard credits to droids and useless starship components.

To further complicate matters, the bounty hunters on the skiff soon appear on the horizon. (If they need more of a challenge, fill two skiffs with bounty hunters.) Their strategy is to let off some Weequay behind a dune, allow them to position themselves with cover, then attack, using the remaining hunters on the skiff to fly around and provide scatter fire to keep the characters on their toes. If the bounty hunters arrive, the Jawas give up and flee inside the sandcrawler, backing it out of the fight. The hunters leave it alone, unless the smugglers try to use it for cover.

Once the ship's repulsors are fixed, it can lift off (about five meters or so) out of the sand. The

freighter's weapons can then be used to finish off these Weequay, though they try their best to find cover in the sand or flee in the skiff.

Hopefully the characters are still working to repair the hyperdrive and main drive. A few rounds after they lift off and begin using the ship's weapons, the bounty hunter cruiser flies into the fray, guns blazing. The smugglers better fix the main drive (and eventually the hyperdrive) to flee the scene and get rid of the cruiser.

The climax can come in several ways. If the smugglers can't get anything else repaired, they're in for a slug-fest with the cruiser. Hopefully the weapons don't get hit. If they're lucky, the bounty hunter ship eventually crash lands in the dunes, then explodes into thousands of glowing splinters. If the smugglers get the main drives repaired, they make a hasty run for open space. It takes the cruiser a few rounds to figure out what's going on and plot an intercept course. Soon they're within range again, and it becomes a slug-fest between the two ships until, at the last possible moment, the smugglers make the jump to hyperspace.

Staging Tips

To add some extra excitement, you might want to run this scenario using several props. You can create your own site maps for the two major fight locations, Docking Bay 92 and the Bakash Station cantina, or you can use existing maps. Docking Bay 92 can be simulated using the map for Docking Bay 94 from *Galaxy Guide 7: Mos Eisley*, or using the landing bay map from the *Star Wars Introductory Adventure Game* (which is to scale with 25 mm miniatures). For the Bakash Station cantina, use the Mos Eisley cantina map from *Galaxy Guide 7* (page 53), or the to-scale, color map in the *Mos Eisley Adventure Set*.

You can also use appropriate *Star Wars* miniatures. You will also find cut-out characters in the *Star Wars Introductory Adventure Game* or the free, promotional hand-out, *Mos Eisley Shoot-Out*, available from West End Games.