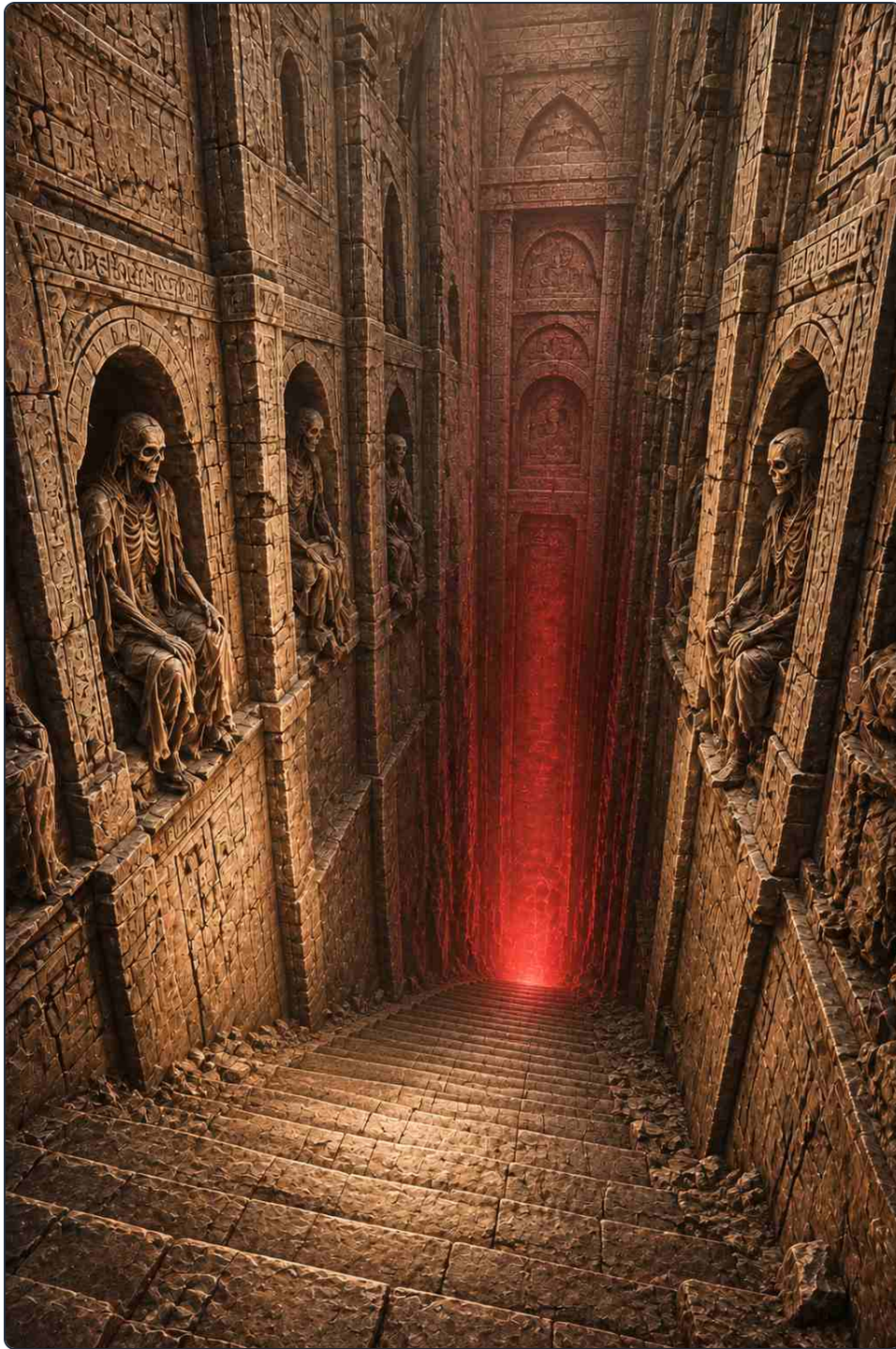




SWURPG ADVENTURE

The Tomb of Tulak Hord

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This is the GM document for a four-session capstone delve on Korriban, built for a party around level 8. It is a dark-side counterpart to *The Trials of Knighthood*: where that adventure sent a lone Padawan up a mountain to be made a Knight, this one sends a whole party *down* into a Dark Lord's tomb to be weighed — and offered a bargain most of them will be tempted to take. Read the **Real Story** below before you run a single scene; the whole adventure turns on what the tomb actually wants, and the players must never learn it before the finale. For general running advice, see the [Adventures hub](#); for the dark-side framing this module leans on, read [Playing the Dark Side](#).

Synopsis

A Jedi historian, **Master Ilena Sarn**, has spent a decade tracking the resting place of the **Holocron of Tulak Hord** — a Sith Lord dead a thousand years, remembered as the deadliest blade and coldest sorcerer of the old Sith Empire. She has finally placed it: sealed in his tomb in Korriban's **Valley of the Dark Lords**. She isn't the only one who found it. A Sith cult has sent its own agent, the sorcerer **Nyra Sil**, and Nyra has a head start. Sarn hires the party to reach the Holocron first and bring it out so it can be locked away where no one will ever practice what it teaches.

The tomb is a gauntlet — a descent through three trials Tulak Hord built to weigh whoever came to claim his power: the **Trial of Flesh** (his alchemical guardians), the **Trial of the Mind** (fear and illusion), and the **Trial of the Will** (the bargain at the bottom). Sithspawn haunt the dark, alchemical hazards fill the halls, and Nyra races the party the whole way down. At the burial chamber, past the last trial, the Holocron's gatekeeper wakes — the trapped essence of Tulak Hord himself — and makes the party an offer. What they answer, and who answers it, is the whole adventure. They leave Korriban one level higher, carrying either a sealed Holocron, a Dark Lord's power, or nothing but the knowledge of what they nearly became.

The Real Story

What the players think: they're beating a Sith cult to a dangerous relic, then getting out.

What's actually true:

The tomb is not a vault. It's an audition. Tulak Hord did not seal his Holocron to *hide* it — he sealed it to *filter*. Every trial is designed to kill the weak and pass the strong, so that only someone worthy ever reaches the bottom. Reaching the Holocron is not theft. It is qualification.

The gatekeeper wants a body. The consciousness bound in the Holocron is not a recording. It is Tulak Hord, reduced to essence and waiting a thousand years for a vessel strong enough to hold him — through the forbidden art of **Transfer Essence**. He does not want to be carried out. He wants to walk out, wearing whoever proves worthiest.

The offer is real, and generous. At the finale, the gatekeeper does not attack — not at first. It *offers*: take up my power, take up my blade, take up my tomb, and become what I was. Everything the party has fought through was to make this offer to someone strong enough to be worth it. The dark side is generous up front (see [Playing the Dark Side](#)); the cost comes after.

Nyra Sil is a red herring for the real threat. The cult sent her to *claim* the Holocron for her masters. She has no idea it means to claim *her*. She can end up a rival, a temporary ally, a victim, or — if the party refuses the offer — the one who accepts it, becoming the climactic threat.

GM The crucial GM call

Do not telegraph the bargain. Run the first two-and-a-half sessions as a straight dangerous delve against a rival — a dungeon crawl the party thinks they understand. The gatekeeper's true nature should land as a genuine turn in the burial chamber, not something the players saw coming from Act I. The whole module is a slow, tempting, reversible descent (per [Playing the Dark Side](#)) — earn the finale by never tipping it early.

How the Party Met

This is a **capstone for an established level-8 party** — most groups will bring their own characters and their own reason to be on a Sith world. For tables assembling a party for this module, pull one of the four general entry framings from the [Adventures hub](#) — hired crew, old debt, shared enemy, thrown together — and layer Master Sarn's contract on top: she is paying a professional crew to do a dangerous job, and she does not much care what they are as long as they can survive Korriban.

GM If the party has a Force-user

Give the Force-sensitive PC a private hook: from the moment they make orbit over Korriban, they *feel* the tomb — a cold, patient pressure, like being watched by something that has already decided it likes them. Feed this all the way down: the tomb is warmer to them, the trials seem to *want* them to pass, and the gatekeeper will address them by name it should not know. This is the essence sizing up its preferred vessel. A party without a Force-user gets none of this warmth — the tomb simply tries to kill them, and the final offer shifts to "carry me out and name your price" aimed at the greediest PC (see Scene 3.2).

Act I – The Valley of the Dark Lords

Estimated length: 1 session, roughly 3 to 4 hours.

The party lands on Korriban, crosses the Valley, and enters the tomb — meeting the cult's outer guard and the first thing the dark has left in the halls. This act teaches the tone: Korriban is not a ruin, it is a *held* place, and the tomb is awake.

Scene 1.1 – Descent to Korriban

READ ALOUD

Korriban is the color of old blood. Your ship comes down through a sky the shade of a bruise, over red rock cut by wind into knife-edges, and sets down at the head of a long valley. On both sides, carved into the cliffs, are doors — huge, black-stone doors flanked by statues of hooded figures, each one the tomb of a Dark Lord dead so long the galaxy has forgotten their names. The air is dry and still and wrong. Somewhere ahead, one door stands already open. Someone got here first.

The Valley is the establishing beat — let the players feel the weight of the place before anything attacks. There is no combat here; there is dread, and the evidence of the rival.

A **KNOWLEDGE: GALACTIC LORE · DC 16** identifies the valley as Korriban's burial ground and, on a success, recalls that **Tulak Hord** was a Sith Lord famed as both a duelist and a sorcerer — and that his tomb was said to test those who entered it.

A **SURVIVAL · DC 14** or **PERCEPTION · DC 14** at the open door reads the tracks: **a small group, five or six, went in less than a day ago** — and something dragged one of them back out. There is a body at the threshold (see Scene 1.2).

A Force-user who reaches out with the Force feels the tomb *notice* them (see the GMNote above).

Scene 1.2 – The Tomb Mouth

READ ALOUD

The open door leads into a pillared antechamber, its floor gritty with a thousand years of blown sand. A body lies just inside — a robed cultist, throat opened by something with claws, one hand still clutching a datapad. Deeper in, torchlight moves. Voices. The cult left guards at the door, and they've heard you come in.

The dead cultist's datapad, recovered with a glance, carries a half-decrypted map of the upper tomb and a single frightened voice-note: *"Sil says the trials are real. Two of us are already dead. She doesn't care."* This is the party's first hint that the rival is ahead — and ruthless.

Nyra Sil left three **Sith Acolytes** to hold the entrance while she pressed on. They are fanatics, not professionals; they fight to the death.

✂ **COMBAT** SITH ACOLYTES (3)

→ Stats, tactics, scaling, and loot: see the Stat Reference PDF (grouped by scene).

GM

Teaching beat: this fight re-establishes the party's competence at level 8 after a session or two away. Let it be a clean win. Its job is to make the tomb feel populated and the cult feel real — and to plant the Sith Poison, which the party will be glad to have by Act III.

Scene 1.3 – Something in the Dark

Past the antechamber, the tomb narrows into a descending gallery lined with alcoves — each holding the desiccated remains of a Massassi servant, entombed standing to guard their master in death. The cult came through here. So did something else.

READ ALOUD

The gallery goes down at a shallow angle, and the torchlight doesn't reach the ceiling. Your footsteps are the only sound — until they aren't. Something moves in the dark ahead, low and fast, and then it's gone. A dry, reptilian hiss echoes off the stone. One of the alcoves is empty, its wrappings torn. Whatever was in it isn't in it anymore, and whatever just crossed the corridor left no shadow at all.

A **Hssiss** — a dark-side dragon, a Sithspawn drawn to the tomb's power — has been hunting the cult's stragglers. It stalks the party from invisibility, striking the Force-user first if there is one.

✂ **COMBAT** HSSISS (DARK-SIDE DRAGON)

→ *Stats, tactics, scaling, and loot: see the Stat Reference PDF (grouped by scene).*

GM

Teaching beat: invisibility + a status that ordinary healing can't fix. Make the players solve a problem their usual tools don't cover — and if there's no Force-user to run the healing trance, let a **TREAT INJURY · DC 18** at least *stabilize* the venom (halve its damage) so a Force-less party isn't simply doomed by it.

Act II – The Trials

Estimated length: 2 sessions, roughly 6 to 8 hours total.

The tomb proper: the three trials Tulak Hord built, the rival sorcerer at the center of the tomb, and the horror he left to guard his rest. Here the party finds the first real dark-side reward — a bled crystal — and the tomb starts, quietly, to *reward* the ones who reach for it.

Scene 2.1 – The Trial of Flesh

The gallery opens into a vast, low hall — the **Hall of the Massassi** — where Tulak Hord's alchemically-twisted war-caste were entombed to rise again for anyone who disturbed them. The floor is scored with old channels that still weep a faint, luminous green.

READ ALOUD

The hall is the size of a hangar and colder than the corridors behind you. Hundreds of alcoves line the walls, each holding a hunched, red-skinned figure — Massassi, the Sith war-caste, twisted by alchemy and dead a thousand years. The green channels in the floor pulse, once, like a heartbeat. Two of the nearest figures turn their heads. Then they step down from their alcoves.

Crossing the hall wakes two **Massassi Warriors** — and disturbs the alchemical channels, which vent a caustic gas.

⚔ **COMBAT** MASSASSI WARRIORS (2) + ALCHEMICAL VENTS (HAZARD)

→ Stats, tactics, scaling, and loot: see the Stat Reference PDF (grouped by scene).

GM Sith War-Sword

An ancient double-edged blade forged through Sith alchemy: it can never be cut by a lightsaber, its wielder can Block a melee lightsaber attack (as the Block reaction) even without Force training, a trained hand can Deflect blaster bolts as a lightsaber does, and its edge ignores resistance and immunity to Kinetic damage. Melee (Exotic), 1d10 slashing/piercing. This is a memorable, campaign-carrying reward — hand it out with weight.

→ Tactical map — Hall of the Massassi — Trial of Flesh: see the Maps PDF (grouped by scene).

Scene 2.2 – The Trial of the Mind

A door of black Sith glass seals the way down, its surface a lattice of glowing red glyphs. This is Tulak Hord's second trial: it does not test the body.

READ ALOUD

*The door is a single sheet of black glass, taller than two of you, and across it crawl lines of red script — Sith glyphs, shifting and rearranging as you watch. As you approach, the script stops moving. It resolves into a single sentence you can suddenly, horribly, read: *What are you afraid of?* And the glass begins to show you.*

The door reads the party's fears and projects them — a phantasm for each PC, drawn from their own history (invite each player to name their character's worst fear; the door uses it). This is a puzzle-fear scene, not a combat.

Each PC must face their phantasm: a **INSIGHT · DC 16** to recognize it as illusion, or a **USE THE FORCE · DC 15** for a Force-user, or a straight **Wisdom save vs DC 15, or be Frightened and unable to advance until they succeed at the end of a later turn**. A PC who *strikes down* their own fear (roleplays confronting it) passes automatically — the tomb respects strength.

The glyphs themselves can be read: a **KNOWLEDGE: GALACTIC LORE · DC 18** (or Use the Force) translates the trial's inscription — *"Fear is the blade that has not yet been forged"* — and, crucially, foreshadows the bargain without naming it: the tomb rewards those who master fear rather than flee it.

In an alcove beside the door lies a **fallen dark-sider** — a previous delver, dead perhaps fifty years, one hand still frozen around a lightsaber. Its crystal is **bled crimson**, and it still carries its benefit (see the GMNote). The tomb *offers* it — the crystal all but glows brighter when a PC reaches for it. Taking it is the party's first small step onto the dark path.

GM The bled crystal

A synthetic red crystal, forged by bleeding — it carries a random dark-side benefit (roll or choose one of: Bloodlust, Reckless Fury, Dread, Cruelty, Hunger, Wrath, Malice, or Torment; see the [Lightsaber Builder](#) for the full effects). Each is a double-edged bargain: a real edge that also bites its wielder. Any PC can seat it in a lightsaber (or carry it as a focus). Note which PC takes it and whether they use it — it is the tomb's first hook, and a thread that pays off in the finale. A PC can later **Purify** it back to white (the door out of the dark stays open), but the fracture — and the memory — remains.

Scene 2.3 – The Rival

Past the glass door, a spiral stair descends to a ritual chamber where **Nyra Sil** has stopped to break the last seal. She is out of acolytes and out of patience, and she has heard the party coming.

NPC NYRA SIL — Sith Sorcerer — the cult's agent, the rival racing for the Holocron

Voice: Cold, precise, unhurried. Speaks like someone who has already calculated your odds and found them poor. Never raises her voice; the threat is in the flatness.

Motivation: Claim the Holocron of Tulak Hord for her masters and walk out the cult's rising star. Does not know the Holocron intends to claim HER. Will bargain, threaten, or kill depending on which is cheaper.

Nyra is the tomb's mid-point pivot. She can become a **rival fight**, a **temporary ally** (if the party argues that the tomb is more dangerous than either of them — which is true), or a **victim** (the gatekeeper offers *her* the bargain first if the party refuses in Act III). Read the table and let the players choose how to handle her.

READ ALOUD

"You made good time." The sorceress doesn't turn around. She's kneeling at a black altar, both hands pressed to a seal of red glyphs, and the air around her is wrong — bent, like heat off sand. "I'd tell you to leave, but you've come too far to listen, and I've killed enough of my own people getting here to be short on mercy. So. You can try to take this from me. Or you can be useful, and we can both survive whatever's waiting at the bottom. Choose quickly. The seal is almost open, and I don't like how eager it is."

⚡ DECISION POINT WHAT DO YOU DO WITH NYRA SIL?

- A** **Fight her.** She defends the altar. Combat (below). If beaten, she can be killed, captured, or left — a captured Nyra becomes a wildcard in Act III.
- B** **Ally with her.** A **PERSUASION • DC 18** or a shared read on the tomb's danger. She fights *beside* the party through Act II's guardian and into the burial chamber — then the bargain tests the alliance to destruction.
- C** **Trick her.** A **DECEPTION • DC 18** to send her ahead into the guardian (Scene 2.4) as a shield, or to make her think the party is leaving. Buys an advantage; earns an enemy.

⚔ COMBAT NYRA SIL — SITH SORCERER (RIVAL)

→ Stats, tactics, scaling, and loot: see the Stat Reference PDF (grouped by scene).

Scene 2.4 – The Guardian

The final seal opens onto a bridge of black stone over a lightless drop — and the thing Tulak Hord left to guard the last stretch to his rest.

📖 READ ALOUD

The seal grinds open onto a narrow bridge spanning a pit so deep your light finds no bottom. Halfway across, something is waiting. It unfolds from a crouch — tall, hunched, armored in bone-white plates, tusks curving from a lipless jaw, claws that drip a black venom onto the stone. A terentatek. The old Sith bred them to hunt Force-users, and this one has been starving in the dark for a very long time.

A **Terentatek** — the definitive Sithspawn horror — holds the bridge. It is the hardest fight before the finale, and on a bridge, positioning is everything.

⚔ COMBAT TERENCEK (SITHSPAWN GUARDIAN)

→ Stats, tactics, scaling, and loot: see the Stat Reference PDF (grouped by scene).

→ Tactical map — The Bridge — the Terentatek's Crossing: see the Maps PDF (grouped by scene).

GM

This is the last fight before the burial chamber — the party should reach the finale spent, low on resources, having *earned* the bottom of the tomb. That depletion is the point: the gatekeeper's offer of power lands hardest on a party that just barely survived the climb.

Act III – The Bargain

Estimated length: 1 session, roughly 3 to 4 hours.

The burial chamber, the offer, and the finale. This is the Trial of the Will — and the reason the whole tomb exists. Slow down. Give the temptation room to breathe before any blade is drawn.

Scene 3.1 – The Burial Chamber

READ ALOUD

*The bridge ends at a pair of doors worked in gold and black, and beyond them is a chamber that does not match the tomb — clean, cold, and **waiting**, as if swept an hour ago. At its center, on a bier of black stone, lies a sarcophagus, and above it, floating, turning slowly in the still air, is a pyramid of black crystal, each face etched with red script, its apex a single point of dark light. As you enter, the light brightens. And a voice — patient, warm, and utterly certain — speaks from everywhere at once. "At last. I have waited so long for someone worth speaking to."*

The **Holocron of Tulak Hord** is the objective, and its gatekeeper is Tulak Hord himself — his essence, bound in the crystal, projecting as a robed figure of red light above the sarcophagus. He does not attack. He **welcomes**. This is the Trial of the Will, and it is a conversation before it is ever a fight.

GM

Run the gatekeeper as gracious, admiring, and reasonable — a grandfather who has been alone too long and is delighted by clever guests. He praises the party for surviving what killed everyone else. He answers questions honestly **except** about Transfer Essence — he speaks of "joining," "inheritance," "becoming," never of taking a body. He addresses the strongest Force-user directly and by name (he read it in them on the way down). The horror is that everything he says is **true**: he really will give them power, a blade, a tomb, a legacy. He just leaves out the part where there's only room for one of them afterward.

→ Tactical map — The Burial Chamber — the Bargain: see the Maps PDF (grouped by scene).

Scene 3.2 – The Offer

The gatekeeper makes his bargain. Let the players sit in it. A **INSIGHT · DC 20** or a **USE THE FORCE · DC 18** catches the wrongness under the warmth — a hunger the words don't cover — but grant no more than a chill; the full truth (Transfer Essence) is only revealed if the party accepts or attacks.

READ ALOUD

*"You came for knowledge. I offer more. Everything I was — the blade that no one in my age could match, the sorceries the Jedi burned their libraries to forget — I offer to **you**. Take up my power. Take up my tomb. Walk out of Korriban as I once walked in, and let the galaxy learn again what a Sith Lord is. I ask only that you are strong enough to hold it. And you have already proven that you are. So. Will you take what you have earned?"*

⚡ DECISION POINT THE TRIAL OF THE WILL — HOW DOES THE PARTY ANSWER?

- A Refuse — destroy the Holocron.** The party rejects the offer and moves to shatter the Holocron. The gatekeeper's warmth vanishes; he manifests to defend himself and to take by force what he was not given — the fight in Scene 3.3. This is the "light" ending: the tomb is closed, the knowledge lost, the party leaves clean but empty-handed but for what they looted on the way.
- B Accept — one PC takes the power.** A PC (usually the Force-user the gatekeeper courted) accepts. The moment they touch the Holocron, the truth lands: Transfer Essence. Tulak Hord tries to overwrite them (a contested Will — see 3.3). If the PC wins, they keep the power AND themselves (a fallen hero, per [Playing the Dark Side](#) — this is a campaign turn, not a game-over). If they lose, Tulak Hord walks out wearing them, and the *rest* of the party now faces the boss (a dark ending, a villain born).
- C Claim it — take it out sealed.** The party refuses to wield it but won't destroy it — they'll carry it out to lock away (Master Sarn's actual contract). The gatekeeper cannot allow the Holocron to leave with someone who won't use it; he manifests to stop them. Same fight as Refuse, but the reward is the sealed Holocron (and Sarn's full payment) instead of rubble.

GM If there is no Force-user

The offer shifts: the gatekeeper cannot make a non-sensitive his vessel, so he tempts the party's most ambitious member with the Holocron as the most valuable object in the sector — "carry me out, and name your price; I will make whoever sells me rich beyond a Hutt's dreams." The greed hook replaces the power hook. Accepting means trying to leave with a live Sith Holocron that is actively working to find a sensitive buyer to possess — a superb sequel seed. The fight in 3.3 triggers on any attempt to destroy or remove it.

Scene 3.3 — The Last Trial

However the party answered, the gatekeeper's essence pours out of the Holocron and takes shape — **Tulak Hord's Shade**, a Dark Lord half-retained, spectral and terrible but not yet whole. He is a duelist and a sorcerer at once, and he fights to claim a body or to punish those who refused him one.

⚔ COMBAT TULAK HORD'S SHADE

→ *Stats, tactics, scaling, and loot: see the Stat Reference PDF (grouped by scene).*

GM

This is the capstone fight — deadly by design, and meant to be run at the party's lowest ebb. Do not pull punches on the Aura of Dread or the Force-only-resistance window; those two mechanics ARE the encounter's identity. But it is winnable: a coordinated L8 party of 4 that spreads out, leads with Force damage, and saves a big turn for round 3 takes him down. If the table is getting mauled, have him monologue between rounds (he *wants* an heir, not a slaughter) to buy the party a breath.

Conclusion + Leveling

The party leaves Korriban one level higher — **level 8 to level 9**, milestone advancement, no XP to tally at the table. Award it on the ship out, whatever they decided at the bottom.

Outcomes by branch:

THE PARTY'S CHOICE	WHAT THEY LEAVE WITH	SEQUEL HOOK
Refuse — destroyed the Holocron	A clean conscience, the tomb's loot, no relic. Sarn pays in full (she wanted it gone as much as contained).	The cult learns their agent died and the Holocron is dust — and blames the party. A vengeance arc.
Claim — carried it out sealed	The sealed, dormant Holocron + Sarn's full fee.	The Holocron is not as dormant as it looks. It whispers. Someone will want to buy it. And Sarn's "vault" may not hold.
Accept — a PC won the Transfer	A fallen (or grey) hero carrying a Dark Lord's power — and everything in Playing the Dark Side about running the road back.	The whole campaign tilts. The PC is now a dark-sider the party trusts. For now.
Accept — Tulak Hord won the body	One PC lost; a Dark Lord loose in the galaxy wearing a familiar face.	Tulak Hord, reborn, is the campaign's new big bad — and he knows everything the lost PC knew.

On leveling to 9: each PC takes their level-9 features per the [leveling rules](#) — a hit-die roll (or the fixed average), any class feature gained at 9, and their ASI or ASI-Alternative Trait if their class grants one at this level. A PC carrying a bled crystal may now bleed or purify it deliberately in downtime; a PC who took the Sith War-Sword or the Talisman folds it into their sheet.