

## "Well Behaved Women..."

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1174) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1174>.

Rating:	<a href="#">General Audiences</a>
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Category:	<a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Star Trek: Discovery</a>
Relationship:	<a href="#">Michael Burnham &amp; Philippa Georgiou (Mirror)</a> , <a href="#">Michael Burnham &amp; Philippa Georgiou</a>
Character:	<a href="#">Michael Burnham</a> , <a href="#">Philippa Georgiou (Mirror)</a> , <a href="#">Philippa Georgiou</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Female Friendship</a> , <a href="#">Female-Centric</a>
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-11-20 Words: 439 Chapters: 1/1

## "Well Behaved Women..."

by [InterstellarSiren](#)

### Summary

Sometimes, making history means breaking the rules. An introspective piece around one of the most polarizing captains in Star Trek history.

### Notes

This was originally posted on AO3 for Women's History Month in March and inspired by a famous quote now attributed to Laurel Thatcher Ulrich.

On the day that Michael Burnham became captain of the U.S.S. Discovery, she had only one regret. The events that had led her here had also taken away the one woman who would have been happiest for her in this moment. Not only that, but she had met two different versions of the same person, and both had proved legendary to her.

There was a marked difference between Captain Philippa Georgiou of the U.S.S. Shenzhou and the Terran Emperor Michael had met when her crew were thrust into the mirror universe. Philippa Georgiou Augustus Iaponius Centarius was an entirely separate entity from the woman Michael had known during her time on the Shenzhou. Her captain and mentor was everything to Michael. There had only ever been one circumstance where she had seen Captain Georgiou afraid to take action.

Now, she realized, it had been for a good reason. The actions Michael forced Philippa to take had resulted in her death. What would her Captain Georgiou have said if she could see Michael now? Would she be saddened by the fact that her first officer had been disgracefully removed from Starfleet, only to be called back in when it needed her most?

Both versions of Philippa had shaped her and made her the woman she was today— finally in the captain's chair, light-years away from the incidents that would have seen her branded as a traitor for the rest of her life.

She supposed the ancient quote was true: "Well behaved women seldom make history." The mirror Philippa was certainly far from well behaved. By the norms of their society, Michael had not been too well behaved, either.

Yet, she had survived, in a time when she thought there would be nothing for her but death and destruction. Not only had she survived; she had brought the entire crew of the Discovery along for the ride to a brand-new world. She had defied the orders and expectations of Starfleet to do it.

It was lucky that she'd made the choice. As much as it could have blown up in her face, Michael was keenly aware that she had brought Starfleet and hope back to people that needed it. She may not have been well behaved or followed its guidelines to the letter, but she had made certain that Starfleet endured to keep others safe. That was all anyone could ask. She could only hope that someday, somewhere, knowing about her and the things she had accomplished would show a young woman that sometimes, it paid off to focus more on one's impact instead of her behavior.

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