

# SHADOW SINFONIA AFTER-ACTION REPORT

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES: **PROTECT BUCKING BORDOK RANCH**

OUTCOME: **SUCCESS**

MISSION LEADERS:

- **ALYA, TWI'LEK POLITICO**
- **SEVEN, CLONE SHARPSHOOTER**

MISSION OPERATIVES:

- **BENDAK, CATHAR POLITICO**
- **DAX, HUMAN MEDIC**
- **LOWHRICK, WOOKIEE HIRED GUN**
- **TARRORRRI, WOOKIEE MARAUDER**

S4 COORDINATOR: **ARLEN**

OVERVIEW:

We've been contacted by **Wilburt Windwright**, a Gigoran rancher. Wilburt is a very distant cousin of Habukuk Pyke, who some of you may remember from the Pyke Compound on Mt. Ison, Hoth.

Wilburt has established a relatively new Bordok ranch on Craci IV. The planet's climate and ecology are ideal for ranchers, but to our knowledge Wilburt is the first to raise **Bordoks** there. The other ranchers--who all raise **Cracian Thumpers**--have taken a strong disliking to **Bucking Bordok Ranch**, and have been intimidating them with raids and acts of vandalism.

So far, the raids had been small groups of 3 to 4 men riding Thumpers, breaking things, and making threats. Unfortunately, the harassment has been escalating lately, and Wilburt is in fear for the safety of himself, his employees, and his livestock. Wilburt has asked us to step in and provide a little muscle. We will teach the hidebound locals that he's there legally, and he has just as much right to raise livestock as they do.

MISSION BACKGROUND:

- Craci IV is in the Craci System, which just inside **Corporate Sector Authority** territory, right on the border.
- The system itself is a **major trade hub**, but Craci IV is something of a backwater planet and--in spite of its profitable livestock exports--somewhat overlooked by the CSA.
- However, the CSA does place a general ban on vehicles and speeders of all types on Craci IV, as they are considered a risk to the local ecology and livestock operations.
- Having had a few **entanglements** with the CSA in the past, S4 advised respecting this restriction.
- Starships are allowed to touch down for brief drop-offs and pickups, but may not linger.
- Personal weapons are allowed. Droids are also allowed (but strongly frowned upon by the locals).

- While military grade weapons and restricted items are technically illegal, S4 recommended a “weapons free” approach to this mission as enforcement in the rural areas of the ranch were bound to be spotty at best; our agents were encouraged to take every reasonable measure to protect themselves and the clients.

#### MISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Once all load-outs were packed and ready, the *Prelude* dropped our six-person team off in an adjacent fallow field, and then quickly departed. Van-Chavez preferred to minimize his exposure to the CSA, which is understandable.
- **Wilburt Windwright** and one of his employees--**Devlanna**, a female Kyuzo--greeted our agents warmly and invited them in for lunch.
- A very large **Dowutin** was seen lingering outside. Wilburt explained that he was named **Crackjaw**, and was not an employee of the ranch per se. Wilburt said that he would feed the Dowutin on occasion and the Dowutin would perform labor for him. It was often handy having such a large, strong friend around.
- Crackjaw had frightened the raiders off on a few occasions, but the raids were getting worse, in spite of his intimidating presence.
- Our agents enjoyed a lavish lunch inside the ranch house, which was surrounded by paddocks, stables, a barn, and numerous small fields and out buildings.
- Wilburt was saddened to learn from Seven of Habukuk Pyke’s capture, lamenting that the “old fool was probably in an Imperial labor camp somewhere.”
- Once everyone had stuffed themselves, Wilburt invited Crackjaw inside, who proceeded to “clean up” all remaining food. The large humanoid barely fit inside and had a voracious appetite.
- Ayla took holo-pics of Wilburt’s ranch hands, and asked them several questions. Ayla wanted to be thorough and make sure none of the ranch hands were involved with the raids.
- Wilburt and Devlana clearly trusted the hands, and were a little upset by this, but they also respected our agents’ caution in covering all the potential risks.
- Fortunately, the hands were cooperative. None of them behaved suspiciously or resisted the background checks.
- Seven and Dax, drawing on their military experience, scouted the terrain and studied the position of buildings, finding the best firing arcs, avenues of approach, cover, and so on. This would come in very handy later.
- Meanwhile, there were plenty of chores to do around the ranch. Wilburt did not expect our agents to help, as he was paying them for protection, not chores. However, some of our agents were happy to help him, and preferred being useful to sitting around doing nothing.
- The two **Wookiees** in particular, together with Crackjaw, were very useful in lending some muscle and some height to chores like repairing the large heavy barn doors, which had been damaged in the most recent attack.
- Dax investigated some damage to the southern paddock.
- The raiders had knocked several meters of fencing down, including a gate. They did this in order to release numerous Bordoks, creating a huge hassle for the ranch.
- Dax determined that the fencing had been torn down by ropes being pulled by large bipedal creatures--most likely Cracian Thumpers.
- Dax also agreed to help Devlanna deliver a **baby Bordok**, the mother Bordok had experienced a very difficult pregnancy.

- Unfortunately, Dax's considerable experience as a battlefield medic, while always useful, was not the same thing as acting as a veterinary midwife.
- All the same, Devlanna appreciated the attempt. The Bordok foal was delivered with only a little trouble.
- At Dax's suggestion, our agents wisely invested some time in learning how to ride Bordoks. Tarrowrri, Lowhhrick, Ayla, and Bendak in were the keenest students.
- Wilburt and the ranch hands did their best to teach them, and appreciated our agents taking an interest and using all available resources in defense of the ranch.
- Fortunately, trained Bordoks take well to new riders, and are easier to learn riding with than Thumpers, which are bipedal and bound more than they run.
- Wilburt asked our agents for a plan, so they'd be better prepared for when the next raider attack came, which he expected any day now.
- It was decided that Wilburt, Devnalla, and the ranch hands would all hole up in the Ranch House every night, with Crackjaw and the fighting-ready hands acting as guards.
- This would both protect the clients and take any potential moles out of the equation during the next raid.
- It should be noted that after observing the ranch hands for a few days, none of them were ever seen using any comlinks, leaving, or acting suspiciously.
- The ranch hands were: Larkin (Klatooinian), Hobb (Human), Dinky (Chadra-Fan), Springer (Rodian), U-Turn (Sullustan), Rook (Nikto). All of them appeared trustworthy, as much as our agents could ascertain in the short time.
- At this point, there was little left to do but the odd chore and wait for the bad guys.
- Our agents took turns keeping watches, and on the midnight-to-morning watch, the vandals came again. This time in force.
- There were four groups of Thumper riders, coming at the ranch from the four cardinal directions at approximately the same time.
- With Seven and Dax in good sniper positions, our team spotted the raiders before they spotted us.
- Dax raised the alarm over coms, waking the rest of the team up.
- Seven and Dax started picking off Thumpers, causing the riders to take sudden unplanned dismounts.
- Tarrowrri, Lowhhrick, Bendak, and Alya mounted up on their favorite Bordoks.
- A Wookiee charging at you on a quadraped is a terrifying thing to witness, as Lowhhrick impressed upon the raiders.
- Tarrowrri's Bordok was felt sleepy and uncooperative, and did not want to go where her rider urged her to.
- The raiders coming from the east threw whiskey-bombs at a storage building, setting it on fire. The raiders coming from the south tossed some of the ad hoc incendiaries into a field.
- The building soon caught fire; fortunately, the bombs in the field didn't catch the green vegetation on fire and quickly expended their fuel.
- Using a combination of stun bolts, shots aimed at Thumpers, and Wookiee fists, our agents gained the upper hand.
- Tarrowrri's Bordok, still being somewhat uncooperative, galloped over to Bendak and licked the Cathar in the face.
- At this point, most of the raiders had been knocked out, or at least severely stunned.

- However, one rider remained, and he wisely decided to bolt.
- Bendak wiped the slobber off his face, and pursued on his Thumper, with a few other Shadows following close behind.
- Bendak caught the fleeing raider, and put him down with a couple of stun bolts.
- Meanwhile, Dax was riding hard around the perimeter, stopping and dismounting to tie up prisoners with rope.
- Unfortunately, the group of raiders to the west managed to escape. Their dead and dying Thumpers were found, but the riders were not.
- The whine of a repulsor engine was heard far to the west, it's assumed the four western riders escaped using an illegal speeder.
- The rest of the early morning hours were spent gathering the prisoners and interrogating them.
- The raiders had arrived from four ranches, each one several clicks away: Sundown Ranch, Thunder Thumpers Ranch, Billow-Tree Ranch, Dusty Brush Ranch
- Their bosses had coordinated the assault, hoping the threat of fire would finally frighten Wilburt away.
- Wilburt was alarmed that he had offended so many other ranchers. He admitted his people skills were not that great. He had been preoccupied with working on his own operation, and he had neglected to properly introduce himself to them.
- Our agents decided to hold the vandals here, and make them work off the damages.
- Everyone agreed that this was fair.
- The quiet of the morning was broken by the approach of a large, lavishly appointed coach, painted in green and gold, and drawn by a team of six Cracian Thumpers.
- White cloths had been tied to the four corner-posts on the top of the coach, acting as "flags of truce".
- The shield emblems on the coach were marked with a triple-Nern: **NNN**
- Wilburt recognized it immediately as Nora Navarr's coach. She was one of his neighbors. A wealthy rancher who specialized in rehabilitating sick young Thumpers as well as raising her own stock.
- Nora's ranch was located a few acres to the east.
- The double doors of the coach opened, and a quilted folding stair descended. A petite, attractive, human woman wearing expensive clothes stepped out.
- Immediately behind her **Benny Scappr**, Weequay leader of the Companions, exited the coach.
- Benny quickly blurted out his congratulations to Wilburt for "hiring some muscle". He then awkwardly introduced our agents as working for an organization called "Justice Served" and let her know that the Companions could happily work with them.
- Realizing Benny must have made up this bizarre cover story on the spot for a good reason (his warning glares provided an additional clue) our agents decided to play it cool and see what this was all about.
- Nora greeted Wilburt and let him know that there was something important they needed to discuss.
- Wilburt was dismayed by the grand entrance of her unexpected visit, but he gathered himself and agreed to "palaver" with her.
- While he two of them talked, Benny discretely approached Bendak and let him know that Nora was none other than the widow of **Novak Navarr**.

- Benny and Bendak agreed that it might be best if Bendak disguised himself or better, remained out of sight, to prevent Nora from recognizing him.
- After all, our agents had killed Novak, together with other scum like Hyxxa, during the infamous duel on Cantonica's moon (where we lost Dr. Pral in the same duel).
- Fortunately, Bendak was the only agent on this mission she was likely to recognize.
- Wilburt suggested they all meet in his large dining hall over a big breakfast, since everyone was tired and hungry.
- Bendak and Devlanna hung out in the kitchen, where they could overhear the conversation with Bendak out of view.
- Devlanna was intrigued by the tension in the air. Bendak did his best to explain the situation to her without getting into the grisly details.
- Nora warned Wilburt that the **Imperials** were getting ready to make a move on the ranchers.
- She'd been to a dinner party, where she was chatting with the local **CSA Viceprex**, a corrupt bureaucrat named Zark Nafeel.
- Nafeel had a crush on Nora, and also had a little too much to drink at the party.
- He let her know that the CSA were cutting a deal with the Imperials, and that Nora might want to go off-planet, ASAP.
- Nora pressed him for more information. Being drunk, and love-blind, he gave up more details.
- The Empire was offering a very lucrative and exclusive contract to the CSA to provide them with riding animals.
- The Imps would use these animals on wilder planets where transportation infrastructure was non-existent and/or the terrain was too rugged and remote for speeders.
- The Empire wanted to create an all-new scouting corps using the animals, which are hardy and self-sufficient.
- In return for this contract, the Imps wanted to industrialize the livestock production, and take a more active role in it.
- As a vanguard maneuver, the Imps wanted to "put down" the "incipient rebellion" that was brewing among some of the local ranchers lately (which is how Imperial intelligence had incorrectly interpreted the raids on Wilburt's ranch).
- The CSA, which prefers to play both sides, tentatively agreed to allow the Imperials to send an expeditionary force out from their nearby garrison, simply as a trial to see how things go.
- Unfortunately, the Imperial task force would be arriving tomorrow.
- For better and worse, it would be happening in the middle of a large system of thunderstorms.
- The task force was to be led by a veteran, **Lieutenant Andros Marh**.
- Marh was a fairly capable commander, having proved himself in battle a few times. However, Nora's assessment was he was grossly underestimating the resistance he would meet from the stubborn ranchers and the severity of the weather system.
- Visitors to Cracia IV were often guilty of both.
- Nora's suggestion was simple: obliterate the Imperial forces and "disappear" the bodies and the wreckage so that it wasn't clear what had actually happened to them.

- By keeping their defeat mysterious, it was her hope that this would terminate the proposal for quite some time, perhaps indefinitely. It would serve as an embarrassing lesson to both the CSA and the Imperials that these deals had consequences.
- Nora's additional intel on the task force was that it was a fairly large: Three or four platoons of Imperial Army soldiers supported by heavy weapons, some speeders, and the possibility of stormtroopers joining in as well (count unknown).
- They only had a few hours before both the storm and the task force would arrive.
- They would need the full cooperation of all three ranches that were being targeted by the Imperial task force:
  - **Bucking Bordok Ranch**
  - **Navarr's Noble Nursery**
  - **Kraspen's Thumper Colony**
- Wilburt and Nora were already committed to the fight. The variables included Kraspen (a surly Ugnaught rancher), Crackjaw, and the recently captured raiders from the four other ranches.
- Nora, Devlanna, and Ayla would ride out in Nora's coach to talk to the Ugnaught, Kraspen.
- With Nora gone, Bendak could come out to work on convincing the captives to join forces for the greater good.
- Both of our politicians demonstrated how well they know their stuff. It didn't take long for them to convince all three (Kraspen, the vandals, and Crackjaw) to join forces with us.
- Seven called up S4 to drop off some heavy weapons and the "**Marcato**" comm jammer for use in the battle.
- The storm had started to blow in just as Van-Chavez raised ship back to the relative safety of orbit.
- Arlen and Van-Chavez offered air support if it was wanted. However, the group consensus was: it was better to not risk the *Prelude* by exposing it to either the elements or the Imperials. Especially since it was our agent's only means of escape from Cracia IV.
- Ayla was picked to be the commander of our combined forces.
- **The Companions** would be deployed at Nora's ranch. **Kraspen** had his own security team. The repentant vandals would act as group of irregulars to ride out wherever they were needed most.
- Heavy weapons and last-minute orders were handed out.
- A couple of Wilburt's ranch hands, who were not soldier material, were sent out into the storm to see if they could recruit more volunteers from other nearby ranches.
- As of the time of this report, their fate is unknown.
- A makeshift command post was established on the roof of Wilburt's guest house, which had a clear view of most of the ranch.
- Ayla coordinated the defense effort while the Imperial units made their initial approach.
- Using hit-and-fade tactics, Ayla and our allies lured the Imperials into spreading their forces far too thin.
- What Lieutenant Marh thought would be a deadly **enveloping** maneuver ended up working against his troops.

- Because of the storm and Marcato interfering with coms, the Imperial forces simply could not coordinate effectively.
- They assaulted in sporadic, ineffective waves, essentially dividing themselves up into small squads (and therefore relatively easy pickings).
- This continued for a few hours, the storm raging the entire time.
- Alya pressed her growing advantage and began mopping up the attackers.
- As the battle started to wind down, everyone was scattered across several kilometers, friend and foe alike.
- The Imperial Lieutenant would not give up, however.
- Gathering his remaining forces: three squads of regular infantry and two **Dark Troopers**, the lieutenant made a heroically foolish final assault on Wilburt's ranch.
- The Dark Troopers were formidable, and the lieutenant knew his life--much less his military career--was riding on the success or failure of this mission.
- Our agents gathered together, using the ranch buildings as cover, and the Bordok riders were once again readied as quick response cavalry.
- Lieutenant Marh and his three infantry squads approached from the east.
- The two Dark Troopers came from the west, one of them emerging from Wilburt's small fish pond and climbing onto the pier.
- The lieutenant ordered one of his infantry squads to open fire. The final engagement had begun.
- Seven took careful aim at one of the Dark Troopers, knowing full well how deadly these assault droids can be.
- Seven's overcharged weapon lit up the stormy sky as the target cooked off, exploding in an impressive blast of sparks, flame, and smoke.
- That was one Dark Trooper out of the way.
- The Wookiees, acting as terrifying heavy cavalry, charged forward.
- Dax and Bendak provided covering fire as Alya continued to direct the action.
- The second Dark Trooper stepped away from a charging Wookiee and, seeing Seven as the most dangerous, launched a missile at him.
- There was a loud hissing sound, then a flash of bright light with a loud boom.
- Seven was down! A part of his armor landed at Dax's feet.
- Dax rushed over and immediately rendered aid.
- The two Wookiees, Tarrorwri and Lowhrick, had enough of this, and smashed and sliced the second Dark Trooper into tiny ineffective pieces.
- The foolish lieutenant refused to give in. He ordered his infantry to press their attack.
- Armed with blaster rifles, one of the infantry units shot Bendak down.
- Needless to say, this pissed everyone off.
- With complete disregard to his own safety, Dax rushed in, and slid across the ground to render aid to the fallen Cathar.
- With Seven up again, and the two mounted Wookiees laying waste on all sides: it did not take long to mop up the remaining Imperials.
- In spite of their exhaustion, the ranchers wasted no time disposing of bodies and vehicles under cover of the storm.
- They ranchers pushed some Imperial vehicles and equipment into the fish pond, and drug the bodies away to hide them in fields and barns. The "disappearance" effort had begun.
- Our agents took a much-needed and much-deserved rest, weathering the storm until it played out.

- Dax patched up the injured.
- After the storm broke, Nora arrived in her coach. It was covered in soot and scratches, and pocked all over with blaster marks. The once pristine vehicle was much worse for the wear.
- Nora stepped out of her coach and looked each of our agents in the eye. She thanked them sincerely for fighting so bravely and protecting their way of life.
- Then she morphed in to her true form: a **Clawdite**.
- Nora let them know that she had figured out who our agents really were.
- She had been estranged from her husband Novak for a long time now, and acknowledged that he was not a good person.
- She also acknowledged that we'd lost one of our own in the duel on Cantonica's moon.
- For all of these reasons, she decided that perhaps "the score was even, for now".
- She let us know that she did not consider us friends, however.
- Nora entered her coach and departed without another word.

#### THE CONDUCTOR'S REVIEW:

Agents, you once again went above and beyond for insufficient remuneration. I salute you for not leaving our client in peril after the letter of our contract was fulfilled. I would have never asked you to remain behind to fight off an Imperial assault! But I am extremely proud and grateful that you did. You consistently surprise me with your valor and unselfishness. We despise the Empire and you defeated them in a suitably humiliating fashion.

It is unfortunate that we encountered the widow of Novak Navarr. I have a feeling that under different circumstances, she would have been a good friend and ally to us. My instinct says she is a good person who got caught up in some bad business; this is something many of us in Shadow Sinfonia can relate to.

Unfortunately, some emotional wounds are too deep and some relationships cannot be repaired, even with the help of our two expert politicians. I would not write her off entirely, but I think it's best we keep our distance for now, and respect her in that manner.

#### S4 REPORT, FILED BY ARLEN:

Phew, it's always good to see the CSA territories in our rear-facing monitors. I really wish the *Prelude* could have joined the battle with you, but I agree with the foresight of keeping us in reserve and protecting our only transport out of this corrupt, profiteering hell-hole.

Van-Chavez brags that he's happy to go do a couple of strafing runs on the Imperial garrison, but I notice he says such things after we're already in hyperspace.

Seven, he has a bottle of Corellian Whiskey for you in the cockpit. Says it's to soothe your wounds. I'd make sure it's not watered down.

#### MISSION REWARDS:

- All four agents: 3,000 credits, 25 XP, +20 Prestige, 0 Notoriety