

STAR TREK

EPISODE 11: Q IS FOR QUARENTINE

"What was once known becomes unknown. And, in this golden age of discovery, new heroes are forged as they explore strange new worlds, seek new life, and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before."

2269.245.5: EN ROUTE TO MARDUK SYSTEM, CAPTAIN'S LOG

We have been called away from surveying the otherwise unremarkable Troth system to investigate the loss of contact with two Starfleet vessels, Dehli and Potempkin. Starfleet's last communication from the recently launched Potempkin occurred ten days ago, the same day the Lincoln-class laboratory ship, Dehli issued their last communique. Admittedly, this one is a bit personal; Captain Dennis Martin Flinn, of the Potempkin, is an old colleague and friend of mine. Knowing how dangerous this region of space can be, I cannot help but fear the worst.

[Roleplaying.]

Traveling at Warp 8, it will take Antares 6 days, 9 hours to reach the Marduk system. During this time, the crew can do as much preliminary investigation into the disappearance of these two vessels as they wish. Unfortunately, aside from classification, mission assignment, received logs, and crew manifest, very little information is available.

Potempkin is a new Constitution-class Cruiser, birthed into service two months after Antares. Designed along similar concepts, it is intended for the same deep space exploration space missions. Captained by Dennis Martin Flinn, an old friend (actually romantic friend from Academy days) of Tigan, he has a record with a penchant for taking chances and overcoming near-impossible odds.

Assigned to assist the Potempkin's Genesis mapping was the Lincoln-class Laboratory starship, Dehli. Captained by Carol Marcus, an insatiable investigator, Dehli had been refitted for the greater stresses imposed by the Genesis Expanse. Additionally, if the crew has a telepath make a personal link with a fellow Betazed telepath named Ajax, assigned as Dehli's counselor, either as a family member or old relationship.

The two vessels had a shared mission assignment, one identical to Antares' assignment: explore, remap, and reclaim Starfleet holdings within the Genesis Expanse. Their logs show their launch from Starbase 47 (where Potempkin had been built and Dehli had been stationed) and their subsequent surveying of systems Nesburn, Tammeron, O'Bryan, and Benecia before heading to investigate the Betreka Nebula and Marduk system.

Initial surveying of Marduk shows a system consisting of eight planets (three gas giants, four lifeless rocks, and one anomalous world called Planet Q) neighboring the re-birthed Betreka Nebula. According to both starships' last report, the Nebula and the anomalous world exhibited strong energy readings Captain Marcus and Flinn had taken to calling "Q-wave radiation". Their last log indicated that they were moving in for closer examinations due to the fact that Q-wave radiation plays havoc with sensors.

CHAPTER TWO: IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

[Roleplaying and action. Scene Aspects: PERSONAL STAKE, Q-WAVE RADIATION [P]]

The system (Marduk) consists of eight planets, three gas giants, four lifeless rocks, and one anomaly: a satellite-sized rock covered in a thick (miles-thick) layer of anomalous gas and perpetually "re-birthing" planet. In essence, "Planet Q" (as it was originally called when first surveyed nearly 100 years previous) is continually undergoing the "Genesis Event". From a scientific point of view, this is a unique opportunity to bear witness to the sheer power of the Genesis Event in a localized format. The Marduk system is situated very close to the Betreka Nebula which is, miraculously, re-forming. Potempkin, adrift on minimal power, is orbiting the anomalous planet, Dehli is nowhere to be found, although subspace wake (residual micro-variations in subspace left behind by warp-capable vessels utilizing sublight drives) point towards the Nebula.

The entire region is bathed in an unknown radiation that causes some concern about sensor and transporter reliability. As such, Tigan wants things done "the old fashioned way".

As intriguing as Planet Q's perpetual Genesis re-birthing is, it is not the primary concern of Antares' current mission, the two Starfleet vessels and their crew are. Therefore, with two points to investigate simultaneously, Tigan wants an engineering and scientific Away Team to head over to Potempkin in a shuttle. Meanwhile, Antares, and the rest of the crew, will investigate the Betreka Nebula and try and hunt down Dehli.

Potempkin turns out to be a ghost ship. Initially, no one can be found aboard, and tricorder readings are sporadic and fluctuating, lending credence to Tigan's declaration of befuddled sensors. Life support is about the only thing operating, as power is so minimal. The Away Team will have to split its attention between Engineering, Med Lab, and the Bridge, in order to facilitate repairs and access medical records and the ship's library.

First, Engineering will have to restore operating power. Full power is out of the question; it looks as though the ship was shorted out by a tremendous power surge, akin to an older computer being too close to a lightning strike. Additionally, the odd radiation has a corrosive-like effect on the circuitry and cabling of the starship. Far from instantaneous, it has been saturated in the energy long enough that numerous conduits and consoles have been rendered inoperable and are in need of replacement, so many that full operations simply cannot be restored.

Once a degree of power is restored, however, the portion of the team on the bridge can get enough juice to attempt to access the ship's library. In the Med Bay they discover an experiment meant to brew an inoculation against the radiation. Once power is restored, they can also begin accessing the ship's medical logs.

Meanwhile, aboard Antares, sensors pick up the Dehli inside the expanding Nebula. With careful piloting and precision targeting, Antares should be able to lock its tractor beam on the drifting lab ship and pull it free of the Nebula. Once free of the Nebula, external scans show the lab's shuttle launch bay standing wide open, the ship bereft of atmosphere.

CHAPTER THREE: GENESIS CURSE

[Roleplaying and action. Scene Aspects: GHOST SHIP, Q-WAVE RADIATION [P]]

All shuttles are magnetically docked and accounted for, however. It appears as if the crew simply opened the doors and were sucked out.

Not long after the retrieval of Dehli, a large mass is registered via sensors to be fast approaching Antares from the Nebula. Tigan disengages Dehli and orders yellow alert. Any empaths or telepaths begin to feel incredibly uncomfortable. Very quickly, however, it is discovered that the mass is not a single mass, but a collection of smaller beings making a beeline to the ship. Image magnification shows them to be large, purple, starfish-like creatures.

Back aboard Potempkin, with power operational, accessed medical logs detail a series of escalating issues dealing with the anomalous radiation, called Q-Wave Radiation. Apparently, it had a mutagenic effect on a cellular-level, warping flesh, muscle, and bone. This killed dozens of crew members in a matter of hours of exposure. The situation continued to get worse while the chief medical officer scrambled to find a cure. An inoculation was thought discovered, but there are no following logs, so the outcome is unknown.

Accessing the ship's library discovers the same as above, plus in an attempt to safeguard the ship, the Captain ordered the shields modulated and bolstered. Somehow, this reacted negatively with the energy emanating from Planet Q and resulted in a backlash of power, which "shorted" out the ship. With shields gone, the effects of the Q-Wave Radiation magnified a hundred-fold. Within minutes, the entire crew was suffering the cellular mutation.

At this point, the door to the captain's cabin whisks open and a horrifically mutated version of the Captain slither-crawls on out and attacks. Simultaneously, drawn to the reactivated engine room, a mass of conglomerated beings floats and swirls like a fleshy tornado and begins to attack Engineering. Finally, those in Med Lab gets to meet the old doctor, who has now mutated into a tentacle-headed frog-like creature.

At Antares, the starfish creatures glom on the shields, but the crew begins to suffer severe telepathic attacks. Empaths and telepaths are immune to the attacks, although they hear hundreds of voices, including their old colleague! An empath or telepath can extend their "immunity" to one other being except for Tigan (who is immediately incapacitated in the mental assault). This leaves a skeleton crew to deal with the telepathic starfish.

It should be relatively easy to determine that they are the old crew of Dehli, which can be made obvious by having the ship's empath/telepath go into a telepathically-induced flashback to earlier days (like back at the Academy), and meeting with Ajax and their resulting friendship/romance.

It is also possible that someone will notice that the creatures group up on the shields in a relative position to the ship's empath, a strong indication that they have linked to them. No amount of piloting or weapons' use will eliminate or deter the telepathic creatures.

Aboard Potempkin, the Away Team will have to deal with the mutant monsters and fight their way back to the shuttle to escape; the ship is a lost cause.

CHAPTER FOUR: NECESSARY

[Roleplaying and action. Scene Aspects: PAST RELATIONS, Q-WAVE RADIATION [P]]

Aboard Antares it is discovered that the telepathic "screams" of the starfish are killing the rest of the crew and something must be done swiftly. Unless some other means can be discovered to deal with the problem, the best bet is to transport the empath to Dehli, who will then have to set the starship to self-destruct once the starfish fly over to the Dehli (and in through the open launch bays where the empath could get an odd, intimate moment when a single starfish approaches her and touches their mind. It is, of course, Ajax. Once Once-Ajax realizes what is happening, by "seeing it" from the empath's perspective, he makes it known that he will "hold the others here" until they, and their crew, have made their getaway. With the ship set to blow up, the empath transports back, helm moves Antares well out of the effect, and Dehli blows up. Immediately, the telepathic cries cease and crew of Antares begins to recover.

Once all is taken care of, Antares retrieves the shuttle and Away Team, then leaves a beacon at the system warning all others to stay away and Antares leaves.

[Rewards: Q is for Quarentine accolade]

BETREKA-DEHLI STARFISH

These poor souls are the amalgamation of Dehli's crew with Ajax's telepathic powers, mutated and augmented by Q-wave radiation re-birthed Betreka Nebula. They can survive in hard vacuum for, seemingly, indefinite periods. They otherwise exhibit strength and endurance within the human spectrum. The Betreka-Dehli starfish are potent telepaths, although it would seem they have no malicious intent. Their terror, confusion, and sorrow at their warped flesh, however, makes these powers a real danger to non-telepaths.



ASPECTS	Q-WAVE MUTANT	TELEPATHIC MONSTER	THE REAL VICTIMS
	Abilities	Agility: 2 Craft: 0 Deception: 0	Endurance: 3 SPACE CAPABLE Knowledge: 1 Empathy: 0 SHATTERED MINDS
	Advantages	Immunity (Hard Vacuum) Natural Armor (DR -2) Natural Telepath (Psi 6; Emotional Attacks WR +2; HALLUCINATIONS)	Perception: 2 NEURAL SENSING Reasoning: 1 Persuasion: 2
STRESS	Physical	Willpower: 4 ALIEN MIND	Resources: 0
	Composure	<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; gap: 5px;"> ■■■■■■ </div> <div style="display: flex; gap: 5px;"> ■■■■ </div> </div>	

Q-WAVE MUTANTS

Originally the crew of the Constitution-class Cruiser, Potempkin, Q-wave mutants are the result of carbon-based lifeforms' prolonged exposure to the cellular mutating effects of Q-wave radiation. These pathetic monstrosities are no longer human and, in many cases, barely recognizable as having stemmed from human-stock. In many cases, these nightmarish creatures exhibit capabilities beyond human potential.

While there are many varieties of Q-wave mutants, all utilize the same basic stat block. All attack with tentacles, bites, and claws. They defend via their alien morphology and spongy hide. Each moves differently; some slither, some crawl, some hop, some hover.



ASPECTS

Q-WAVE MUTANT

HORRIFIC MONSTER

HUMAN NO MORE

ABILITIES

Agility: 2

Endurance: 8

Perception: 2 Strength: 6

MONSTROUS PHYSIOLOGY

INHUMAN

STRENGTH

Craft: 0

Knowledge: 1

Reasoning: 1 Willpower: 4

ALIEN MIND

Deception: 0 Empathy: 0

HATRED OF ALL LIFE

Persuasion: 4 Resources: 0

TERRIFYING PRESENCE

ADVANTAGES

Counter Attack (make attack if melee defense generates Spin)

Horribly Scary (+2 Persuasion to frighten; for 1 FP may make

Composure fear attack against all in zone)

Natural Armor (DR -4)

Natural Weapons (WR+2; Reach: 1 zone)

Stalker (+2 Hide rolls)

STRESS

Physical

Composure