

# Legends of the Old Republic: The Horde Invasion

## Episode 6

Things are coming to a head in the Old Republic! This is the Penultimate chapter in the saga of the Horde Invasion!

As we left our heroes (Dag Baxil, Corellian Freighter Pilot; Quarllen, Chadra-Fan Gambler; Arahm Dhayn, bad-boy Elani Jedi; Zsa Zsa Binks, Gungan Jedi Mystic; Alexar Feleman, goody-goody Human Jedi; Neo, android; and Natar, the NPC Hutt Jedi), their ship, the Corellian Queen, had just been destroyed by the Horde as they were fleeing from the scene after assassinating their leader, Kron. All seemed lost.

The Horde immediately left the planet Bhuvanishita and returned to their asteroid base. Once they felt safe, the Jedi lowered their mental cloak of their disabled ship, now in a decaying orbit. They had projected the illusion of their ship being destroyed and the Horde attackers were satisfied and left. However, now they faced a new threat: their ship was horribly damaged and they were slowly spiralling towards the planet's atmosphere. They



were able to temporarily fix the life support systems by cannibalizing the Escape Pods and seal the hull breaches. 5 days of work went by, but they couldn't fix the ship. They had given up, with minutes left before they burned up, when the Republic Flagship Triumphant entered the system and tractored them to safety.

On board , they learned that the Horde had splintered into several small factions, abandoning the asteroid and attacking various systems. The Horde, broken, was easily dealt with by the Republic Starfleet. The remaining Horde were fleeing back to the unexplored regions, leaving their booty and slaves behind. Kron's recording droids were recovered, and everyone has seen how Ahram held Kron still with the Force while Dag shot him in the head, then escaped against impossible odds. The team were heroes to the Republic, they had saved the Galaxy and were to return immediately to Coruscant to receive a hero's welcome!

Back on Coruscant, they were met by cheering throngs, and a delegation from the Senate and Jedi Council, including Chancellor Galron and Jedi Master Imbrium. Chancellor Galron happily shook their hands and congratulated them. They were to be put up at the best hotel on Coruscant and be received before the Senate tomorrow to receive the Galactic Medal of Valour. Master Imbrium was less

impressed. He told his Jedi that they were to report before the Council at sundown, and he shot Ahram a dirty look, whispering that they would speak privately later.

Neo avoided the fame and publicity. His desire was for anonymity. He managed to impersonate a crewmember of the Triumphant and escape unnoticed into the undercity.

Dag and Quarllen were given awards of 50 thousand Dactaris each. They were excited. Their first expenditure was new clothes and a night of partying at the best bars and dance clubs in Coruscant where they indulged in their seedier vices.

The Jedi reported before the Council at sundown. Ahram was singled out and chided for his actions. He was ordered to meditate for five days to purge his emotion, hatred, and impatience. After the report, Master Imbrium took Ahram onto the balcony to speak privately. He told Ahram that as his former Padawan, he was going easy on his punishment, and that he was seriously concerned about Ahram's growing failure to control his emotions. Ahram responded with insolence and argument. Master Imbrium, irritated, ordered Ahram to end his insolence and to retire to his quarters to seek balance and peace. Ahram left in a huff. Alexar and Zsa Zsa went to the library to study.

Ahram didn't return to his quarters. He went to the library to research the name he heard from Kron, "Paegana". He found no reference, but a detailed search of the computer databanks revealed a locked file hidden in a remote computer terminal deep in the Undercity at a long abandoned Jedi training hall.

Alexar and Zsa Zsa spent several hours reviewing the footage from Kron's recording droids. They learned the history of the Horde and of Kron, and of his meeting with Paegana and her return to power. They witnessed the first invasions and subsequent vampiric consumption of the worlds by Paegana. They watched the battles and events that even concerned themselves. In the end, they watched the assassination (the footage of which was on all the NewsNets) and the subsequent break-up of the Horde.

Ahram took a trip deep into the Undercity. There he found the ancient stone training hall, now long abandoned and dusty. In the bare library, he found the old computer terminal, but the system was locked. He left to look for Neo. After a long search, he found Neo working on some illegal dataslicing in the back room of a bar in the undercity. He took Neo back to the training hall. Neo accessed the ancient system and copied the information. The datafile in question was a fragmented restoration of a file deleted 1,500 years ago. Once he was done, he deleted the databanks of the ancient system forever.

Ahram took Neo and the data back to the Jedi Temple and uploaded the data to his own terminal and began to study it. He read for hours. Within was the story of the original rise of Paegana, how she threatened to destroy the galaxy 1,500 years ago, but was defeated by a Jedi named Kascheij Bessmertni. Paegana was banished from the Galaxy to a small lifeless world in Unexplored Space where she would wither but never die. Kascheij, too, was banished to a small lifeless world, but not as far away, for he, too, had become as Paegana: requiring the life energy of others to remain

powerful. Afterwards, all data on the events were ordered destroyed and erased in the hopes that no one would be tempted to discover the secrets that led to their rise to power.

Dawn rose over Coruscant. The hung-over Dag and Quarllen were fetched from their suites for the award ceremony. They were met by Zsa Zsa and Alexar. Ahram, bitter about his punishment, decided to forego the ceremony to stay and study. Neo sat bored and restless in Ahram's quarters. When they were not met by Ahram, the team became concerned. They refused to receive the award without Ahram. They ordered the sky-taxi to return to retrieve Ahram, delaying the ceremony. They persuaded Ahram to accompany them, but Ahram, still bitter, wore a black cloak in protest of his punishment.

They arrived late for the awards ceremony, much to the dismay of the harried protocol officer (cute blond girl with a pony-tail, always clutching a datapad and always trying to catch up with the schedule). They boarded the hover-platform and the ceremony began. They were introduced by Chancellor Galron and rode the hover platform up to receive their medals.

While being awarded their medals, the huge screens above the Senate Chamber went white, then replaced with the image of Paegana, smirking. She cackled a laugh, then addressed the planet Coruscant:

"Ha ha ha! Hello, Mortals! Have you missed me? Well, I've RETURNED! And this time there's no one to stop me! Your time has come weaklings! I have come to take what is rightfully mine, the GALAXY! Now Paegana shall show you the meaning of REVENGE! And should you think of destroying my asteroid, remember, this: it is filled with your precious little colonists. Destroy me, and you destroy them all! Ha ha ha!"

At that, Nightmares descend through the ceiling and attack the Senators. Bedlam and chaos ensue. Senators are escorted to exits while the blue-armored Republican Guard begin battle with the black demons. The team quickly help cover the Senators' retreat. During the retreat to safety, all are hit with waves of Evil Power, and are drained of energy! All start to become weaker and tired. Imbrium orders all Jedi to the Temple Amphitheatre. Ahram decides to return to his quarters to finish his interrupted study. While the Jedi band together to form a powerful shield of Force, blocking Paegana's draining power, Ahram learns the location of the planetoid prison of Kascheij, 3 days away in the Corellian Queen. He finds Neo and goes to the Amphitheatre to get Dag and Quarllen.



Outside, the sky is darkened and millions of Nightmares have descended upon Coruscant. All civilian traffic has stopped and the military has begun fighting the Nightmares. The Fleet has busied itself with finding Paegana's asteroid, still cloaked in invisibility, but somewhere around the planet. The Jedi shield has managed to stop her vampiric drain of the world, but only temporarily. The Jedi shield will fall in seven days!

After that, Paegana will need but a week or so to drain the world of all life!

Ahram gets Dag and Quarllen and leave. Imbrium, suspicious, orders Alexar and Zsa Zsa to follow him to ensure he causes no trouble. Ahram and company soon discover they are stranded at the Jedi Temple, until Alexar approaches and calls a robo-transport to take them to the spaceport. Ahram grudgingly agrees to take the two newcomers with him and his group.

At the Spaceport, Ahram insists they commandeer a fast courier ship to save time. Alexar disagrees, citing protocol and laws on stealing spaceships. The argument turns to confrontation when Alexar draws his lightsaber and forbids Ahram from stealing the ship. Ahram immediately shoves Alexar against the wall with the Force. The rivalry between the two has finally come to a head (and I thought, as GM, that I might finally get my lightsaber duel after all!). Dag immediately drew his blaster and pointed at Alexar as well, ordering him to deactivate his saber and telling Ahram that there's no way in hell he's leaving Coruscant in any ship but his own. There was a tense few moments as everyone considered their options. Alexar deactivated his lightsaber and Dag turned his blaster towards Ahram. Ahram held the Force hold for a moment, then relented. He agreed to drop his plan to steal the ship and instead take the Corellian Queen. There was a collective exhale from Neo, Zsa Zsa, and Quarllen. There were dirty looks exchanged between Alexar, Ahram, and Dag.

They left Coruscant for the unnamed planetoid home of Kascheij Bessmertni.

There, they found the small dark spikey planetoid, like a dark grey chestnut in space. They landed the ship and found the gravity and atmosphere was artificially enhanced. There was a dark fissure in the crust nearby, which Alexar, Zsa Zsa, and Neo entered, soon followed by a still bitter Ahram. They climbed down the fissure into the bowels of the planetoid.

Deep inside, they found the ancient wizard, Kascheij Bessmertni. His limbs were wrinkled and bitter, his fat raisin-like head was punctuated by small cybernetic components. His eyebrows and beard hung down like ivy. He hobbled about on an ancient gnarled stick. He was suspicious of the newcomers. They asked for his aid in defeating his nemesis, Paegana, but were met with bitterness for the Jedi Council imprisoning his deathless body on this planetoid as a reward for saving the galaxy. Eventually, he made a deal. If they brought him the "Eye of the Beast", found in the Temple of the Stars on the planet Raghav, he would help them. He told them that only the Eye can help them, and that he'd show them how to use it to defeat Paegana, if they brought it to him. They agreed.

The planet Raghav orbited a dim dying star. Raghav was a dead world, the forests petrified, the seas dried away. The Temple of the Stars was the only structure on the twilit world. They landed in a clearing 300 meters away. Zsa Zsa, Ahram, Alexar, and Quarllen entered the cathedral-like temple. Inside, on the far wall, was carved the head of a huge beaked monster. Under its single horn was a glowing red gem the size of a small football. When they approached, the carving came to life, emerging from the wall like it was part of the stone itself.

Ahram attempted to use the Force to pull the gem out of the socket, but found that it was immune to his effort. It did bring the monster lurching forward, however. He leapt upon the monster and attempted to use his Matter Warping ability to separate the

gem from the beast's stone eye socket. The gem fell out, but the monster swept Ahram off with its huge stone claws. Ahram was tossed against the wall and nearly killed.

Alexar used his lightsaber to cover Quarllen as he scrambled to retrieve the "Eye". Zsa Zsa rushed to Ahram's aid. Alexar managed to strike at the now blind creature as it madly thrashed about. Zsa Zsa attempted to transfer some of her Force into Ahram to save him, but the dark power growing inside of Ahram simply absorbed it like a Black Hole. Zsa Zsa was undaunted and tried again. This time, she managed to fight back the shadows in Ahram's soul and was able to save him. She scooped him up and tried to drag him to safety.



Meanwhile, Quarllen was making for the exit with the gem while Alexar was covering his retreat, when, running in from outside, Neo lept at the creature, curling himself into a cannonball, slammed into its side. The impact brought the creature down with a crash. The beast began to crack and fragment. The cracks led up the walls of the Temple that it was a part of. The Temple was beginning to disintegrate and collapse. The team managed to dodge falling rocks and debris and barely made it out alive as the Temple collapsed into rubble and dust.

Dag brought the Corellian Queen to them and everyone boarded. Neo carrying the wounded Ahram. From there they left Raghav and entered Hyperspace.

To be Concluded..

As always, next week on Legends of the Old Republic: The Horde Invasion: The team face the final showdown with the Sith Sorceress Paegana. The fate of the Galaxy rests on their shoulders. Will Ahram turn to the Dark Side, as he appears to be doing? Will he go rogue and become a "Ronin"? Will there be a Republic to come back to? The Jedi Council had only 7 days before they fell. The team will return in 10 days. What will happen? Only the events of next week's game will tell.

**\*\*Post-Game Wrap-Up\*\***

This week's game went very well. The team followed my expectations and did exactly what I thought they would given the choices and situations provided. Ahram, and his player Carl, are the X-Factor, the variable that's hard to predict. Carl is doing an excellent job in role-playing his character, a Jedi torn between his training and his hot-blooded Elani temperament. My favorite scenes this week were Ahram and Imbrium's Balcony confrontation, and later Ahram and Alexar's pissing contest! At first, I was worried about where that would go, but the role-playing was top notch and everyone was INTO IT! So I decided to let it go and see what happened. However, despite Carl's great role-playing, he's an unpredictable player who's constantly arguing the ambiguous ethics of this actions, and constantly doing ethically ambiguous things. He's not very Jedi-ful, and the player's chomping at the bit that's been placed upon him. He's earned two Dark Side Points so far, and although he's role-played them to the hilt with the confrontations and black robes, he feels his

actions didn't deserve them in the first place. He's an "ends justify the means" kind of guy.

One direction this may take down the road is the possibility of letting Ahram go "Ronin", leaving the Jedi and going rogue. This would be an interesting campaign and would fit Carl's sensibility more. The problem with that would be the interaction with the more ethical Alexar, played to goody-goody perfection by Geoff, and Zsa Zsa. If I can work out this problem, it may be the direction of future campaigns. The other players certainly found the idea intriguing.

**\*\*\*SPOILERS BELOW\*\*\***

**\*\*\*GM'S ONLY\*\*\***

**\*\*\*HIGHLIGHT TO READ\*\*\***

*Next week is the final showdown with Paegana. Both sides will have powerful Kaiburr Crystals which enhance the Force, but also enhance dark-side tendencies. The two crystals will cancel each other out and it will be a straight Force battle between the two sides. Afterwards, the temptation of the crystal will either make or break Ahram, and this will be the final test of his loyalty, and will determine the future of the campaign.*