

STAR TREK™
ADVENTURES

SIGNALS

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A LIVING CAMPAIGN MISSION FOR 2371

INTRODUCTION

Signals is a mission for the *Star Trek Adventures* Living Campaign series. This mission is meant to be played by a Gamemaster and 3-6 Players and has been designed to be used for any of the three *Next Generation*-era ships (or any ship the Gamemaster and Players use) in the Living Campaign, set in 2371.

To run this mission, the Gamemaster needs to be familiar with the mission itself and the *Star Trek Adventures* rules.

For this mission, you will need:

- At least two 20-sided dice (d20) per Player, and several 6-sided dice (d6) to serve as Challenge Dice
- A set of chips or tokens for Momentum
- A set of chips or tokens for Threat
- Characters and a starship. Pre-generated characters can be found at www.modiphius.com/star-trek

The Gamemaster begins the mission with two Threat for every Player Character in the group.

SYNOPSIS

A month ago, Starfleet picked up an unusual alien signal emanating from the Seku system, deep inside the Carina Nebula within the Shackleton Expanse. The runabout *Susquehanna* was initially dispatched to investigate, but the crew failed to report and is presumed lost. Starfleet has asked the Player's ship to investigate the source of the signal and locate the missing runabout.

Upon arrival at the Seku system, there is no sign of the missing runabout, but the crew picks up the alien signal emanating from Seku VI, as well as signals from active Starfleet comm badges. There is no response to any attempts at communication, so a team beams down to investigate. Soon after the away team heads down to the planet, the ship receives a faint distress signal from the *Susquehanna* from somewhere in the nebula.

While the ship enters the nebula to find the *Susquehanna*, the away team tries to determine what happened to the Starfleet officers on the planet and searches for the source of the mysterious alien signal. To do so, they must overcome the natural dangers on the planet while dealing with a group of Romulans who are also searching for the signal.

Meanwhile, the ship enters the nebula to search for the *Susquehanna*. Unfortunately, they're not the only ones looking for the missing runabout. A Romulan warbird, lurking in the system, also picked up the distress signal. The nebula renders their cloaking device ineffective, but neither ship's sensors work well in the nebula, so it becomes a game of "cat and mouse" as the two ships search the nebula for the missing runabout.

On Seku VI, the away team arrives at the source of the signal to discover a colony of Humans and Romulans at the location. The settlers in the colony are composed of outcasts: Maquis who fled the Demilitarized Zone, a group of Romulan dissidents, as well as other misfits. The settlers are not pleased to see Starfleet officers and initially react aggressively.

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Back in space, with any luck, the Players' ship outwits the Romulans and rescues the crew of the *Susquehanna* and returns to Seku VI to aid the planet-bound crew. Assuming the crew on the planet resolves the situation with the settlers, they learn about a recently discovered chamber buried deep underground where the settlers found an ancient stone and metal obelisk. The obelisk is emitting the signal that was detected and tracked by Starfleet. The away team descends into the mines to find the device and deactivate it before it attracts any more attention.

ACT ONE

Read or summarize the following:

"Captain's Log, Stardate 48632.4. Starfleet Command just issued revised navigational data for the sector. The recent destruction of the Amargosa star has caused fluctuations to the ambient magnetic field, requiring minor adjustments the warp engines and navigational systems. Engineering assures me that making these alterations to the ship's systems will have minimal impact on efficiency.

*More importantly, we recently received a message from Narendra Station that a runabout called the *Susquehanna* has gone missing in the Carina Nebula, deep within the Shackleton Expanse. The *Susquehanna* was investigating an unusual alien signal that originated from the nebula when all contact was lost. We have been ordered to enter the nebula, find the runabout, and determine the origin and cause of the alien signal. Starfleet has also advised that Romulan and Ferengi ships have been sighted in the region, so we should exercise caution since they likely detected the alien signal as well.*

*We've been carefully searching the nebula for several hours, but finding the missing runabout has turned out to be an excruciating process. Sensors are extremely limited due to effects of the nebula, making the odds of finding the runabout slim. We have, however, located the source of the alien signal – a small dusty planet called *Seku VI*. We've set course for the *Seku* system in the hopes of finding the missing runabout.*

SCENE ONE: FOLLOWING THE SIGNAL (SHIPBOARD)

A month ago, Narendra Station detected an unusual signal coming from deep within the Carina Nebula in the Shackleton Expanse. A runabout, the *Susquehanna*, was dispatched to investigate. Not long after entering the nebula, contact was lost with the *Susquehanna*. The Players' ship is dispatched to search for the *Susquehanna* and investigate the cause of the alien signal.

The signal has been analyzed, but Starfleet has not been able to decipher it. It seems to be a repeating packet of encoded information with no discernible pattern. The signal repeats every 3.67 minutes.

The Players will not know this, but the signal is of an ancient species' origin. It was triggered when miners breached an underground complex. It is a simple automated alert system that also activated a defensive network.

SEKU VI

A small, rocky planet, marginally Class M, orbiting an F-type star. The Seku system is located in a "clearing" deep within the Carina Nebula. It has been logged and cataloged by an unmanned probe, but no starship has ever visited. There are no oceans, but there is sparse, non-sentient life, and water on the surface, mostly around the equatorial range. Sensor readings show an incredible wealth of mineral deposits on the planet. There are also indications that the planet might have dilithium crystals, though previous scans were inconclusive. Starfleet had tagged the system for further investigation.

Unfortunately, some of the rare minerals interfere with transporter operation, making beaming to the surface difficult, but not impossible.

SCANNING THE SYSTEM

Once in the system, a Player can attempt a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2, which is assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Science**. Another Player can also assist using **Control + Engineering** to divert extra power to sensors, or **Control + Conn** to place the ship in an ideal location. Success shows signs that at least one starship has passed through the system recently and probably landed on the planet. By spending Momentum, the Players realize that two small craft have been in the system, though there is currently no sign of either.

Once the ship is closer to the Seku VI, they can easily locate the source of the alien signal in a mountain range near the equator. The crew can make additional scans of the planet, likely searching for the missing runabout. Initial long-range scans show that there is a lot of electromagnetic interference on the planet due to its mineral content. Ask for a **Control + Science Task**, which can be assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Security**. Achieving a Difficulty of 1 detects two Starfleet communicators on the planet's surface. If the Player spends Momentum the Player realizes that a small ship has entered the atmosphere; however, there is no sign of a ship on the surface. If the Player spends additional Momentum, the Player also detects an indeterminate number of humanoid life forms near the source of the signal. Attempts to hail the Starfleet comm badges, the runabout, or the life forms do not get any response.

Gamemaster Guidance: *For the adventure to move forward, the Players must decide to go down to the planet's surface to search for the missing Starfleet officers and then the source of the alien signal. Given that this is the only trail they have, the Gamemaster probably won't have to do much prodding.*

Starfleet regulations state that a captain should not accompany an away team in an unknown or dangerous situation, so it is likely that the captain remains on board the ship. This adventure is designed to let the Players split the group however they wish. This is an excellent opportunity to use the Supporting Crew rules. For clarity, each Scene has been labeled (Away Team) or (Shipboard). If the captain chooses to go with the away team, that works just as well. Just skip Scene Three, or move it to the end of the adventure.

SCENE TWO: GETTING TO THE SURFACE (AWAY TEAM)

The away team must decide if they want to beam down to the planet or take a shuttle. Each of these options present unique hazards. The electromagnetic interferences on the planet present difficulties for both. A shuttlecraft's hull may become ionized, which could wreak havoc with the shuttle's navigation sensors and other systems. The same interferences make transporting to the surface more difficult and possibly dangerous. Use of pattern enhancers, once on the surface, will solve the problem for the return trip.

The crew's scans of the planet show that communications with the ship may be somewhat spotty, as will tricorder use. This is not to say that they are completely ineffective, but just that they should be aware they may be of limited use. If they choose to beam down, pattern enhancers could also help with establishing stable communications with the ship.

Gamemaster Guidance: *Two encounters are described below, and the Gamemaster should use the appropriate one that based on the away team's decision to take a shuttle or to beam down. Only one of these encounters should be used, not both. So, if the Players take a shuttle to the surface, there are no Romulans waiting in ambush.*

ENCOUNTER: TAKING A SHUTTLECRAFT

If the away team decides to take a shuttlecraft to Seku VI, the crew should decide which characters are at Conn and Ops. Only two characters can fit in the shuttle's cockpit. Immediately upon entering the upper atmosphere, the shuttle's outer hull is ionized, causing major system failure, including loss of communications with their ship. The character at Ops can attempt a **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2 to de-ionize the hull. This is a **Success at Cost** Task if failed, as a system of the Gamemaster's choice is damaged (possibly impulse engines or phasers).

Soon after recovering from the ionization, the Player at Ops detects another shuttle on the same heading, but it quickly shifts course to intercept the shuttle. No roll is needed to detect the shuttle: it is a **Reason + Security** or **Conn Task** with a Difficulty of 0. A Player can choose to make a roll to earn Momentum, or to learn more about the shuttle. Spending Momentum grants the following information:

- The shuttle is of Romulan design, roughly equivalent to the Player's shuttle.
- There are Romulan life-forms aboard.
- The Romulan shuttle's disruptors are armed, and it is preparing to fire.

The Romulans refuse to communicate with the Players and immediately open fire. If the scan is not successful, the Romulans gain a surprise round of attack. Conduct two rounds of combat (use Threat if necessary to keep the Romulan ship from being destroyed) then read or paraphrase the following:

The shuttle veers to avoid disruptor fire from the Romulan shuttle. Just then Ops reads a sudden, massive power surge from the planet, in the region of the source of the signal. There is a bright flash of blue light, and the impulse engines shut down, causing the shuttle to plummet toward the planet's surface. It appears the Romulans were struck by the same flash. Smoke plumes from their impulse engines as their ship spirals toward the ground.

Safely landing the shuttle requires a single Task from the character at the Conn. This is a **Daring** or **Control + Conn Task** with a Difficulty of 4. The character at Ops may attempt to assist by rolling **Control + Engineering** to coax a little power from the dying engines. This **Task** is Success at Cost, and if failed the shuttle crashes, and every Player on board must make **Fitness** or **Control Task** with a Difficulty of 2 or take 5 [CD] Damage. Additional Complications may mean the loss of equipment, such as phasers or tricorders.

Gamemaster Guidance:

- 1) *Make sure the Romulans don't shoot the Players down in two rounds of combat. In the unlikely event that this happens, use all the same rolls for successfully landing the ship, and describe the Romulan ship being struck by the flash of blue light.*
- 2) *Timing: The ionization effect should happen at the same time the ship receives the distress call from the missing runabout (see **Act Two, Scene One**). Hopefully, the ship is out of the system by the time the Romulan shuttle shows itself. If the Player captain is*

hesitant to leave the system before contacting the shuttle, remind him that lives are at stake, and every minute could be putting the crew of the runabout at risk. The away team are trained Starfleet officers and should be able to handle themselves in their absence.

ENCOUNTER: BEAMING DOWN

If the crew decides to beam down to the surface, they must overcome the effects of the electromagnetic interference. This is a **Daring + Conn Task** with a Difficulty of 3. This is a Success at Cost task. Failure means that every Player must make a **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2 or suffer +1 Difficulty to all Tasks for the duration of the Scene. Alternately, the Gamemaster can have equipment, such as phasers, communicators, or tricorders be damaged or inoperable.

Players who are willing to take more time (one hour) can attempt to modify the sensors to make transporting safer. This requires a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 3. Other Players can use **Insight + Science**, or similar skills, to assist. Success reduces the difficulty for the beam down to 2. Additional Momentum can be used to further reduce the Difficulty.

The surface of Seku VI is broken and rocky with sparse scrub. The Players barely have time to begin surveying their surroundings when the Romulans attack. Two Romulans are hiding at the beam down site, hoping to ambush anyone beaming down to the location of the Starfleet comm badges. The Romulans cannot be negotiated with, and attack without hesitation. (If the away team is greater in number than four, add an additional Romulan.)

Gamemaster Guidance: *This encounter should take place only if the Players beam down to the planet. If they take a shuttlecraft, proceed directly to **Act Two**.*

SCENE THREE: DISTRESS CALL (SHIPBOARD)

If the captain and any of the crew are still aboard the ship, they receive a distress call from the *Susquehanna*. A Player on the bridge can attempt a **Control + Security** or **Conn Task**, assisted by the ship's **Communications + Security** with a Difficulty of 0. The communication is garbled, but it is about 1 light year away, inside the nebula, in an area that has not yet been searched. Momentum can be spent to clear up the reception.

- **1 Momentum** – Same as above, but the voice can be heard saying, “Main power is out... life support failing.”
- **2 Momentum** – All of the above, plus the voice also adds, “Romulans... they want....”

Optimally, this encounter takes place just as the shuttlecraft enters the planet's atmosphere and is suffering from the ionization effect, or while the Players are engaged in a firefight with the Romulans. Either way, communication is difficult or impossible and time is of the essence. The ship should immediately break orbit and set out in search of the runabout.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE: CAT-AND-MOUSE (SHIPBOARD)

Warp drive is dangerous in the nebula, so the ship is forced to proceed at low speeds or risk seriously damaging or destroying the ship. Locating the runabout is an Challenge with 4 linear Tasks. The default to overcome each Task is **Reason + Security** with a Difficulty of 3, assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Security**, though the Players may come up with other creative alternatives. Players can use **Reason + Science** and/or **Reason + Command** to assist.

This is an Opposed Challenge, a race against the Romulan warbird that's also looking for the *Susquehanna*. The Romulan warbird needs to succeed in the same four Tasks, with a talented crew (Target number 13) assisted by the warbird's **Sensors + Security**. If the warbird succeeds before the Players, the warbird is waiting for them by the runabout; if the Players succeed first then they reach the *Susquehanna* before the Romulans.

Attempting to complete this Challenge places the ship in peril. In this case, this means that every time a Player rolls to overcome the Task, and fails or includes Complications, the Gamemaster can spend Threat or introduce a Complication to introduce one of the challenges listed below. Gamemasters can feel free to invent their own Threat spends as well. When the Challenge is completed, proceed to **Act Three, Scene One: The *Susquehanna***, below.

Effects of the Carina Nebula:

- **Class II Nebula** – The Difficulty of many **Tasks** is increased by 2. (This has been taken into account for described Tasks.)
- **Metreonic Gas** – The Complication Range is increased to 3 for any use of Engines, Sensors, or Weapons.
- The Difficulty of Tasks to detect cloaked ships is decreased by 2.

Read or summarize the following:

Captain's Log, Supplemental – We've picked up a new distress signal from the Susquehanna. She's still out there, and someone is alive and transmitting. Unfortunately, we've lost contact, but at least we have something to go on. Even with a general direction to renew the search, the nebula is a dangerous place. Explosive gases, obscured debris, and possibly even enemy ships: all hazards that require the crew to remain on constant alert.

THREAT SPENDS

Debris (Threat Cost: 1) – Sensors don't detect debris in the nebula until it's almost too late to avoid it. A pilot must succeed at a **Daring + Conn Task** of Difficulty 2 to avoid the debris, or **Control + Security** with the same Difficulty to blast the debris. Failure means that they take 5[CD] Damage.

Cloaked Mines (Threat Cost: 2) – The Romulans have dropped several mines in the nebula in the hopes of damaging the runabout. Fortunately, the nebula is interfering with the cloaking ability of the mines. A Player can attempt a **Reason + Science Task** of Difficulty 3 to detect the mines. If the mines are not detected they explode, causing 10[CD] damage to the ship.

Metreonic Gas Clouds (Threat Cost: 3) – Pockets of metreonic gas in the nebula can cause extreme damage to the ship if not avoided. Ask for a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3 to avoid the gas. Failure means that there is an explosion that causes 8[CD] Damage and one automatic Hull Breach.

Romulan Ship (Threat Cost: 4) – See “Encounter: The Veritex” below.

ENCOUNTER: THE VERITEX

The Romulan warbird *Veritex*, under the command of Commander Methra, appears out of the nebula, having found the *Susquehanna* now. If the Players were here first, they can choose a range up to Medium to begin the engagement, otherwise the *Veritex* decloaks at short range and immediately takes an aggressive stance. They want to know the nature of the alien signal, and they believe the crew of the runabout already has that information.

Methra does not fire immediately but insists that the crew turn over any and all information relating to the alien signal. Attempting to convince Commander Methra that they don't know anything, and to allow them to leave initiates a Social Conflict. If the Player offers any reasonable amount of information, the Gamemaster can reduce the Difficulty by 1-3. The Negotiation begins as an **Insight or Presence + Command Task**, with a Difficulty of 4. If this fails, the Player can move on to another form of Social Conflict with the same Difficulty: Intimidation or Deception. If the Player fails, the *Veritex* fires.

If the Romulan warbird engages in combat, the Gamemaster can use best judgment on when the Romulans decide to flee. Rather than staying to fight, the crew may try to lose the Romulan ship in the nebula.

SCENE TWO: OVERLAND (AWAY TEAM)

When the away team has "landed" or beamed down and dealt with the Romulans, read or paraphrase the following:

The broken and barren volcanic landscape of Seku VI lies before you. The terrain is mostly volcanic rock, ash, and sand. Some sparse vegetation clings to life in the form of lichen and pale grasses. Sharp, rocky ledges and deep ravines will make traversing this terrain slow and tortuous.

Despite interference from the planet's rare minerals, your tricorders still receive the alien signal coming from several kilometers to the east, and two Starfleet comm badges register as being nearby. To the north, you see a thin pillar of smoke.

If the crew took a shuttle down, they suspect the wreckage to the north is the Romulan shuttlecraft. If the crew beamed down, the Romulans crash-landed some time before the Players' ship arrived, but the crash site was not detected due to sensor interference (or perhaps a partially functioning cloaking device).

Not far from the landing or beam down location, hidden behind a ledge, the away team discovers the fate of two Starfleet officers who attempted to beam down from the *Susquehanna*. The electromagnetic interference apparently led to a fatal miscalculation – both officers are dead, partially buried in the ground with looks of pain and horror on their faces.

The crew has long journey (several hours) from their crash site to the source of the signals (and the humanoid life forms). The Romulans crash-landed just a few kilometers north of them. The Players can decide if they want to intercept the Romulans or make directly for the signal. The signal is strong enough that they can locate it with tricorders. Locating the Romulans is much more difficult since the tricorders are not functioning at full capacity due to the magnetic interference.

If the crew investigates the Romulan crash site, it adds an hour to the trip. They find several dead Romulans and their wrecked shuttlecraft. There is nothing else of use at the crash site and everything of value was destroyed in the crash or sabotaged afterwards by the Romulans. There are signs that surviving Romulans traveled toward the alien signal.

If the Players try to intercept the Romulans, they can attempt a **Reason + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2. Taking the Romulans by surprise is much harder since they are quite alert and are using tricorders to watch for enemies. A Player can attempt an opposed Task against Subcommander Rathar. The Player must get more successes than Rathar, or they see each other at Medium range.

If the Players travel directly to the source of the signal, it is accomplished in a similar manner to the search for the runaway described in **Act Three, Scene One**. The Players must overcome a linear Challenge, with three Tasks with a Difficulty appropriate to traversing the arid landscape of Seku VI. Gamemasters can feel free to invent their own challenges as well as those presented below. When the Challenge is completed, proceed to **Act Three, Scene Two: The Settlement**.

THREAT SPENDS

Dust Storm (Threat Cost 1) – A dust storm springs up. The Players can seek shelter by making a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2, or hunker down where they are, requiring every Player to make a **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2. Failure means that the Player has a +1 Difficulty to the next Obstacle or Challenge Task.

Cliff or Ravine (Threat Cost: 1) – The Players come to a cliff or ravine that they must either scale or go around. Going around increases the Magnitude of the Obstacle by 1. Scaling requires every Player to attempt a **Daring** or **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2. This is a Success at Cost Task, so failing does not mean that that Player falls, but that they suffer some sort of problem (broken equipment, muscle strain causing +1 Difficulty to further tasks until healed, etc.).

Stinging Insects (Threat Cost 2) – The Players are swarmed by stinging and biting insects. The Players can attempt a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3 to drive off the insects (setting the tricorder to emit a particular frequency, finding a local plant that drives them off, etc.). If no Player does this, then every Player must roll 1 [CD], and anyone who rolls an Effect (5 or 6) has been poisoned. Characters who have a Fitness of 9 or higher may re-roll this die once.

A poisoned character adds +1 to the Difficulty of any Tasks they attempt until the poison has been treated. The Gamemaster may cause a sickened character to worsen as a Complication on any Task the sickened character attempts, adding an additional +1 to the Difficulty of the character's Tasks for each time their condition worsens. If the Difficulty increases to +3, the character falls unconscious. Without a medical Facility to treat the poison a character with a medkit can attempt to keep a poisoned character on their conscious and on their feet by attempting a **Reason + Medicine Task** with a Difficulty of 2. Each point of Momentum spent reduces the character's penalty by 1.

Romulan Ambush (Threat Cost 2) – Subcommander Rathar sends two Romulans to ambush the Players. The Players must make an opposed roll against the Romulans (just one roll for the Romulans) to avoid being taken by surprise. If they are surprised, the Romulans get to act first. If any Player beats the Romulans by 2 or more, they can warn the other Players. Any Player using a tricorder gets 1 automatic success. (If the Players beamed down to the surface, they already have dealt with this Threat.)

Thin Crust (Threat Cost: 3) – The Players cross a section where hardened magma is brittle and thin. It begins crumbling underfoot like cracking ice. Every Player must attempt a **Daring + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3. Failure means the Player must take (or resist) a wound from being burned by lava. Players actively checking the terrain with tricorders might be able to avoid this Challenge.

ENCOUNTER: THE ROMULANS

How and when the Romulans arrived on the surface varies depending on how the crew came down to the planet. If they took a shuttle, the Romulans only recently arrived and their shuttle crash-landed at the same time as the away team. If the away team beamed down, then the Romulans arrived a few hours before the Players. In either case, they are making for the source of the signal as well. The away team's course of action determines when the Romulans are encountered: they can intercept them on the way to the source of the signal, or the Romulans show up later while the away team is investigating the signal.

Whenever the away team encounters the Romulans, either by intercepting them or at the source of the signal, the number of Romulans (including Subcommander Rathar) equals the number of the away team +1.

ACT 3

SCENE ONE: THE SUSQUEHANNA (SHIPBOARD)

The *Susquehanna* at first attempted to beam down a couple crew members. Unfortunately, this failed spectacularly. When they tried to fly down to the surface to retrieve their lost crew members, it was struck by the same flash of energy that the Players' and the Romulans' shuttles encountered, but they were more fortunate and managed to escape back into space.

They tried to leave the nebula but continued to suffer systems failures, including their warp drive. They limped along for a while at sublight speeds, trying to reach the edge of the nebula. They detected the arrival of the crew's ship but were unable to send a message. In desperation, they managed to get communications back online by diverting much of their remaining power to get out the brief short distress signal that was received by the Players' ship.

Unfortunately, the *Veritex* picked up the distress signal as well and is searching for them. Their engineer of the *Susquehanna* has been using the battery packs from their phasers and other devices to keep life-support running. The crew is starting to lose consciousness when the runabout is found (unless the Player crew fails to immediately move to rescue them after receiving the distress call). The ship can either beam the survivors aboard or use the ship's tractor beam to bring the runabout into the shuttle bay.

If the Romulan ship has not been encountered or the crew escaped using the nebula to hide, this would be an excellent time to spend some Threat to have it show up. In this case, tell the Players that they have five rounds before the crew of the *Susquehanna* dies of cold and suffocation. The Players must lower their shields if they wish to beam the crew of the runabout on board — a risky proposition with Romulans present.

Gamemaster Guidance: *If all the Players beamed down to the planet, skip this scene, and run it after the Players return to the ship. If the Romulan ship disables the Players' ship, the Gamemaster could use the Susquehanna as a deus ex machina to save them from the Romulans. Just as the warbird circles for the kill, the runabout emerges from the nebula and drains its last bit of power to fire its phasers to distract the Romulan ship long enough for the Players to rally.*

*If the Gamemaster wants to expand this section a little, the two ships can play cat-and-mouse in the nebula, as each ship tries to get into an advantageous position. The Romulans are at a slight disadvantage because their cloaking device does not work in the nebula. If they try to use the nebula to their advantage by using it to hide before taking the other ship by surprise, have both ships make opposed **Daring + Science Tasks**. The ship that gets the highest roll gets a bonus to an action in their next combat round equal to the amount they exceeded the other ship's roll. If they exceed by 3 or more, they get a free shot.*

SCENE TWO: THE SETTLEMENT (AWAY TEAM)

At the site of the signal, there is a settlement of outcast Federation citizens, independents, Romulans, and various other species. They have come together because they didn't fit in with other societies and are seeking their own way in the universe. They chose this planet because it was remote and unlikely to be disturbed by any of the great powers. They are resentful at the arrival of Starfleet

officers, possibly violently so. The presence of the rare minerals on the world was a factor, as they intend to set up a mining operation. There are about three dozen human and miners, mixed male and female, with a handful of children as well.

They set up camp at this location because they of the unusual geologic readings deep beneath the surface here. The readings, as the crew eventually learns, turned out to be an artificially constructed pentagonal chamber. The chamber is an ancient alien outpost. One of the miners accidentally activated the signal and the planet's defensive systems. A defensive network came online (which attacks any ships in the planet's atmosphere and it began transmitting the signal that was picked up by Starfleet and the Romulans). About a week afterward, one of them tried to leave on a supply run, and their ship was hit by the blue flash that took down the Players' shuttle. They barely managed to set back down at the camp. None of the miners have the technical expertise to shut off the signal, and they've been terrified that they may cause a greater catastrophe.

Because of the signal, they are expecting visitors and have set guards around the perimeter of the town. Their hope is to capture someone capable of turning off the signal and disabling the defensive device.

When the Players get to the settlement, read the following:

Cresting a ridge, you see a small settlement of about three dozen individuals in the valley below. The settlement lies at the base of a high ridge and consists of several camouflaged dwellings. They also appear to have dug caverns into the cliff face. Two shuttle-sized ships are also parked and obscured under camouflage netting. The netting is made of a material that deflects sensor scans, which would explain why you didn't detect the ships or the buildings from orbit. At least a couple dozen figures move around among the building.

As you are examining the settlement, the rock in front of you explodes from a phaser blast. Someone calls out from a rocky outcropping nearby, "Hands up! That's the only warning you're getting."

ENCOUNTER: SNIPERS

Expecting visitors, several snipers have taken positions around the settlement. The Players have been spotted by a sniper who took the warning shot. How the Players act here determines how the rest of the adventure plays out. If they Players fire back, two more snipers move into range after two rounds and fire from long range. The settlers in the town are alerted and will be difficult to negotiate with. An **Insight** or **Presence + Command Task** with a Difficulty of 5 is needed to bring them to the table.

If the Players surrender, they are disarmed and taken into town to speak to Ero Drallen. If not, they must sneak or fight their way into the mines.

MEETING THE BOSS

If the Players surrender or are overcome by the snipers, they are brought before Ero Drallen, the leader of the settlers. Ero is inclined to keep the crew's weapons and send them back out into the wastes. If asked about the signal, Ero tells the away team that they discovered a strange pentagonal chamber deep inside the mountain a little over a month ago. When they first entered the chamber, the device activated and the signal has been emanating ever since. If the Players can convince him that

they can turn off the signal, he lets them into the caves, sending one of his miners along to keep an eye on them. If asked, he returns their weapons.

THE ALIEN DEVICE

The mines cut deep into the cliff face, and then vertical shafts drop several hundred meters. Rickety grav-lifts of uncertain quality allow miners (and the crew) to descend into the darkness. After winding through several more caverns, the Players come to an area where the mine shaft apparently ends at a metal wall. The wall has been cut through, and on the other side is a pentagonal chamber. Several control devices of some kind line the walls. In the center of the room is what looks like a floating pentagonal obelisk, carved from some type of hard stone. Strange sigils, faintly illuminated with a soft blue light, are engraved into the obelisk's facings.

The obelisk resists all attempts to scan it, though it is clearly the origin of the alien signal. Anyone touching the obelisk must attempt a **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3 or take 3 [CD] Damage and be stunned for 5 minutes.

GAMEMASTER ADVICE: WHAT THE HELL IS THIS OBELISK?

This obelisk, and the chamber it sits in, is of ancient alien construction. Its power systems are barely functioning but have enough residual power generation to initiate those bursts of energy, the subspace signal, and for its self-destruct sequence.

The signal performs like an echo locator – it's waiting for a response from other obelisks in the Expanse. If you need to improvise, or any Obtain Information spends ask about this kind of information, this is all that is available; otherwise, the technology cannot be understood due to its ancient and unknown nature.

Analyzing the control panels and making a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3 allows the Player to shut off the signal. Doing so causes the blue light within the obelisk to momentarily fade out. Ships or shuttlecraft can also now safely leave or land on the planet without being shot down.

Moments after the lights fade out, they come back up and some begin blinking in an indecipherable pattern. The flashing slowly increases in speed. Scanning the obelisk to determine the cause is a **Reason + Engineering** or **Science Task** with a Difficulty of 0. A successful scan shows that the obelisk and an area deep beneath the chamber is experiencing a rapid power build-up and will self-destruct in 6 minutes.

The crew has a choice: get out of the mine shaft and to the surface, or try to disable the self-destruct sequence. Once the timer expires, an explosion, deep underground, will destroy the chamber and all evidence of the alien technology.

Stopping the self-destruct sequence is an **Extended Task** with the following conditions:

- Difficulty: 5
- Magnitude (3):
- Work (15):
- Timed: 4 Intervals

Gamemaster Advice: *With only 4 intervals to complete the Extended Task and every Task taking 2 intervals, the Player Characters involved are up against it – with a real chance of death if they fail.*

They'll be forced to spend Momentum or use Talents to reduce the time their Tasks take, in order to get the 3 Breakthroughs they need. This is also an excellent opportunity to introduce a Complication to a character if they have a Value about the preservation of technology, or investigating the newly discovered. If they accept the Complication, they stay, try to stop the self-destruct sequence, and gain one Determination. But your Players probably won't need the encouragement, only use this option if you want someone to stay behind. In order to keep up the peril, introduce the Romulans! encounter below, at the same time as the Extended Task takes place.

ENCOUNTER: ROMULANS!

If there is still the chance for Romulans to turn up, this is an excellent time for them to appear. The Romulans found the settlement and hunkered down to observe. As they watched, the Players arrived. When they saw the Players enter the mines, they became concerned that the Starfleet officers were going to find the alien device, so they either snuck or blasted their way into the mines and descended after the Players. The Gamemaster should give the Players just long enough to learn all they can about the obelisk and the controls before having the Romulans arrive. There are a number of Romulans equal to the number of the away team +1.

The Gamemaster should allow the Player(s) who examined the control panels to attempt a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2. If they succeed, inform them that while examining the controls there appears to be an anti-intruder defense that stuns anyone in the pentagonal chamber. Unfortunately, they have to be inside the pentagonal chamber to trigger the defense, and so anyone activating the device is stunned as well.

ATTACK

- Intruder Stun Weapon (Ranged, 4 [CD] Vicious 1, Area, Non-lethal)

CONCLUSION

If they Players manage to stop the self-destruction of the chamber, then they'll enable Starfleet to follow up with a survey team to further investigate the alien technology. There is also a possibility that people die down in the chamber because failing at the Extended Task – which will have a massive impact on the crew (and the Player group) in future missions.

The ship should be returning to the planet about the time the Players return from the mines. The Players on the surface can hitch a ride with Ero Drallen back to the ship, or the ship can send a shuttle down to retrieve them. Starfleet wants to make an in-depth study of the alien chamber, and the miners won't be happy about having to move. The captain can offer relocation assistance, which helps placate them. The Gamemaster and the Players can play out these negotiations or leave them to Starfleet Command.

As the last scene wraps up, read or paraphrase the following:

Captain's Log, supplemental – I just received a priority one message from Narendra Station. The U.S.S. Enterprise has been destroyed. Further details are forthcoming but it is believed that Captain Picard and most of the crew survived. What this means for the Federation, I do not know.



LIVING CAMPAIGN CONSIDERATIONS

This is your opportunity to note what cool things happened in your game. Tell us by filling in the feedback form on our website. For their deeds, we could give mentions in dispatches with future games, with commendations or drawbacks for pre-generated characters who move on to appear in further adventures.

ROMULAN UHLAN [MINOR NPC]

Species: Romulan

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
11	08	09	10	08	11

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
01	02	02	01	00	00

Stress: 11 **Resistance:** 0

Weapons:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 3[CD] Knockdown, Size 1H, Non-lethal)
- Dagger (Melee, 3[CD] Vicious 1, Size 1H)
- Disruptor Pistol (Ranged, 5[CD], Vicious 1, Size 1H)
- **Escalation** Disruptor Rifle (Ranged, 6[CD] Vicious 1, Size 2H, Accurate)

SPECIAL RULES

- **Guile and Cunning:** When attempting to remain hidden or unnoticed, a Romulan can spend one Threat to increase the Difficulty of enemy Tasks to detect them by one.
- **Wary:** Whenever a Romulan attempts a Task to notice or detect an enemy or hazard, they may re-roll one d20.

SUBCOMMANDER RATHAR [MAJOR NPC]

Rathar is a man of science, but he is dedicated to the mission. He is more likable than most Romulans, especially if the Players have something to offer, and he might be enticed into allowing the characters to participate in the investigation of the alien signal.

Traits: Romulan

Values:

- Knowledge is power
- By any means necessary

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
11	09	09	08	10	10

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
02	01	03	02	03	01

Focuses: Diplomacy, Infiltration, Physics, Xenobiology

Stress: 12 **Resistance:** 0

Attacks:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 5[CD] Knockdown, Size 1H, Nonlethal)
- Disruptor Pistol (Ranged, 7[CD] Vicious 1, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Ambush:** When attacking an opponent who is unaware, the Sniper may spend 2 Threat to allow the Sniper anyone under their command to re-roll any of the d20s on their attack roll.
- **Guile and Cunning:** When attempting to remain hidden or unnoticed, a Romulan can spend one Threat to increase the Difficulty of enemy Tasks to detect them by one.
- **Wary:** Whenever a Romulan attempts a Task to notice or detect an enemy or hazard, they may re-roll one d20.

COMMANDER METHRA [MAJOR NPC]

Traits: Romulan

Values:

- Discretion is the better part of valor
- Romulans are the superior species

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
09	12	08	12	10	09

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
04	3	03	02	01	01

Focuses: Debate, Deception, Military Tactics, Paranoid

Stress: 11 **Resistance:** 0

Attacks:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 5[CD] Knockdown, Size 1H, Nonlethal)
- Dagger (Melee, 5[CD] Vicious 1, Size 1H)
- Disruptor Pistol (Ranged, 7[CD] Vicious 1, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Guile and Cunning:** When attempting to remain hidden or unnoticed, a Romulan can spend one Threat to increase the Difficulty of enemy Tasks to detect them by one.
- **Ruthless and Determined:** Commander Methra may spend 2 Threat to gain the effects of a point of Determination, rather than the normal 3.
- **Wary:** Whenever a Romulan attempts a Task to notice or detect an enemy or hazard, they may re-roll one d20.

SNIPERS (HUMAN, ROMULAN, OTHER) [NOTABLE NPC]

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
12	10	9	10	9	10

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
00	02	04	02	01	01

Focuses: Paranoid, Guerrilla Tactics (Normally these apply only to Romulans, but they are suitable for any of the settlers.)

Stress: 11 **Resistance:** 0

Attacks:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 3[CD] Knockdown, Size 1H, Nonlethal)
- Disruptor Sniper Rifle (Ranged, 6[CD] Vicious 1, Size 2H, Accurate)

SPECIAL RULES

- **Ambush:** When attacking an opponent who is unaware, the Sniper may spend 2 Threat to allow the Sniper anyone under their command to re-roll any of the d20s on their attack roll.
- **Guile and Cunning:** When attempting to remain hidden or unnoticed, a Romulan can spend one Threat to increase the Difficulty of enemy Tasks to detect them by one.
- **Wary:** Whenever a Romulan attempts a Task to notice or detect an enemy or hazard, they may re-roll one d20.

SETTLER (HUMAN OR ROMULAN) [MINOR NPC]

Trait: Based on species

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
08	09	09	07	07	08

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
00	02	01	02	01	00

Stress: 10 **Resistance:** 0

Attacks:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 2[CD] Knockdown, Size 1H, Nonlethal)
- Mining Pick (Melee, 4[CD] Vicious 1, 2H)
- Disruptor Pistol (Ranged, 4[CD] Vicious 1, Size 1H)

ERO DRALLEN [MAJOR NPC]

Trait: Human

Values:

- The strongest survive
- Only trust the latinum when it's in your hands
- Trust is earned, not given

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
09	12	08	08	11	01

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
03	02	02	04	02	01



Focuses: Botany, Geology, Negotiation, Small Craft

Stress: 10 **Resistance:** 0

Attacks:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 3[CD] Knockdown, Size 1H, Nonlethal)
- Disruptor Pistol (Ranged, 4[CD] Vicious 1, Size 1H)

ROMULAN SHUTTLECRAFT

SYSTEMS

Comms	Computers	Engines	Sensors	Structure	Weapons
03	03	05	06	03	03

DEPARTMENTS

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
01	02	01	01	01	01

Power: 5 **Scale:** 1

Shields: 4 **Resistance:** 1

Crew: Basic (Attribute 8, Discipline 1)

Weapons:

- Disruptor Cannons (Energy, Range Medium, 4[CD] damage, Viscious 1).
- **Escalation 2** Photon Torpedoes (Torpedo, Range Long, 4[CD] High Yield)

Talent:

- Improved Warp Dive
- Cloaking Device

VERITEX [D'DERIDEX CLASS WARBIRD]

Traits: Romulan warbird

SYSTEMS

Comms	Computers	Engines	Sensors	Structure	Weapons
09	10	10	10	11	09

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DEPARTMENTS

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
02	02	03	03	02	02

Power: 10 **Scale:** 6

Shields: 13 **Resistance:** 6

Crew: Talented (Attribute 10, Discipline 3)

Weapons:

- Disruptor Banks (Energy, Range Medium, 10[CD] Vicious 1)
- Plasma Torpedoes (Torpedo, Range Long, 6[CD] Persistent8, Calibration)
- Tractor Beam (Strength 5)

SPECIAL RULES

- **Cloaking Device:** The vessel has a device that allows it to vanish from view. Operating the device requires a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2, assisted by the **ship's Engines + Security**



(this is a Task from the Tactical position). This Task has a Power requirement of 3. If successful, the vessel gains the Cloaked Trait. While cloaked, the vessel cannot attempt any attacks, nor can it be the target of an attack unless the attacker has found some way of detecting the cloaked ship. While cloaked, a vessel's shields are down. It requires a minor action to decloak.