# STAR TREK™
## ADVENTURES

# Decision Point

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## *U.S.S. BELLEROPHON*
### Living Campaign Adventure

*"The Prime Directive is not just a set of rules. It is a philosophy, and a very correct one. History has proved again and again that whenever mankind interferes with a less developed civilization, no matter how well intentioned that interference may be, the results are invariably disastrous."*

– Captain Jean-Luc Picard

# INTRODUCTION

"Decision Point" is an adventure for the *Star Trek Adventures* Living Campaign playtest series. This adventure is mean to be played by a Gamemaster (gamemaster) and 3-7 players, using the pre-generated characters provided.

To run this adventure, the gamemaster needs to be familiar with the adventure itself, the *Star Trek Adventures* playtest rules, and the pre-generated characters.

For this playtest, you will need:

- At least two 20-sided dice (d20) per player, and several d6s to serve as Challenge Dice
- A set of chips or tokens for Determination
- A set of chips or tokens for Threat
- A set of chips or tokens, or some other manner of marker, for group Momentum.
- The pre-generated character sheets, and the USS Bellerophon starship sheet
- The Star Trek Adventures playtest rules (version 1.36 of the core rules, version v1.1 of the Starship Operations rules)

## Synopsis

The characters are part of a rescue mission to locate the *S.S. Tesla*, a civilian science vessel that has gone missing while investigating spatial anomalies in a particularly unstable region of the Shackleton Expanse. The crew tracks the missing ship to the Orgun system which, remarkably, has two Class M worlds, both protected by the Prime Directive. The *Tesla* crash-landed in a remote wilderness area of Orgun III. The planet is suffering from geological upheaval, as well as atmospheric electromagnetic interference, forcing an away team to take a shuttle to the surface to investigate.

Once on the surface, the crew learns that the scientists have already contacted the natives of the planet and revealed the existence of the Federation. A recovery team from the local planetary government arrives and offers to take the crew to the scientists.

The scientists inform the crew that the planet is in dire straits (the planet is suffering an apparently natural geologic disaster that will destroy the planet in a matter of few weeks). In defiance of the Prime Directive (which doesn't technically cover civilians) the scientists have already started helping the people of Orgun III (a lemur-like species that call themselves the Lormeans) come up with a plan for planetary evacuation to Orgun II. This could cause a massive upheaval for the residents of Orgun II since its people are a different species with a much lower tech level.

The scientists (and the Lormean planetary government) implore the away team to assist them in coming up with an evacuation plan. Working together, they could drastically increase the numbers of survivors. The crew also discovers a massive energy surge coming from somewhere deep beneath the planet's surface. Perhaps this is the cause of the planetary upheaval? The expedition to locate the energy source uncovers a malfunctioning ancient machine. Lormeans some time, but the fate of the planet is sealed. Will the crew help the scientists evacuate the Lormeans to Orgun II, or do they stick to the letter of the Prime Directive and leave the Lormeans to their fate?

**The gamemaster begins this adventure with two points of Threat for every player character in the group.**

# Scene 1: Finding the *Tesla*

When the players are ready to begin, read the following:

> The *U.S.S. Bellerophon* has been searching for a missing science vessel, the *S.S. Tesla*, which went missing six weeks ago while cataloguing anomalies in an unstable region of the Shackleton Expanse. This region is notorious for an unusual number of temporal and spatial anomalies, some benign and others extremely dangerous. Eighteen hours ago, the *Bellerophon* picked up a plasma trail, likely from a damaged ship.
>
> The Orgun system has two Class M planets, both with populations protected under *General Order One: The Prime Directive*. Orgun II has a primitive civilization, equivalent to medieval Earth. The residents call themselves the Slithar and are a violent and warlike culture. The residents of Orgun III, who call themselves Lormeans, are quite different, being a mammalian species resembling humanoid lemurs that are noted for a peaceful and communal society. Their technology is equivalent to mid-21st century Earth, just pre-warp tech, but still covered by the Prime Directive. The plasma trail from the *S.S. Tesla* leads directly toward Orgun III.

**The *S.S. Tesla* carried a crew of six scientists:**

- Captain Andrew Forrest (Human – Lead Scientist and Systems Engineer)
- Dr. Emmet Sherman (Human – Lead Astrophysicist)
- Ibab Thi'vhet (Andorian – Geologist)
- Dr. Norma Grange (Human – Physicist)
- Orimu Faz (Trill – Chemist/Xenobiologist)
- Dr. Scia Lort (Human – Biologist/Medical Doctor)

The adventure begins with the *U.S.S. Bellerophon* in orbit around Orgun III. The ship's main deflector has been modified to transmit interference, shielding the ship's presence from Lormean satellites in orbit and any possible scans from the planet. The crew's scans of the planet reveal electromagnetic surges in the planet's atmosphere, making those scans more difficult than usual. The character at Ops can make a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2, assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Science**. Complications may mean that the ship's sensors suffer damage from energy fluctuations from the planet, or that the sensors return false positives, or some other manner of inconvenience. Other characters may assist, but don't spend too long resolving this Task.

The scans reveal that the *S.S. Tesla* crash-landed, relatively intact, in a wilderness region, about 200 km from the Lormean capital city. No humanoid life-forms are shown in the vicinity. The energy fluctuations around the planet are interfering with the sensors, making it difficult to differentiate human life-forms from the native Lormeans. The scan also shows an extremely powerful energy source, about 5 km underground, not far to the north of the capital city. Due to the unusual energy fluctuations around the planet, communicators are ineffective and the transporters are too dangerous to use.

If the task generates any Momentum, the characters can spend points to improve the results of the scan. The information gleaned is based on the amount of Momentum spent.

- **1 point of Momentum:** The underground energy source to the north of the capital city is far more advanced than anything on the planet and is of an unknown kind. It is definitely not natural, and unlike any energy source used by the Lormeans.
- **2 points of Momentum:** Human life-forms are detected in the capital city. A sensor lock for transport cannot be obtained, but they, or most of them, are almost certainly in the city.
- **3 points of Momentum:** The subterranean energy source north of the capital city appears to be impacting the geologic instability and may be responsible for the electromagnetic disturbances in the atmosphere.

# The Away Team

The gamemaster should encourage the player captain to remind the rest of the crew that the Prime Directive is in effect on this world, and that the crew should do everything they can to preserve its integrity. If the group does not have a player captain, the gamemaster can have the NPC captain remind them. Starfleet Regulation: *Section 12, Paragraph 4*, indicates that a Captain should not accompany an away team. However, given the delicate nature of this mission, the communication difficulties, and the fact that the Prime Directive applies here, the captain has ample room to decide to override the regulation and accompany the team. (The gamemaster may wish to talk privately to whichever player is taking the role of captain, if any, and encourage them to go with the away team during the adventure.)

> The Prime Directive is a **Directive** for this mission: it serves as an additional Value that any character can use, positively or negatively. It prohibits interference with pre-warp cultures by Starfleet personnel. This is described in full in the core rules.

The atmospheric disturbances make the transporters useless and require the crew to take a shuttle to investigate and search for survivors from the *Tesla*. It will also mean that the away team is on their own once on the surface. Precedent from similar incidents indicates that the crew should search for survivors, recover what they can, determine if the ship can be repaired, and if not, destroy it so that the native population cannot access the technology. (If scans showed that there are humans in the nearby city, the crew should still go to the crash site first and then attempt to locate and recover the scientists afterwards.)

Modern technology can easily avoid detection by the planet's surveillance satellites and planetary radar, but travel to the planet is complicated by the energy fluctuations around the planet. Landing the shuttle safely requires a single Task from the character at the Conn. This could be a **Daring** or **Control + Conn Task** with a Difficulty of 2. A character at Ops may assist in this Task, using **Control + Engineering** to modify power levels to compensate for the fluctuations, or **Reason + Science** to figure to figure out that the shuttle's shields can be used to mitigate the effects. Only one character may assist – there's not enough room at the controls for more than one assistant.

**Gamemaster Guidance:** *This is a **Success at Cost Task**, meaning that the players cannot fail to land the shuttle, but failure could incur additional cost. Complications or failure lead to damage to the shuttlecraft and/or minor injuries (Complications, rather than full Injuries) to the crew. No matter what, the crew sets the shuttle down near the wreckage of the* S.S. Tesla.

> As you exit the shuttle you see the wreckage of the *S.S. Tesla* lying in the burnt remains of the forest around it. The forest has been leveled for about 50 meters around the wreckage. The crew cabin appears to be mostly intact. The *Tesla* was a small, civilian version of a *Raven*-class science vessel.
>
> A quick examination of the surroundings reveals two recent graves. Quick tricorder scans reveal that one body is human and the other Andorian – crew members of the *Tesla*!

Searching the *Tesla*, the crew finds that despite previous heavy damage, the warp core had been shut down prior to crash landing, preventing a catastrophic explosion, though emergency power is still running. The ship is damaged beyond repair, and even with supplies from the *Bellerophon,* the *Tesla* will never fly again. The computer data cores, along with all logs, have been removed. Most of the personal effects belonging to the scientists have been taken as well. The gamemaster can require Tasks to learn all of this, asking for a Difficulty 0 Task, and granting one piece of information for each Momentum spent. The Security Officer can attempt a **Reason + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 1 to determine that the internal security sensors are still on and transmitting.

The electromagnetic interference on the planet makes tricorder scans problematic. This is ample justification for the gamemaster to spend Threat to increase the Difficulty of scans, or generate Complications from false readings. Give the players as long as they need and then move on to **Scene 2**.

## Healing and Repairs

If the players or the shuttle was damaged during landing, they can tend to those issues now. A **Bravery + Medicine Task** with a Difficulty of 1 is sufficient to give first aid and patch up minor injuries, while making repairs to the shuttle requires a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 1.

# Scene 2: The Lormeans

About 20 minutes after the crew begins examining the area (or whenever seems dramatically appropriate), a flyer lands near the crew's shuttle. Normally tricorders would have detected the approach of the flyers, but the atmospheric disturbances make detection harder. Unless a crewmember is specifically standing watch, the crew will be taken by surprise.

> *A sudden breeze stirs up ash from the crash site as several flyers come out from the cover of the trees and settle on the ground nearby. The vehicles each disgorge a half dozen humanoids. They are slight of build and on average, shorter than humans, and are covered in a light coat of fur and with large, lemur-like eyes. They move with a graceful agility as they point energy weapons of some kind in your direction.*

## Lormean Security [Troopers]

The humanoid residents of Orgun III call themselves Lormeans. They are a peaceful species that resemble humanoid lemurs. They stand about 1.4 meters in height, have large eyes that allow them to see in nearly complete darkness, and sport long, dexterous fingers that make them excellent climbers. They have a relatively low population compared to humans on Earth, with only about 17 million Lormeans living on Orgun III. They long ago merged into one planetary government.

These Lormeans are part of their planetary security forces, and are more used to stopping criminals than confronting off-worlders.

**Traits:** Lormean, Cautious

### *Attributes*

| Control | Daring | Fitness | Insight | Presence | Reason |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|----------|--------|
| 9 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 8 |

### *Disciplines*

| Command | Conn | Engineering | Security | Science | Medicine |
|---------|------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

*Combat*

**Stress:** 10        **Soak:** 0

**Weapons:**

- Unarmed (Melee, 3[CD], Knockdown, Size 1H, Nonlethal)
- Stunner (Ranged, 3[CD], Intense, Size 1H, Nonlethal)

**Special Rules:**

- **Lormean:** Reduce the Difficulty of tests to climb by one step. Ignore any Difficulty increase to Tasks caused by poor lighting or darkness.

Assuming the players do not immediately start a fight, one of the Lormeans approaches and speaks to the crew. She identifies herself as Captain Theema, and she tells them that the scientists are safe at their capital city of Lorm. She invites the crew to accompany her team back to city. The players will undoubtedly begin asking her questions; however, she refuses to answer, telling them only that the scientists are safe and waiting there. She continues to insist that they accompany her to Lormean Central Headquarters in Lorm. Assuming the crew accepts the offer, they are relieved of their weapons, ushered aboard the flyers, and whisked away to the city.

## Lormean Central Headquarters

The Central Headquarters is a massive building with high ceilings and glass walls that upon closer inspection are made of opaque amber. The characters are taken to a room that overlooks the city and the dense, misty forests beyond. The most striking thing about the building is that it is actually an enormous living tree. In fact, almost all Lormean dwellings appear to be made of living trees. The living spaces are naturally grown inside the trunks of the trees and soft moss lines the floors rather than carpeting.

The four surviving scientists are here, and they excitedly greet the crew. The head of the Lormean government is there as well and greets the crew after the scientists have the chance to explain the situation.

Lead scientist Dr. Emmet Sherman provides the following information:

- While cataloging spatial anomalies, the *Tesla* was struck with unexpected gravimetric wave that damaged the ship's warp drive, as well as other systems, including Comms. They managed to limp to the Orgun system and tried to set down, but the damage to the ship was too great and they crashed.
- Captain Andrew Forrest died attempting to patch together the warp drive. The Andorian, Ibab Thi'vhet, died during the crash. Dr. Emmet Sherman took command of the mission after Forrest's death.
- The Lormeans detected the crash and arrived soon after the crash. Not being beholden to the Prime Directive, the crew of the *Tesla* opted to accompany the Lormeans back to their capital city in the hopes of finding a way to contact the Federation.
- After learning about the planet's distress, the scientists unanimously decided to help the Lormeans come up with evacuation plans.

As soon as the scientists finish their explanation, the head of the Lormean government, Chief Minister Toorel, cuts in and tells the crew that the Lormeans need their help:

- Orgun III is suffering from severe geological distress, and electromagnetic disturbances are wreaking havoc on their planetary communications systems. Major earthquakes have become common, and they estimate that the planet will break up within two weeks.
- They don't understand the cause of these disturbances. They are hoping that the crew can use their shuttlecraft to attempt to determine the cause.
- The Lormeans have plans to evacuate as many people as they can to Orgun II. With their own technology, they may be able to get a few hundred to safety, but with help from the scientists and now a starship in orbit, they could rescue far more. A few hundred will not provide enough genetic diversity, and the Lormeans will come to an end as a species.

To highlight the imminent destruction of the planet, as they are talking, the Lormean Headquarters is struck by a powerful tremor that causes cracks to appear in the walls and computers to short out dramatically, but no major damage, yet….

## GM Guidance: NPCs on Either Side

*Under most circumstances, the rules for NPCs cover adversaries – those who are opposed to the player characters' goals in some way. Most of the time, NPCs whose goals align with those of the player characters require hard-and-fast rules to the same degree as adversarial NPCs.*

*That isn't always the case, however. And, in the case of the scientists here, an NPC's goals may shift – at some points making them an ally, while at others making them an opponent. To handle this, use the following guidelines:*

- ***If an NPC is an Adversary:*** *The NPC spends points from the gamemaster's Threat pool to buy Immediate Momentum spends, and adds surplus Momentum to the Threat pool instead of having a group Momentum pool. Any instance where a player character would add to Threat, an Adversarial NPC spends from Threat instead. NPC abilities that specifically cost Threat remove points from the Threat pool.*

- *If an NPC is an Ally:* The NPC may add to or spend from group Momentum as the player characters do (the gamemaster may wish to assign allied NPCs to players to govern this). Allied NPCs treat instances where they would add to Threat in the same way player characters do. NPC abilities that specifically cost Threat add points to the Threat pool.
- *Changing Allegiance:* In any given scene, an NPC is either an Adversary or an Ally. The gamemaster determines which is the case for each NPC. This is most likely to be the case where an NPC is regarded as an Adversary for some purposes (such as social conflict), and an ally for others (physical challenges, combat). The gamemaster should try and avoid situations where the NPC must be both Adversary and Ally within the same scene, to avoid confusion.

# Dr. Emmet Sherman, Lead Astrophysicist [Elite]

**Species and Traits:** Human, Analytical
**Values:**
- More Theoretical than Practical
- Leader in his field

| Attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Control** | **Daring** | **Fitness** | **Insight** | **Presence** | **Reason** |
| 10 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 12 |

| Disciplines | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Command** | **Conn** | **Engineering** | **Security** | **Science** | **Medicine** |
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 |

**Focuses:** Advanced Mathematics, Astrophysics, Oratory

*Combat*

**Stress:** 8 **Soak:** 0

**Weapons:**

- Limited Phaser I (Ranged, 3[CD], Size 1H, Charge 3, Non-Lethal)

# Dr. Norma Grange, Physicist [Elite]

**Species and Traits:** Human, Practical
**Values:**
- Always trying to prove one theory or another
- A good scientist takes responsibility

| Attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Control** | **Daring** | **Fitness** | **Insight** | **Presence** | **Reason** |
| 8 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 12 |

| Disciplines | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Command** | **Conn** | **Engineering** | **Security** | **Science** | **Medicine** |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 |

**Focuses:** Computers, Experimental Physics, Force Fields

*Combat*

**Stress:** 9 **Soak:** 0

**Weapons:**

- Limited Phaser I (Ranged, 3[CD], Size 1H, Charge 3, Non-Lethal)

# Dr. Orimu Faz, Chemist and Xenobiologist [Elite]

**Species and Traits:** Trill, Polymath
**Values:**
- If I am no longer curious, I am lost
- There is no price too great for discovery

| Attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Control** | **Daring** | **Fitness** | **Insight** | **Presence** | **Reason** |
| 9 | 9 | 7 | 10 | 8 | 11 |

| Disciplines | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Command** | **Conn** | **Engineering** | **Security** | **Science** | **Medicine** |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 |

**Focuses:** Chemistry, Sociology, Xenobiology

*Combat*

**Stress:** 8 **Soak:** 0

**Weapons:**

- Limited Phaser I (Ranged, 2[CD], Size 1H, Charge 3, Non-Lethal)

**Special Abilities:**

- **Joined Trill:** Dr. Faz is the latest host of the Faz symbiont. Up to once per scene, Faz may spend 2 Threat to gain an additional Focus for the remainder of the scene.

# Dr. Scia Lort, M.D., Biologist [Elite]

**Species and Traits:** Human, Compassionate
**Values:**
- Those who fail to prevent tragedy are as culpable as those who cause it
- First, do no harm…

| Attributes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Control** | **Daring** | **Fitness** | **Insight** | **Presence** | **Reason** |
| 10 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 12 |

| Disciplines | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Command** | **Conn** | **Engineering** | **Security** | **Science** | **Medicine** |
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 |

**Focuses:** Biochemistry, Pathology, Xenobiology

*Combat*

**Stress:** 7 **Soak:** 0

**Weapons:**

- Limited Phaser I (Ranged, 2[CD], Size 1H, Charge 3, Non-Lethal)

## GM Guidance: Plot Complication

*To add some moral and ethical complexity, consider having one of the scientists be a loved one (sibling, cousin, former lover), former colleague, student, or mentor of one of the characters. For example, if one of the player characters is a Joined Trill, perhaps they had a relationship with a former host of the Faz symbiont in a former life. This can provide the scientists with a little bit of an edge when trying to convince the crew to assist the Lormeans. Only one of the scientists should be connected in this way; any more may seem contrived.*

*If the crew started a fight with the Lormeans at the crash site, they most likely lost and awaken from being stunned at Lormean Central Headquarters. Assuming they are either stunned or accompany the Lormeans, the crew's weapons have been taken.*

*If the players somehow defeat the Lormeans at the crash site, the gamemaster must try to get the story back on course without railroading the players. If they try to "rescue" the scientists in the capital city, it is likely that they are captured. In fact, the scientists are so intent on helping the Lormeans that they betray the crew to the Lormeans if necessary.*

*If the crew protest to the scientists about breaking the Prime Directive, they shrug and tell them that it's too late – the Lormeans already know. They then turn on a local live video broadcast of the news that is showing recorded interviews with the scientists telling a news reporter all about the Federation. Of course, the Prime Directive still requires that Starfleet try and limit the scale and scope of the interference.*

## Resolution

The crew may have already detected the strange underground power source. If they bring this up, then the scientists recommend that the crew check out the location while they continue to help come up with an evacuation plan. If the players did not detect the underground power source, the Lormeans and the scientists suggest that the crew use the shuttle to make better scans of the planet to see if they can learn more about the unusual electromagnetic energy fluctuations. The Lormeans send one of their own along as an observer, and one of more the scientists can accompany the crew if they wish.

Players making scans of the planet can attempt a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2. Other players can assist by diverting additional power to the sensors by making a **Control + Engineering Task** or even by coordinating the search attempting a **Presence + Command Task**.

The crew may ask for their weapons back. The Lormeans are resistant to doing this, but convincing the Lormean leader to return their weapons is a **Presence + Command Task**. This is a Persuade Task with a Difficulty of 2, with success seeing the return of *one* of the character's weapons, plus an additional weapon per Momentum spent (Repeatable). If the players use force to overcome the Lormeans, or otherwise prove belligerent, the gamemaster may spend three Threat to reveal that scientists to have removed key components from the shuttle, making escape from the planet impossible. These components are needed for the shuttle to be operational.

# Scene 3: The Caverns

The source of the energy emissions that harm the planet come from a location 5 km beneath the surface. Scanning the area reveals the entrance to a series of natural caverns leading to the energy source.

The crew will likely have one Lormean and maybe some of the scientists with them, who can be an aid or a hindrance. If the "Plot Complication" scientist is along, the gamemaster could place that NPC in harm's way to provoke the attached character into taking impulsive actions that could put the entire crew at risk.

The caverns are often narrow with sudden drop-offs and sharp bends and turns, and the gamemaster should ask the players to determine the order they're travelling in. The descent is not easy and is fraught with dangers. The gamemaster decides how many hazards they must overcome, though at least two should be used to make the point that the trip is difficult. The gamemaster should spend Threat to enact any of the following Hazards:

- **Unstable Tunnel (3 Threat):** A section of tunnel is unstable and could collapse. The character(s) in the lead, or those using tricorders, can attempt a **Reason + Science** or **Insight + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2 (1 if a tricorder is used) to notice the unstable area and avoid it. Failure means that the crew is caught in a cave-in and everyone must make a **Daring** or **Control + Security** against a Difficulty 2 or take 3[CD] Damage.
- **Ravine (2 Threat):** The characters come to a narrow ravine that is possibly jumpable for a particularly athletic character. To climb or jump across the ravine requires a **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3. Once across, assuming the characters packed rope and other climbing gear, the rope can be tossed across and other characters can cross with only a Difficulty of 1. This task uses the Success at Cost rule: Failing the Task doesn't mean that the character failed to cross the ravine, only that they must pay some other cost to do so, suffering an automatic Complication as the price for the most basic level of success. This could be dropping a tricorder or other piece of important gear into the ravine, where it is lost, or suffering a minor injury (a sprain or similar debilitating but non-lethal injury).
- **Poison Gas (3 Threat):** The crew comes to a large cavernous area filled with heavy fog. A tricorder scan (no Task required) shows that the fog is a poisonous gas. Players can traverse ledges high up on the walls to avoid the gas, but they paths are narrow and treacherous, requiring a **Daring** or **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2 (The players can, of course, come up with alternate means of avoiding the gas, and it is up to the gamemaster to determine what kind of Task might be required, or if it is successful). If the characters don't manage to avoid the gas, it will take a **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2 to climb back out of the fog, but they will suffer the effects of the gas on any failed Task. The gas causes 3[CD] Damage, but an Injury just causes unconsciousness, and a character will recover naturally if they can be supplied with breathable air (as if they had been Injured by a Stun attack). If the character isn't retrieved from the gas, then they will suffocate and die.
- **Steam Vents (2 Threat):** Dangerous vents of scalding steam are shooting out of crevasses in this part of the caverns. Scientifically minded characters can use tricorders to determine the pattern of steam release, or they can charge through and attempt to avoid the jets. To estimate the steam release times, a character can attempt a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3. Every player must make a **Daring + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3 to cross the cavern; this becomes a **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2 if the pattern of steam release has been determined. Failure means the character suffers 2[CD] Knockdown Damage from jets of hot steam.

**Gamemaster Guidance:** *The obstacles for traveling through the caverns are meant to add some excitement and tension to the story, not overwhelm the players. If an obstacle leaves them wounded and despairing, you might not want to hit them with any more.*

After the crew overcomes any Obstacles the gamemaster wishes to impose, read the following:

> *You see light ahead breaking through the darkness: not the dim glow of phosphorescent fungus, but the cold harshness of artificial lighting. It looks like a cave-in caused a rupture into an artificially carved and lit corridor.*

*The cave-in appears to have destroyed the carved-out tunnel in one direction, and the other ends in a set of sliding metal doors. The tunnel was clearly carved by a laser mining drill and has surfaces as smooth as glass. Light panels that have no apparent power source line the ceiling.*

The doors have no markings but open as soon as anyone approaches. The doors open into an elevator, but there are no buttons, devices, or markings inside. Assuming the players enter, the elevator door closes and it moves. It's impossible to tell how far or fast the elevator moves, but moments later the doors open.

# Scene 4: The Source

The elevator takes the crew to what appears to be a command and control center for the entire planet. Upon investigating the control center, the players can discover that Orgun III appears to be part of a network of planets once inhabited and controlled by a powerful, ancient race. Momentum spent to Obtain Information during this scene may also reveal that Orgun III was, in fact, moved from its original orbit to its current position eons ago. Something went wrong in the process, and the planet suffered severe geologic damage. Part of the purpose of the machinery here is to maintain the damaged structural integrity of the planet. Over the past millennia, the machine has deteriorated from lack of maintenance and extreme old age.

Read the following when the elevator doors open:

> *Outside the elevator is a vast underground cavern filled with incredible machinery. The air is hot and dry with an acrid smell. Huge metallic towers covered with lights flicker as charges of electricity play back and forth between them.. Between you and the electrified towers is a command center of some kind. Rows of computers and control devices line the walls, and large screens show mostly indecipherable information scrolling past. Occasionally, something familiar flashes on a screen, such as geographic map of the planet and a model of this solar system.*

The crew will undoubtedly want to determine the purpose of the machinery. If they have encountered similar technology from this ancient race before, they immediately recognize it as such. If not, then the tech will be completely foreign to them.

1. **Decipher the Purpose:** The crew must determine the purpose of the alien machinery. This requires scans and analysis of the written language and the machines themselves. This is an **Insight** or **Reason + Science** or **Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 3.

The machinery was clearly built millennia ago, but an unknown species that created it obviously monitored every aspect of the planet: geological make-up, electromagnetic fields, and atmospheric conditions. Incredibly, it can also affect these things: everything from weather control to affecting geological stability. The systems also show that the planet was at some time in its past moved from a different orbit to its current location, an event that would have required almost unimaginable power. The machinery appears to, at least in part, be able to compensate for stresses that resulted from this move. (There is also some other purpose that is undecipherable to the crew.) The crew is able to determine that the machinery is malfunctioning, but to be able to make repairs they have to figure out how to use the controls.

2. **Understand the Controls:** Knowing a machine's purpose does not necessarily mean you know how to control it. The players must figure out how to manipulate the machine's controls before they can attempt repairs. This is a **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 3. Multiple attempts can be made, but each failure gives the gamemaster one Threat – too long spent studying the controls could allow something worse to happen.

Once the crew has figured out how to operate the machine, they can begin making repairs.

3. **Make the Necessary Repairs:** Damage to the area is the result of millennia of neglect. It is also clear that a complete repair is not possible – the technology is too complex, and full restoration might take years of studying these machines. However, a partial repair might be able to at least extend the machine's operation. Making the repairs requires at least two characters to work together: one making an **Insight** or **Reason + Science Task** and the other making a **Daring** or **Control + Engineering Task**, both with a Difficulty of 3.

Successfully making the repairs allows the machinery to begin functioning again. It greatly reduces the geological and electromagnetic disturbances around the planet. Analyzing the data coming through the machine's monitoring systems shows that the stability of the planet has been extended by about six months, but at that point the systems will inevitably fail and the planet will break apart.

## Hazards

Repairing the ancient alien devices can be hazardous at the best of times, and being on a planet that is in the process of ripping itself apart only makes matters worse. The gamemaster should feel free to take advantage of Complications or spend Threat to introduce Hazards (2 Threat per Hazard):

- Machinery explodes, doing 3[CD] damage to a random character, or making later tasks more difficult (+1 Difficulty), or adding additional Tasks (at Difficulty 2) that must be completed.
- Tremors open a small chasm or drop a boulder on a crew member, inflicting 3[CD] damage and pinning them until they can be freed with a **Daring** or **Fitness + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 2.
- Steam or radiation jets from the machinery, causing damage to crew, or disabling equipment.
- Control panels catch fire, increasing the Difficulty of future Tasks.

The trick here is to make it clear to the players that they cannot linger down here too long – they need to complete their repairs swiftly or continue to face these problems.

## Conclusion

Assuming the crew make the necessary repairs, the machine is now back online and the disturbances are mostly mitigated. Most importantly, communicators, sensors, tricorders, etc. all function normally now, and they can be beamed out almost immediately upon completing the repairs. They must decide what to do about the Lormeans and the scientists who wish to help them evacuate.

# Scene 5: Hard Choices

### GM Guidance: The Prime Directive

*As the right of each sentient species to live in accordance with its normal cultural evolution is considered sacred, no Starfleet personnel may interfere with the normal and healthy development of alien life and culture. Such interference includes introducing superior knowledge, strength, or technology to a world whose society is incapable of handling such advantages wisely. Starfleet personnel may not violate this Prime Directive, even to save their lives and/or their ship, unless they are acting to right an earlier violation or an accidental contamination of said culture. This directive takes precedence over any and all other considerations, and carries with it the highest moral obligation.*

Assuming the crew has managed to effect repairs to the machine, the life of the planet has been extended by about several months – but the planet is still going to die. Even if the Federation agreed to assist, there aren't enough ships that are nearby, able to traverse the Shackleton Expanse, and capable of providing aid to assist in the evacuation. The only chance for survival of the Lormeans is for them to evacuate to Orgun II. The players need to make the hard choice of whether to assist in the evacuation, allow the scientists to assist, or stop the scientists from interfering.

**Gamemaster Guidance:** *The Prime Directive does not explicitly prevent Federation citizens from interfering with undeveloped worlds, only Starfleet officers. However, there is some implication that a Starfleet officer should attempt to prevent the contamination of an undeveloped world, and this would imply that they should not allow the Federation scientists to assist the Lormeans. On the other hand, they have no right to interfere with the actions of the Lormeans themselves. The gamemaster may volunteer this information to the players or let them come to their own conclusions. If a player asks for guidance or more details, then the gamemaster can allow a player attempt a Difficulty 0 **Reason** or **Insight + Command Task**, and let them ask one question for each Momentum spent (Repeatable).*

## Options

- **Help the scientists:** The crew can decide to help the scientists organize an evacuation to Orgun II, knowing that this is a clear violation of the Prime Directive. (See below.)

- **Refuse to help but don't interfere with the scientists:** The scientists continue their research to save as many Lormeans as possible.
- **Stop the scientists from helping:** The crew can intervene and stop the scientists from helping the Lormeans evacuate. Being an inherently peaceful species, the Lormeans won't physically stop the crew, though they will plead their case.

## Helping the Scientists

This is a clear violation of the Prime Directive, but the players may rationalize that at least some of the Lormeans are going to make it to Orgun II, so they might as well help as many as possible escape. The gamemaster can choose to require rolls for this, but ultimately, if the crew assists the scientists, with the full resources of the ship they can help the Lormeans construct ships that allow them to save almost 2.5 million of the planet's population. The other thing to keep in mind here is that the crew will have to keep their activities from Starfleet Command for some time in order to fully help with the rescue operation. (If Starfleet learns of an operation to assist the Lormeans, they will insist that the crew halt all activity immediately and return to the nearest starbase for debriefing.) If they only offer scientific and material support, the numbers or Lormeans rescued is halved, though they can accomplish this in a matter of weeks rather than months.

**Gamemaster Guidance:** *Players will be players, and they may not be able to resist helping the Lormeans. That being the case, they probably want to come up with some possibility for rescuing the Lormeans while not interfering with the residents of Orgun II. A generous gamemaster can allow the players a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 4 to find isolated locations (islands, remote valleys, etc.) on Orgun II where the Lormeans can re-settle. This should keep them separate for a time. The crew could also insist that the Lormeans leave their technology behind, thus lessening the impact of their arrival. The gamemaster should be ready for all kinds of wild suggestions and refer to the section in the rules entitled, **So Crazy it Might Work!** Feel free to set the difficulties for any near impossible sounding scheme very high, but give them a chance.*

## Don't Interfere

The Lormeans are, of course, not happy about this choice, but they respect the crew's decision. The scientists continue to implore the crew to help them (be sure to make good use of the Plot Complication scientist) and may even take drastic measures to get them to help. If the gamemaster has any Threat left, one of more of the scientists may attempt to take one of the crew captive to blackmail the rest of the crew into helping. Given the resources of the crew, this attempt will likely fail. On their own, the scientists are able to save about 5,000 Lormeans.

## Stop the Scientists

If the crew refuses to allow the scientists to help the Lormeans make their own attempt to escape, only a few hundred of them are able to evacuate -- not enough for the species to be genetically viable. Within a few hundred years, the Lormean species will be nothing but a memory.

### *GM Guidance: Ethical Debate*

*This is an ideal situation for the players to discuss the moral and ethical implications of helping the Lormeans, and how they interpret the Prime Directive. With the scientists involved, it's also a potential opportunity for social conflict if the players choose to follow the Prime Directive and try and stop the scientists.*

*There's a lot of potential here for interesting roleplay, bringing in the rules to support the roleplay as required.*

## Conclusion

By the end of this scenario, the players will have made their decisions and sealed the Lormeans to their fate, for good or ill. The end state can vary widely, depending upon the choices made by the players. Millions of Lormeans may have been rescued and the players at risk of a reprimand, or even court-martial, or the Lormeans may be doomed as a species, or anything in between.

## 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.

For example, crews that decide to help the Lormeans in violation of the Prime Directive will certainly be called to justify their actions, and may receive a reprimand or even more severe disciplinary actions. The responsibility of this falls to the Captain first and foremost, because a Captain is responsible for their crew.