

## The Imposter

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## The Imposter

by [Hawku](#)

### Summary

"Why are you constantly mucking about with the transporters, trying to create Vulcan-Talaxian hybrids?" - Unofficial Literary Challenge Annual 1-1: In the early 25th century, Captain Seifer of the U.S.S. Ragnarok manages through a spat of Tellarite duplicates.

### Notes

Author's notes: This was written in January 2017, as part of the Star Trek Online forums Unofficial Literary Challenge Annual #1, a short-lived variant of the ULCs. A user wanted to experiment with a separate monthly challenge that would focus on one Captain for the whole year, which it ended up being mainly me participating. I decided to focus my ULCA entries on Captain Oroku Seifer and the U.S.S. Ragnarok, to give them a bunch of one-offs. These ran along side my serialized Anthology of Ragnarok series, where Seifer was last seen in RGK 3 with the Deferi from STO. Tomsin and Tomsin last appeared in "Tabletop Beginnings". Captain Aeris was last seen in ESD 60-61 in her new ship, the U.S.S. Viracocha, fighting a Borg threat.

Unofficial Literary Challenge Annual #1: Your ship was recently engaged in combat by Orion pirates. During a critical moment, a member of your crew -- someone you have served with for several years -- was inexplicably unable to perform adequately, leading to a loss of life, but not costing you the battle. After the battle, your investigation discovers that their entire Starfleet resume is a fabrication by a capable, but unqualified civilian who failed to be accepted to the Academy for any number of reasons. Write a Captain's Log detailing the depths of your investigation into your former colleague's true identity, and the subsequent action you must take.

### *Unofficial Literary Challenge Annual #1*

"The Imposter"

Captain Oroku Seifer gripped his command chair as the *Pathfinder*-class with *Discovery*-class pylons U.S.S. *Ragnarok* spun around from an explosion of two quantum torpedoes hitting each other right in front of them.

"Gahhh!" Seifer yelled as his balance was momentarily thrown. "Hail the Orion ship!"

Lieutenant Aramaki hailed them and an Orion appeared on screen. *"This is Ginyo of the O.S.S. Hakkett. We demand you give us all of your stuff and whatnot. You know, the various trinkets and bells and whistles. A couple of hair brushes, salad tongs and so on."*

"What the hell, man?? I was just sitting here with my new crew and new ship! Do you know how annoying being disturbed from that is? Also, what stuff? Starfleet vessels literally have nothing on them! We're the epitome of pristine, cleanliness and our corridors are scrubbed tirelessly of germs, every hour."

Ginyo smirked. *"Ah, I see I have sufficiently riled you. Excellent work, me."*

"I mean, it was alright, but nothing to write home about." Seifer stood up. "Anyway, Aramaki, fire upon the enemy vessel for being different than us!"

The human tactical officer frantically worked his controls. "Sir? The weapons controls are completely messed up??"

"Flight is wonky-wonky as well," Lieutenant Edward said, turning from her helm.

Moggs looked up from his science station. "Same here. I believe our systems have been compromised, internally. It was that guy." The Caitian pointed at a Tellarite who was also a Starfleet officer working away at the Operations console. "It was definitely that guy."

"Oh, man! I'm so close to winning this Fizzbin game! So close!" Tomsin said, completely oblivious to what was going on in his surroundings.

Seifer walked over and turned him around. "What the?? That game is a fraud from Sigma Iota II which makes so much nonsense that in digital form it messes up any computer system!"

"Yeah, I wouldn't even touch that with a hundred meter tractor beam," said Ginyo from the viewscreen. "I lost two slave girls to madness trying to figure it out. And they're the smart ones of our race! Hakkett out!"

The screen cut to a view of the Orion corvette turning in space and warping out of there as fast as they could.

"Hey, you wronged me first by causing me to be Riker-duplicated, so I can do whatever I want!" Tomsin argued.

Seifer crossed his arms. "Do you actually believe that as justification or are you just arguing because it's a Tellarite sport and you're in a gaming mood?"

"A little bit of Column A, a little bit of Column B and whole lot of an unmentioned Column C, which has more to do with something I ate this morning that's causing me indigestion," Tomsin explained.

Just then, his transporter duplicate, another-Tomsin, entered the Bridge. "Did I miss anything?"

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Later, Seifer met with Tomsin in his Ready Room with his entire Starfleet biography up to his Academy résumé displayed on his desktop screen for study.

"Dammit, man! This résumé is an obvious forgery. Under '*Objective*' you wrote, '*To seek out new arguments and new civilized confrontations*', and under '*Experience*' you wrote, '*Five years of gritting your teeth and furrowing your brow*.' You're a Tellarite? Your brow is always furrowed?"

Tomsin pointed. "Hey, the scowl of my people is a constant effort of tension. We cannot for one second relax our facial muscles or we lose our planetary citizenships!"

"Yeah!" contributed Tomsin's transporter duplicate, who was sitting right next to him.

Seifer dismissed them both. "Ugh. So weird. Anyway, you clearly faked your way passed the Academy and into Starfleet. Why?"

"Because a member of my family wronged us and left to never be seen again! I made my way into service where they operate, intending on confronting them in the only way that befits all grown men with slow reflexes in conflict: Anbo-jyutsu!"

The other Tomsin raised his arm. "Same."

"But, by the time I got here, I ended up loving the work. Contributing to bettering the Federation and myself was more fulfilling than confrontation, so I abandoned my mission and settled into my duties."

Seifer stood up and sighed. "Well, despite that, I have no choice but to relieve you of your duties and drop you off with the Earth-bound U.S.S. *Viracocha* who we're rendezvousing with today. We're doing crew transfers from Spacedock, so I guess that works out for me finding a new Operations officer."

"You may think this pleases me, but I've grown too attached to Starfleet and have even been taking all the online Academy courses to appease my appetites."

The Captain shook his head. "Those are available on the subspace web now?? Talk about recruiting cannon fodder for the Tzenkethi. Oh, and if you're so dedicated, why are you constantly mucking about with the transporters, trying to create Vulcan-Talaxian hybrids?"

"Because being duplicated in the wonky way that I have has made me open to the ridiculousness of this universe in ways that expand and malleate me like never before! I'll feed my desire to explore fear manifestations as Kohl-Clowns, or transfer my brain out of my skull, or hunt ancient cities as crouching-baby-talking Loque'eque creatures without any remorse whatsoever."

The other Tellarite nodded. "We've actually planned that last one out with a pre-timed release of their mutagenic virus throughout the ship for next Friday."

"Ugh! I'm definitely not sorry to see you go. You're confined to force fields until we reach the *Viracocha*," Seifer ordered as he activated protective energy barriers around both men. "Don't even think about entering your brains to find lost Section 31 information, because you don't have any!"

The other Tomsin snorted before closing his eyes and jumping into a deep mental crusade. "I'll be the judge of that!"

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Later, the U.S.S. *Ragnarok* met up with the *Sojourner*-class U.S.S. *Viracocha* and Seifer met with Captain Aeris in his transporter room where several transferring officers were continually beaming to and from both ships.

"Well, I guess I'm not the only one with a new ship. How's she flying, Captain?" Seifer asked as he pulled both Tomsins over.

Aeris smirked. "Better than your off-model starship. Really? *Discovery*-class pylons on a *Pathfinder*-class starship?"

"Uh, it makes it look way better, plus customization is a thing Starfleet allows now, so why not?" Seifer shrugged. "Anyway, I need you to take Tomsin and Tomsin back to Starfleet for Court Marshal and so on."

The other Captain blinked in shock. "Wait? You've got a Tomsin too?"

"Hello, Captain Seifer, I'm here to transfer to—" and then the Tellarite which had just beamed over, stopped speaking when he saw two other Tellarites that looked just like him. "What the!?! It's my twin brother!"

Seifer jumped back in surprised. "Whoa! You're his twin?? Why do you even have the same name then?"

"That's where the conflict in our family stems, Captain," explained the original Tomsin. "He's the one I had originally faked my way into Starfleet to search for because he insulted and left us for not relinquishing his first name to me!"

Transporter-duplicate Tomsin continued. "You see, our mother died upon birth claiming her son's name was Tomsin, but no one could figure out which son she had meant, so her offspring were named the same."

"It's a dumb argument and I was happy for a while by joining Starfleet to get away from the likes of you," the Tomsin on the transporter pad said. He then took out his tricorder and tapped at it. "But it just so happens I prepared myself for this exact possibility by infecting myself with a quasi-energy microbe!"

Suddenly the transporter was activated around him, dematerializing him for a second and rematerializing him with a giant floating worm hovering over and around him.

"Attack!" the new-transfer-Tomsin ordered, prompting the hovering worm to launch itself toward the two other Tomsins.

Seifer and Aeris dove out of the way in continued shock. "Not more Tellarite madness??" yelled Seifer.

"Oh, I've had years to prepare for you, Tomsin!" argued the original while leaping out of the path of the circling attack. He then quickly accessed the transporter console and dematerialized-rematerialized himself in the same way, bringing his own giant quasi-energy microbe into existence.

The new worm then shot itself toward the other worm which was circling around and the two clashed over and over again.

"This is crazy, Tomsins!?! People have the same names all the time!" claimed Seifer. "But it doesn't mean you're the same person?? We may see and judge ourselves in others, but it's never accurate because people are inherently different by their experiences and environments!"

The duplicate Tomsin transported his own quasi-energy microbe and it fired itself into the other two. All three ricocheted off each other, head-first, clashing and cutting the others in combat! The first worm finally was knocked out and onto the transporter pad, with the other two flying over to finish the job.

"Wait!" the original Tomsin yelled out. "The Captain's right. We're not the same, and we should be appreciative of that. Change starts with us." He waved his hand, calling his worm back to him and then went over to the controls to dematerialize-rematerialize it away. His transporter duplicate did the same.

The new-transfer-Tomsin went over to his fallen worm and examined it. "I suppose we can be adults about this now. It's been long enough that we've grown in maturity, or supposedly, we should have." He then tapped at his tricorder, dematerializing-rematerializing his microbe away.

"It takes a lot of headspace to deal with family the right way," commented Aeris as she helped Seifer get up. "We take too many liberties with our own kind."

Captain Seifer dusted himself off, annoyed. "Uh, that excuses nothing. Don't think any of you are getting away with any of this! You're all going to be charged with disruption, and you two fakers are getting double-court marshaled!"

"Hold on, are these the Tellarites who took the online courses?" Aeris said, going through her PADD. "Turns out they took the final exam and both passed. I was to graduate them here and officially assign them to where they already were."

Seifer's jaw dropped. "WHAT?! But they lied about the whole thing??"

"Oh, that," Aeris dismissed. "They already admitted it to the Council and took the extra credit courses as penalty, clearing them of any possible charges and advancing them to the head of their online class." She then turned to the two other Tomsins. "Congratulations, Cadets. Looks like you're already well into the craziness of this universe."

The Captain watched as Aeris got back onto the transporter pad. "Don't leave me here with three Tomsins!?"

"Oh, it was just a little family spat," Aeris said before transporting back to her ship. "Give the little worm summoners a break. And don't modify your ship any further away from its self-canon design."

After she left, the new-recruit Tomsin approached Captain Seifer and took out his hand. "Greetings, sir. Ensign Tomsin, reporting for duty. Don't worry, I don't have any transporter duplicates." And then he thought about it. "But we do have several other twins."

"Ugggh!"

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