

# STAR TREK

## EPISODE 13: GARDEN OF EDEN

*"Unknown dangers brew at Federation doorsteps. 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."*

### 2270.8.25: FEDERATION STARBASE 621; EDGE OF GENESIS EXPANSE

Due to a number of recent, unexplained Federation starship disappearances, the Antares has been recalled from the portion of the Expanse it had been assigned and re-assigned. Ironically, we are in the same galactic "neighborhood" as the Badlands and Gamma K-7, where the conflict that originated the Genesis Event took place. According to Starfleet, four Federation vessels have gone missing, the USS Defiant, USS Lexington, USS Polaris, and USS Shelley. We have been tasked, along with our traditional exploration role, of finding them. Our first destination is the Lamemda system, USS Shelley's last known location.

[Roleplaying.]

The Antares is given a new sub-mission while exploring the Genesis Expanse: several other Federation starships have gone missing, and Antares is tasked with locating them, if possible. The missing vessels are: USS Defiant (Constitution-class), USS Lexington (Miranda-class), USS Polaris (Detroit-class), and USS Shelley (Oberth-class).

Their first point of investigation is the Lamemda System, where USS Shelley had last reported. Investigating, they pick up a faint distress signal originating from an uncharted system (Star 1170), which turns out to be a small yellow star with five planets, the third of which is Class M with abundant vegetation. USS Shelley is in orbit of the third planet, commanded by Captain Robert Wesley. Scans indicate only a skeleton crew aboard USS Shelley. As Captain Wesley quickly explains and apologizes (via radio, claiming visual technical issues), the automated distress call went out when the crew failed to post logs for over a week; the ship's engineers have since shut it down. Antares' counselor can detect emotional falseness in his voice -- it is clear he is hiding something.

Wesley apologizes for any shortness, excusing his own counselor (and most of his crew) for having picked up an infection and warns against traveling planetside for the same reason. He excuses his lack of contact due to being overwhelmingly busy and seems to get a little irritated at the notion of not checking in with "Mom and Dad". He refuses any further interference from Antares.

When Antares attempts a deeper, more thorough scan, Shelley raises its shields, baffling sensors and making readings a challenge. Only a psychic has a hope of getting through, telepathically, and the only recipient with whom she can make contact is USS Shelley's counselor, a human female named Miko Tram. Miko informs the psychic of being a prisoner aboard her own ship, that the rest of the crew, those aboard and those planetside, have been infected by a parasitoidal fungus. Further communication is then blocked; according to sensor scans, that deck of the ship has just been saturated with melorazine, a powerful sedative. Captain Tigan orders the retrieval of Shelley's master codes.

## CHAPTER TWO: UNIVESAL MIND

[Roleplaying and Action. Aspects: RISK OF INFECTION, THEY'RE STILL STARFLEET!]

Simultaneously, Antares receives a distress call from planetside where Dr. Uv'ren (Vulcan) reports requesting additional personnel and aid, as things have gotten "complicated". Once the master codes for Shelley are acquired (Alpha-Wesley 42-1137 Wesley-Bravo), Tigan will order two Away Teams, one security (which will be heading, via shuttle, to USS Shelley, to board and, if nothing else, extract Miko Tram) and one medical/science (which will be going planetside to "assist" and investigate the planetside operations).

In both cases, the Away Teams encounter "vege-zombies", the crew members infected by the fungus (called *Cryptococcus universalis*) that strips conscious control from the victim, overriding rational decision-making and motivation and replacing it with the sentient plant's motivation of limitless propagation. The vege-zombies react violently to any attempts to hinder them, are immune to regular stun (heavy stun works on them) and other "low" phaser settings (higher thermal ratings work wonders on them, but that also involves killing fellow Federation officers and ship's crew).

Normally, so long as *C. universalis* has not determined that the Away Teams are a threat, they will be ignored. When the Away Teams have caused enough trauma, *C. universalis* reacts with terrible vengeance. To represent this, place 10 green glass beads (or other marker) at the center of the table. In either location, as vege-zombies are "taken" out by heavy stun shots, remove one glass bead. If a vege-zombie is removed via moderate or higher thermal settings, remove two glass beads and add an orange one to the mix. If the green beads are ever completely removed or three or more orange beads are added, *C. universalis* retaliates. Increase all vege-zombie offensive rolls by +2 as they attack with a fueled strength.

Planetside, about twenty minutes after the Away Team arrives and is investigating the infection, the science team there manages to erect a transporter inhibitor, effectively trapping the team on the planet while they contend with the issue. For the planetside Away Team, their mission grows even more difficult when *C. universalis* attacks with fully converted, previously infected fauna; huge, rhino-like masses of fungus covering vegetation-rotted bones and withered muscle tear into any fortification the Away Team designs at a critical moment, opening their station up to immediate attack. The creatures collapse and disintegrate after such a violent impact (they have been infected for over 10 months), showering the zone with *C. universalis* spores (so those without protection are at risk of infection). Be sure to hammer the planetside Away Team, forcing them to stay on the move as vege-zombies pursue them throughout the science facility. This will make working on a cure incredibly difficult as any work will have to be done on the move or in short spurts.

Aboard USS Shelley, the Away Team must contend with a vine overgrown interior of the starship (the vines "move" to attack by filling corridors with clouds of infecting spores; the clouds last only seconds, but the vines continually produce them, so the "attacks" are continuous while the offending Away Teams are present. Additionally, there are the 34 vege-zombies on board

## CHAPTER THREE: FUNGUS AMONG US

[Roleplaying and Action.]

that do their best to infect the Away Team, or stop them by using the six phaser IIs with which the crew is equipped (otherwise, they carry only phaser Is). Miko has locked and sealed herself in a small lab, activated (and maintains) an atmosphere scrubber, and wears a sealed suit (she is taking no chances) and has improvised a flamethrower, in addition to the phaser I she carries. Rescuing her is of top priority; it is hoped that her early experiences might inform Antares' crew as to how to deal with the infection.

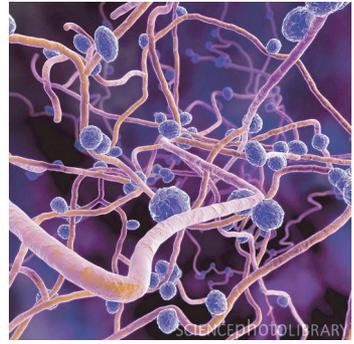
Aboard Shelley, things should be run with the same tension as it is planetside. Be sure to take advantage of the fact that Shelley's crew know the layout and capabilities far better than Antares' crew. So use ambush points, Jefferies' tube crawlways, and constant attack via gas and filtration systems in addition to transplanted and infected vines and spore clouds. At any given time, the Shelley crew can attack with the starship's Systems rating to signify any of this, particularly in placing various Aspects and blocks on the scene (DARKNESS, MELORAZINE GAS ATTACK, SPORE CLOUDS, TANGLING VINES, and so forth).

Total episode success involves finding a cure to *C. universalis*, saving the crew, saving USS Shelley, and hitting the planet with General Order 24.

[Rewards: Garden of Eden Accolade]

# CRYPTOCOCCUS UNIVERSALIS

A parasitoid fungus originating on the planet, Star-117-3, also known as “Jungle Hell”. The fungus, in its natural state, appears as a greenish-brown mass, typically about 18.2 cm in diameter with a slightly “fuzzy” epidermis. *C. universalis* growths are often found on the underside of 117-3’s massive, broad leaves and transports itself to potential hosts via gravity induction.



Victims of *C. universalis* show symptoms via significantly increased body heat, rising approximately 8° Celsius (averaging 105°c. in human victims). Additionally, once *C. universalis* has taken root in a host, greenish fungal growths begin to emerge at any opening on the body. Most often these are publically visible as patchy spots at the ears, nostrils, eyes, and mouth of the infected host.

The infected lose the ability to make rational decisions or reach “typical” conclusions. Their motivations are based entirely on the continued propagation of *C. universalis*. A host will typically ignore outsiders and non-infected unless directed by the parent fungus or significantly threatened. A subtle “hive mind” seems to connect *C. universalis* hosts, enabling them to act cohesively without external means of communication or common language. This cohesion extends to all infected hosts, regardless of class. To further assist with a host’s survival, *C. universalis* deadens nerve responses, rendering them immune to pain. Hosts retain tool use and intelligence, making them dangerous.

Infections are spread through bite or spore inhalation. Spores cannot survive in standard atmosphere for more than a few seconds.

## ASPECTS

PARASITOID FUNGUS

VEGE-ZOMBIE

C. UNIVERSALIS MUST SPREAD!

## ABILITIES

Agility: 2

Endurance: 3

Perception: 2 Strength: 4

Craft: 2

DEADENED NERVES

Reasoning: 2 Willpower: 4

Deception: 2

Knowledge: 2

HOST MEMORIES

Empathy: 2

Persuasion: 2 Resources: 2

EVERYTHING IS A

POTENTIAL HOST

## ADVANTAGES

Trauma Resistant (immune to 0 FP phaser settings and minor consequences)

## STRESS

Physical ■■■■■■■■

Composure ■■■■■■