

The Dolphins Were Right

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1519) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1519>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: Phoenix-X
Character:	Ensemble Cast - PNX
Additional Tags:	Weekly Challenge: The Dolphins Were Right
Language:	English
Series:	Part 20 of Legends of the Phoenix
Collections:	Weekly Writing Challenges
Stats:	Published: 2024-04-13 Words: 650 Chapters: 1/1

The Dolphins Were Right

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Summary

"The joys of canonical existence?" -- Weekly Challenge 42: In the late 24th century, the U.S.S. Phoenix-X prepares a shuttle for another Warp 10 jump.

Ad Astra: Weekly Challenge #42

"The Dolphins Were Right"

Out, in the endless reach of outer spacey-space, the *Prometheus*-class U.S.S. *Phoenix-X* stretched, despondently and humbly through the far reaches of nothingness. Commander Seifer stood alone in a cold Conference room, staring out at the empty Class-2 shuttle *Dracon*.

"Everything okay, Commander?" came BOB's voice from behind, as the Ferengi and special counselor entered.

Seifer kept his gaze at the arbitrary shuttle. "What's the point of all this, Mr. BOB? We search and seek out the limits of our Universe, engage with action-packed aliens, only to destroy the *Enterprise* for the umpteenth time and for what? The joys of canonical existence?"

"Well, we did choose life during the insemination process through the conception by our parents," BOB offered as he took a spot next to him and stared out as well. "It's almost as if we were compelled to be here by the very nature of what we are to begin with: Randoms."

The Commander gestured. "Sure, but freewill only begins with sentience, and there's no way said cognition wanted a Universe of poorly lit Bridges, serialized drama, Section 31 badges and constant back-and-forth Archer pacing?"

"You're focusing on the negative," BOB countered. "What about the Data cakes, the Sisko-Garak Romulan wackiness and the Seven of Nine of it all? Those were good times recorded in 4:3 standard definition logs."

Seifer shook his head in reminiscence. "Certainly, yes. Even the Picard-Insurrecting-to-Shinzoning, I could put up with. But doesn't it all seem so randomly salamander?"

"That's the beauty of it, Commander," BOB pressed. "It can be anything it wants to be and make us a part of it. Janeway-macrovirusing to hop-scotch Chula-verses to the incorruptible legends of the U.S.S. *Cerritos*."

All of a sudden, the doorbell beeped off and upon opening, a massive wave of water flushed into the Conference room, quickly pooling up to their knees, followed by a Delphine Starfleet officer swimming in to them.

"Oh, Lieutenant Whui," Seifer turned in observation. "You didn't have to come up all the way here from Cetacean Operations? A comm-call would have been fine."

Whui wiggled his way to a posture within the shallow water. "I just needed some fresh air. Being cooped up, charting space in that one submerged room can really get to you sometimes. Anyway, now that my course is set, we are ready to launch the *Dracon* into our Warp 10 maddening experiment."

"Seems redundant, considering Tom Paris does this to all his Captains, but it would be interesting to see the results of a non-manned vessel doing it," Seifer suggested. "Let's do it. Engage."

Suddenly, the *Dracon* revved up its engines and shot itself out into space, occupying all points in the Universe at once before returning as a giant cake in space.

"Fascinating!" BOB declared in shared, wide-eyed shock. "By being everywhere all at once, it somehow enveloped infinite probability and became the most random thing possible. A cake!"

Whui gaped as well. "It looks delicious. The purple must be the result of not having a sentient being to absorb the nonsensical salamandering effects of what some people mistake for evolution."

"I don't think the Progenitors knew what evolution was either, but this arbitrary concoction proves the Universe means anything. Everything. It's up to interpretation and has no obligation to make sense to anyone," Seifer surmised. "Thank you, both."

BOB somehow had already replicated a fork and knife. "So, can we try it?"

"If its antimatter waste composition is below 30%, then yes," the Commander reassured as the giant shuttle-sized cake was now being tractor-beamed into the *Phoenix-X*. "Whui, are you coming?"

The dolphin-like alien perked up. "Hell, yes! Computer, fill the corridors leading to the shuttle bay, please." After an acknowledgment tone, the sounds of crashing waves and screaming officers could then be heard from outside the doors.

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