

An adventure for the

# STAR

## TREK THE NEXT GENERATION Roleplaying Game

“The Choice” Written by Allen Shock

### INTRODUCTION

This scenario is designed for the crew of a Starfleet ship. It takes place in the year 2371 (Stardate 48213.7). One of the crew will be faced with a difficult choice, while the others must battle hostile Cardassians.

### BEGINNING:

The character's ship has been sent to survey the Beta Corallis star system, which is located 2 light years from the border of the Cardassian Demilitarized Zone. Starfleet is particularly interested in the fifth planet. The system contains five planets; three are gas giants, one is a Class F planet, essentially an atmosphereless rockball. The fourth planet is Class M. Orbital sensor scans (a Routine Shipboard Systems (Sensors) task) will reveal that the planet is very arid (less than 10% surface water) and contains no significant resources. Another Shipboard Systems (Sensors) task at a Difficulty of Moderate (6) will detect anomalous energy readings on the northern continent. Due to shielding, exact analysis is not possible, but it can be determined it is below the surface. The Captain may wish to (and probably should) send down an Away Team to investigate.

The Away Team will materialize in an area approximately 100 meters from the detected energy source. The area is filled with natural rock formations, caverns and cliffs. Personal Equipment (Tricorder) readings (Difficulty of Challenging (10)) will reveal the energy source to be about 50 meters below them, in one of the caverns ahead. If they try to communicate with the ship, they will find their communicators being jammed. Before they have a chance to try to clear the jamming, they will be attacked. There are three attackers for each character. The assailants are armed with phasers (Perception check at Moderate (7) to note they are Starfleet issue phasers) set on heavy stun. If they are unable to stun all the characters on the first round, some of them will run into a nearby cavern; they are trying to lure the characters into an area where they can be ambushed. If they are successful in stunning all the PC's, those characters will wake up 30 minutes later...but one of their number will be missing!

### UNWELCOME COMPANY

At about the same time that the Away Team is being attacked, ship's sensors will pick up a vessel moving toward the planet. It will be identified as a Cardassian Galor class Warship. Its presence in Federation space is a violation of the Federation-Cardassian Treaty. If hailed, a Cardassian named Gul Takal responds. He says he has come seeking a cell of terrorists who belong to the Maquis, who recently raided a Cardassian outpost. Long-range sensors tracked them to this world. If challenged, Gul Takal will state that since the Federation can't seem to root out these terrorists, the Cardassian Union will employ more efficient methods; his ship is carrying a load of Delta Bombs (sensors can confirm this). He intends to bombard the planet; this would be successful in annihilating anything living on this planet, even if underground. If informed that there is an Away Team on the planet, he will tell the Captain to remove them; if informed that they cannot (the jamming is affecting their sensors, making transport impossible), the Cardassian will say that this is unfortunate, but he will not let this deter him from his mission. He will warn the ship not to interfere, or he will destroy them without hesitation.

The Captain, of course, cannot let this happen. If he hesitates, have someone who makes a Law (Starfleet Regulations) roll remind him that Delta Bombs are an illegal weapon according to numerous treaties, and Starfleet regulations require him to safeguard the lives of his crewmembers on the planet. When informed that they will not be allowed to carry out their mission, the Cardassian will say “Then prepare to die!”

**MEANWHILE, BACK ON THE PLANET...**

The captured character awakens to find himself in an underground cavern. He has no weapons or equipment (including his commbadge). The entrance to the small chamber he is in is blocked by a force field. There is a guard standing on the other side. Give him a few moments to try to think of an escape plan. Then, three people appear outside the force field. Two are human males dressed in civilian clothing. The third will be instantly recognizable to the captured character. A woman, dark hair with a streak of silver, wearing a Starfleet uniform devoid of any insignia. Her name is Aurora Thomas-Commander Aurora Thomas, last the character knew. (For the sake of the adventure, it is assumed that Aurora and the character were romantically involved when they served together; if this is not to the player's liking, establish instead that they were good friends.) She will greet the character with a touch of sadness in her voice. "I didn't expect to see you here." she will say. "Truth to tell, I didn't expect to see any Starfleet people here, since this system is basically worthless, which is why we chose it." If asked who "we" are, she will sigh and say "The Maquis, of course; I run this cell." She will then explain that she resigned her Starfleet commission in 2368 when the Federation signed the treaty with the Cardassians. Korellia V, the world of her birth, was one of the worlds ceded to the Cardassian Union. "500,000 Federation citizens had built that colony by their own blood, sweat, and tears, and the Federation just gave it to the Cardies. My father served at Korellian Station- I was born there. He risked his life countless times keeping the Cardassians from taking the colony-and they just GAVE IT AWAY! I knew then that I could no longer serve in Starfleet. I resigned, drifted for a while...then met someone else like me, a person who had quit Starfleet for the same reason. but he knew about the Maquis. I joined up right away; even if Starfleet wouldn't protect the people, I felt I could." She will also tell the character that she has tangled with a few Starfleet ships since joining the Maquis; her knowledge of tactics has helped her defeat them with a minimum loss of life. The character can feel free (if he wishes to) to engage in her in a moral debate about her actions. She will stand firm. If asked why he was captured, she will smile and say "Two reasons; we know that your ship will find our base; we figured a hostage would be good insurance to get them to allow us to evacuate. Secondly, when I found out you were there, I decided I wanted to see you again...to talk to you. We worked well together once..I thought maybe we could do so again..." At this point, another Maquis will inform Aurora that a Cardassian ship has arrived and is attacking the Starfleet ship! Aurora sees an opportunity here; she orders the crew to their Raider spacecraft. She then invites the character to join them, to help save his ship.

## **NO QUARTER**

The Cardassian warship will power up its weapons and attack immediately upon the Starfleet ship's challenge. Starship Tactics (Federation) roll of Routine (4) will reveal that staying in orbit puts the ship in a bad defensive position. There is an asteroid belt between the fourth and fifth planets that could serve as cover. Conduct combat as normal; it will take one round for the ship to reach the asteroid belt. Evading the Galor and reaching the asteroid belt without being hit requires the Flight Control officer to make a Moderate (7) Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) check. The asteroid belt is fairly dense and the asteroids are in motion; it will require a Moderate (6) check each round in addition to any other maneuvering to avoid impact with an asteroid. Such an impact will do 20 points of damage (roll 1d6: 1-3 Forward shields, 4-6 Aft shields.). Have the characters make a Shipboard Systems (Sensors) test on the second round of movement in the asteroid field. Success detects an antimatter mine! Evasive action must be successful to avoid the mines (Moderate (8)). Each mine that is hit does 25 points of damage to the shields (roll as above for fore or aft). Mines must be checked for every other round while the ship is in the asteroid field. It is possible to shoot the mines at +6 Difficulty due to their size. The Cardassians know where the mines are, and can therefore avoid them. It will also be conducting attacks on the Starfleet ship while this is going on.

## **TO THE RESCUE!**

The Maquis Raider, captained by Aurora, will lift off from the planet. The character who was captured will be offered the Tactical Station ( or some other station appropriate to his abilities). It won't be tough to pick up where the two ships are; Aurora will order the raider into the asteroid field after the Cardassian ship. The Raider is subject to the same rolls and Difficulties for mines and asteroids as listed above. ideally, the Maquis ship will not arrive until the situation aboard the Starfleet ship has become desperate. Aurora will not fire on the Starfleet ship even if it fires on her ship; she will concentrate her efforts on the Cardassian ship. Aurora is a Tactical genius and will employ very unorthodox strategies. It is also clear that she means to destroy the Cardassians. She will order attacks that are designed to kill the ship's crew. The character must choose whether to obey those orders or not. If the Cardassian ship takes over half its

Structural Points in damage, or loses it's shields and weapons, it will attempt to escape. Aurora will order pursuit; it will require an Opposed persuasion test with a Difficulty of 10 to talk her out of this.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

If all goes well, and the Cardassian ship is defeated or destroyed, Aurora will contact the Starfleet ship and offer assistance. The Captain will have to decide at this point what to do about the Maquis ship. On the one hand, they are wanted criminals. On the other hand, they probably saved the lives of everyone on the ship. If the Captain asks about his missing officer, he will be allowed to speak to him. Before he does, though, Aurora will ask to speak to him. "You're good; we could use someone like you. Make no mistake, it's no adventure; we're hunted by both sides, and we'll never get any medals. But someone has to stop the Cardassians, and the Federation has lost the will to do so. You can join us, or we'll send you back to your ship. Your choice."

Joining, of course, means the character is effectively out of the campaign, as well as now being considered an enemy of the Federation.

If the character returns to his ship, the moment of truth arrives; will the Captain let the Maquis ship go? If he tries to apprehend them, it's another space battle, this time with a Maquis raider. (It is possible that the Starfleet ship will be too damaged from the fight with the Cardassians to even be able to stop the Maquis.) If not, and it is needed, the Maquis ship will tractor beam the Starfleet ship out of the asteroid field, using their sensor logs to retrace a safe route. They will then warp out of the system.

### **REWARDS AND SUCH**

Experience Points:

if the characters survive the adventure : 1 pt.

If the characters prevent the Cardassians from bombing the planet : 1 pt.

If the characters defeat the Cardassian without Maquis help: 2 pts.

if the characters defeat the Cardassians with Maquis help: 1 pt.

if the characters defeat the Maquis ship: 1 pt.

Renown:

If the characters defeat the Cardassians without Maquis help: +3 Skill Renown

If the characters defeat the Cardassians with Maquis help: + 2 Skill Renown

if the characters apprehend the Maquis: +2 Discipline Renown

If the characters allow the Maquis to escape: -2 Discipline

If the captured character chooses to join the Maquis, he gains the Wanted disadvantage (but not the points thereof), and -10 Discipline. He also leaves the campaign as an active character (but might be good for a Maquis campaign when the DS9 game comes out.)

## NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Name:** Aurora Thomas **Species:** Human **Type:** former Commander in Starfleet

### ATTRIBUTES

Fitness 3  
Vitality +1  
Coordination 3  
Reaction +1  
Intellect 2  
Presence 4  
Willpower +1  
Psi 0

### SKILLS

Administration (Starfleet) 2 (3), (Starship) (4)  
Athletics (Jumping) 2 (3), (Rugby) (3)  
Command (Combat Leadership) 2 (3), (Starship) (4)  
Computer (Research) 1 (2)  
Culture (Human) 2 (3)  
Dodge 2  
Energy Weapon (Phaser) 1 (2)  
History (Federation) 1 (2), (Human) (2)  
Knowledge (Cardassian Technology) 1 (2), (Maquis Operations) (2)  
Language  
Federation Standard 3  
Law (Starfleet Regulations) 2 (3)  
Personal Equipment (Tricorder) 1 (2)  
Planetside Survival (Urban) 1 (2)  
Shipboard Systems (Command) 3 (4), (Ops Mgmt) (4), (Sensors) (4), (Flight Control) (4),  
(Tactical) (4)  
Space Sciences (Astronomy) 1 (2), (Stellar Cartography) (2)  
Starship Tactics (Cardassian) 2 (4), (Federation) (4), (Maquis) (4)  
Unarmed Combat (Starfleet Martial Arts) 2 (3)  
Vehicle Operations (Shuttlecraft) 1 (3)  
World Knowledge (Korellia V) 1 (2)

### TRAITS

Contact (Starfleet Lieutenant John Thomas, her brother) +1, Contact (Starfleet Captain Alan Thomas, her father), Promotion +8 (Commander), Dept. Head (Ops) +4 (formerly), Rival (Commander Audrey Jones), Intolerant (Cardassians) -2, Vengeful (Cardassians) -3, Guilt (over leaving Starfleet) -1, Wanted (by the Federation and Cardassians) -4, Species Enemy (Cardassians) -4

### RENOWN: 46

Aggression: 18, Discipline: -12, Initiative: -2, Openness: 2, Skill: 12

### COURAGE: 5

### RESISTANCE: 4

### WOUND LEVELS: 4/4/4/4/4/0

**PERSONALITY/BACKGROUND:** Aurora was a Starfleet Brat who spent most of her life on a Starfleet orbital station at Korellia IV, a colony world which is now part of the Cardassian Union thanks to the treaty the Federation signed with them. Aurora resigned her commission in 2368 because she considers the treaty a betrayal of Federation ideals. She drifted for awhile until she met another former Starfleet officer who had resigned for similar reasons; Chakotay. He recruited her into the Maquis, where her command abilities quickly elevated her to a position of authority.

She is a brilliant commander, but sometimes lets her hatred of Cardassians blind her to the right thing to do.

**Equipment:** Starfleet Phaser II, Starfleet communicator, Starfleet Tricorder.