

Hidden Secrets

Fathomless Campaign Episode 8

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Introduction

Adventure 8 is meant to be played by a Gamemaster (GM) and 3-8 players using the pre-generated characters. To run this adventure, the GM should be familiar with the adventure itself, as well as the **Star Trek Adventures** roleplaying rules.

To play, you will need the following:

- At least two 20-sided dice (d20) per player, and several d6s to serve as Challenge Dice
- A set of chips or tokens for Determination
- A set of chips or tokens for Threat
- A set of chips or tokens, or some other manner of marker, for group Momentum
- The pre-generated character sheets, and a starship sheet
- The **Star Trek Adventures** core rulebook

Synopsis

The ship-based crew observe a ship of The Mindful entering the nebula from the last episode. Pashform was alerted to the ship breaking away and entering the nebula. It appears that a splinter faction of The Mindful is going into a pocket system within the nebula for some reason. Pashform and his people don't have the available resources to go after them as they are concentrated on scavenging what resources they can and saving the people from the ship that exited the nebula. The crew can go investigate where the ship went and what it is up to, but first they will have to modify their shielding to be able to safely enter the nebula.

Scene 1: Entering the Nebula

Information

Pashform will tell the crew about a possibly rogue faction of The Mindful calling themselves the Reshaped. They have taken over a couple of ships and have headed for a small pocket system within the Magna Oscura nebula. Pashform doesn't know exactly what they are up to but they are definitely not up to anything good.

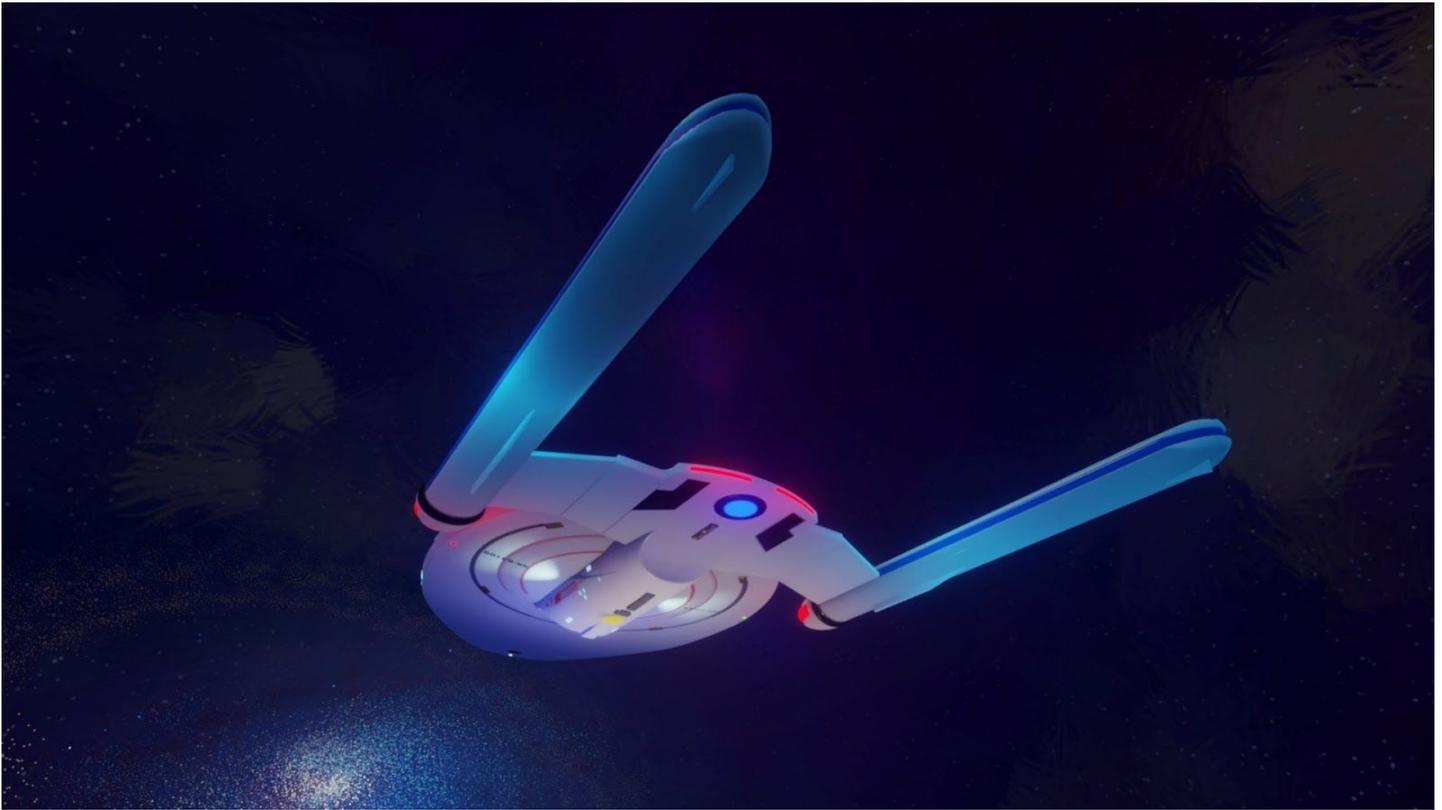
There is a network of probes that they use as navigation points in order to find the location of the pocket system within the nebula.

Pashform will ask the crew for their help if they do not offer it. He will also help, if asked, by giving information on how to adjust deflector shielding to protect against the effects of the outer edge of the nebula. As an alternative, Pashform may accompany the crew into the nebula to find out what is happening.

Shields Up!

The crew will need to adjust the shields appropriately so that they can safely travel into the Magna Oscura Nebula. The roll that they will need to succeed at will be dependent upon how much information they have at hand. A scan of the specific harmonics of Fathomless ships shields will help as will information that Pashform can give.

GM Guidance: *This is a perfect opportunity to have players start building momentum for this episode by scanning the Fathomless' ships shield frequencies at a Difficulty of 1.*



Shield Modifications

This will be a **Control + Engineering** (assisted by the ship) roll to make the modifications necessary to help the ship safely enter the nebula.

- **Difficulty 5:** With just the information that they have gathered so far, making modifications to the shields will be quite difficult.
- **Difficulty 3:** By using the information that Pashform gives them or by scanning the shield harmonics of Fathomless ships they can significantly reduce the difficulty of the task to modify their shields.
- **Difficulty 2:** By using both the data from Pashform and scanning the Fathomless ships an engineer should be able to figure out how to modify the shield harmonics correctly.

Following the Trail

GM Guidance: *If the players plan to enter the nebula without making the necessary shield modifications you should have the nebula do damage against the shields and eventually the ship once shields are down. The effect should increase as they get further into the nebula making them realize that the nebula is not to be underestimated. Start at 2 damage to shields (Ship resistance +2 damage) then continue to increase by one point of damage every few minutes as they continue to get deeper into the nebula.*

The players can enter the nebula traveling at $\frac{1}{4}$ impulse speed and scan for the probes that work as a path to the pocket system mentioned within the nebula. This is a relatively easy task requiring an **Insight/Reason & Science** roll using ships sensors at **Difficulty 1**. Multiple complications early on

should have the ship getting turned around and heading back out of the nebula. Multiple complications further into the nebula should increase the difficulty of finding the next probe in the series. If they become extremely lost they can send out probes in multiple directions to help find their path again. This should be a series of about 5-6 checks to get to the pocket system.

GM Guidance: *Are your players breezing through the nebula and full on momentum? Spend threat to create conditions that might pose a threat to the ship during this sequence. Use Threat to create complications and emphasize the treacherous flight conditions and risk of losing their way. Add in flight complications requiring a piloting check or make it harder to find the next probe. There are very few places to spend Threat in this episode, so this is a good place to use it for a bit of thrill if they are doing quite well.*

Scene 2: Pocket System

Star

The pocket system within the nebula has a Yellow G-Class giant as its central star. The nebula surrounds the system but does not encroach on it. The nebula appears to be bright yellow surrounding this system as the light from the sun reflects off of it. It has 6 planets orbiting the sun, one of which is class-M (the 4th planet from the star).



Planet

Early scans of the planet (**Difficulty 1**) will show signs of pollution from an industrializing nation that is deep into an Iron Age. When they get closer, scanning the planet will show them a population of about 4-5 million humanoids untouched by Cryptic Matter. Deeper scans (**Difficulty 2-3**), taken from orbit, will reveal advanced technology hidden in a cavern system within a mountain range away from population centers. No transmissions are detected coming from the planet.

Poposa

The race on the planet below has no ties to the Fathomless, though the Fathomless have had contact with them and traded with them for food. The Poposa will be difficult for the crew to get a good image of if they want to insert themselves into the society dressed and looking like them (because there are no transmissions to get images from). The players are not meant to pursue contact with the Poposa as they are a pre-warp, industrializing civilization. If the players want to explore the race they may, but remind them that it is taking away time from their primary mission to find the Reshaped. If they spend too much time with the Poposa skip to the Caverns cliffhanger at the end of the module.

Poposa Society: *Poposans are a humanoid race that have predominantly purple hair and eyes with a large number of dark freckles upon their skin. Their hair and eyes tend to match many of the plants found on the planet. Those born without purple hair are shunned in the society and seen as different where purple is normal (regardless of the shade). These people have just begun to form industry with large factories starting to produce everyday goods using steam and other fuels for mechanization. Their religion and philosophies are primarily based around their Sun as they have no stars in the sky. Their nights are fairly well lit as the nebula reflects a good amount of the light back at the planet's dark side.*

Workshop

The advanced technology is hiding in a system of caves and mines in the upper reaches of a mountain range. It is difficult to see what is actually there with sensors as the mountain range and cryptic matter are disrupting sensors. An away team can beam down just outside of the old mine, but beaming into the cavern is considered dangerous as it is difficult to maintain a transporter lock. There are no lifesigns evident when players scan the caves, though there are Poposa lifesigns nearby.

You may wish to have the characters beam down nearby and

have to have them work to get to the mine with the workshop without encountering Poposans. It would not be recommended for them to take a shuttle as it would be noticed by the Poposa in the area.

The team of players, using tricorders (**Difficulty 1 Insight/Reason & Science** roll or increase the **Difficulty to 2** if they have to find a way to avoid a Poposa encampment), will find an abandoned mine nearby that houses the detectable advanced technology detected by the ship. About 1000 meters within they will find a large workshop area. The workshop is defended by 1-2 emplaced weapons (GM discretion). This is a perfect opportunity for the GM to use threat in order to roll extra dice as a Task Roll of 9 will rarely succeed without extra dice.

Weapon Emplacement

STRESS: 9

RESISTANCE: 2

WEAPONS: Proficient: Task Roll 9

- **Beam (Theta Radiation):** Ranged, 4 ▲ Lethal

Workshop Description: *The cavern opens up to a large area that appears to have been turned into some sort of workshop. There are a number of tools and pieces of electronics scattered around the various work surfaces of this workshop. Lighting is dim, but available. A large worktable in the middle appears to have been able to hold and construct a device that was over 3 meters long and 2 meters wide. The caverns continue from here, but not the light.*

Players may scan the equipment and workshop with their tricorders in order to try to work out details about the workshop. Players should roll using **Insight/Reason and Science/Engineering** at a **Difficulty 2** to determine the basics of what was being constructed here. Multiple science and engineering based players may contribute to this roll.

Succeeding at a **Difficulty 2** allows them to determine that a form space-based particle emitter was being constructed here, and possibly multiples.

Additional momentum generated by the roll can be spent to answer the following questions:

- **What kind of particles are being produced?**
W-Particles
- **What is being used to generate the power in the lab?**
The power appears to be coming from a series of cables that lead deeper into the mountain. (Further scans to get information deeper into the mountain appear to be blocked or shielded).
- **What kind of space capabilities did this device have?**
Thrusters (leading them to believe it might be some sort of probe or satellite).
- **Was anything else being produced here?** Yes, but it is difficult to make out what as the last major project is the most apparent.

Scene 3: Caverns

Going further into the cavern will activate the cliffhanger for the next episode.

Cliffhanger: As the team moves further into the cavern a loud sound of motors begins. A large surge of power is detected on tricorders and the cavern begins to shake. Portions of the mine deeper within start to collapse and lights begin to flicker and cut out. For those not within the cavern, a continuous beam is seen shooting from the mountain top at the sun.

Let the players on the planet know that contact with their ship was lost when the beam activated. Players onboard the ship will see the beam fire from the planet directly at the sun. Again, communications and transporter locks are temporarily lost as the beam activates.

Stat Blocks

Pashform (Mindful Leader) (Major NPC)

Cryptic Matter Scientist

ATTRIBUTES

CONTROL 10

FITNESS 10

PRESENCE 09

DARING 09

INSIGHT 08

REASON 11

DISCIPLINES

COMMAND 02

SECURITY 01

SCIENCE 03

CONN 01

ENGINEERING 02

MEDICINE 02

FOCUSES: Cautious: Science, Field Medic,

STRESS: 11

RESISTANCE: 1

WEAPONS:

- **Antimatter Burst:** Ranged, 5 ⚡, Size 1H, Lethal,
- **Unarmed Strike:** Melee, 3 ⚡, Size 1H, Knockdown, Nonlethal

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Antimatter Burst:** Pashform is one of a few Fathomless that have learned to control the antimatter within them. They are able to expel a couple of atoms of antimatter and fling them at a target.

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