

## Delta Recruit

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## Delta Recruit

by [Hawku](#)

### Summary

"Quit your whining, me!" - Unofficial Literary Challenge 11.1: From the early 25th century, Captain Reynolds of the U.S.S. *Hijinx* travels back in time to convince her younger self to join the fight against the Iconians.

### Notes

Author's notes: This was written in May 2015 as part of the Star Trek Online Forums Unofficial Literary Challenge #11, and aligns with the game's release and training level from the Delta Recruit campaign. This story also establishes the event in the past that forced many of my Captains to go back to Starfleet Academy, effectively lining them up with the events of the game.

Unofficial Literary Challenge #11: Prompt #1: You're an up-and-coming cadet/second officer/colonist, with your whole life ahead of you. Then one day, you're confronted with an older version of yourself (and not that much older!), wearing the insignia of the very highest rank, and telling you that you have to use the device you're being handed to gather intelligence on the supposedly-extinct Iconians, to prepare the galaxy for a massive invasion. How do you handle it? Does this feed your ambition? Do you have ambitions, or did you just join Starfleet to study nebulae? What is your reaction to finding out you're destined to surpass anyone's expectations – and that you have to prepare for total, all-out galactic war in less than two years?

### ***Unofficial Literary Challenge #11***

"Delta Recruit"

The *Akira*-class U.S.S. *Hijinx* sat at an undisclosed location; its windows completely blacked out by Starfleet issue, texturized curtains.

"Where..... where are we?" Lieutenant Bo attempted to lift one of the futuristically designed drapes, but his hand was slapped down by his commanding officer.

Reynolds snapped. "Hey! You know we're not allowed to know where we are."

"Did the Temporal Protocol have to black out our sensors along with our windows, while auto-piloting us all at once?" Bo complained, passively, as they entered a turbolift.

Reynolds nodded. "Well, it's about secrecy, I suppose. But, at least my job here is done. I did what I had to do: Went back in time and talked myself into helping save the galaxy from the Iconians."

"It's odd to think that anyone in Starfleet would be arbitrarily pro-Iconian, not to mention entrusting the future of a 100,000 lightyear-in-diameter galaxy to a fresh, green Cadet."

Reynolds tapped her foot, impatiently. "All that matters is that my younger self doesn't mess things up for me in the present."

Now, worried, Reynolds' thoughts drifted, in search of her memories. She'd hoped to find anything out of the ordinary; she delved deep into her past-self and the series of events that led to where she was now:

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Back, in the past, Reynolds sat in Admiral Herthel's office, unsure at the reasoning in her presence there.

"According to medical reports, everyone involved in the accident has been cleared for re-entrance into Federation society."

Reynolds lifted a finger. "Uh, I was lured here with the promise of a five-drink coupon at 602 Club?"

"Yes, yes. Of course," he said, tossing her an isolinear chip. "That gets you two pounds of wings, as well-- The free range kind, none of that lab-grown stuff Chronowerx Refit was pushing for a while." He paced. "Now, despite everything you've been through, whichever of it you even remember, your aptitude and academic scores remain exemplary. I'd like to ask you to apply to Starfleet Academy."

The Betazoid burst out in short laughter. "Haha! Are you kidding me? Last week, I got into a bar fight with a bunch of Starfleet recruits, after I called one of them 'Cupcake'."

"Even more of a reason to join, as that's a Captain's-prerequisite in some alternate realities. But, in this one, sooner or later, you're going to have to accept who you are and what you're capable of, as the many others did, who endured that same accident, including Menrow, Iviok, and Aeris. Once that is done, you get to rightfully take your place among Starfleet's okay-ish."

Reynolds sighed. "I don't know where this is coming from, but I'm young, brash and too full of life to throw it all away on some rule-bound science-y/militaristic and exploration mash-up organization. Seriously, do you guys do birthday parties too?"

"Yes, in fact, there is an entire department dedicated to that-- But I'm not here to get into operational specifics of our purple cake, celebratory initiatives at the moment. My purpose is to convince you to join..." He tried to measure her by mere visual observation... "You'll get to read people's minds from across the vacuum of space...?"

She immediately slammed her palm against the surface of the table. "Sold! Now where do I sign up? And when are you going to apologize to your wife about forgetting your anniversary?"

"Uh... tonight?"

Reynolds nodded. "Very good."

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Years later, Graduation Day, Reynolds found herself in a last-second, Advanced Phaser Training program minutes before an embarking for her Training Cruise. After taking out several Klingon holograms, using live-fire inside a Klingon warbird Bridge simulation, Cadet Reynolds took a sigh of relief.

"Ah, yes, very good. I guess that Herthel was right about me after all. I'm pretty darn, nifty, if I do say so, myself. Promising future, here I come!"

Then, an unexpected, similar voice rang out, from behind her. "I know this is going to sound crazy, but I am you, from your future."

"Yeah, right. Nice try whatever-your-name-was," Reynolds said, turning to observe the Fleet Admiral version of herself.

The Admiral smirked. "Think of a number, any number. It will be identical to the one I thought of when I was in your position."

*Blue*, Reynolds thought, being as sly as ever.

"Ah, yes," the Admiral smiled, "thought I was quite the comedian back then. The number you are thinking of is 'blue'."

The Cadet cursed at the telepathic Betazoid standing before her. "How did you know I was thinking that? How did you know what was in my mind?? How???"

"Future-you. It's the only explanation," the Admiral reaffirmed. "Now. There is a war coming. The Iconians, who we thought were extinct, have returned to take back that was once theirs. You... we... will benefit from the knowledge I'll give you today."

Cadet Reynolds nodded. "Tell me what I need to know."

"I can't just drop everything on you at once; the knowledge I just said I would give to you. No! Take this," she handed her younger self a large, unpocketable, disc-like device. "It allows me one-way communication from the future to you."

Reynolds shook her head. "Doesn't that inhibit productivity? And, also, if you're really me, then you know I, like others, are still recovering from an accident, years ago. Our minds trickling bits of who we are, piece-by-piece, in a fragile, psychological battle for mental stability."

"Quit your whining, me! You get to be Fleet Admiral, which means ordering people around on a grander scale, including dealing with the weight of the Iconians, which, I'm sure a Cadet with no perceived experience can handle, easily."

The Cadet gritted her teeth. "I feel like we're going off-script now? Anyway, let me just say how odd this all seems that a future group would intentionally paradox all of this, this... Beta Quadrant Recruiting?"

"Delta. Well, you'll find out. Maybe. You'll also blow up a lot."

She tilted her head. "I'll help you, fine, but you have to clarify that whole accident thing that's got me, predictably, addicted to cordafin and inaprovaline."

"Done! But just so you know, your Cadet friend and Captain are behind one of those holographic walls, trying to decipher the muffled sounds of our talk," future Reynolds warned. "Now, allow our minds to touch; my mind to your mind, my thoughts to your thoughts."

Young Reynolds was taken aback. "Ew, a mind read of myself? That's like trying to kiss your own brother."

"Ugh. Don't you see? It was a massive molecular reversion field, intermixed with an ion storm, that turned all of us half-young and the trauma of it suppressed years and years of memories! Several starships were involved."

Young Reynolds looked to the side, in pure shock. "Of course! I remember now. I was old, and now I'm young again. That explains why Herthel wanted me and it explains why my face is a déjà-vu every time I see myself in the mirror. I've always felt like I've seen that woman before."

"I can't... I can't begin to explain to you how mirrors are meant to work like that anyway. Now, instead of me confusing you further, there will be updates through that device as you progress through your career. Check it often."

The Cadet did a double-take. "You can tell me about the Iconians, but you can't tell me the specifics of them all at once? By the time I figure everything out, Starfleet will have zero time to be ready??"

"I'm going to be honest, me. We need action. Like, lots of it, in the future, or what's the point of doing anything? And the only way we're going to get it is if we design ourselves to be ill-prepared for a surprise attack, through the guise of preparation itself. Well, I think I've taken up as much of your 'time' as I can. Enjoy the free ore!"

As future Reynolds faded away in an odd and painstakingly slow dissolve, young Reynolds was left to her new life of account-wide rewards. "Umm... Thank you?"

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The simulation disengaged and Reynolds found herself in one of the Academy grounds' holodecks, where she began. Her Cadet-mate stood there, alone. "The Captain got tired of waiting for you and said to meet him aboard the ship when you were done talking to yourself. The other Cadets in our class went up too, ten minutes ago, via shuttle."

"I think you should start referring to me as 'sir'."

The Cadet squinted. "Why? Why would you make that suggestion out of nowhere? Never mind. Let's just beam up. It's not like there's a shortage on transporter confinement beams."

"Ugh. That future me screwed everything up here. I'm way out of sync now! She thinks she likes being Fleet Admiral, huh? Well, I'll show that jerk who's the boss here."

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Back in the present, still at that secret location, future Reynolds returned to the *Hijinx* and she and Bo made their way in to the turbolift. The two conversed until Reynolds dropped off into deep-memory.

"Ma'am?" Bo interrupted her thoughts. "You were saying something about expecting your younger self not to mess things up for you in the present?"

Snapping out of her extended flash back, so oddly engaged in the presence of another person, Reynolds shook her head to awake-mode. "Oh, yes, yes. Sorry. That was selfish of me to take up your time like that. You see, it was an entire year of obsessive rank-building, for me, but I finally made it to Fleet Admiral, again. And it was all thanks to me-- that other me, I mean."

The two stepped out of the turbolift and on to the Bridge. Bo found it important to correct her, just then. "Actually, you never became any-Admiral. You Picardly turned down promotion after we captured that slippery, no-lipped Romulan, Taris, and you remained Captain ever since. Oh, they registered you as Admiral, but only as a hollow, non-effective commission, just there for the rank system paper work."

"What!?" Reynolds then recalled those Romulan Mystery events: "And where did half those missions go? Did I just skip them??"

She quickly approached a nearby, blacked-out console, where she could address her reflection out of pure rank-inhibiting spite. It was clear, now, her tendency for diminishing growth was now self-inflicted.

"Dammit, me!"