

STAR TREK[™]

ADVENTURES



MISSION BRIEFS

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

TALES FROM THE 23RD CENTURY

CHRISTOPHER L. BENNETT

CREDITS

FAM	1670	5670	8132	386
2D20 SYSTEM DESIGNER NATHAN DOWDELL	CREATIVE COORDINATOR KIERAN STREET	3D DESIGNERS JOANA ABBOTT, SEAN BULLOUGH, & BEN DE BOSDARI	CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCOUNTS MANAGER LLOYD GYAN	
STAR TREK ADVENTURES	FINANCIAL CONTROLLER LUC WOOLFENDEN	SENIOR 3D PLASTICS DESIGNER COLIN GRAYSON	EVENTS MANAGER GREGOIRE BOISBELAUD	
PROJECT MANAGER JIM JOHNSON	DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR JASON ENOS	LOGISTICS AND PRODUCTION MANAGER PETER GROCHULSKI	COMMUNITY MANAGER APRIL HILL	
WRITER CHRISTOPHER L. BENNETT	DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM JONO GREEN & ETHAN HEYWOOD	AUDIO AND VIDEO PRODUCER STEVE DALDRY	TRANSLATIONS AND PUBLISHING MANAGER MATT TIMM	
EDITOR JIM JOHNSON	QA TESTERS DOMINIC WESTERLAND, NATHAN PERRY, & SAMANTHA LAYDON	EDITOR BRYCE JOHNSTON	DISTRIBUTION AND KEY ACCOUNTS MANAGER GARY MOORE	
GRAPHIC DESIGN MICHAL E. CROSS & ROXANNE THOMPSON	SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER GAVIN DADY	STUDIO COORDINATOR ROCIO MARTIN PEREZ	MARKETING COORDINATOR SHAUN HOCKING	
ART DIRECTOR JIM JOHNSON	PROJECT MANAGERS BEN MAUNDER, CHRIS SHEPPERSON, DANIEL LADE, & JAMES BARRY	PHOTOGRAPHER FÁTIMA MARTÍN PÉREZ	CUSTOMER SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS DANN	
COVER ARTIST ROXANNE THOMPSON	ASSISTANT PROJECT MANAGER HARALAMPOS TSAKIRIS	OPERATIONS MANAGER JOHN WILSON	BOOKKEEPER VALYA MKRTCHYAN	
PROOFREADER BRYCE JOHNSTON	ART DIRECTION KRIS AUBIN & ROCIO MARTIN PEREZ	WEBSTORE MANAGER APINYA RAMAKOMUD	FOR PARAMOUNT GLOBAL MARIAN CORDRY & STEPHEN ZELIN	
MODIPHIUS ENTERTAINMENT LTD.	LEAD GRAPHIC DESIGNER MICHAL E. CROSS	FACTORY MANAGER MARTIN JONES	WITH THANKS TO GENE RODDENBERRY, JOHN VAN CITTERS, MARIAN CORDRY, DAYTON WARD, & THE MANY FANS WHO SUPPORT THIS GAME	
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER CHRIS BIRCH	GRAPHIC DESIGNERS STEPHANIE TORO GURUMENDI, MARK WHITTINGTON, & CHRIS WEBB	SENIOR PRODUCTION OPERATIVES DREW COX & WARWICK VOYZEY		
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER RITA BIRCH	LEAD 3D DESIGNER JONNY LA TROBE-LEWIS	TOOL MAKERS ALEX TAYLOR-MORRELL, LUKE GILL, & DAVID HEXTALL		
MANAGING DIRECTOR CAMERON DICKS	SENIOR 3D DESIGNERS CHRIS PEACEY & DOMINGO DÍAZ FERMÍN	LEAD PRODUCTION OPERATIVE ANTHONY MORRIS		
HEAD OF PRODUCT SAM WEBB		PRODUCTION OPERATIVES LOUIS PAUL HARTLE, JAKE PINK, MILES TURNER, & THOMAS BULL		
HEAD OF CREATIVE SERVICES JON WEBB				
HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT SOPHIE WILLIAMS				

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STAR TREK

ADVENTURES

Published by Modiphius Entertainment Ltd.
39 Harwood Road, London, SW6 4QP, U.K.

INFO@MODIPHIUS.COM

WWW.MODIPHIUS.NET

STARTREK.COM

Modiphius Entertainment Product Number: MUH142225-PDF

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STAR TREK ADVENTURES

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

CHRISTOPHER L. BENNETT

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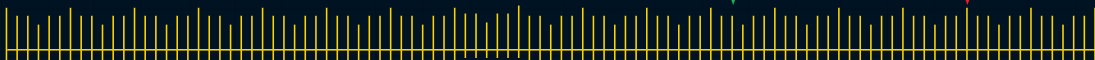
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ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Galaxy is ancient beyond easy comprehension – on the order of a million times older than Human civilization. Uncounted civilizations have risen and fallen before the dawn of recorded history of any Federation world. While most of their remains have long since vanished, many have left ruins or artifacts that endure to the present. Other ancient societies live on, wielding technologies or mental abilities vastly beyond our own, though not always in a form recognizable to us. The discovery of these ancient civilizations, or their remains, offers immense potential for advancing Federation knowledge, but comes with great peril as well.

This packet presents ten detailed mission briefs you can modify for use as adventures in your **Star Trek Adventures** campaigns. Each mission brief is designed to stand alone, though several are presented with a loose connecting story arc that may be used or disregarded at the gamemaster's discretion. They may be added to an existing campaign with minor modifications.

ELEMENTS OF A MISSION BRIEF

A mission brief contains several elements that collectively create a high-level outline for a **Star Trek Adventures** mission. Each element may be modified as needed to suit the needs of your particular game and group of players. The elements of a mission brief include:

- ▶ **Title:** An evocative title for the mission.
- ▶ **Suggested Era of Play:** The *Star Trek* time period in which the mission is recommended to be set (*Enterprise* era, original series era, *The Next Generation* era, etc.).
- ▶ **Suggested Spotlight Role:** The suggested focus player character role. This can be used to help you and your players plan milestones and character arcs.
- ▶ **Synopsis:** High-level summary, detailing key points such as location, antagonists, the plot, etc. The synopsis generally explains how the story might relate to the player characters and provides the essential details needed to start developing the story.
- ▶ **Major Beats:** Key scenes or encounters to include, leaving room for you to bridge them as needed with material unique to your cast of player characters and campaign events.
- ▶ **Minor Beats:** Secondary plot elements or suggested subplots that you could weave into the mission as a side scene or subplot.
- ▶ **Key Non-Player Characters:** Brief descriptions of key NPCs, including the main antagonist(s). This element may also suggest specific NPCs from the core rulebook to use or adapt. Note that any page references listed in this document refer to the Starfleet-oriented **Star Trek Adventures** core rulebook.
- ▶ **Conclusion:** The intended ending of the mission, with suggestions on how to adjust the conclusion when the players move the story in unanticipated directions.
- ▶ **Adding This Mission to Your Campaign:** Advice on how you might fit the mission into your ongoing campaign.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

“CLOSED BORDERS”

- **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- **Spotlight Role:** Captain

SYNOPSIS

An abandoned star system’s ancient defenses trap the players’ ship in a dimensional prison, along with returned descendants of the original civilization who are unrecognized by its overzealous defense computer. The crew must convince the AI to release them and accept the descendants’ claim to the system.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

“We have begun our survey of the aging subgiant star FGC 6619. Sensors have detected technologically advanced remains on planets and moons throughout the system, but no signs of intelligent life. It seems the population must have abandoned the system when their sun began to grow hotter over a hundred thousand years ago.”

MAJOR BEATS

GHOST SYSTEM

When the ship moves in close to survey the red giant system, it triggers a network of defense satellites that trap it in powerful tractor beams. A computerized voice declares that they have violated the territorial sovereignty of the Loregni and will be detained. The ship is teleported to an extradimensional pocket space where they discover derelict ships of various ages, stretching back millennia. The most recent one is still inhabited, and its natives, the Dorecali, make contact and explain that this is a prison dimension from which few have ever escaped.

FACING JUDGMENT

The Dorecali explain that they are descendants of the Loregni, who abandoned their system when an attempt to delay their star’s red giant phase backfired and triggered massive flares. The defense grid was created to protect the system until they returned, but it no longer recognizes them after millennia of evolution. The A.I. contacts the Starfleet crew and agrees to free them if they renounce any territorial claim. The crew must decide whether to stay instead and plead on behalf of the Dorecali, whom the A.I. assumes are lying about their identity. If they stay, the A.I. warns that they will remain imprisoned forever if they fail to prove their case.

PLEADING THE CASE

If the crew remains, they may cite the Federation’s history of diversity to convince the A.I. to accept the Dorecali. Characters of interspecies ancestry could serve as examples of genetic change and cultural coexistence. Alternatively, they may accept release and attempt to neutralize the defense grid from outside, but this is far riskier.

MINOR BEATS

Some of the derelict ships belong to more ancient Loregni descendants, millennia older than the Dorecali with physical and cultural differences. These ships can be explored to gather evidence of cultural change.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

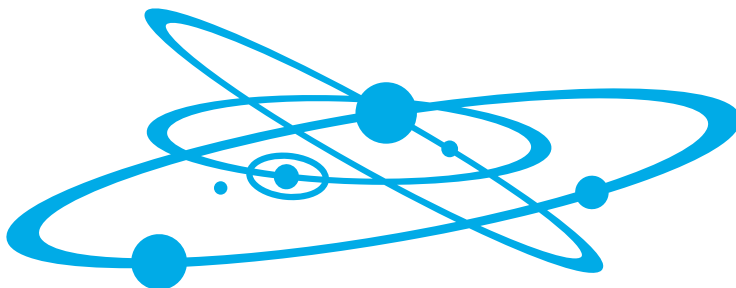
The Dorecali leader, Gared, is a Major NPC and uses the stats of Gul Tremak from page 329. Other Dorecali may be adapted from Cardassian stats on the same page. The Loregni artificial intelligence is a Major NPC with Reason 12 and Control 12.

CONCLUSION

Ideally, the A.I. releases the ship and accepts the Dorecali as the Loregni’s descendants, letting them resettle the system and recover their cultural heritage. If the characters fail to free the Dorecali, this may create conflict with other Dorecali ships or settlements they come across later.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

The mission can be easily adapted to any era, though an *Enterprise*-era crew is more likely to be pure Human and have a harder time demonstrating species diversity to the Loregni A.I.



ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS “FIRE FROM THE TITANS”

- ▶ **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- ▶ **Spotlight Role:** Security Officer

SYNOPSIS

Two medieval cultures have discovered advanced technology left by an extinct ancestral civilization, and are warring with weapons beyond their understanding. The crew must decide whether to intervene to save them from themselves.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

“We found the planet identified as the source of energy readings detected two days ago. Strangely, scans show its population to be at a pre-industrial level. We’re investigating the ruins identified as the source of the energy readings, with orders to avoid contact with the indigenous population.”

MAJOR BEATS

LOST CITY

The landing party finds that the energy readings come from the ruins of an ancient city whose builders appear to have colonized this planet and interbred with its natives some 76,000 years ago. The party gets caught in the crossfire between two indigenous factions riding the local equivalent of horses and chariots, but using energy weapons, deflectors, and sensors. The locals’ sensors identify the party as aliens, and both sides try to capture them. Ideally, some players should be taken by each side, or some taken by one side with the other side offering to help free them.

CIVILIZING MISSION

The two factions both try to convince the players to help them capture the ruins. The Renaissance-level Ashari say they are bringing civilization and religious enlightenment to this continent, but the superstitious natives found the ancient city and used its miracles to attack their missionaries. The Bronze-Age Bachinu say they’ve been forced to use the forebears’ holy gifts to defend their way of life against Ashari cultural imperialism. Both are convinced they’re right, but are using weapons that could devastate their world.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS

Once the characters escape (or convince their captors to free them), they must determine what to do. The Prime Directive precludes interfering, but the city’s technology

disrupts and endangers both sides’ development. Yet the technology is their ancestral birthright, so does Starfleet have the right to take it from them?

MINOR BEATS

The Ashari and Bachinu representatives both have points of view the characters sympathize with, prompting debate. Do the Bachinu have rightful grievances about the Ashari’s imperialism? Are the Ashari right that the Bachinu are too backward to be trusted with the ancient technology?

The unsolved mystery of the city-builders’ disappearance and their species origins will set up the later story arc.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

For the Ashari and Bachinu, adapt Klingon stats from pages 317-319, modified with Bajoran attributes from page 104.

CONCLUSION

The crew could find a way to neutralize or destroy the ancient technology. They could also negotiate a peaceful agreement, perhaps with Federation stewards to supervise the technology and educate the two cultures. At worst, they could depart and leave the Ashari and Bachinu to determine their own fate.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This campaign is intended for the original series era, in which the Prime Directive permits intervention to eliminate threats to a culture’s natural development. The crew’s choices might be more difficult in *The Next Generation* era, when the Prime Directive is stricter and discourages any intervention, even beneficial. In the *Enterprise* era, the lack of an official non-interference policy could give the characters a freer hand.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

“RUNAWAY BRAIN”

- **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- **Spotlight Role:** Communications Officer

SYNOPSIS

A Tellarite colony salvages a vast, powerful ancient artifact that begins to replicate itself and threatens to dismantle the colony system's planets. The crew must attempt to halt the artifact's expansion by reasoning with its controlling intelligence.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

"The Tellarite colony on Kertenis V has requested our assistance in the study of an ancient, recently discovered artifact. The artifact is an enormous slab of computronium – every atom is part of a complex nanotech computer. I will be assisting in efforts to translate its code. If any of it is still viable after a hundred million years, it could revolutionize Federation computer science."

MAJOR BEATS

THE SLAB

The Tellarites have placed the asteroid-sized, solar-powered slab of computronium in close orbit of Kertenis, a red dwarf with eight planets in very tight orbits. The lead Tellarite scientist, Doctor Pegnar chim Jul, believes it to be part of a Matrioshka brain -- a series of nested Dyson spheres (like Russian Matrioshka dolls) configured to absorb a star's entire energy output for power. The slab begins sending out self-replicating computronium probes that start disassembling the system's planets and converting their matter into computronium sphere pieces. The probes multiply as they go, so the rate of conversion accelerates exponentially.

MAKING CONTACT

The communications officer should attempt to contact the brain before its probes reach Kertenis V. They learn that the slab is a colony of A.I. minds that were content to simulate their own reality within the Matrioshka brain until biological intelligences found them, saw their self-replicating tech as a threat, and destroyed the brain. The few surviving Matrioshkans are determined to rebuild and won't tolerate coexisting with organics, who they fear. They'll destroy all life in the system and anyone who tries to stop them.

GRAY GOO SCENARIO

As the Matrioshkan probes continue to multiply and dismantle Kertenis's planets, the crew must evacuate or rescue endangered ships and planetary outposts while seeking a way to defeat the brain. But its technology is so advanced that the only hope may be for the communications officer to negotiate.

MINOR BEATS

Doctor Jul believes that learning the secrets of Matrioshkan tech is worth sacrificing a few planets for. As a Tellarite, Doctor Jul values argument and debate as a necessary part of the reasoning process. He will respect strong challenges to his point of view and will see politeness or tact as dishonest manipulation.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Tellarites can be found on page 108. Doctor Jul is a Major NPC with a focus on computer science. The chief Matrioshkan A.I. representative is a Major NPC with high Daring and Control values.

CONCLUSION

Ideally, the Matrioshkan A.I.s can be convinced to withdraw. If they can be convinced that the modern Galaxy is too full of organic life, they will use their advanced technology to scan the universe for a more lifeless region and vanish.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This adventure can be adapted to any era. In the *Enterprise* era, the fact that the Tellarites are not yet Federation members could make for more challenging interactions. Also, the limited use of transporters in that era would make evacuations slower and more difficult.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS “HORNET’S NEST”

- ▶ **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- ▶ **Spotlight Role:** First Officer

SYNOPSIS

In an ancient system with multiple inhabited planets, inexplicable bursts of warfare and strife keep breaking out, preventing long term peace. The characters determine it's the result of manipulation by the inhabitants' hyper-advanced forebears.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

"The inhabitants of the Zumachi system have requested Starfleet mediators in hopes of staving off a war. Several of Zumachi's planets were terraformed and settled by an ancient civilization, most of whose members evolved to an incorporeal plane millennia ago. The descendants of those who remained behind have struggled without success to maintain a lasting peace among the system's worlds."

MAJOR BEATS

BLASTED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

The characters' ship arrives in the Zumachi system and is promptly attacked by ships from two different rival factions, the powerful, centralized "Inworlds" and the proudly independent "Outworlds," even though both factions requested their aid negotiating peace. Their captains seem irrationally aggressive and resistant to reason. Scans show they're under some kind of mental influence, and when informed of this, they grow embarrassed and visibly restrain themselves from attacking further.

LET'S YOU AND THEM FIGHT

The Inworld leader Nemcora and the Outworld leader Thayril meet with the captain and explain that their incorporeal Forerunners still reside within the system and look down on those who chose to remain corporeal. Periodically, the Forerunners amuse themselves by mentally influencing the Zumachi and inflaming political and social tensions to provoke wars – in this case, stirring up the Outworlders' mistrust of Inworld economic aid programs and Inworlders' contempt for Outworlders' traditionalism. Zumachi scientists have always known this, but the public and leaders have been too fired up to believe it. They hope confirmation from outsiders will help.

A BURNING HOUSE

The Forerunners influence the characters' minds to make them fight among themselves, even as they drive Nemcora and Thayril toward greater mutual hostility. The crew must fight off this influence and work to find a solution, whether by attempting to contact and reason with the Forerunners or by finding a medical or technological means to block their influence.

MINOR BEATS

The Forerunners' mental influence could inflame tensions and resentments between player characters, providing an opportunity to bring simmering conflicts to a head or disrupt relationships.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Nemcora and Thayril are Notable NPCs, while the Zumachi ship commanders are Minor NPCs. Adapt Starfleet NPCs from pages 314-316 using Andorian attributes. If a Forerunner is successfully contacted, they are a Major NPC with high Control and Presence.

CONCLUSION

Ideally, the crew should find a way to protect the Zumachi from future Forerunner manipulation or convince the Forerunners to leave them alone (though a negotiated settlement might not last indefinitely). Even so, however, the crew will still need to negotiate between the Zumachi factions, to resolve the genuine tensions and disputes that the Forerunners merely amplified.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This adventure can fit any era with minimal adjustments. *Enterprise*-era crews should be less familiar with the concept of humanoids evolving to incorporeal forms, since fewer such species have been encountered at that point.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

“MAGIC IN THE AIR”

- **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- **Spotlight Role:** First Officer

SYNOPSIS

Exploring a planet that appears to have regressed from high technology to a preindustrial state, a landing party discovers that the indigenous population has apparently magical powers. The crew must seek out the true source of the phenomenon when it traps the landing party on the planet.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

“We are beaming down to survey 37 Geminorum IV, evidently the origin of the abandoned outposts on the system’s outer moons. Sensors show remnants of cities and transportation networks, evidence of a highly advanced civilization that collapsed. There are no signs of a war or catastrophe that could have caused the collapse. Our landing party will attempt to discover the reason for this civilization’s fall.”

MAJOR BEATS

WHERE THERE’S A WILL

The landing party beam down in disguise as the planet’s humanoid natives, who appear to live comfortably at a pre-industrial level, though low-level interference prevents detailed tricorder readings. They are greeted by locals who recognize them as visitors from space, saying other offworlders have come in the past. Any desire is provided by the Will, a seemingly magical force that can shape matter, allow communication between minds, and protect against danger. The Will is in everything. After sharing a meal with the locals, the players discover they can summon the Will — but find that the interference prevents transporter locks. They are trapped.

SUFFICIENTLY ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

The landing party may investigate the origin of the Will. The ship may explore the ancient lunar outposts. It turns out the Will is an advanced nanotechnology pervading the environment and inhabitants, including the landing party through the food and drink they consumed. The Geminorans didn’t regress, but became so advanced that their technology became indistinguishable from magic. But the nanotech interferes with simpler technology, and the

crew’s equipment is starting to fail. Bringing them back by shuttle could infect the entire starship.

IS THERE A WAY?

The Geminorans can’t imagine why the players would want to leave, so convincing them to help will be difficult. The players may seek a way to neutralize the Will long enough to retrieve their landing party. But this risks permanently disrupting or destroying the Will, which could provoke the Geminorans to use the Will’s “magical” powers to attack the ship.

MINOR BEATS

The power the landing party gains from the Will, including the ability to create whatever they imagine or communicate between minds, provides ample opportunities for roleplaying. What temptations might they succumb to? What conflicts might arise? Might some be tempted to stay?

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

For Geminorans, adapt Starfleet Engineer and Science Officer stats from page 315, using Betazoid attributes from page 105 to represent their mental connection. Upgrade as necessary for Notable or Major NPCs.

CONCLUSION

Presumably, the players find some way to rescue the landing party, ideally without destroying the Will or angering the Geminorans. If the Will is destroyed, intentionally or accidentally, the captain may face consequences with Starfleet Command.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

For the *Enterprise* era, the landing party may arrive by shuttlepod instead of transporter, in which case they will be stranded by the failure of the shuttle’s engines.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

“NOTHING BESIDE REMAINS”

- **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- **Spotlight Role:** Science Officer

SYNOPSIS

A landing party investigating an ancient artifact in space is abducted into the distant past along with others from different times. It turns out to be the work of an ancient scientist who wished to probe her civilization's distant future... and doesn't like what she's found.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

"Our survey of the Memnon system has turned up nothing but ancient ruins on its second planet, abandoned over 75,000 years ago. However, we have just discovered a large satellite on a long cometary orbit, bringing it back into the system once every 1600 years. It's the only facility we've found that shows active power readings, so we are investigating."

MAJOR BEATS

THE TRAP

The landing party beams over to the orbiting satellite, determining it to be 78,000 years old, and consistent with the ruins on Memnon II. At its heart is a mysterious instrument generating strong gravimetric, tachyon, and chroniton readings. As the party approaches the device, it powers up and teleports them away.

TIME'S CAPTIVES

The players find themselves 78,000 years in the past on Memnon II, held captive along with assorted aliens from the past and future. They were brought here by Vedria, a scientist from the proud, advanced Memnonian civilization of Zyndam (ZIN-dahm). She built the satellite to probe the future, hoping to see Zyndam's great legacy, but was dismayed to see that her civilization was forgotten. She's interrogating her captives in hopes of discovering the cause of Zyndam's fall, so that she can change history (her future) to prevent it.

ESCAPING THE PAST

The players must attempt to free themselves and the other captives, return them to their times, and prevent Vedria from altering history. They may try to convince Vedria to allow time to play out naturally, but this will be difficult, given her devotion to what she sees as her great and noble civilization.

MINOR BEATS

The abductees could be from a range of different civilizations, some more hostile than others. It might be difficult to get them to cooperate. The risks of sharing future knowledge should be considered, particularly since some of the captives are from the characters' own future.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

For Vedria, adapt Captain T'Mek from page 316 with a focus on temporal physics and values reflecting her determination and loyalty to her people.

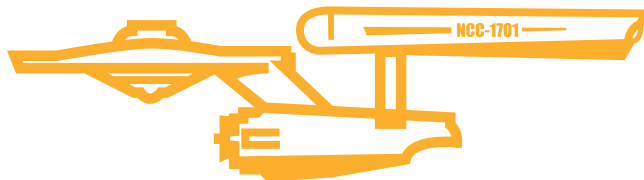
CONCLUSION

The mission ends with the characters successfully returning to their own time, stopping Vedria, and hopefully returning the other abductees. They might persuade Vedria by convincing her to let them take back records of her civilization's cultural, artistic, and scientific achievements, so that they will be remembered. They may consider destroying the satellite to prevent future abductions, but that would alter things for the people from the future they already encountered.

The records brought back from Vedria's time reveal that the Zyndam were the builders of the abandoned city in "Fire from the Titans," deepening the mystery of their civilization's disappearance.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This scenario is adaptable to any time frame. The satellite only makes a close approach to Memnon every 1,600 or so years, but the characters' ship can detect and intercept it anywhere in its orbit.



"THE EXPERIMENTERS"

- **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- **Spotlight Role:** Security Chief

SYNOPSIS

A distress call turns out to be a lure sent out by a powerful civilization that observes and studies younger cultures. They force the crew to re-enact past dangerous missions, with life-and-death stakes.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

"We are responding to a distress signal from a previously uncontacted planet, called Nashar by its natives. Sensor readings of the surface are ambiguous due to some form of interference, but there are indications of Klingon weapons signatures and mass panic."

MAJOR BEATS

BLIND EXPERIMENT

The landing party fights off what seems to be a Klingon attack on the helpless Nashari, but the attack seems purposeless and the Klingons are off. Once the characters fight off the attack, or realize it isn't real, the Klingons disappear. The Nashari explain that they're a highly advanced civilization who abandoned space travel millennia ago. Instead, they use their powerful sensors to remotely study younger civilizations around the Galaxy. Now they've decided to move on to direct experimentation and have chosen the crew as their subjects. They question the crew about their choices in the Klingon attack and how to make the simulations more accurate. If the crew refuses to play along, the Nashari make it clear that they have no choice.

REPEATED TRIALS

To make their simulations more accurate, the Nashari access the ship's logs and force the players to participate in illusory recreations of past Starfleet missions (based on their own former campaigns or *Star Trek* episodes, at gamemaster's discretion), with real life-and-death stakes. If they attempt to solve past problems the same way, the Nashari throw out surprises to test them further.

COMPETING METHODOLOGIES

The players are aided by the former leading Nashari faction, who believe in observing younger cultures

without interference and believe the current leaders' interventionism is unsound. They work together to try to extricate the characters. But this is just a symptom of the deeper conflict between the two Nashari factions, so the involvement of the ousted faction could make the current rulers even more aggressive.

MINOR BEATS

Reliving past adventures could give characters a chance to try different solutions, though they would ultimately be mere illusions. It might allow revisiting past character conflicts or mistakes and help the characters work through them.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Each Nashari faction should have a Notable or Major NPC at its head; adapt the Vorta Overseer from page 331, but increase the Control and Fitness scores.

CONCLUSION

Ideally, the characters will find their way out of the interventionist faction's control and escape the planet. They may be dependent on the isolationist faction to set them free. Optimally, the interventionist faction will be unseated. Failing that, the crew should warn Starfleet to be alert to potential interference – and to keep in mind that there could be someone watching them at any time.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This scenario works best in the original series or *The Next Generation* era, when there are a century or two of Starfleet missions for the Nashari to re-enact for their experiments. It could still work in the *Enterprise* era, but there would be fewer past missions to re-enact.

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200

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817

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205

203

832

522

402

941

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS “ENEMY MINED”

- ▶ **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- ▶ **Spotlight Role:** Medical Officer

SYNOPSIS

A telepathic minefield left over from an ancient war turns the crew of another Starfleet vessel against their own people. Can the crew understand and reverse the effect before it takes over their ship as well?

OPENING LOG ENTRY

“We are en route to the Eltanin system to assist *U.S.S. Excalibur*. Captain Kamiyama reports her crew began behaving strangely while exploring the system’s asteroid belts, the remnants of planets destroyed in a great war over 70,000 years ago. It seems unlikely anything that ancient could still have any effect today, but with a technology advanced enough to destroy entire planets, who knows?”

MAJOR BEATS

FRIENDLY FIRE

When the characters’ ship arrives in the Eltanin system, *Excalibur*’s captain, Mei Kamiyama, seems cooperative as she moves in for a rendezvous, but then raises shields and attacks. It seems the whole crew has fallen prey to the strange behavior. The character must survive *Excalibur*’s attack and subdue the ship without harming its crew.

MINES OVER MATTER

Investigating *Excalibur*’s logs, examining the crew, and studying the Eltanin ruins reveals that the ship ran afoul of a telepathic minefield, a weapon left by one of the combatants in a massive war some 76,000 years ago. The weapon was designed to turn enemy personnel into sleeper agents and saboteurs. But no sooner do the characters determine this, than they realize some of them are becoming infected by the minefield’s influence. There’s no telling who might turn on their crewmates at any moment.

A BURNING HOUSE

The medical officer must find a cure for the telepathic infection while the other characters seek to identify which of them are secretly sleeper agents ready to turn on the rest or sabotage the ship.

MINOR BEATS

Study of the Eltanin ruins should reveal evidence that the Zyndam from “Nothing Beside Remains” were combatants in the war. The ruins, and possibly some telepathic impressions retained by the infected characters, should suggest that this war was what brought about the fall of the Zyndam.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

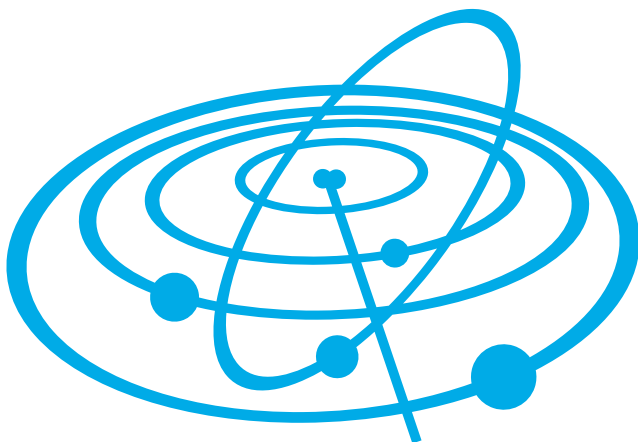
Captain Kamiyama and her crew can be based on the Starfleet NPCs on pages 314-316. *U.S.S. Excalibur* (NCC-1664) is a *Constitution*-class ship, as described on page 240.

CONCLUSION

The crew should succeed in curing the telepathic infection. Ideally they should find a way to neutralize or destroy the ancient booby trap. Failing that, they should leave warning buoys around the system. Meanwhile, though the crew has gained more insight into the fate of the Zyndam, it should only deepen the mystery of how their civilization effectively vanished and became forgotten.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This adventure is adaptable to any era. In the *Enterprise* or *The Next Generation* era, a different ship class should be substituted for the *Constitution*-class *Excalibur*. Starships in the *Enterprise* era do not have deflector shields or tractor beams, so combat mechanics would be different.



ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

“DARWIN’S DERELICT”

- **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- **Spotlight Role:** Chief Engineer

SYNOPSIS

The crew must stop the Romulans from obtaining a giant, extremely advanced derelict starship on an unpopulated planet. The mission is complicated by the discovery that proto-sapient native life-forms have evolved in symbiosis with the ancient ship.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

“On a routine survey of the FGC 4738 system, we have detected what appears to be a gigantic derelict starship on the second planet. Its geological context suggests it’s at least eight million years old, but it appears remarkably intact and still gives off low-level power readings. I can’t wait to get a look at its technology. I’m worried by our proximity to Romulan space, though.”

MAJOR BEATS

SYMBIOTIC ORGANISMS

The characters discover the derelict absorbs energy from its environment and is made of self-repairing programmable matter, explaining how it’s still intact and functional. An indigenous species, a sort of bird-primate, has evolved behaviors adapted to the ship’s presence. The animals damage the ship in such a way as to guide its self-repair nanotech to form shapes such as nests and simple tools, and can work its replicator controls to produce water and food. It’s ambiguous whether this is evolved instinct, or the beginnings of sapient thought.

INVASIVE SPECIES

A Romulan ship enters the system, intending to claim the derelict. The players may try to prevent them from reaching the surface. If this fails, the landing party should try to defend the derelict and the bird-primates. By this point, it should be increasingly clear that the bird-primates are evolving toward sapience and civilization.

SELECTIVE PRESSURES

The characters must decide how to keep the derelict out of Romulan hands. If the Romulans take it, not only would it give them a strategic advantage, but it would doom the

bird-primates who depend on it. Destroying it would be undesirable for the same reason, but might be the only way to keep it from the Romulans.

MINOR BEATS

The situation could produce some interesting Prime Directive debates. Some might see the derelict’s presence as outside interference, but since it’s been part of the bird-primates’ environment throughout their evolution, it’s arguably a natural part of their development, and removing it would violate the Prime Directive.

It could be fun to imagine other ways that the island’s species have evolved in response to the derelict’s presence.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

For the Romulan captain, adapt Gul Tremak from page 329 with Romulan attributes. For the Romulan landing party, use the Romulan Uhlan and Centurion stats from page 320.

CONCLUSION

Ideally, the derelict should be preserved for the bird-primates’ use while also ensuring that the Romulans do not take it. Perhaps the engineer could reactivate the derelict’s defenses and shield its whole island from outsiders. At worst, it might be necessary to destroy the ship to keep it from the Romulans, in which case the engineer might attempt to devise an alternative means for the bird-primates to survive.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This mission could work well for either the original series or *The Next Generation* era. For the *Enterprise* era, there’s no direct Romulan contact, so the Klingons could be substituted instead, or perhaps an antagonist from that era, such as the Arkonians.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS “QUEST FOR ZYNDAM”

- ▶ **Suggested Era of Play:** Original series era
- ▶ **Spotlight Role:** Science Officer

SYNOPSIS

The crew finds a lost Zyndam colony with evidence pointing to where the vanished civilization may have gone. However, the destination is in territory disputed by the Klingons, who seek to beat Starfleet to discovering whatever technology may remain.

OPENING LOG ENTRY

“Using the information gained in the Eltanin system, we have located a second Zyndam colony planet. Sensors have detected the ruins of multiple major cities devastated and abandoned 76,000 years ago. I am leading a landing party to search for any sign of the species’ survival.”

MAJOR BEATS

BURIED TREASURE

Searching through ruins, the landing party finds an intact data archive, but come under attack by a defense system. The players may use what they have learned about the Zyndam to convince it to grant them access, or may overpower it. The archive contains one piece of a code that promises to reveal where the Zyndam survivors fled, and clues to the worlds where the other two parts of the code can be found – but they are in disputed territory claimed by the Klingons.

TREASURE HUNT

The ship must search for the abandoned worlds containing the rest of the code. This may attract the attention of a Klingon patrol led by Commander Koze. If confronted, they may explain their interest is purely scientific, but Koze will sense they are seeking something important. They may face opposition as they find the target worlds and locate the code fragments. The code can be solved using the Zyndam cultural knowledge gained in previous adventures.

X MARKS THE SPOT

The code leads to a spatial distortion deep in interstellar space. There, the crew finds a more advanced version of the time station from the Memnon system. Instead of a temporal portal, they find a dimensional portal. An A.I. gatekeeper reveals that the Zyndam’s downfall was a civil war that

devastated countless worlds. Shamed by their abuse of power, the Zyndam left for a pocket universe where they could harm no one else, leaving clues for any survivors.

Koze’s forces find the station and try to capture it. How the crew reacts will determine whether the A.I. judges them worthy of learning the Zyndam’s secrets.

MINOR BEATS

Commander Koze values archaeology as a way to honor one’s ancestors and learn from the past, so he can be reasoned with. Yet he still feels any powerful ancient knowledge must be claimed by the Empire before the Federation.

KEY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Base Commander Koze on Moq’var from page 319. He commands a squadron of three D7 battle cruisers from page 259, spread out across the disputed sector.

CONCLUSION

The Starfleet-Klingon conflict will probably convince the Zyndam A.I. that the Galaxy is not ready for renewed contact. The characters may try to convince it to keep communication open, at least, so the Zyndam’s legacy will not be forgotten again. The characters may be able to convince Koze to join in this plea.

ADDING THIS MISSION TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This mission could be adapted as a standalone adventure by removing references to previous events; simply portray the Zyndam as a lost civilization. For *The Next Generation* era, substitute Romulans or Cardassians for the Klingons.

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