

STAR TREK™
ADVENTURES

*WE ARE THE
STARS THAT
SING WITH OUR
LIFE*

BY AARON POLLYEA

A LIVING CAMPAIGN MISSION FOR 2371

INTRODUCTION

We Are the Stars... 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

Following the discoveries on Seku VI during the episode "Signals," Starfleet has ordered all starships assigned to Narendra Station to the region around the Alpha Torgui star system. They are to assist in the recovery of a civilian archaeological team and in assisting a Starfleet Corps of Engineers Geospatial survey platoon from Alpha Torgui II after long range sensors detected that the primary of the system was days from gravitational collapse and becoming a supernova.

Once in system, it quickly becomes apparent that the archaeologists have discovered an ancient civilization that had settled the second world and are recovering unique artifacts. This discovery complicates matters as the intense gravimetric ripples in space-time from the beginnings of the stellar collapse are making transporter systems unable to function properly.

The Players must first figure out the timetable at which the star will undergo collapse, determine that the recovery operations aren't possible in the timeframe given, and improve the transporter systems enough that it is possible to use them for transport.

BACKGROUND

Alpha Torgui is a three-planet system with a red giant star reaching the end of its life span in the center. Federation scientists are interested in the star as it has shown evidence of being far too young to be reaching the last stages of its existence before becoming a supernova and some researchers have suggested an ancient species may have performed a sort of stellar re-engineering project for an unknown purpose. Initial surveys of the three rocky worlds orbiting Alpha Torgui don't show signs of any former inhabitation or terraforming. The only evidence the unknown species left behind of their presence in the system were wrecked and useless orbital constructs circling the bloated red primary.

This changed when a civilian team of astronomers and engineers were surveying the surface of Alpha Torgia II for the emplacement of a small but manned stellar observatory on the sunward facing side of the planet. While taking bedrock core samples, engineers broke into an underground complex that was clearly artificial and stripped at some point in the past of anything technological. What was left behind was still valuable as it showed the presence of an unknown species found in other systems within the Expanse at the same time that species was constructing devices around the star. As no operational technology or record-keeping devices have yet to be found on the planet, the Federation is unable to determine if what they term as the 'Torgian Builders' were an independent species or a subject race of a wider spread unknown species, possibly even the same species that created the artifacts found on Seku VI and other planets within the Expanse.

Starfleet sent the civilian archaeological team to the Alpha Torgia system to explore the vast underground vaults and city sized caverns, and a team of Starfleet Corps of Engineers to assist them with surveying the planet for more underground rooms and shoring up the ancient tunnels and roofs against further collapse. The Corps of Engineers starship, *U.S.S. Mogami* (NCC-44785, *Calypso* class) has been on station since their deployment a couple weeks ago.

The tremors began days ago and have become more frequent along with the stars' flares and other observed instabilities. The leader of the Corps of Engineers platoon, Lieutenant Hal Thompson, has just sent out an extraction request to Starfleet and it's up to the Players to make sure they are able to get out alive along with the petabytes of data recorded and various artifacts recovered.

ACT ONE: ORDERS FROM STARFLEET

Read or summarize the following:

"Captain's Log, Stardate 48673.4. A priority message from Starfleet Command has deployed us to the Alpha Torgui system to rendezvous with U.S.S. Mogami to assist in the evacuation of a team of archaeologists and several unique ancient artifacts from below the surface of the second world. I'm intrigued by the mysteries the planet contains, but what we rescue here may be all that will answer the many questions that we have about who was in that system, and why."

Normally the prediction of when a star should begin gravitational collapse is something that Starfleet sensors can determine to a fair degree of accuracy, but the modifications to the star by the unknown species has made it much more difficult. Strange spectral lines and intense starquakes are causing strange readings, and it doesn't help that somewhere deep in the star there is a sensor shadow that hides something not understood by modern engineering or astrophysics.

In order to determine the timetable there needs to be a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3 with Astrophysics as an applicable Focus. If successful, the characters will determine the star will undergo final gravitational collapse in 11 hours +/-30 minutes. The rescue mission for the artifacts and the people on the planet is projected to take 18 hours. Additional successes over the needed 3 can give the following bonuses per success over the 3: For 4 successes, the players are also able to increase the accuracy of the sensor readings to show that the strange sensor shadow deep in the star is causing compression of the stellar matter around it and may accelerate collapse unexpectedly. Any additional successes may be used to add successes to a later Science test made by the characters.

The arrival of the Player Characters' ship will kick the rescue operation into high gear, and all of their shuttles will be in use to assist in getting material and people off the surface, so any possible use of shuttles by the characters except to go between the ship and surface will be a no-go.

Players may also wish to explore the debris field of wrecked alien equipment in low orbit around Alpha Torgui itself. A character may do this if they are not involved in the research to determine when the star will collapse, or if the players are able to get 4 successes in that challenge it will leave them enough time to do this at the same time on a different system. Players may also come up with the idea of using a probe to put into low stellar orbit in addition to the ship's sensors; if this is the case, a **Reason + Science** or **Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 0 with applicable Focuses of Orbital Construction, Materials Science, and Physics can be done at any time before Act 2 with the following results dependent on how much Momentum Players wish to spend:

0: The wreckage is composed of tritanium alloys, duranium, and polyduramide. All of which are fairly standard materials seen on modern starships.

1: The orbit of the wreckage seems to be off the center of the stars' mass in such a way as to suggest a second, high mass object. No object can be detected where the other mass should be to account for the orbits.

2: The wreckage seems to have once been gravitationally bound to the strange sensor shadow deep in the star. This could be the strange mass that is affecting the orbits of the satellite debris, but it seems to not really be there, just a hole.

3+: There is a flicker of power in some of the wreckage during a flare event while sensor observations are occurring, it seems like there may be some working equipment that wasn't seen before or wasn't operational before somewhere in the debris field.

Players may want to research the planet, Alpha Toryui II. This can be performed any time during this Act, and without attempting any Tasks the Players determine that the second planet as being a Class B (a hot, partially molten world similar to Mercury in many regards, but with active volcanism) and basically all the information about the discovery of ancient artifacts and the current mission of archeologists there to recover them. If characters wish to do a more in-depth scan of the planet, a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 0 using the Geology or Cartography Focuses is made with the following results dependent on how much Momentum the Players choose to spend:

0: Many of the more geologically stable regions of the planet have large hollow spaces deep in the crust. Currently all life form readings are in one of those caverns, or in the turbolift shaft to the surface getting picked up by shuttlecraft. Clearly these are the archaeology and Starfleet Engineering teams.

1: Many of the hollow spaces have a breathable atmosphere in them, slightly different than Earth standard with extra Argon and Helium. No power readings except from known sources.

2: The caverns and hollow spaces all seem to be artificially constructed with ages ranging from 2 million to 200,000 years ago.

3: (Only achievable with a Geology specialty.) The volcanic channels and fissures also seem to be artificial with many of the hollow spaces being having small inactive channels leading to large active ones. This suggests that the power source the species that built these caverns were using the planet's own geothermal energy.

Players that look at or investigate the artifacts that are being recovered should have the following description read to them.

The artifacts being recovered from the surface seem to be in a variety of shapes and sizes, but all of them have sharp edges, crystal-like. The surface of each item isn't smooth, nor is there anything that would indicate a function except for small, sharp edged channels that run across their surfaces. On close inspection the artifacts resemble crystalized metallic meteorites and even have a faint coppery or metallic smell. Every few moments an observer will see a flickering blue light deep inside the artifact, but sensors will always return no activity at all.

During this Act characters that are telepathic or empathic will begin to hear whispers in their mind. Nothing can be heard specifically of the voice/voices whispering, but a Player Character hearing these whispers can make an **Insight + Command Task** with a Difficulty of 1 to determine that what they are hearing is far enough away that it is neither on the ship nor on the planet. These whispers will continue through Act 2 and get stronger through Act 3. Tasks and notes on these whispers will be found at the end of each Act.

Gamemaster Advice: *Complications suggested for this Act: Shuttle accident (this could result in a quick rescue mission involving the players, gravimetric sheer damages the ships sensors (this allows the Gamemaster to reduce the number of successes on a challenge in Acts 2 or 3), or even damage to Mogami from gravimetric sheer and making them have to leave early (also affecting the difficulty of*

later challenges). The Gamemaster is encouraged to allow engineering characters or other characters that may help in repairs and not involved in research to attempt to fix these problems.

ACT TWO: THE HEAT IS ON

"Captains Log, Supplemental. My officers have determined that Alpha Torgui will undergo final gravitational collapse in less than 14 hours, and Lieutenant Thompson of the Corps of Engineers assured me that getting both the people and artifacts off the planet will require days more. If it comes down to it, people's lives are what matters, but we will stay in orbit until the end to preserve what history we can."

The Gamemaster should start this Act by asking the Players what options they think are feasible to speed up the recovery rate from the surface. Have a 'conference room meeting' where they voice their opinions and debate, but don't let them go on too long. Bring Lieutenant Hal Thompson in on the meeting via viewscreen. Try and focus them onto having a total of three clear ideas to explore. Some of these can be dead ends, and options that will not work include:

- Improving the transporter systems to allow the beaming of living matter. The high density of ions in the system from the dying star are making transporter systems very touchy.
- Landing the starship (if the Players' ship is capable of landing) on the surface of the planet as its geologically unstable.
- Abandoning the artifacts and leaving within the hour with all personnel accounted for. If this is proposed, have an archaeologist listening in on the conference on Lt. Thompsons' end of the transmission overhear this and raise protest. This suggestion is bad enough that there should be an immediate **Presence + Command Task** with a Difficulty of 3 with Lt. Thompson adding a single success, otherwise the archaeologists as a group begin to question Starfleet's commitment to science, exploration, and preserving the past. At the Gamemaster's discretion, they can either bank that for a future adventure that may have a negative outcome with anyone associated with the Federation Science Council or have an immediate Complication.
- Anything that the Gamemaster feels is out of place.

Ideas that can work are as follows:

- Improving the transporter emitters and sensors on the exterior of the ship, linking them into the gravimetric sensors to provide accurate enough resolution to allow the transport of non-organic matter only, such as the artifacts on the planet itself. The heavy ion flux outside the ship may scramble more complex organic molecules, but non-organic objects are easier for the systems to deal with, as long as the characters don't mind having static shocks on all metallic surfaces from the ions also coming aboard.
- Construction of 'hampers' on the starship's shuttlecraft, sealed bins that would allow the shuttles to move more artifacts with each trip.
- Anything the Gamemaster feels would make sense that their players come up with that fits in the *Star Trek* setting. Just remember that archaeologists need to be on the planet to help sort, load, and catalog the artifacts.

After the characters are done having the debate about what to do and are leaving the conference room, an intense gravity wave washes over the ship, the computer automatically declaring a Yellow Alert. The shuttles will be split between the Players' ship and *Mogami* for docking purposes.

Time becomes critical now. If the characters wish to improve the transporter systems so they can beam inorganic matter (i.e., the artifacts), an **Insight + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2 with Focuses of Spatial Phenomena or Quantum Mechanics or a **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2 with the Focus of Transporter Systems is made with the following results dependent on the total number of successes: 0: Modifying the transporter emitters on the exterior of the ship doesn't succeed, and the radiation from the star damages the EVA team. Each person assisting the modifications takes 1+3 radiation damage. 1: Modifying the transporter systems doesn't succeed at first. The first batch of artifacts doesn't materialize correctly and is lost. 2+: Transporter modifications succeed!

Construction of hampers on the exterior of the shuttles is fairly straightforward. If the characters wish to do this, a **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 1 is made.

During the end of this act, as characters are wrapping up their improvements, the Gamemaster is encouraged to increase the frequency and intensity of the gravity waves impacting the ship, with the final gravity wave of the act being accompanied by a drastic increase in brightness of the star, and panic coming from the archaeologists. Captain Fortok of *Mogami* will signal that his ship's sensors are beginning to show deep instabilities in the planet's crust and rapidly changing magnetic fields that his science officer isn't able to figure out. Characters also wishing to look at the planet will get the same information that the magnetic field is fluctuating rapidly and the planet's crust is shifting along faults that weren't there moments before. All of it seems to be occurring for no reason at all. The deadline for stable warp out is quickly approaching and there are still archaeologists refusing to leave their work behind.

Lieutenant Thompson asks that Captain Fortok break orbit as *Mogami* is nearly at capacity as it is. *Mogami* recovers its shuttles and personnel and quickly wishes the crew luck before making its transition to warp. The countdown to when the estimated point-of-no-return is still a couple hours away, and with the improvements the characters have made to the ship and its shuttles showing that everyone can make it off with all the artifacts in time, but the unexpected happens. Another massive gravity wave ripples the ship's hull, allowing every character to hear the structure groan. The ship's main computer announces that the ship's warp drive is off line.

The ship and her crew are left drifting in orbit with only hours left before total stellar collapse just as the rescue operation is wrapping up.

During this Act the whispering in the minds of telepaths and empaths aboard the starship grows stronger. Characters wishing to explore these phenomena should tell you that they want to research this. The Gamemaster and Players should follow the Scientific Method (pg. 157-158, *Star Trek Adventures* core rulebook) to research what's happening. In Step 1, Observation, the task falls into Science as the whispering seems to operate on many brain patterns and over a large area, so doesn't neatly fit into Medicine or Engineering. In Step 2, Hypothesize, the Right Way is Subspace Theory (or any other idea that is close to this such as Quantum Mechanics), but the Gamemaster should use their discretion. In Step 3, Testing, the Gamemaster should require 5 successes to

complete the research. This research will take most of Act Three to complete and further details on events involving the whispering will be found at the end of that Act.

***Gamemaster Advice:** This Act involves a lot of problem solving, and role-play should be encouraged to let players have the opportunity to think outside the box.*

SCENE THREE: LIGHT IS LIFE AND DEATH

"Captains Log, Supplemental. It was our duty to stay behind as there were still civilians in harm's way, but it has put us at risk. The collapse is only an hour away and the last of the personnel are coming aboard. I've ordered the ship to full impulse as soon as the last shuttle is aboard, but we are currently unable to enter warp due to damage from gravimetric waves. I'm hoping that getting as many light-minutes between us and the star will buy our engineering and science teams more time to try and stabilize a warp field and get us to safety."

With the ship's warp drive knocked out and the last of the shuttles being brought aboard, the ship has to break orbit. The ship makes full impulse away from the star approximately 15 minutes before the star implodes. It's time to get the warp engines online, and fast. But time isn't as dire here as you might think; this is where real physics come into play. Alpha Torgii II circles its star at about 19.29 AUs, and that means even if the ship stays in orbit, it'll be over 160 minutes before the supernova's shock front reaches the planet, and the ship is accelerating away under full impulse.

When the star does explode, there is a subspace shock that travels faster than light and disables all long-range subspace communications from the intense distortion of space-time that is occurring and make forming a warp-field for the starship nearly impossible. But that doesn't mean the destructive radiation and highly charged plasma of the explosion will then destroy the ship, that shockwave is moving at just under the speed of light.

In those 15 minutes plus the time the shock wave would reach the vessel a lot can happen. Characters can be involved in bring the warp drive back online. The amount of time it will take is dependent on the amount of successes the characters get. A **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2 with the Focuses of Emergency Repairs, Warp Core Operations (Matter/Anti-Matter), or Warp Field Dynamics can take place:

Spending 2 or more Momentum: The ship is able to form a stable warp field and jump to high warp for a few brief minutes before the subspace shockwave of the exploding star disrupts the field and drops them back to sub-light velocities about 10 light-hours from the rendezvous point with *Mogami*. The ship is safe.

Spending 1 Momentum: The ship is able to form a stable warp bubble for moments before the subspace shockwave from the imploding star. The starship is able to travel a couple light-days before dropping back to sub-light speeds. This gives more than ample time for the engineering staff to figure out a way to generate a stable, but weak, warp field and move towards the rendezvous point at a small multiple of the speed of light before passing the wave front and then quickly meeting up with the *Mogami*.

2 Successes or more with no Momentum: If the Gamemaster wishes, this is the standard outcome that will bring tension to the Players about how they can figure out what is happening. The subspace shockwave passes the ship and makes forming a stable warp field impossible. Read on.

0 - 1 Successes: This is a dire result only possible by having characters on the engineering staff in the engine room really messing things up or the Gamemaster using Threat. The consequences can be that the warp core must be ejected from becoming unstable, or that the warp coils in the nacelles are burning out as they try and generate the warp field. The only way for the ship to survive is bend the rules and disengage the relativistic safeties on the impulse drive, allowing the ship to continue to accelerate to a significant portion of the speed of light. This would allow the ship to keep ahead of the physical shock front and have only hours pass for the crew before they make it to the rendezvous coordinates, but as with all relativistic effects, it also means time still passes normally to everyone else and the ship would arrive a year late. As this means a starship was taken out of service for a year the officers and crew will be having lots of interviews with Starfleet Command and maybe even Temporal Investigations as relativistic time-travel is not looked upon kindly in the Federation. This is why starships, even at full impulse power, rarely have relativistic effects and generally stay closely linked with Federation Standard timekeeping. It's recommended that the Gamemaster avoids this case unless through the entire episode the characters have really fouled up, been incredibly unlucky, or the Gamemaster has quite a bit of Threat to use.

Read or paraphrase the following:

"Nearly everyone on the ship turns to a viewscreen to witness the supernova. The star brightens at the same time that it begins to collapse inwards, the images dimming automatically to keep the rare sight in view. Unlike other supernovas, the star doesn't complete its collapse; rather it suddenly pancakes out into a brilliant disc, with its outer edge touching the orbital debris. Alarms begin blaring from every computer as any stability your warp field has disappears and the warp core itself shifts into an automatic safety. Those who are monitoring the sensors are showing a truly massive and unprecedented subspace rift forming around the stellar remnant. The glowing disc spreads outwards towards Alpha Toryui II, the unimaginable energies of the collapsed star visibly boiling away the outer crust before the entire planet erupts in neon green lines of tortured space-time. The starship is suddenly thrown sideways as though it was falling towards the events occurring before, just as suddenly, everything stops. There is no stellar remnant, no expanding plasma cloud, no planetary debris, nothing besides an expanding ripple in space-time."

Whatever remnant of the unknown species and Toryui civilization located in this system activated and produced a system wide 'gateway', transporting the entire system elsewhere using the power of the supernova itself. During this transport any characters that are in the cargo bay still studying the artifacts can have the following added to the above description:

"As the supernova unravels, in the cargo storage the archaeologists and crew members still sorting through the rescued objects begin to notice glowing streamers of blue light that escape in the small channels the run across the surface of them. Sensors don't show anything occurring at first, but suddenly alerts in the bay begin to sound as tricorders and even the main computer begin to detect tears and fractures in sub-space leaking through nearly all the artifacts. These tears begin to quickly heal and are undetectable again after mere seconds, and seconds after that the glow disappears."

The Gamemaster is welcome to allow Players to make a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2 to determine that some previously undetected devices activated and produced a subspace rift encompassing the entire system before creating an artificial wormhole that lasted long enough that

the three planets and the devices were all pulled through. The falling sensation that everyone experienced was the local space-time snapping back into a less distorted smoothness.

For the research involving the whispering in the minds of telepaths and empaths aboard the starship, characters involved in this research are unable to take part in the other Tasks and Challenges occurring during this Act. Thus, this is a good side plot for Characters unskilled at engineering or not taking part in figuring out how to stabilize the warp field so the starship can escape. As the star approaches its critical moment, the whispering will get louder, almost distracting, but no words can be heard due to more and more voices adding to the noise, similar to a crowded arena and the multitude of voices overlapping.

The amount of time the Characters have before the ship jumps to warp to escape the oncoming shock front from the supernova will give them four attempts at a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3. If the characters are researching along the “Right Way” of Subspace Theory (or similar concepts as previously stated) they will arrive at a conclusion after five successes. What they will discover is that the increasing instability in space-time due to the imploding star is weakening some subspace barriers, allowing energy and information to ‘leak’ into our universe. The whispering must be other minds that exist, but in a realm of subspace or an alternate dimension. If the characters have spent Momentum during any of their Research attempts they will also pinpoint the subspace band that the whispering comes from, and if they wish they may tune a subspace transceiver to amplify the signals with a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 1.

The results should be unsettling. Before the star explodes, the transceiver will receive clearer voices, but the words are still not clear, only the emotions that the telepathic and empathic characters feel. There is a significant amount of fear, but also joy, sadness, anger, etc...all mixed with a chaotic feeling of madness. The moment the star explodes, the voices will drain away until there is only a strong voice that speaks through the subspace transceiver and into the minds of those characters who have already been hearing the voices. It says, “Tilikaal...help us...please...” before subspace becomes too disrupted to hold the frequency any longer. Any further attempt to regain the specific subspace frequency fails.

CONCLUSION

The rescue flotilla makes their way back to Starbase 364 to unload the artifacts and civilians. The bright side of this entire near-disaster was that several artifacts were returned for study before they were lost forever, and these artifacts are displaying complex multi-dimensional computer processes, and that clearly intelligent and space-faring civilizations that were not the ones who originally developed it attempted to use them later. What is made clearer is that Federation research on the unknown species will now have to take into account the fact that they could move entire systems when they had access to as much power as a star collapsing could provide.

At the Gamemaster’s discretion, certain Characters may receive a commendation from the Federation Science Council upon the successful completion of this episode. This commendation can be used in future missions to give the Character(s) a single success in any Command or Science Skill Task associated with the Federation Science Council, or people directly working for them. Finally, each Player Character may use Lieutenant Hal Thompson of Starfleet Corps of Engineers as a contact



they may call upon in the future for possible information related to the event or the artifacts as determined by the Gamemaster.

DR. MITCHEL AL'MALKI [NOTABLE NPC]

Doctor of Archaeology and Anthropology, Head of Research on Alpha Torgui II and representative of the Federation Science Council. Dr. Al'Malki comes across as overworked and edgy. In any conversation with the characters, Al'Malki is clearly very knowledgeable about most recent archaeological digs across the Federation and even most recent developments in the largest profile science developments. His conversations though will be short and to the point as he is continually pulled in multiple directions as the events unfold. Characters that go out of their way to do science and help preserve any artifacts will have his gratitude.

Traits: Human, Federation Science Councilor

Values:

- Leading in Discovery

ATTRIBUTES

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
8	6	8	6	8	12

DISCIPLINES

Command	Conn	Security	Engineering	Science	Medicine
2	1	1	1	4	2

Focuses: Archeology, Xenoanthropology, Scientific Ethics

Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Resistance: 0

ATTACKS:

- Unarmed Strike (2 ▲ Knockdown, Size 1H, Non-lethal)

SPECIAL RULES

- **Science on Standby:** At Dr. Al'Malki's discretion, he may increase the amount of Crew Support available for a starship by 2 for a single mission, but this Crew Support may only be used for Tasks involving Science (or Medicine). These Crew Support Points do not count against the normal limit of Crew Support available for a starship.