STAR TREK™
ADVENTURES



STOLEN LIBERTY

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CHAPTER 01.00

STOLEN LIBERTY

BY CHRISTOPHER L. BENNETT

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CHAPTER 01.10

STOLEN LIBERTY

SYNOPSIS

The adventure opens with the crew's starship surveying a habitable-zone Jovian planet whose third moon is Class-M, with a fission-level civilization. Sensors detect a small, rickety space capsule from that moon descending into the gas giant's atmosphere. The primitive capsule begins to break up, sending out a distress call even though its homeworld is out of touch behind the Jovian. The crew is obligated to respond and rescue the astronauts, though they cannot be allowed to return home afterward.

The lead astronaut, named Pakiren, explains that his species, the Pochai, share their native moon Jinidar with another species, the Modar. The small, weak Modar use the burly Pochai as laborers, treating them as an inferior race with few rights. This is why the space capsule was so poorly designed for its mission – its crew was considered expendable.

The captain assigns a Player to help the rescued Pochai adjust to the starship. Pakiren and his colleagues find it vastly preferable to their oppressed lives back home. Seeing different species working together as equals is paradise for them. Pakiren begs the captain to bring this vision to Jinidar, and don't understand why Starfleet directives don't permit it.

So Pakiren appeals to various members of the crew in private, urging them to defy regulations and help him help his people. If a Player Character is convinced by his arguments, they will help the Pochai steal a shuttle and return home, as well as stealing weapons from the ship's armory; if not, Players can take over Supporting Characters among the crew who will be convinced to help Pakiren. The security chief (or another Player Character) has a chance to stop the Pochai from stealing an armed shuttle, but fails.

The captain must take the ship to Jinidar under stealth, hoping that the situation can be resolved with minimal contamination. But the Pochai are broadcasting across the entire moon, urging their people to rise up in revolt, and promising to use the shuttle's phasers and shields against the Modar.

Now that the secret is out, the crew must do two things – retrieve their equipment and negotiate an end to the fighting. But contacting the Modar will reveal that they believe the crew initiated the revolt, since they assume the Pochai are too passive and unintelligent to have done it themselves.

Pakiren attempts to use the shuttle to attack Modar forces, and the Player or Supporting Character must decide whether to try to stop him. If they're unsuccessful in convincing the Pochai to stand down, the captain and crew will need to find another way to force the shuttle down and retake it and the weapons. After that comes the greater challenge of negotiating peace between the two species.

DIRECTIVES

In addition to the Prime Directive, the Directives for this mission are:

- Respond to all distress calls from space-going vessels
- Prevent Starfleet weaponry from falling into unauthorized hands
- Starfleet Directive 010: Before engaging alien species in battle, any and all attempts to make first contact and achieve non-military resolution must be made.

The Gamemaster begins this mission with 2 points of Threat for each Player Character in the group.

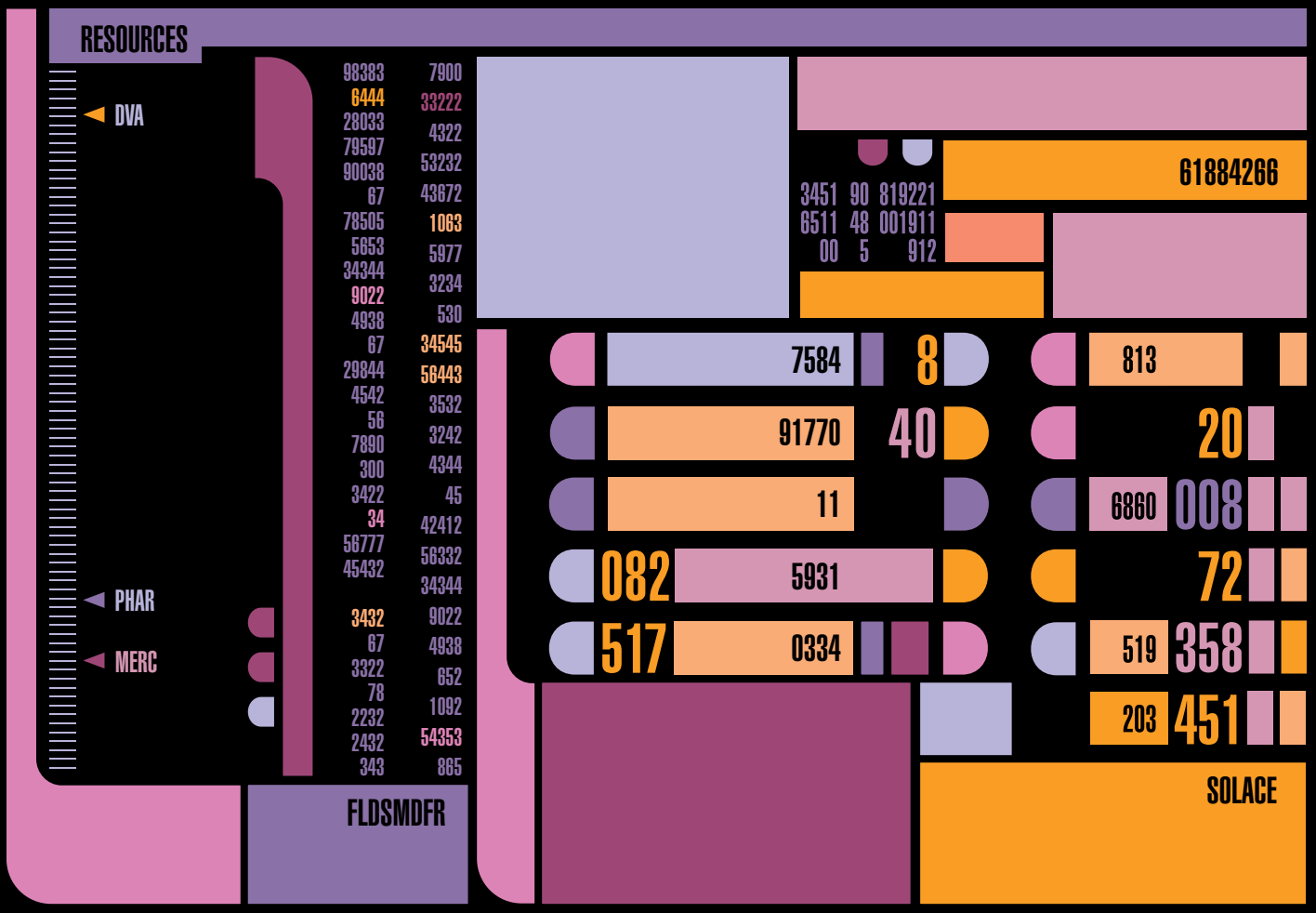
ADAPTING THIS MISSION TO OTHER ERAS

This scenario presumes a setting in 2371, yet it can easily be adapted to any time frame in which the Prime Directive is in effect. The one exception is the *Star Trek*: *Enterprise* era (the 2150s-60s). In that time frame, the Prime Directive does not yet exist, so Starfleet crews would be free to make contact with Jinidar. However, Earth Starfleet is not a military force; its personnel see themselves as explorers and scientists, and should thus be reluctant to embrace a military solution. This scenario would play out according to the Optional Alternate Story Sequence detailed on page 011.

Earth Starfleet ships are not heavily armed. Even the limited armaments (phase pistols, particle rifles, and stun grenades) available for the Pochai to steal could be game-changing on Jinidar, but losing them would leave the Starfleet crew badly under-protected, providing an additional incentive to deny Pakiren's request and to recover the weapons after their theft. If shuttle combat comes into play in Act Three, keep in mind that Earth Starfleet shuttlepods are only lightly armed with plasma cannons and shielded only with polarized hull plating, which could make them more vulnerable to Jinidarian artillery.

If the Players' crew in the *Enterprise* era includes MACO Player Characters or Supporting Characters, then those MACOs might be more willing to side with Pakiren and help the Pochai fight for freedom. This could lead to some lively debates between the Starfleet and MACO characters.

Additionally, keep in mind that transporters are uncommon and unreliable in the 22nd century, and grappling lines are used instead of tractor beams. This could affect the initial rescue sequence to a minor degree. When showing the Pochai around the ship, keep in mind differences in technology in different eras. For instance, the 24th century uses replicators; the 23rd uses food synthesizers and an automated dumbwaiter system; and the 22nd uses protein resequencers and preserved food stores, or a live chef if the ship is large or prestigious enough. Also, 22nd-century ships have water showers instead of sonic showers.



CHAPTER 01.20

STOLEN LIBERTY

ACT 1: THE RELUCTANT ASTRONAUTS

CAPTAIN'S LOG

STARDATE 48611.5

We have arrived at star system FGC-20903, following up on an automated survey probe's detection of conventional radio signals from the vicinity of the star's second planet, a warm Jovian within the system's habitable zone. Scans have confirmed that the signals emanate from the Jovian's third large moon, an M-class world supporting a technological civilization at a nuclear fission level, roughly Grade F on the industrial scale.

We have positioned ourselves on the far side of the gas giant to avoid detection while we gather information on the populated moon with sensor probes. However, we must take care to avoid the planet's radiation belts, which engulf the innermost two large moons and can shift outward unpredictably.

SCENE 1: THE DISTRESS CALL

The initial challenge for the Players is to maintain a safe orbit around the warm Jovian while remaining out of sight of the inhabited moon, which is emitting radio pulses consistent with deep-space radar and thus is presumably at a level of civilization that could potentially detect the ship. This is both a Navigation Task (**Reason + Conn** assisted by ship's **Computers + Conn**) with a Difficulty of 1 and a Helm Task (**Control + Conn** aided by ship's **Engines + Conn**) with a Difficulty of 1.

The Jovian (a Class J gas giant) is roughly the size of Jupiter (about 140,000 km in diameter) but of slightly larger mass (about 2 x 10^{27} kg or 330 Earth masses). Because it's in the star's habitable zone, it's warm enough to have white clouds of liquid water rather than brown ammonia clouds like Jupiter, though its atmosphere is mostly hydrogen and methane. Beneath and between the white cloud bands are bands of deep, featureless blue.

The radiation belts are toroidal (doughnut-shaped) fields of high-energy protons and electrons, captured by the planet's powerful magnetic field and accelerated to relativistic speeds, making them as deadly as any phaser or disruptor barrage if a ship gets deep enough within them. The belts extend out to roughly 600,000 km from the planet in its equatorial plane and are typically up to 10,000 km in thickness north to south, though they can surge outward or tilt as the planet's magnetic field fluctuates under influence from the stellar wind.

The belts engulf the orbits of the inner two large moons. The physical parameters are given here in the event that the Gamemaster wishes to have the Players explore or examine them: Moon 1 (Truvus) is a molten, sulfurous, highly volcanic world like Jupiter's moon Io (diameter 5600 km, orbiting the Jovian every 1.2 days at a radius of 330,700 km). Moon 2 (Mygor) is barren and rocky, with more limited volcanic activity giving it a thin, toxic atmosphere (diameter 8800 km, orbiting every 2.4 days at radius 525,000 km). The third large moon (Jinidar) is a smallish M-class world about 10,200 km in diameter (80% of Earth), orbiting in 4.8 days at 833,400 km, comfortably outside the radiation belts and protected from their occasional surges by its own magnetic field and atmosphere. The moons are in orbital resonance with each other like Jupiter's Galilean satellites, hence the regular ratio between their periods and distances. Note that the characters do not yet know the indigenous names of the moons, which are given here for the Gamemaster's convenience.

While coordinating sensor probes to gather data from Moon 3, the science officer detects a small metallic object skirting the Jovian's outer atmosphere. The commanding officer or a science officer may suggest making a closer scan. Due to the smallness of the object and the interference from the radiation belts, this is a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 2, aided by ship's **Sensors + Science**. If necessary, bringing the ship closer to the object will decrease the Difficulty. Success will reveal that the object is a small, primitive space capsule, made of metals with a spectroscopic profile consistent with the minerals of the third moon. Atmospheric resistance is slowing the capsule, causing its orbit to decay toward the Jovian, and it lacks the structural integrity to survive descending much deeper into the atmosphere. It is attempting to thrust outward and halt its descent, but its thrusters are too weak, their performance

erratic and inefficient. The capsule doesn't seem well enough built for such a risky undertaking as space travel near the Jovian.

The capsule begins emitting a distress call, even though its signal can't possibly reach its home moon with the Jovian in the way. The speaker is female (Tomilor) but has a strong, gruff voice:

"This is Interlunar Probe Twelve. We are in immediate distress. We are caught in Zafrel's gravity well. Our orbit is decaying into its outer atmosphere and we are unable to generate sufficient thruster power to break free. We are in full eclipse from Jinidar and unable to contact Master Control. If any other listener is somehow able to receive this message, please respond and advise! Repeat, this is Interlunar Probe Twelve…"

The Players' crew are the only people who can possibly hear this signal or respond to it in time. This creates a Prime Directive conundrum which will hopefully provoke debate among the Players. But there are factors that argue in favor of responding. Under the circumstances, the astronauts could be rescued and taken back to Federation space, and their homeworld would believe they simply died. Indeed, since they knew their people could never hear them, their distress call could be considered a direct appeal to any aliens who might exist, and regulations would thus require responding. If the Players are sticklers for the Prime Directive and resist this interpretation, the decision will be made for them when they start to receive a new distress signal addressing them directly; the occupants of the capsule have succeeded in spotting the starship. With the distress call unambiguously addressed to them, they're now obligated to help.

The radiation environment around the Jovian creates enough interference that transporters can't reliably lock on to the capsule's occupants unless the ship closes to extremely close Range. This leaves two options.

- The ship may draw close enough to attempt using a tractor beam to draw the capsule out of the atmosphere. Tractors are normally used at Close Range, but under the circumstances, the attempt can be made to amplify them for Medium Range by a Power Management Task to reroute power to the tractors. This is a **Daring** or **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2, which may Succeed at Cost. If successful, the attempt can be made to snare the capsule with the tractor beam. This is a **Control + Security Task** with a Difficulty of 3 (baseline 2, +1 for the distance and environmental attenuation). The capsule is so fragile that the gravitational gradients in the tractor beam could tear it apart unless the beam remains perfectly centered; thus, the capsule takes 2 points of damage for every Success short of 3, and 1 additional point of damage for each Round it remains within the beam. There should be enough advance warning of imminent capsule destruction for the Players to abort the attempt and try something else. If the Task is successful, the crew may be beamed aboard once the capsule is in range, or the capsule may be brought into the shuttlebay if the bay is large enough.
- The ship may alternatively attempt to match course with the falling capsule and come into Close Range to beam the occupants aboard. This requires plunging the ship into the Jovian's atmosphere, a Hazard with a baseline damage rating of 1 per Round, +1 for each Round beyond the first (i.e., 1 in the first Round, 2 in the second, 3 in the third, etc.) that the ship remains in atmosphere. This is because the atmosphere is growing denser and hotter as the ship and capsule descend deeper within it. Closing to transporter range is a Maneuver Task with a Difficulty of 2, and should take at least 2 Rounds, +1 Round for every Success short of 3. On reaching Close Range, the next Round will be the attempt to lock transporters, a **Sensors + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2, +1 for each successive Round. Upon achieving a lock, beaming the capsule's occupants off is a **Control + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 3 (baseline 2, +1 for atmospheric interference), assisted by **Sensors + Engineering**.

Upon successfully retrieving the crew, they will be beamed to sickbay, where the captain and other selected Players should proceed to meet them.

JINIDARIAN SPACE CAPSULE

A primitive interplanetary (technically interlunar) space capsule comparable to the early Apollo and Soyuz spacecraft of Earth, but cruder in design and badly lacking in safety features. Basically a metal barrel with thrusters.

SYSTEMS

COMMS	04	ENGINES	03	STRUCTURE	02
COMPUTERS	02	SENSORS	04	WEAPONS	–

DEPARTMENTS

COMMAND	–	SECURITY	–	SCIENCE	01
CONN	01	ENGINEERING	01	MEDICINE	–

POWER: 3 **SCALE:** 1

SHIELDS: 0 **RESISTANCE:** 1

CREW COMPLEMENT: 3

ATTACKS: None

SCENE 2: PAKIREN

The rescued astronauts are three burly humanoids (two male, one female) with vaguely bearish features, but with large eyes and long, dexterous fingers. They are disoriented and confused by their unfamiliar surroundings and by the Starfleet crew, but there is an air of relief and hopefulness about them as well. The shorter male steps forward fearlessly to greet the Players on their arrival. He speaks for the others, introducing himself as Pakiren, the female as Tomilor, and the larger male as Samaz. Their world is called Jinidar, and their people are the Pochai.

Pakiren explains that their mission was part of a larger crewed space program to explore the Jovian, Zafrel, and its moon system. They were sent through Zafrel's outer atmosphere as part of a sampling mission, as well as an aerobraking maneuver to put them on course for the inner moon Truvus in hopes of taking mineral samples and assessing its viability for mining. (The Players should be made aware of the highly volcanic, geologically volatile conditions and toxic atmosphere of Truvus, making it surprising that living beings would be sent into such danger instead of automated probes. But the Pochai should be stoically accepting of being sent into such mortal peril.) Their thrusters proved inadequate to hold course when Zafrel's outer atmosphere proved denser than predicted.

At this point, the Starfleet engineer should report on the bewilderingly shoddy design of the craft, which was far too crude and lacking in safety features for such a risky undertaking. If asked why they would take such a reckless risk, Pakiren explains with stoic acceptance, though with a subtle undercurrent of bitterness:

"That is the Pochai's role. We do what the Modar cannot — the heavy work, the dangerous work. The risk is only to Pochai, so why should the Modar not take it? It is only through Pochai sacrifice that the Modar have built our world."

Further questioning from the crew should elicit the following answers from Pakiren and Tomilor as appropriate:

- The Modar are a different species, smaller and frailer without the Pochai's strength or dexterity. Yet they rule Jinidar, and the Pochai do their bidding.
- The Modar have always ruled, and the Pochai have always served. Most Modar are kind enough to their Pochai servants as long as they are obeyed without question, but sometimes their needs require the risking or sacrifice of Pochai lives. This is particularly true of the space program, in which Pochai have been used as live test subjects from the beginning. In the past two decades of rocketry research, dozens of Pochai have died from rocket explosions or crashes, suffocated or received fatal doses of radiation in space, or been vivisected after their safe return to study the effects of space on living tissues.
- The Pochai are taught to honor those who died in the service of increasing Modar knowledge, and to be willing to give their own lives to the cause with pride. In practice, Pakiren and the other astronauts take little pride in being sent out to die, but it brings them some consolation to hope that their deaths might lead to improved spacecraft so that fewer Pochai will need to die in the future.
- The reason the Pochai accept subjugation to a weaker species is because, in ancient times, the Modar seemed like gods, with knowledge beyond Pochai understanding. They could sense the coming of danger, find water or metals underground, and predict the coming of the burning plagues heralded by auroras in the sky, leading those they favored to safety in the caves. Thus, the Pochai revered them as gods and allowed themselves to be tamed.
- Today, the astronauts and other Pochai like them — those who serve in advanced scientific projects like the space program and thus need a degree of science education – understand that the Modar have thermal and magnetic senses the Pochai lack, enabling them to achieve their feats, including the ability to see the onset of surges in Zafrel's radiation belts that weaken Jinidar's protective magnetic field. Pakiren and others like him understand that the Modar are not divine, though many Pochai still cling to the old worship. Still, even without belief in their divinity, the whole civilization relies on Modar rule and Pochai servitude; what else is there?

This would likely lead into a discussion in which the Players explain to Pakiren and the others that they're free now, that they can live out the rest of their lives in the Federation, a society where all species are equal and no one is exploited. The Pochai should have some difficulty believing or accepting this, though they are eager to hope it's true. After all, they were sent out with little hope of survival and were resigned to death when they began to sink into the atmosphere, but now they're alive and safe and being treated with kindness by beings with technology even more advanced than the Modar's. They have much reason to hope, but it will take some convincing.

The captain, naturally, has other duties, so they should assign another Player to take charge of the Pochai and guide them through their adjustment to their new life, at least until they can be transferred to experts at a starbase.

PAKIREN [MAJOR NPC]

TRAITS: Pochai

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	10	FITNESS	11	PRESENCE	12
DARING	11	INSIGHT	08	REASON	08

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	05	SECURITY	03	SCIENCE	02
CONN	04	ENGINEERING	02	MEDICINE	01

VALUES:
- I Must Protect My People
- A Life of Servitude Is Not Enough

FOCUSES: Leadership, Persuasion, Piloting, Spacecraft Operations, Strategy

STRESS: 14 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS: None

SPECIAL RULES:
- **TOUGH.** When *Avoiding an Injury*, the cost is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1.

TOMILOR [MAJOR NPC]

TRAITS: Pochai

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	09	FITNESS	10	PRESENCE	10
DARING	10	INSIGHT	11	REASON	10

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	02	SECURITY	01	SCIENCE	04
CONN	02	ENGINEERING	02	MEDICINE	05

VALUES:
- Pochai Deserve Better Treatment
- I Don't Want to Give Up Any More Children

FOCUSES: Medicine, Science, Spacecraft Operations, Life Support

STRESS: 11 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS: None

SPECIAL RULES:
- **TOUGH.** When *Avoiding an Injury*, the cost is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1.

SAMAZ [NOTABLE NPC]

TRAITS: Pochai

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	08	FITNESS	11	PRESENCE	09
DARING	11	INSIGHT	08	REASON	07

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	–	SECURITY	02	SCIENCE	01
CONN	02	ENGINEERING	03	MEDICINE	01

VALUES:
- I Obey Those Wiser Than Myself, Especially Pakiren

FOCUSES: Mining, Engineering, Heavy Lifting, Spacecraft Operations

STRESS: 13 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS: None

SPECIAL RULES:
- **TOUGH.** When *Avoiding an Injury*, the cost is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1.

SCENE 3: TOURING THE SHIP

This is a flexible sequence, with the Player assigned as the Pochai's guide showing them around the ship and introducing them to aspects of Federation/Starfleet life as the Player sees fit. The three Pochai should ask questions informed by (and revealing things about) their own history as a slave race being exposed to interspecies equality and freedom for the first time. They may have trouble understanding or believing that the different species aboard the ship are truly equal, so the Player might be well advised to let them observe interactions between Player Characters or Supporting Characters of different species. This would allow establishing personal bonds between the Pochai and those Characters, laying the groundwork for Pakiren's efforts to win those Characters over in Act Two. (This could also be an opportunity for the Players to act out scenes advancing ongoing character and relationship arcs otherwise unconnected to the main story.)

The individual Pochai would react in different ways specific to their personalities:

- Pakiren is a natural leader with a nascent sense of idealism; he's always sensed that things could be better, but he hasn't been able to visualize how until now. He's eager to learn more about the Federation's egalitarianism and the freedom of its citizens to lead whatever lives they desire, but he might be wary of what he's told and hesitant to accept something that seems too good to be true. Thus, he may encourage the crew to talk about their life experiences and those of their family members, but he would be a probing, skeptical inquisitor. His scientific training makes him fascinated by the alien beings and advanced technology around him, eager to learn more about them, but that same training compels him to think critically. He's also curious about the ship's weapons and the crew's combat capabilities, but he cloaks that curiosity as best he can for the moment; the idea beginning to form in his head is still too tentative for him to risk giving it away.

- Tomilor is the group's medic and life support specialist. She's particularly interested in what the sickbay scans reveal about Pochai anatomy and how to treat it; Pochai medicine has not been developed to the same level of sophistication as Modar medicine, since Pochai lives are considered more expendable. She's also impressed by the gender equality in Starfleet. Pochai females are expected to prioritize childbearing, so as to maintain a suitable labor force for the Modar. The only reason there are females in the space program is because the Modar hope to establish mining colonies on the other moons and will need breeding stock, so they wish to study the effects of space on female bodies as well as male. Tomilor had already borne half a dozen children before being recruited for space, and she has now been rendered sterile by radiation exposure on an earlier test flight. She has good reason to expect that she might have been vivisected if she had returned alive from the mission, since she is no longer needed as a breeder. She still thinks about her children often, though they were taken away from her years ago. She resisted growing too attached to them, knowing what kind of life they had in store. Learning that Federation children of all sexes are free to fulfill their potential and remain close to their families is deeply affecting to her.

- Samaz is a heavy laborer and miner, sent to assess the mining prospects on the inner moon and to perform any needed physical labor. He's well-trained in spacecraft operations, but not especially bright or imaginative, since his upbringing didn't encourage the development of those traits. He's obedient by nature, but he feels a special loyalty to Pakiren, who has shown him far more kindness and respect than any Modar ever will. He also reveres Tomilor as a surrogate mother figure of sorts and would do anything for her. He's not as inquisitive as the others, content to watch and listen and to follow the others' lead. He's somewhat frightened by the sheer alienness of everything and everyone around him, but his reflex is to be deferential to those who display more power or intelligence than he has, which includes everyone on the ship – as long as he doesn't suspect them of posing a threat to Pakiren or Tomilor. In that case, the other two may need to hold him back.

After the Pochai have been shown around enough to let the freedom and power of Starfleet really sink in, Pakiren has a private talk with his fellow astronauts and then asks to speak to the captain. When they meet, Pakiren makes a heartfelt request of the captain:

"We are truly grateful for your rescue, and for your kindness in offering to let us live out our lives in the Federation and share in the freedom you enjoy. But we cannot stand to accept this remarkable gift for ourselves, knowing that our people back home will continue to live in servitude, that children will still be taken from their parents, that Pochai lives will be casually sacrificed for Modar convenience.

You have a vessel of amazing power, backed by a mighty civilization. If you can offer this freedom to three Pochai, then you can offer it to eight hundred million. Please, Captain – take us back to Jinidar. Help us free all Pochai from slavery."

CHAPTER 01.30

STOLEN LIBERTY

ACT 2: YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION

SCENE 1: POLICY DEBATE

The captain and senior staff meet in conference with the three Pochai astronauts in an attempt to explain to them delicately why the Prime Directive prohibits Starfleet from intervening on Jinidar. However bad things are there, it's up to the Pochai and Modar to solve their own problems without well-intentioned outside interference that might do more harm than good. But Pakiren and Tomilor are unconvinced, and they make the following arguments in the course of their dialogue with the Player Characters:

Pakiren: *"You say we should not be interfered with by other species. But the Pochai have been interfered with by the Modar throughout our history. We have never not been interfered with. Does your Directive not compel you to stop that interference?"*

Pakiren: *"You say it is up to us to resolve this problem for ourselves. But we have never even known an alternative existed. How will my people learn that it is possible to live another way, a more equal way, unless we return and tell them what we have seen out here? Or better yet, unless you go there and show them the equality between species that you have shown us?"*

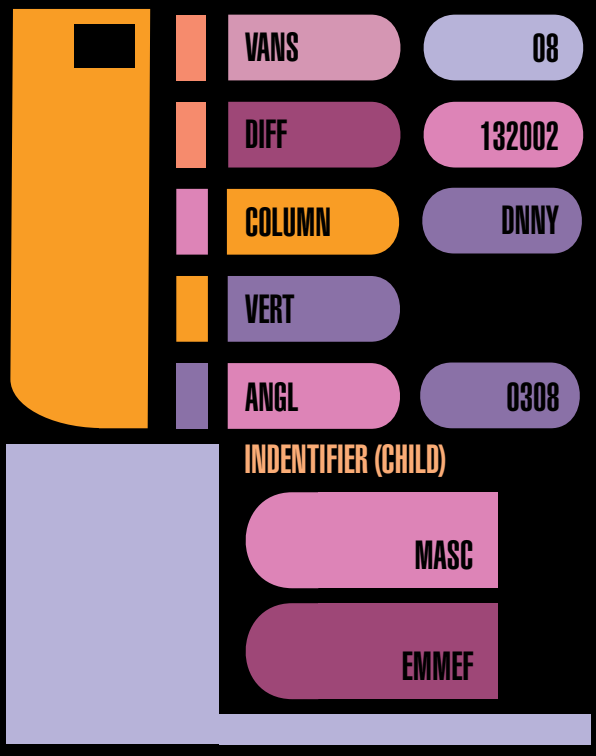
Tomilor: *"You do not need to force the Modar to change. Simply show both species that there is a better way for us all to live. You say you want to protect our right to choose, but how do you do that by deciding that we are not allowed to be aware of the choice?"*

Pakiren: *"If you take us to live in your Federation, then we will find someone who will bring us back here to reveal these new truths to our people. If we are truly free, then you will not be able to stop us. But many Pochai will suffer and die in the meantime. Since we will go back anyway, there is no reason not to take us back now."*

Tomilor: *"You speak in the abstract of societies and their right to choose. What of the children who are taken from their mothers, who are raised to serve and sacrifice and die? Where is their right to choose? Please, think of what they will face – of what their mothers will have to endure. And help them."*

But the Prime Directive is firm, and the captain and crew are presumably aware that such intervention would probably cause worldwide upheaval. As discussed in the core rulebook, *Chapter 3: Your Continuing Mission*, pp. 55-57, there can be exceptions made to the Prime Directive, but as a rule, any intervention should be done in a way that causes the least possible disruption. What the Pochai are asking is for Starfleet to take action that would fundamentally alter the entire shape of a civilization, and that is too massive a step to take unilaterally. Starfleet Command would almost certainly not authorize such an action, and the penalties to a captain who made such a choice would likely be career-ending. (Note: This might be less true in a 23rd-century setting, in which the Prime Directive often was interpreted as an obligation to stop others' interference in a society.)

At the very least, even if the captain does not reject Pakiren's pleas outright, this is a question that will require careful consideration, and possibly consultation with Starfleet Command, before a decision is made. Either way, Pakiren and his fellow astronauts will not be satisfied with the outcome of the meeting.



SCENE 2: PERSUADING THE CREW

With the captain unwilling to act, Pakiren and Tomilor (with Samaz following their lead) go to the crew and try to convince individual Player and Supporting Characters to assist them, even if it means defying their captain and the Prime Directive. Since Pakiren has a high Presence rating, this should reduce the Difficulty of the Persuasion Task for him, or from another perspective, increase the Player's Difficulty for resisting persuasion. Tomilor's high Insight rating should also aid her in persuading others, letting her empathize with her listeners and offer arguments that appeal to their Values.

Players should be aware that their characters will face discipline if they defy orders. However, the opportunity for character development through challenging their Starfleet Values could entice some Players to take the chance, while other Player Characters' Values may override their loyalty to Starfleet (for example, a Bajoran character who grew up under Cardassian oppression might identify more strongly with the Pochai than with Starfleet).

Any characters that Pakiren and Tomilor successfully persuade will agree to help them steal a shuttle to return to Jinidar and attempt to free their people. Pakiren will feel out their willingness to steal weapons from the ship's armory as well. If they are resistant, he will not press the issue, but will consider other means.

If none of the Players feel their primary characters would agree to defy orders to help the Pochai escape, or if Pakiren and Tomilor otherwise fail in their Persuasion Tasks with the Player Characters, then one or more Players may take over Supporting Characters whose Values, Focuses, and personal history would make them more inclined to help. Using a Supporting Character might make a Player more willing to take a potentially career-ending action without risking their primary character. If no existing Supporting Character is suitable, new ones may be created. Ideally, at least one Supporting Character who helps the Pochai should be a security officer, in order to gain access to the armory and steal weapons.

If two or more characters side with the Pochai, they might differ in their willingness to steal weapons. A more reluctant character might not learn of the other character's weapons theft until afterward, creating a moral dilemma for that Player: do they continue to help the Pochai, or do they break ranks and confess to the captain?

SCENE 3: GRAND THEFT SHUTTLECRAFT

On the bridge, the science officer reports to the captain that a moderately strong magnetic storm is approaching the ship. It should pose no danger to the ship and requires no more than minimal shields, but it will interfere with sensors, communicators, and other external systems. Yellow alert is advisable as a precaution.

Because of this heightened alert status, the security chief (or first officer or other appropriate Player Character) is alerted to the attempt of the Pochai's ally to override the shuttle bay controls, and leads a team to the hangar bay to intercept them. (If the ally *is* the security chief, obviously a different character will need to fill this role.)

The security chief can try to talk Pakiren and his ally or allies out of their shuttle theft using Social Conflict, while they in turn try to convince the chief to let the Pochai go, or even to join them. If Pakiren and his allies succeed, the chief will order the security team to stand down and let the shuttle go. If the chief refuses to back down, then Pakiren and Samaz will open fire and combat will ensue. The Pochai's high Stress score and Tough Talent should give them an advantage in physical conflict, as will the assistance of their Starfleet allies. Also, the security team's hearts are probably not in the fight, given how sympathetic the Pochai and their cause are. Their reluctance should make it easier for Pakiren and Samaz to overpower them, whereupon they will take their weapons and steal the shuttle anyway. Their Starfleet ally will accompany them in fleeing the ship. If they have more than one ally, arrange for at least one to escape with the Pochai and at least one to be captured or stunned by security. This could generate an optional scene in which the captain confronts the captured character in the brig. Alternatively, if an ally has second thoughts and backs out or tries to help the security team, that could ameliorate the captain's reaction. Make sure at least one Player Character or Supporting Character escapes with the Pochai, however.

On the bridge, the captain and crew will attempt to stop the escaping shuttle, but the magnetic storm prevents them from using transporters or tractors. Any attempt to use these systems will be an automatic failure. If the captain orders firing on the shuttle to disable its engines, the attempt to achieve a target lock will also be an automatic failure. No doubt the Pochai's allies in the crew timed their escape to use the cover of the storm. There is nothing the ship can do to prevent them from reaching Jinidar and starting a Pochai uprising.

OPTIONAL ALTERNATE STORY SEQUENCE

In the unlikely event that the captain is willing to bend the Prime Directive enough to make open contact with Jinidar and offer negotiation (or in a 22nd-century version of the campaign before the Prime Directive exists), then Prime Minister Verodif will thank the captain for rescuing their "astronautical test subjects" and request their return, but Pakiren tells the captain that they may be subjected to intensive interrogation, experimentation, and possibly even dissection to assess the impact of their contact with aliens. They certainly will not be allowed to spread the knowledge of Federation equality to their fellow Pochai.

Pakiren requests that the captain use the ship's communication system to broadcast his message to the Pochai moonwide. If the captain refuses, then Scenes 2-3 can play out essentially as described above, though the radiation storm would need to grow far more intense and require the ship to retreat from Jinidar orbit for several hours following the shuttle theft, so that events on Jinidar could play out as described below.

If the captain agrees to broadcast Pakiren's message and reveal knowledge of the Federation to his people, then the story goes directly into Act Three, Scene 1, as the crew watches the Pochai on the surface react to the revelations and begin offering resistance over the hours that follow. Verodif's message accusing the crew of fomenting the uprising will need to be rephrased accordingly – in part because it will be somewhat accurate in this case. Pakiren will plead with the captain to stop the government troops from slaughtering the striking workers. Assuming the captain refuses to intervene militarily, then Act Two, Scenes 2-3 can play out and the narrative will proceed in a somewhat different order.

SHUTTLECRAFT

TRAITS: Starfleet Shuttlecraft

SYSTEMS

COMMS	07	ENGINES	05	STRUCTURE	05
COMPUTERS	06	SENSORS	05	WEAPONS	05

DEPARTMENTS

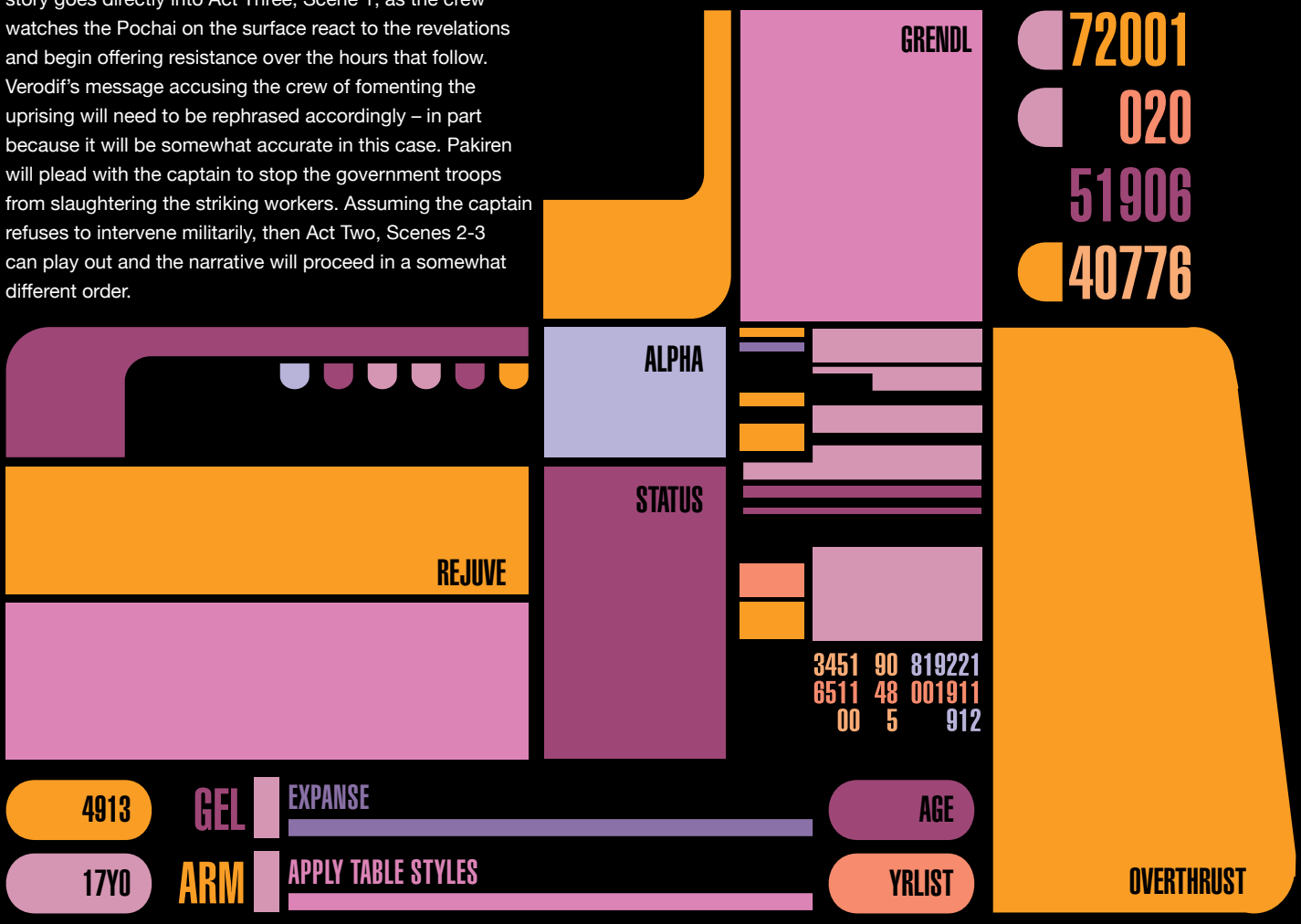
COMMAND	–	SECURITY	01	SCIENCE	–
CONN	01	ENGINEERING	01	MEDICINE	–

POWER: 3 **SCALE:** 1

SHIELDS: 4 **RESISTANCE:** 1

CREW COMPLEMENT: 1 or 2, plus 6 passengers

ATTACKS: Phaser Bank (Energy, Range Medium, 3▲, Versatile 2, Escalation 2)



CHAPTER 01.40

STOLEN LIBERTY

ACT 3: WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT DESTRUCTION

CAPTAIN'S LOG

SUPPLEMENTAL

The radiation storm has now abated, but the stolen shuttle has had a head start of several hours and has no doubt reached Jinidar by now. We are making a stealth approach to the moon, with the sun behind us to avoid visual detection and with our shields configured to absorb radar beams. We can only hope the Pochai astronauts – and our own personnel who appear to have joined them – are proceeding with enough restraint that we still have a chance to stop them from exposing our existence to the peoples of Jinidar.

SCENE 1: THE UPRISING

As soon as the ship reaches high orbit of Jinidar (still stealthed by their shields, like the *Enterprise* in The Original Series: "Assignment – Earth"), the communications intercepts from the surface confirm that the captain's hopes were futile. Pakiren and his Player ally have used the shuttle's communications system to hijack the planet's broadcasting networks and transmit Pakiren's message of freedom planetwide, backed up with audio-visual records from the shuttle's Starfleet database proving that there are advanced aliens of many species out in the Galaxy, living together as equals. Pakiren also tells his people that he has powerful alien weapons that he will use to help them fight for their freedom, stressing that the races of Starfleet are much more powerful than the "divine" Modar.

Over the next few hours, observation of the surface reveals many Pochai organizing in mass protest or going on strike, demanding freedom. Many more Pochai remain loyal to their Modar masters and are putting down the protests and strikes by force – but that use of force is only intensifying the resistance and causing matters to escalate. There's no sign that the astronauts have begun using Starfleet weapons in the fight as yet, but it's only a matter of time.

The captain assigns a Player Character (the science officer or security chief, most likely) to locate the stolen shuttle and Starfleet weapons, then attempt to retrieve them, ideally by transporter but if necessary by sending down a security team. This will play out as an Opposed Task between the searching Player (the Active Character) and the Pochai's Player ally (the Reactive Character), who is helping the astronauts keep the shuttlecraft shielded and hidden. On the planet, the astronauts and ally have used Samaz's mining experience to find a large cave whose mineral composition helps shield the shuttle from detection. By itself, the cave makes finding the shuttle a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3 (even aided by ship's **Sensors + Science**). The ally is attempting to modify the shuttle's shields, power emissions, and so forth to prevent detection, which is a **Daring + Engineering** or **Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3.

If the searcher succeeds in detection, the ally's efforts will nonetheless make it impossible to beam up the shuttle, so the next step will be to send a security team. However, given the volatile conditions on the surface, the captain has good reason not to rush into this. The Modar government is sending hails out into space, demanding that the starship reveal itself and answer for its part in instigating this uprising. The hails are full of static due to the atmospheric ionization from the recent radiation storm, but a *Respond to Hail* Task with a Difficulty of 1 (using **Control + Engineering** assisted by ship's **Communications + Engineering**) will receive the following, with minor interference:

"This is Prime Minister Verodif of the Allied Lands of Jinidar. In the name of the High Priest-Queen of Jinidar, I address you, the aliens who have come to our lunar system. We have monitored your landing craft and determined that it must be a support vessel of a larger spacecraft in the vicinity. We of Jinidar hereby demand to know why you have captured our astronautical test subjects and commanded them to foment a worker insurrection. We bear no hostile intentions toward you, and we consider this sabotage of our labor force to be an unjustified act of aggression against us."

PRIME MINISTER VERODIF [MAJOR NPC]

TRAITS: Modar

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	11	FITNESS	08	PRESENCE	11
DARING	10	INSIGHT	09	REASON	11

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	05	SECURITY	03	SCIENCE	02
CONN	02	ENGINEERING	03	MEDICINE	02

VALUES:

- Jinidar's Prosperity Must Be Protected
- Pochai Strength Must Serve Modar Will

FOCUSES: Leadership, Persuasion, Politics, Public Policy

STRESS: 11 **RESISTANCE:** 0

WEAPONS: None

Prime Minister Verodif is a Modar male. The Modar are small, about one meter tall, and resemble bipedal foxes with green, seal-like skin. Their hands are webbed and have limited grasping ability. The Modar have a constitutional monarchy; the High Priest-Queen at the head of the religion used to control the Pochai has now become a ceremonial figurehead in a democratic system, although democracy and equal rights have been extended only to the Modar.

Verodif takes the existence of aliens in stride. After all, there are already two different sentient species on Jinidar, so it's easy for them to imagine others; and as early space explorers, they consider the question of life on other planets of their own system to be unresolved, so they already have government protocols in place for first contact with aliens, although this particular situation is not one their analysts predicted.

Since the damage is already done and the Modar are now aware of Starfleet's existence, the captain may decide to return contact. If the captain attempts to explain that the astronauts stole a shuttle and launched this rebellion on their own, Verodif will not believe it. The Modar are accustomed to thinking of the Pochai as well-trained animals, clever but not capable of independent thought. The Modar can imagine off-world species equal or superior to themselves, but are unable to imagine that the Pochai could be fully sentient – or, more likely, unwilling to imagine it, for it would require acknowledging the injustice and cruelty on which their entire civilization is built.

Verodif gets an unheard report from an advisor, then turns back to address the captain:

"A citywide labor strike has now broken out among the Pochai in Storoviz, our most important industrial city. If you do not rein in these acts of disobedience at once, I will have no choice but to deploy the military to terminate the resistance. The waste of so many workers' lives will do significant damage to our economy, but the damage will be far greater if this outburst is not halted swiftly. Bring the Pochai to heel now, or I will have no choice but to put them down."

Meanwhile, on the surface, the ship's detection efforts and the news of the impending military attack on the striking laborers in Storoviz have convinced Pakiren that they can hide no longer. He orders the other astronauts to ready the shuttle for launch and arm its weapons. "We will strike at the army before they can attack our people in Storoviz." Tomilor objects, reminding him that the army is made up of fellow Pochai, misguided in their loyalty to the Modar but not deserving to die. "We have no choice," Pakiren counters. "We must do something."

008 RELAPSE PROTOCOL
FFG CURRENT TIMESTAMP
5T1 INTERIOR PORT PLATE RESET
781 BACKWARDS COMPATABILITY
667 JPOP COMSAT

SCENE 2: THE BATTLE OF STOROVIZ

Pakiren has figured out how to pilot the shuttle himself, so he takes off in it and sets course for Storoviz even if the Starfleet ally is reluctant to engage in the attack. Tomilor and Samaz will accompany him, and the ally character(s) will either come along willingly or be required to come along, at phaserpoint if necessary, so they won't reveal any of Pakiren's plans. This will give the Player(s) the option to participate in the climactic action.

On the bridge, the science officer reports the following:

"Jinidar's upper atmosphere is still ionized by the recent magnetic storm. I'm afraid we can't use transporters or the tractor beam to intercept the shuttle. I'm not even sure their transceiver can pick up our hails through the interference. Or perhaps they just don't want to listen."

The shuttle will reach Storoviz in only 8 Rounds if nothing is done to delay or divert Pakiren. The captain must decide how aggressively to act in order to prevent the use of Starfleet weapons to massacre government troops. Options include:

- Ordering the communication system augmented to punch a signal through and try to reason with Pakiren. For the officer given the assignment, this is an Extended Task using **Control** or **Daring + Engineering** aided by ship's **Communications + Engineering**. The Extended Task has a Work track of 6, Magnitude 2, Difficulty 3, and Resistance 2 from the atmospheric interference.

- Sending down another armed shuttle (ideally piloted by a Player) to intercept Pakiren's shuttle and attempt to force it down, nonlethally if possible. This would entail ship-to-ship Combat between the shuttles, with the Complication of the Jinidar military firing on both shuttles with surface-to-air missiles (Torpedo, Range Medium, 1, Low Yield), perceiving both as a threat. These attacks would be relatively harmless unless one of the shuttles lost shields in the aerial battle, which would force the attacking shuttle pilot to make some tough choices.

- Attempting to cripple the shuttle with starship phasers and forcing it to land. Getting precise enough aim and intensity to cripple the shuttle nonlethally is a **Security + Weapons Task** with a Difficulty of 4, though Pakiren will perform an equivalent Opposed Task of evading fire. (The Player ally may take over the helm to assist, allowing for a Player-vs.-Player Opposed Task; even a reluctant ally would not want to be shot down.) Conversely, shooting to destroy the shuttle with phasers or torpedoes would require less precise aim and calibration and would thus reduce the Task Difficulty to 2, though this would presumably be a far more difficult choice for the captain to make on a personal level.

On the shuttle, Tomilor is attempting to persuade Pakiren to stand down:

Tomilor: *"I agreed that we should fight to free our people, not fight against them. Those are our fellow Pochai that you intend to fire upon!"*

Pakiren: *"Pochai who still obey the Modar, even after we have shown them the truth. This is how it has always been! We have always been stronger than the Modar. They have only held power by convincing Pochai to help them oppress other Pochai, or to allow ourselves to be oppressed. I wish the soldiers had listened and risen up along with us, but they have not. They will kill thousands of strikers if we do not stop them. And that will destroy any hope of liberation. It is a horrible choice, but if there must be Pochai lives lost either way, let it be in a way that weakens the Modar's grip rather than strengthening it."*

Tomilor is unable to sway Pakiren. Samaz is paralyzed by the debate between the two comrades he reveres, but his default reaction is to obey Pakiren's orders. That leaves only the Player ally to decide whether or not to attempt a Persuasion Task to change Pakiren's mind. The Player should attempt to find an argument that will resonate with Pakiren's Values, or convince him that there is a better alternative that he hasn't considered. A personal appeal informed by the Player (or Supporting) Character's Values and backstory could also improve the Player's chance of success.

If the shuttle comes under attack from another shuttle or the ship's phasers, that could add another layer to the Player ally's attempts to talk Pakiren down – e.g., convincing him that he can't help his people if he gets himself and his friends killed. Ironically, this would make it more likely that Pakiren could be persuaded successfully, provided that the action of the combat gives the Player enough time to make the argument. On the other hand, if Tomilor or Samaz is injured or killed, that would intensify Pakiren's anger and make him less likely to back down, even if it means getting destroyed. However, if Samaz is injured, the Player could attempt to physically overpower Pakiren. This would be difficult given Pakiren's strength, toughness, and determination, but if Tomilor can be convinced to help, then she and the Player could overpower Pakiren together.

Ideally, the goal is to stop Pakiren non-lethally before he can attack the troops closing on Storoviz, then retrieve the shuttle and Starfleet weapons. However, this attempt could be unsuccessful, leading to the deaths of one or more of the astronauts and possibly even of the ally character if the shuttle is destroyed (although the character could be rescued at the last moment by the other shuttle's transporter, if applicable). Alternatively, the crew could fail to stop Pakiren from attacking the troops, resulting in a significant loss of life before Pakiren is finally stopped one way or another.

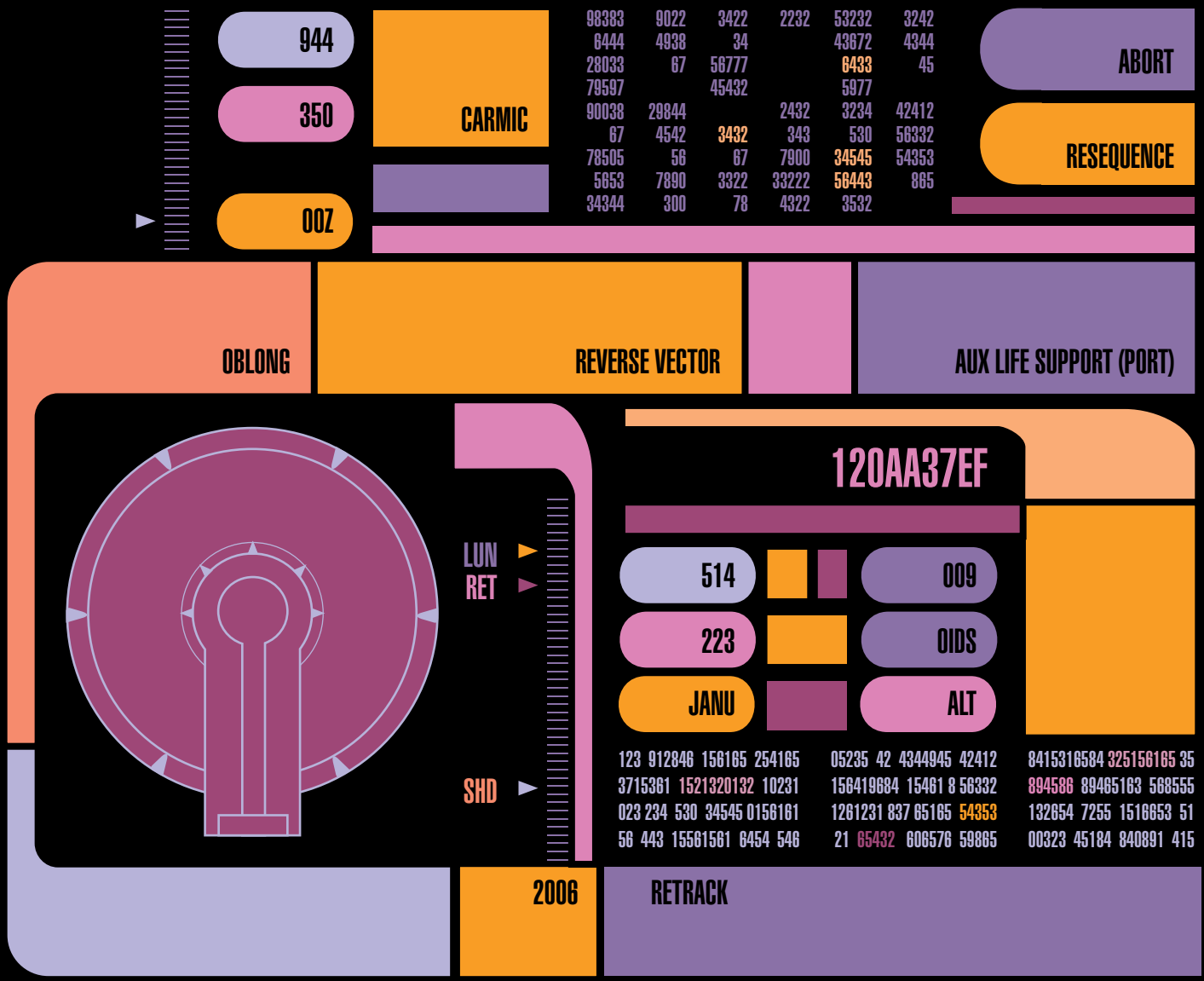
SCENE 3: HARD CHOICES

The Modar government's reaction to the events in Storoviz depends on the outcome of the Players' efforts to stop Pakiren. If they succeeded in preventing Pakiren's attack on the soldiers, this will make Prime Minister Verodif more receptive to letting the captain talk him out of slaughtering the striking Pochai laborers. Even so, this will still be a difficult Persuasion Task, made more difficult if Pakiren and the others have been taken alive.

If Pakiren succeeded in killing some of the soldiers, then Verodif will be more hardened and will proceed with the slaughter, unless the captain decides to intervene directly to stop it in some way. Since these events were precipitated by Starfleet interference, the captain and crew may feel obligated to intervene. This could lead to a more involved optional Conflict sequence at the Gamemaster's discretion. (For melee combat, the stats for a Pochai soldier could be based on Samaz's stats, adjusted for a Minor NPC.)

However the Storoviz situation plays out, the Pochai remain in open revolt, awakened to the possibilities of freedom they never dared to believe in before. New strikes and acts of resistance are breaking out planetwide, as Pochai demand equal rights and control of their own destinies. If the government army did put down the Storoviz strikers violently, it will have only provoked fiercer outrage from the rest of the Pochai. If Starfleet's efforts managed to avoid bloodshed, then the Pochai protestors on the surface will be pleading with Starfleet to intervene for their freedom as well.

Pakiren points out (if he survives, and if the Players don't beat him to it) that the Pochai now have the idea of freedom and equality, and that's an overpowering force that can't be taken away. The Modar's only hope is to accept the new reality and work with the Pochai to build a more equal social order. Verodif is resistant to this notion, but is beginning to recognize that trying to force a return to the former status quo is untenable.



CHAPTER 01.50

STOLEN LIBERTY
CONCLUSION

Once the business with the Pochai and the Modar is settled one way or another, the captain and security chief will have to deal with disciplining the crew members who defied the Prime Directive to assist the Pochai. Whether they still have a future in Starfleet could depend on whether they redeemed themselves by helping to stop Pakiren before it was too late. But even in that case, some form of punishment will be needed. The Players will also have to work out any interpersonal tension or sense of betrayal that arose from the conflict, and any new doubts they may have about the morality of the Prime Directive. These events could have an impact on the crew lasting well beyond their departure from Zafrel and its moons.

CONTINUING VOYAGES...

The captain may offer to help negotiate the peace, but whether Verodif accepts the offer depends on how successful the Players were at minimizing loss of life at Storoviz, and on how persuasively the captain's case is made. If the offer is accepted, then at the Gamemaster's discretion, the crew could remain to mediate negotiations, potentially leading into a new campaign as the captain and crew tackle this difficult process.

Alternatively, the captain could call in a Federation diplomatic team to shoulder the burden if the ship is needed elsewhere. On the other hand, if the Modar reject the offer of Federation diplomatic assistance, there is no choice but to move on and hope they and the Pochai can work things out on their own.



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