STAR TREK™
ADVENTURES



TROUBLE ON OMNED III

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MODIPHIUS ENTERTAINMENT™
2d20™

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Modiphius Entertainment Product Number
MUH051430-PDF

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CHAPTER 01.00

TROUBLE ON OMNED III

BY GILES PRITCHARD

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CHAPTER 01.10

TROUBLE ON OMNED III

SYNOPSIS

The Player Characters' ship is called away from a routine science mission to intervene and mediate a dispute that has erupted on Omned III, a Class-M planet on the border between Federation space and the Talarian Republic. Inhabited by the Shean, a human-like warp-capable species, Omned III is teetering on the brink of civil conflict. While few in numbers, the Shean possess an insular and rigidly structured society, with the ruling and military classes living in a single large space station called Omned Station, anchored at the L2 point, while the working classes live on the planet surface.

The Shean of Omned III are universally infected with a subtle parasite that manifests as an apparent genetic disorder, which they call the 'Omned Curse.' This disorder has a similar effect to Progeria in humans, meaning that they age at a vastly accelerated rate. A vaccine farmed on the surface of Omned III prevents this debilitating disorder from taking hold. In the last month, however, the vaccine shipped from the surface has failed to take effect. With unprotected newborns suffering, and more recent cases of the disorder beginning to activate in adults, tensions between the upper and lower castes are at a breaking point.

Ulth Aliss, a member of the working caste on the surface, has sent an emergency beacon to the Federation, asking for assistance before things get out of hand. Garsed Laksit, head of the Omned Security Forces, has accused the lower castes of deliberately attempting to poison the elites, and has little interest in Federation involvement.

Scientific study of the vaccine on the surface and on the Omned Station will yield key results, showing the vaccine on the surface to be a living organism, while samples from the station are dead. Further investigation set against the backdrop of rising tension, and the threat of military action from Garsed Laksit, will suggest a change in Omned Station's environment may have inadvertently made it hostile to the life-form that feeds on the parasite causing the disorder, and which prevents it from activating. Referencing the first cases on the station with engineering logs will show a major upgrade to the air filtration systems may be responsible; pumping more ammonia into the atmosphere than the organism that protected the Shean can process.

DIRECTIVES

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

- Do your utmost to prevent a violent civil conflict on Omned III
- Study the Omned Curse

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

ADAPTING THIS MISSION TO OTHER ERAS

Given "Trouble on Omned III" is a standalone adventure without specific ties to nations or species already part of the *Star Trek* canon, it is able to be played across any *Star Trek* era. Gamemasters should feel free, of course, to relocate Omned III to any out of the way location that suits their needs. "Trouble at Omned III" could, therefore, be used as a standalone adventure slotted in to any campaign the Gamemaster has planned. Given the nature of the disorder in the plot (a parasite which causes the 'Omned Curse'), the Gamemaster could easily substitute the Shean for any race that suited their specific campaign.

CHAPTER 01.20

TROUBLE ON OMNED III

ACT 1: A CALL FOR HELP

SCENE 1: OMNED STATION

The adventure begins with the Player Characters aboard their ship, en route to the star Oneda Beta.

The Players should have an opportunity to perform some research on Omned III and the Shean. If researching Omned III, the Players (probably the Science Officer or equivalent) may attempt a **Reason + Science** Task with a Difficulty of 0 to discover the following:

Omned III is the fourth planet in the Omned system, a Class-M planet, and is inhabited by the Shean. Hosting a relatively small population, in the tens of thousands, Omned III is terrestrial, with few large bodies of water, and mostly known for its mineral exports.

If researching the Shean, the Players (probably the Science Officer or equivalent) may attempt a **Reason + Science** Task with a Difficulty of 0 to discover the following:

The Shean are a human-like species who, while possessing warp-capable technology, inhabit only the Omned system. They live in a strictly hierarchical society, with those on Omned III being divided into two castes: the ruling and military elite, and the lower caste workers. The upper caste exclusively inhabits a space station called Omned Station, positioned at the planet's L2 point, while the working class extracts the minerals that drive the Shean economy, and live on the surface of the planet. The Shean of Omned III suffer from a debilitating genetic disorder, not unlike Progeria in humans, which causes highly accelerated aging. The workers on the surface farm a vaccine, which combats the onset and effects of this disorder (which is referred to as 'The Omned Curse'). The Shean have no particular alliances to any other species, preferring, due to their small number, to remain as neutral as possible. They do have a history of limited co-operation with the Federation, although interactions have been few. Protocol dictates that any ship approaching Shean-held territory make contact with the regional Council (Omned Council in this case) for clearance.

CAPTAIN'S LOG

STARDATE (DEPENDENT ON YOUR CAMPAIGN AND/OR ERA)

While en route to the Oneda system to perform routine scientific analysis of the binary star Oneda Beta, which has been exhibiting strange fluctuations in its gravity and spectrographic readings, we have received orders to change course for Omned III. A crisis has erupted, and the Federation has received a call for help from one Ulth Aliss, one of the few educated members of the lower caste of the Shean who inhabit the planet.

If researching for news on the reported 'crisis', the Players (probably the Science Officer or equivalent) may attempt a **Reason + Science** Task with a Difficulty of 0 to discover the following:

The Shean have a long history of civil disputes arising primarily from their strict hierarchical social structure. With class being a product of birth, the working classes have long struggled for rights; these usually revolve around working hours, holidays, pay, access to education, representation in judicial matters and so on. According to the ship database, Omned III is no exception: only in the last 50 years have the working class had access to a basic education for their children, better and more flexible working hours, and a series of incremental pay increases. On several occasions, representatives of the working class have submitted appeals to the Federation for support in lobbying the Shean government for better conditions and more equal rights.

As the ship approaches Omned III, the Players should have already decided whether they will follow protocol and make their first contact with the Omned Council, or whether they will attempt to flag the surface in an attempt to meet up with Ulth Aliss. This scene assumes the Players will follow protocol, but they may also decide to communicate with the surface at the same time, or go there directly. The Gamemaster should modify the order of the following scenes to accommodate the Players' chosen path.

When the Players are ready, read:

As the ship approaches Omned III, the planet grows in the viewscreen. It appears a barren world with sparse patches of green surrounding even smaller patches of blue water. Omned Station is an extensive structure, built around an old trading station. It has been incrementally expanded over the generations and now houses the 6,000 or so Shean belonging to the governing and military caste.

Hailing Omned Station will get an immediate response of welcome (the Shean will be aware of the ship designation and name due to the hail).

Read or summarize the following:

Greetings! And welcome! The Shean are always pleased to welcome visitors, especially ones from such esteemed friends as the Federation. I am Trade Minister Renar Taltos. How may we be of assistance?

After any other small talk, the ship will be asked to dock. If the Players mention they are responding to a beacon sent from Ulth Aliss, and/or that they have heard there is a crisis on Omned III, the tone of the conversation will change noticeably and the Trade Minister will not respond to any questions other than to request they dock. If the Players don't mention Ulth Aliss, the Trade Minister will make flowery references to the long positive relationship between the Federation and the Shean, and will invite them to dock.

If the Players did not mention Ulth Aliss and/or any crisis:

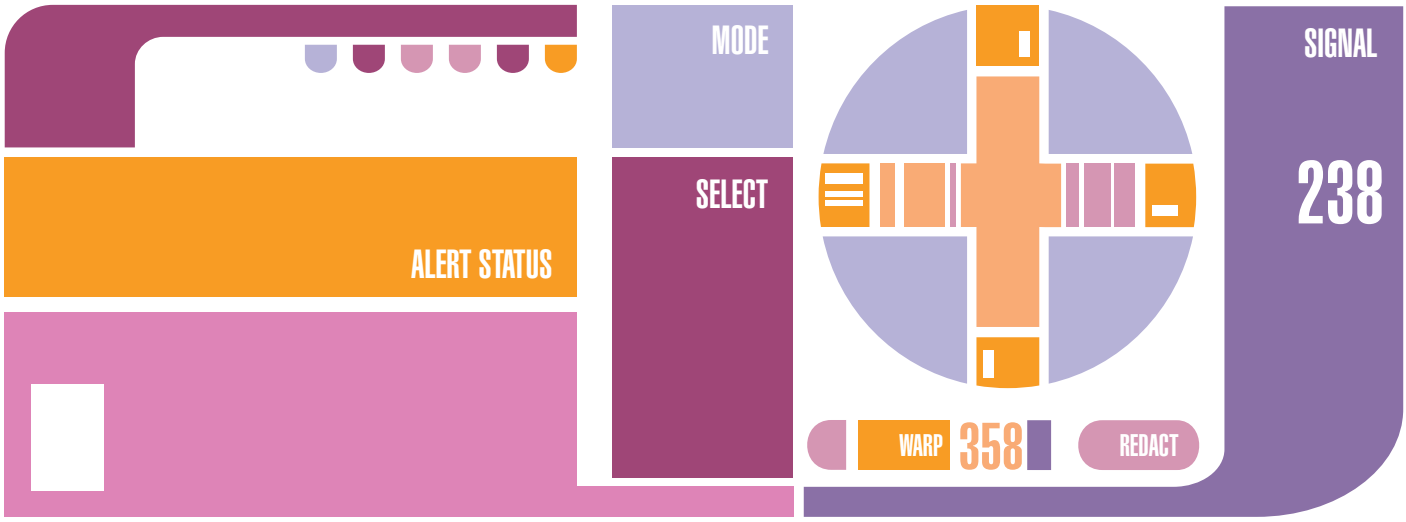
After docking, the Players will be met by a delegation of Shean that will include the Trade Minister Renar Taltos, the Prime Minister's advisor Garek Kelthon, and several other minor dignitaries (the Shean upper caste have names that begin with consonants, while the lower class use vowel sounds).

The Players will be taken on a tour, showing that Omned Station is a wealthy place — not opulent, but certainly well off. The station is well lit, with broad corridors and many small parks and garden areas. Players will have the opportunity to see living and recreation areas, as well as research facilities, the library, and other facilities.

Any of the crew who make a **Reason + Sciences Task** with a Difficulty of 1 when examining the flora will note that it looks unhealthy. If asked about the status of the gardens, one of the minor dignitaries will note that they have recently upgraded their air-filtration systems, and the plants are adjusting to the change in atmosphere. The explanation seems consistent with the evidence. The Shean deem it a minor and temporary inconvenience.

The Player Characters will be asked along the way what the purpose of their visit to Omned III is. The Shean assume initially that it is for trade or supplies and will behave as such unless contradicted. Renar Taltos will make much of the Federation throughout any discourse. He will offer the characters rooms and refreshments, and ask them to join him for dinner and a deeper discussion of their needs. If the characters mention Ulth Aliss or inquire too deeply or specifically about the troubles on Omned III (Renar will pretend everything is just fine), Renar will appear visibly perturbed. He will lead the characters to a meeting room, and send one of the dignitaries to gather more 'guests'. These other guests will, most vitally, include Garsden Laksit, Security Minister for the Shean on Omned III. If the characters make it to dinner, Renar will press them in regards to their purpose on Omned Station (he assumes it's for trade or supplies).

If the characters decide to lie to Renar about their purpose and not mention the beacon, Ulth Aliss or the crisis, the Gamemaster should go along with their ruse as long as they can pass a **Presence + Command Task** with a Difficulty of 2. This may incline Renar to allow the characters to visit the surface,



GARSED LAKSIT [NOTABLE NPC]

TRAITS: Shean

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	10	FITNESS	10	PRESENCE	12
DARING	12	INSIGHT	09	REASON	08

DISCIPLINES

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

FOCUSES: Selfish, Self-Assured, Scientifically illiterate, Distrustful of Experts

STRESS: 14 **RESISTANCE:** 1

ATTACKS:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 3⮝, Knockdown, Non-lethal, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

- **TALENTS** — Once Per Scene Garsden Laksit may spend 2 Threat to enforce a restriction from the list in Scene 3, or may spend 2 Threat to reduce the time before initiating the Laksit Solution by 1 Day (scene 3).

and he will certainly, at some point, relate the recent trouble of 'more and more victims falling foul of the Omned Curse'.

At some point the characters will need to spend time on Omned Station in order to work out what is happening with the upper castes and the rise of the 'Omned Curse'. If the characters have managed to avoid Garsed Laksit, beginning to study the Omned Curse is where he will make his entrance, as per any of the situations below. Garsed Laksit will assert that the failed vaccines and Omned Curse are a deliberate attack on the upper castes concocted by the lower castes.

If the characters did mention Ulth Aliss and/or any crisis:

After docking, the characters will be met by a delegation of security guards, and several high-ranking officers of the Shean military. They will be treated politely enough, and will be taken on a very brief tour, showing that Omned Station is a wealthy place, not opulent, but certainly well off. The station is well lit, with broad corridors and many small parks and garden areas.

Any of the crew who make a **Reason + Sciences Task** with a Difficulty of 1 when examining the flora will note that it looks unhealthy. If asked about the status of the gardens, one of the minor dignitaries will note that they have recently upgraded their air-filtration systems, and the plants are adjusting to the change in atmosphere. The explanation seems consistent with the evidence. They deem it a minor and temporary inconvenience.

The tour will lead the Players indirectly to a meeting room. In the meeting room are several Shean, most importantly, Security Minister Garsden Laksit. It is assumed that the characters will not be carrying any weapons (aside from the security officer), and will be asked to leave them on the ship if so (the security officer is permitted his weapon). With Security Minister Garsden Laksit is Jancor Taldaw, his advisor and several other officers in the Omned III Security Force.

Whichever way the characters meet Garsden Laksit, he will be brusque. He is a man used to getting his way, and a hard man to shift from his own opinions.

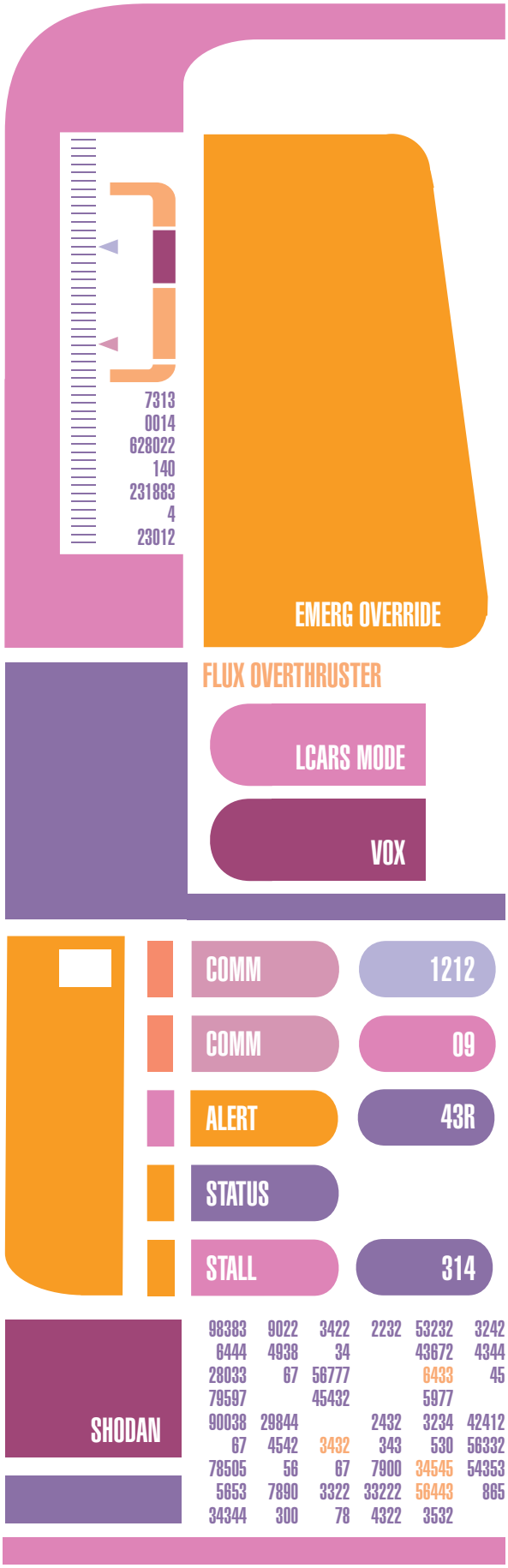
After the initial introductions, read or summarize the following comments from Garsden Laskit:

Welcome, of course, to Omned III. The Shean have long held the Federation in great esteem, and we, on our part, have always done our best to act as good friends. I have heard that you were contacted from the surface. I am not personally aware of the contents of the message to you, but I wish to provide you with information about our situation. On the surface there are a group of agitators, mostly our extensive record of their actions would show them to be little more than this. But we have long suspected their involvement in more subversive forms of dissent. What has happened most recently however, was a shock, even to us. Obviously long planned and carefully executed, the lower castes, led astray by these dissidents, have made an attack against us. A most vile attack, striking first at the most vulnerable: the children and infirm. This is an attack that will spread, unless swift and decisive action is taken.

These agitators have poisoned us. All of us. The vaccine used to prevent the Omned Curse, which many good doctors suspect may have been a lower caste plan all along, has been compromised. Now our infants, those born this last month, are suffering. Every day, cases of regressions and flare-ups grow more regular. It would seem, that unless action is taken, that we will all eventually succumb.

The Players, undoubtedly, will have many questions for Garsden Laksit. To summarize his perspective on events, he believes and will do/allow the following:

- He believes Ulth Aliss and a small (but undefined) group of 'Agitators' among the working class are responsible for poisoning the upper caste.
- He believes this is a deliberate attack against the upper caste, not simply to apply political pressure, but to actually kill them off.
- He believes that the vaccinations have been a ruse all along (planned for generations), and that the ultimate goal of this 'so-called curse' was to get the upper castes dependent on the vaccine, with withdrawal resulting in the Omned Curse. As a result of this belief, he will be willing to suspend the transport of, or even destroy, the vaccine and the facilities where it is farmed. He has convinced himself that the Omned Curse is a lower caste plot. He has substantial support among members of the security force, government and upper caste for his views, though many (mostly scientists) are vehemently opposed.
- He will eagerly show the characters to the medical wing and extended triage centre, where about 15 infants are showing signs of accelerated aging, including cellular damage and in some cases, organ failure. In addition there are 87 other upper class Shean showing, or beginning to show, signs of the Progeria-like infliction.
- He will allow the characters to conduct whatever experiments or observations they wish, as long as he thinks they match with his view on what is and has been happening.
- He believes the Federation was invited to come to Omned III to prevent the military from performing reprisals against the workers, and he won't be cowed.
- He hopes the characters will view Ulth as a terrorist (in his mind Ulth certainly is), and that any studies performed by the characters will show the vaccine is ultimately a weapon.
- He will allow the characters to remove patients to their ship for further analysis.
- He will allow the characters to analyze the most recent batches of the vaccine received from the planet surface, as well as stored samples from the past.



CHAPTER 01.30

TROUBLE ON OMNED III

ACT 2: INVESTIGATIONS

The Players may wish to pursue a range of investigations into the vaccine, the Omned Curse and so on. How they may do so is detailed as follows.

SCENE 1: STUDYING THE OMNED CURSE

Studying the Omned Curse is an extended task that will take 2 days to complete (Base Difficulty: 2, Work Track: 6, Magnitude 2, Resistance Soak: 1. This task must be performed in the Medical facilities aboard Omned Station, as all infected have been confined to quarantine, and they will not be permitted to leave, even to the Federation ship's sickbay.

The first Breakthrough at the Extended Task of Studying the Omned Curse (by examining patients from the station, both healthy and showing signs of the 'Omned Curse') will demonstrate that there is such a thing. The Shean do indeed have the genetic markers of a disorder similar to Progeria, which causes highly accelerated aging. It is not 'made up'. Extended withdrawal from the vaccine will likely result in the disorder activating again, and will eventually lead to organ failure and death if left untreated. Those affected currently are either babies to about a year in age, the infirm, and a handful of others. If studied, every Shean on Omned Station studied will show signs of the disorder beginning to activate.

The second Breakthrough at the Extended Task of Studying the Omned Curse will indicate that the genetic disorder is a

THREAT

Any Complication rolled by any character may be used by the Gamemaster to infect a single character with the Omned Curse. Alternatively the Gamemaster may spend 2 Threat to infect one of the characters. It is recommended that the character infected be the one leading the study of the Omned Curse. The Infection begins as one of the symptoms listed below.

Once infected, any subsequent Complication rolled by any of the characters (or the expenditure of 2 Threat by the Gamemaster, up to twice per scene) may be used to induce any of the following symptoms in the infected character (these may all be applied multiple times, with the effects stacking as per the descriptions):

- Shaky: Increased Complication Range on all attempted Tasks by 1 (from 1 to 2, from 2 to 3 etc).
- Loss of focus: Lose all Momentum generated on a single Task.
- Weakness: Take 1 Stress in damage.

Once the character is infected and the first symptom hits, the character will notice something is seriously amiss. An Insight/Reason + Science/Medicine Task with a Difficulty of 1 will tell them they have been infected with the Omned Curse. This is reduced to Difficulty 0 if they have already worked out the Omned Curse is caused by a parasite. It may suit the Gamemaster to have the character infected while studying the Omned Curse be confined to quarantine, in the medical wing on board Omned Station. From here they may continue their studies on the Omned Curse, the vaccine and so on.

These symptoms could easily be abused by the Gamemaster to seriously injure one of the characters, though this is not the intent. The intent of the infection is to apply tension and a sense of pressure on the characters and crew, it should be alarming to begin with, and develop to be potentially debilitating as the adventure progresses. The infection should be used carefully by the Gamemaster to impress upon the Players a sense of desperate urgency as one of their own begins to suffer more and more significantly as the adventure goes on. Their eventual success will mean as much to the crew as it does to the Shean. Once the character is vaccinated the symptoms slowly disappear (at a rate of one per day if the timing is important).

SHEAN — UPPER CASTE [MINOR NPC]

TRAITS: Shean

FOCUSES: Upper Class, Haughty

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	10	FITNESS	09	PRESENCE	11
	08	INSIGHT	11	REASON	08

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	02	SECURITY	01	SCIENCE	00
CONN	01	ENGINEERING	02	MEDICINE	00

STRESS: 10 **RESISTANCE:** 0

ATTACKS:

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

product of gene editing caused by a parasitic lifeform living inside the Shean of Omned III. This lifeform is so ubiquitous that all the Shean studied have it, and so subtly intertwined in the biology of its hosts it was almost impossible to identify.

The Gamemaster might want to pick out a couple of patients for the characters to interact with over the course of the Extended Task. If they do, they will find that almost every patient examined believes they have been poisoned by the lower caste. All are wealthy upper-caste citizens, mostly working within the bureaucracy of government or the security force. Parents of the children tested will naturally be distraught.

Even if presented with the evidence that the disorder is genetic and/or parasitic in nature (and not poisoning), patients will almost universally maintain the view that they are being poisoned, unless a **Presence + Command Task** with a Difficulty of 3 can be performed (this shouldn't be a priority for the characters, but something they may want to try).

SCENE 2: STUDYING THE VACCINE

Studying the Vaccine is an extended task that will take 1 day to complete (Base Difficulty: 1, Work Track: 6, Magnitude 2, Resistance Soak: 0 if performed in the ship medical bay, 1 if performed on Omned Station).

Study of the vaccine is largely inconclusive. The most recent and older samples are functionally identical – dead cells that have broken down (strangely) and not recognized by the ship's computer. Once the characters achieve the second Breakthrough (successfully completing the Extended Task) they will discover that the 'vaccine' does not appear to be a vaccine in the traditional sense – and that the breakdown of the cellular material could be the result of a reaction of some sort. This breakdown can be seen in past and current samples. It may well be the result of tampering, but if so, it has been going on for as long as samples have been collected and stored by the upper castes.

SCENE 3: CONTACTING THE SURFACE

Laksit is against the idea of the characters contacting Ulth Aliss or the surface. He may be convinced otherwise by the characters arguing that it would allow them to get a full analysis of the vaccine, and/or bring back a functional batch, but he will be reluctant.

The characters may want to split up, with some studying the vaccine, some the curse, and some attempting to reach or contact the surface. Insofar as it is manageable, the Gamemaster should encourage the characters to divide their attentions; this will enable the Players to align their character skills sets with tasks that suit them, and make everyone feel involved in the building pressure, as well as any successes along the way. It will also aid them in managing the timeline put in place by the Laksit Solution.

SCENE 4: THE SURFACE

Omned III is a relatively barren world, with pockets of vegetation centered around fresh water lakes, which are mostly supplied from underground springs. Omned III is home to roughly 45,000 Shean working class citizens, who live quite a separate existence to those on Omned Station. Focused across several small locations, the working class live in highly structured settlements, with the living quarters reminiscent of military barracks, and commercial hubs at the centre. Each settlement has its focus: Five are home to largely mining communities who extract the ore that is the mainstay of the Omned III economy. Two focus on food

production, and supply both the other settlements and Omned Station. And the last, Settlement 1, produces the vaccine used by all the Shean in the Omned system, and is the location of Ulth Aliss.

Settlement 1, is the smallest of the settlements on the surface, and comprises some 2,300 citizens. The population of Settlement 1 are largely concerned with the production of the vaccine which all the Shean of Omned rely on, and are the most highly educated population within the Shean Lower Caste on Omned III.

After landing at or beaming down to Settlement 1 the Gamemaster should read or summarize the following:

Settlement 1 is a highly organized town positioned on a spit of land projecting out into one of Omned III's larger natural lakes. It is surrounded by lush vegetation, which extends from the edge of the lake for several hundred meters before faltering and giving way to the barren rock and dust that predominates the surface of the planet. The town itself is a rough semi-circle, and proceeds inwards in layers. The outer layer is the barracks-style living quarters for the civilian population who live here. The inner layer is dominated by commercial buildings: shops selling food and wares, drinking holes, and the single school available to the settlement. The very center, positioned against and extending onto the lake itself, is the facility where the vaccine to combat the Omned Curse is manufactured.

As you walk off the shuttle/materialize, you attract plenty of attention from the Shean you see. Soon, a throng of children and onlookers gathers to follow your every move. Visitors are obviously rare here, especially from beyond Omned III.

The Shean of Settlement 1 will be thrilled and excited to see members of the Federation, heaping on them small gifts, and treating them generally as rock stars. They will hang from every word, and while the adults will be too reserved or polite to ask, the young will bombard them with questions about the Federation, about their ship, and about their adventures and experiences. Underlying interactions with the adult population, Players with an **Insight** of 10 or higher will pick up a sense of unease and fear, interactions with people in positions of power rarely go well for those in positions of no power…

FINDING ULTH ALISS

If the characters ask around for Ulth Aliss, they will be directed to the school, where Ulth works part-time as a volunteer teacher (when not working at the vaccine facility). He is easy to find, and a well-known member of the community for being an outspoken champion of their rights, a well-educated citizen and the son of the first group of Shean to get an education on Omned III.

GAMEMASTER NOTE

The characters may attempt to contact the surface at any point in the adventure in order to study the vaccine and/or meet up with Ulth Aliss. The Upper Caste will expect the Federation to follow protocol and make contact with Omned Station first (Scenes 2 and 4), but the characters may decide to follow their own plan, in which case the Gamemaster should be flexible; running elements of Scenes 2 and Scene 4 together with different teams of characters working on elements of each. The Gamemaster should allow the characters to follow their own investigation, but the two key things the characters will probably want to do is to make contact with Ulth Aliss and study the vaccine.

If the characters follow the directions of the Shean they encounter, read or summarize the following:

Ushered by a small throng of eager adherents to the school, you find Ulth Aliss in the middle of a lesson, teaching young Shean to write.

The classroom is fairly bare, with meager facilities and resources, and upon entering, Ulth stands, shocked, before asking the children to leave with the classroom aide.

Ulth is a man of medium height, with a dark complexion, dark hair and eyes. Wary of you, his eyes taking in your uniforms and equipment in a carefully calculated sweep. His shocked demeanor seems to suggest he is both happy to see you, but also worried. "Greetings! I am Ulth Aliss. To be honest I thought my beacon would attract nothing but scorn from above, but here you are. I sent that beacon because I am worried about what may come. I have, well, we all have heard about the trouble on Omned Station. But whatever they think, however easy we are to blame, it has nothing to do with us. You must believe me!"

THREAT

The Gamemaster may spend Threat on the following:

- 2 Threat – The Shean of Settlement 1 are worried that the Federation has arrived at the behest of the Shean Elites. They are afraid for Ulth Aliss, as voice of the people, and become agitated when the characters want to find him. A **Presence + Command** Task with a Difficulty of 2 is required to sooth them. If failed, they will conceal Ulth's real location as much as possible.

- 2 Threat – On landing the Shuttle/transporter suffers a malfunction (a jammed landing leg, a computer glitch, etc). It will require a **Reason + Engineering** Task with a Difficulty of 2 to fix, which will take a day.

TRAITS: Shean

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	09	FITNESS	09	PRESENCE	10
	10	INSIGHT	10	REASON	12

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	02	SECURITY	01	SCIENCE	02
CONN	00	ENGINEERING	01	MEDICINE	03

FOCUSES: Educated, Ideological, Merit Over Birth

STRESS: 10 **RESISTANCE:** 0

ATTACKS:

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

Ulth Aliss is a known agitator for the rights of the lower caste, but as much as he appears worried to see the characters, an Insight + Command Task with a Difficulty of 0 will show he is earnest in what he says.

Ulth is an educated man, highly intelligent, and he has made the most of the scanty education he has been provided. He believes fervently that the caste system is wrong and unjust.

The following provides a primer on what Ulth Aliss believes and will say in response to any questioning by the characters:

- The vaccine has not been, insofar as he knows, tampered with in any way. He doesn't know why people on the station are getting sick, and to a degree he empathizes with them.
- The symptoms manifesting on Omned Station are not presenting on Omned III. As far as he is aware, the vaccine is still functioning as it has always done.
- He believes the caste system is wrong on every level. He would like to see dramatic change, and hopes the Federation can 'shake things up'.
- He works at the vaccine facility (like most of the population of this settlement), and has seen nothing out of the ordinary.
- He has distributed a range of pamphlets, newsletters, and papers through which he champions the rights of the lower castes and argues against the caste system. But these, he states, were intended to motivate the lower caste to better themselves and question the dominant ideology, nothing more (though he is also, obviously, something of an ideological firebrand).
- He is happy to show the characters the vaccine facility (as much as he can).
- He describes the production process for the vaccine as 'growing' rather than 'producing' or 'making'.

ENCOUNTER: STUDYING THE VACCINE

The characters will find they have full and unquestioned access to any area they would like to go. Either with the assistance of Ulth Aliss or on their own, they may approach the processing facility where the vaccine is produced.

Read or summarize the following:

The facility in which the vaccine is produced and from which it is shipped around Omned III and to Omned Station is an expansive single floor building that abuts and extends out over the lake. The oldest portions of the building are unadorned prefabricated concrete, while newer portions are built from stone that looks as though it were mined close by. The structure sits partially on land, but extends maybe 100 meters or more out over the surface of the lake with the walls extending down to the lake bed, and floating floors and gantries giving workers access to the machinery housed in the facility.

Mostly curiously this is not a medical lab in which a vaccine could be manufactured. The machinery here, large pumping and filtration systems, is at odds with what the characters would expect. Anyone with a value of 2 or more in Medicine will be shocked to learn that this is where the vaccine is produced.

On further examination of the equipment, either through a **Presence + Command Task** with a Difficulty of 0, or a **Reason + Science Task** with a Difficulty of 1 (asking or investigating), the Players discover that the vaccine here is not manufactured, but is a product that is filtered out of the water in the lake. Such investigations will take at least half a day to confirm.

Further analysis of the vaccine itself, an extended task that will take 1 day to complete (Base Difficulty: 1, Work Track: 8, Magnitude 2, Resistance Soak: 0) will provide the characters

SHEAN — LOWER CASTE [MINOR NPC]

TRAITS: Shean

FOCUSES: Hard Working, Submissive

STRESS: 8 **RESISTANCE:** 0

ATTACKS:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 1⮝, Knockdown, Non-lethal, Size 1H)

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL	10	FITNESS	08	PRESENCE	11
	08	INSIGHT	09	REASON	11

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND	01	SECURITY	00	SCIENCE	02
CONN	00	ENGINEERING	02	MEDICINE	01

with some unexpected results: the vaccine itself is not a vaccine in the traditional sense, but a life-form farmed from the waters of the lake.

If the characters have already investigated the vaccine on Omned Station:

The cellular structure matches, as closely as can be discerned, the broken-down cells of the vaccine samples from Omned Station. It would appear that something has caused the life-form transported to Omned Station to die, and for the cells to break down. It is most probable that the cause is environmental in nature, and peculiar to Omned Station.

GAMEMASTER NOTE:

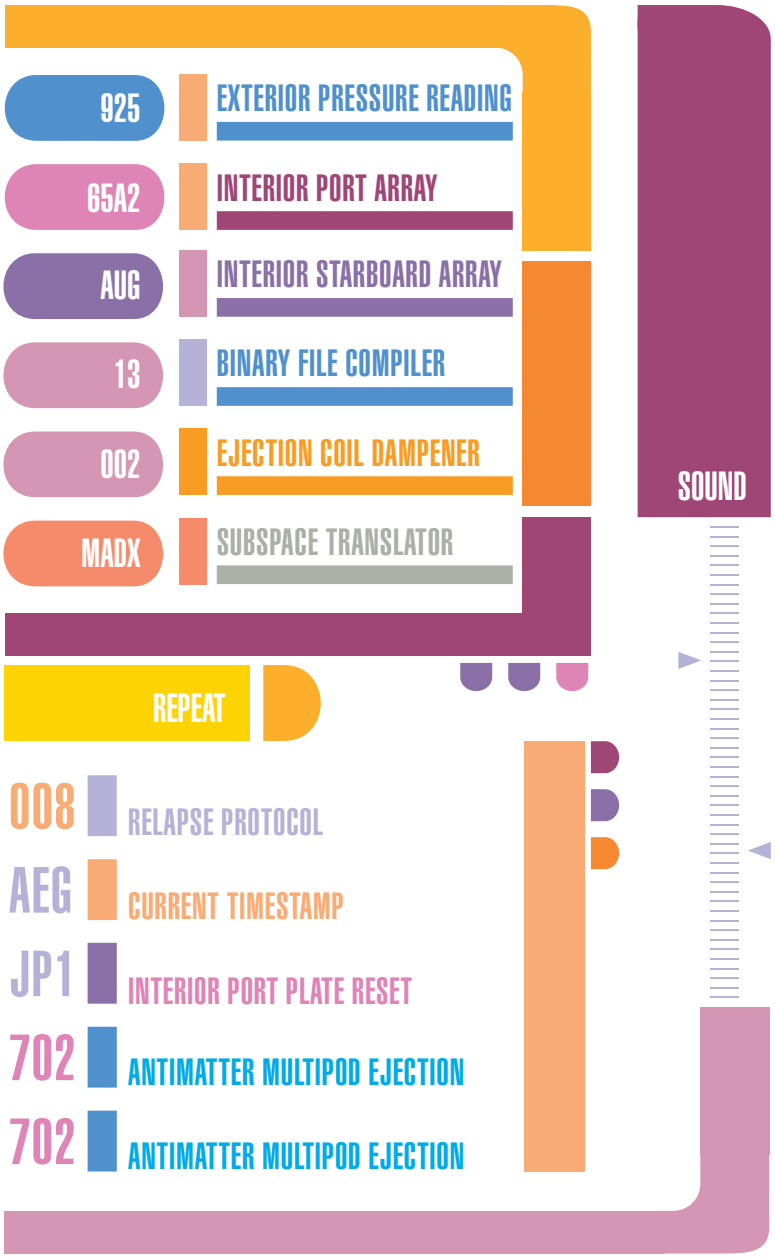
The characters will make this connection whether they study the vaccine on the station first, and the vaccine on the surface second, or the vaccine on the surface first and on the station second.

STUDYING THE OMNED CURSE IN THE LOWER CASTE

Players may also wish to study members of Settlement 1 for signs of the Omned Curse. Doing so will take 1 full days of testing, and may be performed through an extended task (Base Difficulty: 1, Work Track: 6, Magnitude 2, Resistance Soak: 1).

If successful, Players will note that exactly the same parasite exists in the Shean on the surface as on Omned Station. If they have also studied the vaccine on the surface (or after they have), the characters will deduce that the lifeform lives in a symbiotic relationship with its host that disrupts the Omned Curse.

If the characters have already studied the Omned Curse on Omned Station, they will learn that the 'vaccine' lifeform both preys on the parasite and prevents it from actively gene-editing its host (thereby preventing the Progeria), and from being contagious.



SCENE 5: THE LAKSIT SOLUTION

Soon after the characters arrive on Omned Station (or on the surface, if they proceed there directly and avoid Omned Station), concerned that the arrival of the Federation may interfere with his plans, Garsden Laksit will initiate the Laksit Solution.

GAMEMASTER NOTE:
The Laksit Solution isn't a scene in the traditional sense, but rather provides pressure the Gamemaster can apply through the scenario to challenge the characters and change the tempo and mood of the story. It provides a timeline for events that happen in the setting alongside the progress of the characters, and also allows the Gamemaster to introduce conflict into the adventure.

The Laksit Solution is the by-word for a build-up of tension that will result in a reprisal attack on the Vaccine Farm on the surface of Omned III. Security Minister Garsden Laksit is convinced the lower castes working these farms have deliberately, and perhaps for a long time, poisoned the upper caste through the vaccines.

The initiation of the Laksit Solution will manifest in the game in several ways, and the Gamemaster should do their best to amplify the sense of urgency. The following various restrictions should be introduced incrementally as the characters progress through their investigation. In all cases the Gamemaster may introduce one such restriction as a result of any Complication, or by spending 2 Threat. Restrictions include the following:

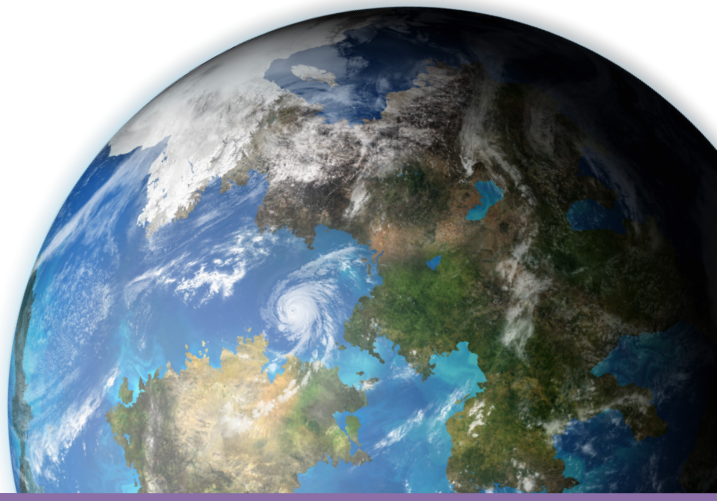
- Going from facility to facility on Omned Station will require ID checks, even for the obviously Federation crew.
- People won't be so open and friendly (any Social Conflict has a Difficulty modifier of +1).
- The crew will be asked to move back to the ship, and come to the station only when necessary (they may need to justify visits to Security Force Officers).
- The crew will be asked to undock and maintain a 'safe' distance (meaning travel to and from is by transporter or shuttle, and people travelling in such ways will be ID checked, even if they have been to the station several times).
- Access to the station computer systems may only be performed under the direct observation of a Security Force member.

After 2 Restrictions have been triggered, read or summarize the following: a broadcast is sent to the Players' ship (and relayed to the characters if they are away from the ship at the time):

This is Security Minister Garsden Laksit. Evidence has indicated that an attack has been made on Omned Station. A sinister and vile attack, seeking to undermine us and bring us to our knees. We cannot and will not be subdued. We cannot and will not be bullied by threat of violence. We cannot and will not do nothing in the face of aggression. I have ordered, today, that Omned Station be placed on high alert, and the Security Forces be mobilized in response to this threat, which we will put down before it grows like a tumor, and out of all possible control. I need you to understand that this is a civil matter, and should not affect the relationship between our two peoples.

The characters may attempt to contact Garsden Laksit, and convince him to delay any attack (which he will launch in 1 day after the above broadcast). Any attempts to influence Laksit should be made as a Social Conflict. Characters may choose to use any method through which to put off the initiation of the attack, including intimidation, deceit, evidence based reasoning, and so on. This attempt should be treated as a Persuade Task with a Difficulty of 1, and Laksit may use any Threat available to bolster his rolls. He will automatically receive +1 dice to his pool if the Players attempt to intimidate him, in addition to any Threat spent by the Gamemaster. Irrespective of the outcome of any Persuade Task, the Gamemaster may still continue to impose the remaining restrictions listed above at the cost of 2 Threat each, with a limit of 1 additional restriction per scene.

GAMEMASTER NOTE:
Players who are particularly creative in their argument (referencing the time it will take them to study the Omned Curse, the potential for a cure, the need to investigate the surface and so on) should be awarded 1 bonus D20 to use in their Persuade Task. This bonus dice does not count against the usual limitation placed on extra dice, which may be added from Momentum, Threat, or Determination.



SHEAN SECURITY FORCE MEMBER [MINOR NPC]

TRAITS: Shean

ATTRIBUTES

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

DISCIPLINES

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

FOCUSES: Unforgiving, Arrogant

STRESS: 13 **RESISTANCE:** 1

ATTACKS:

- Unarmed Strike (Melee, 3, Knockdown, Non-lethal, Size 1H)
- Bludgeon (Melee, 3, Knockdown, Size 1H)
- Phase Pistol (Ranged, 4, Size 1H)

SPECIAL RULES:

Will usually be encountered in groups of 1-3. Characters may encounter several groups at once.

Every point of Momentum generated by the characters from their Persuade Task may be spent to add 1 day to the proposed attack timeline.

Players may attempt to Persuade on multiple occasions (at least 1 day must pass or 1 Breakthrough made on any Extended Task, between attempts) but for every subsequent attempt after the first raises the Difficulty by 1 (the second attempt is Difficulty 2, the third Difficulty 3 and so on).

As per above, every 1 Momentum generated from the Persuasion Tasks may be spent to push the attack out by 1 day.

Gamemasters should note the time it will take the characters to complete any extended tasks given this timeline, and use the added pressure to increase the tension. This may be a useful point to bring some of the characters' Values into the mix, especially those who value life, justice, fairness, and similar factors.

Should the time pass before the characters have the evidence required to show what is really happening with the vaccine, the reprisal attacks will go ahead, with Omned Station using small shuttles to ferry Security Forces to the surface. At this point the characters may decide to intervene militarily, using force (either themselves taking a frontline role on the surface, or using the ship to attack the shuttles), or they may use the threat of force to hold off the attack while other members of the crew scramble to find the answers they need.

ECHO VALUE

51906	COMMU
40776	MISSION

98383	995	4938	56	5677	3322
6444	61105	67	7890	45432	738
28033	565		1420		2232
79597	3	29844	392	3432	7900
90038	9022	4542	1134	69	33222

SECURITY SHUTTLE

TRAITS: Old

SYSTEMS

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

DEPARTMENTS

COMMAND	—	SECURITY	02	SCIENCE	—
CONN	02	ENGINEERING	02	MEDICINE	—

POWER: 3 **SCALE:** 1

SHIELDS: 3 **RESISTANCE:** 1

ATTACKS:

- Phaser Bank (Range Medium, 3, Versatile 2)

SPECIAL RULES:

Crewed by 1 pilot and capable of carrying 8 Security Personnel.

CHAPTER 01.40

TROUBLE ON OMNED III

ACT 3: CLOSING THE CASE

SCENE 1: OMNED STATION REVISITED

If the characters have investigated the vaccine on the surface of Omned III, and discovered it to be a lifeform, this will add a new perspective on what has gone wrong on Omned Station. Once the characters have these pieces in place, investigation of any changes to the environment of Omned Station should become a key priority.

If the characters ask about any changes made to Omned Station in the last few months, or access the station's engineering records, they will discover that the atmosphere filtration systems have recently been upgraded.

Players investigating the filtration system may make a **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 2 to discover that the system is programmed to filter ammonia from the atmosphere at a slightly different level than the previous system.

Analysis of this system and the data from any investigation of the vaccine on the surface will suggest that higher than usual levels of ammonia may be causing the vaccine-life-form to react, dying, and then breaking down.

It is a **Reason + Engineering Task** with a Difficulty of 3 to repair and reprogram the system in order to maintain ammonia at levels acceptable to the vaccine.

This adventure should drive toward one of two possible conclusions: A) The characters find the root cause of the vaccine problem, or B) The Laksit Solution is executed. What follows is a brief discussion of how to resolve either scenario.

The Players find the root cause of the vaccine problem, and attempt to fix it. They will achieve this by: Studying the Omned Curse on the station or surface to determine what it is (a parasite causing Progeria in its hosts). Studying the vaccine to work out what it is (a life-form that prevents the parasite from affecting its host). Working out that environmental conditions on the station are causing the life-form to die, and that this was a change to the air-filtration systems on the station. Finally they will repair the station systems to allow the lifeform to survive.

If the Players are successful:

- Laksit is shamed and stripped of his position, amongst the turbulence of the characters solving the problem. Laksit leaves with a handful of supporters. He may become a recurring villain – aged and debilitated by his condition in the absence of the vaccine (and using other treatments instead), he is bitter, angry, and despises the characters.
- The characters are lauded for their assistance, and their intervention initiates a new round of trade and alliance discussions with the previously neutral Shean.
- The ship and crew will have a new safe and friendly port of call and will have favorable terms if they require help from Omned III.

If the Players are unsuccessful:

- The Laksit Solution will be executed (see below).

If the Laksit Solution is executed:

If the Laksit Solution is initiated the adventure will take on a more martial aspect. Security Minister Laksit intends to destroy the vaccine farm and anyone in or near it, causing significant casualties. Characters may intervene militarily, using their ship to fend off landing shuttles, or taking to the ground and dealing with the security forces landing there. In either case the characters will out-gun the security forces, but the security forces will have the advantage of numbers. The characters' main goal should be the protection of the vaccine facility, but this is a good point where Gamemasters can challenge the characters' Values and Directives: can they stand and protect a vital facility while civilians are being attacked?

CHAPTER 01.50

TROUBLE ON OMNED III

CONCLUSION

If the characters do end up in direct conflict with the security forces, they should be able to hack and remotely access the Omned Station computer network (a **Reason + Security** Task with a Difficulty of 3), and maintain their investigation, if they so desire, and should be allowed the opportunity to resolve the conflict by revealing the truth. The Gamemaster may need to get creative in terms of how the characters get any missing information they require. Ulth Aliss and the workers at the facility may be of use here.

The characters may also decide that the Federation cannot militarily intervene in a civil matter, in which case they must stand by and watch while the vaccine facility is destroyed. The explosive devices used in the destruction of the vaccine facility will alter the environment of the lake enough to cause the lifeform used as the vaccine to suffer a catastrophic extinction, which will have massive consequences for all the Shean of Omned III.

At this point any of the following threads may be followed by the characters/Gamemaster:

- The characters may attempt to evacuate as many civilians as possible, in which case some short encounters with security forces should play a part.
- The characters may be involved in defusing the explosives (a **Reason + Engineering** Task with a Difficulty of 3).
- The characters may attempt to save samples of the lifeform from the lake (a **Reason + Science** Task with a Difficulty of 2) in order to maintain the production of the vaccine through synthesis.

CONTINUING VOYAGES...

Following are some possible storylines to pursue following the conclusion of this adventure:

- Since the upgrade to the air-filtration system killed off the vaccine, and the parasite activated again, it also became contagious once more. One merchant vessel left Omned Station in that time, and may be carrying the parasite in its infectious form. The characters may be tasked with tracking them down and treating them before the parasite can spread.
- If the true nature of the vaccine and Omned Curse were revealed, Laksit will be expelled from the Omned system. Forced to use other medications to stave off the ravages of the Omned curse, he may become a bitter adversary to the Federation and the characters particularly. Chasing him as he threatens to do them harm may be a follow up adventure. Alternatively, he may serve as a useful NPC to bring back as an antagonist.
- With the Omned system on the border between the Federation and the Talarian Republic, members of the Talarian Republic may view the characters' involvement on Omned III as interfering with a system in Talarian space. A delicate diplomatic situation could arise putting the relationship between the two powers in jeopardy.

