

Paradises, Tactical Considerations Thereof

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by [SevereAnnoyance](#)

Summary

No Starfleet mission that starts with the observation "This planet is a paradise" is going to go well, and Lieutenant Fult has been around long enough to know it.

"This planet is stunning," enthused one of the botanists on the away team.

"A real paradise," agreed one of the geologists.

Lieutenant Fult, head of security on the Federation starship *Interpreter*, sighed a heavy and world-weary sigh and drew her phaser.

Captain Chester paused in her admiration of the green grass and tall trees and picturesque mountains to raise an eyebrow at the diminutive Tellarite.

Fult let out a huff of irritation. "Captain, you're the historian. You know what always happens when a Starfleet crew is on a new planet and someone calls it paradise. I don't care if you call it superstition, or anecdotal, it's happened far too often to me and to everyone I know to take chances."

Chester might have been a rookie captain, but foolhardy she was not, and a far more experienced officer having a sudden fit of paranoia was not something she was going to ignore. She glanced around at the away team and said, "All right everyone. Stay together and don't wander off. Lieutenant Fult is right—this is still an uncharted planet, and we don't want to take it for granted."

As the away team pulled back together, slightly sheepish, and, in the case of the scientists, pretty annoyed, she tilted her head back to Fult. "That said Lieutenant, I'm not sure the phaser is necessary. Alertness is good, but stopping to smell the roses is a fundamental sentient pleasure. Especially after months in space."

"Roses on *your* planet have venomous hostile insects," said Fult, speaking from experience. She reluctantly holstered the phaser, but kept a hand near it.

Ten minutes later, when the stun field flattened the entire landing party, it was cold comfort that the phaser wouldn't have been much good in any case. She didn't even get to say *I told you so*, before unconsciousness claimed all of them.

Fult *did* say it once everything was settled. It turned out that the reason the planet was such a lovely untouched paradise was that the inhabitants of the barren moon three planets further into the system had designated it a wildlife refuge for a species of amoeba that lived in soil and was horribly sensitive to temperature and pressure.

It took two days of the away team sitting in a small cell with deeply inadequate plumbing before Chester talked their way out of being tried for violations of the local endangered species protection act, and once they were finally on the shuttle on the way home she hardly needed to get the full sentence out of her mouth. She turned and looked at the Captain who gave her an utterly exhausted look back, and said, "You have a point, Lieutenant. Every paradise has its snakes."

"Amoebas," said the morose voice of the botanist from the back of the shuttle, and they headed for home.

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