

THE "TRUE" STORY OF MICHAEL BURNHAM

©2023 Stanley Marcus Grimm

Note: This story is a parody that takes place in the "Star Infinity" universe. This story also contains spoilers for Star Infinity itself.

Michael Burnham was born to Gabrielle and Mike Burnham on March 21, 2385 on Vulcan. On May 11, 2407, Michael's parents completed a prototype of the "Red Angel" time-traveling suit. As they were about to test the prototype at their asteroidal lab, it was invaded by rogue Klingons. They were killed, and the suit was stolen. Unfortunately for the Klingons, the suit self-destructed and was rendered useless due to a biometric security measure.

When Michael heard of her parents' deaths, it affected her greatly, and she developed an intense hatred for Klingons. In 2410, Michael accepted an assignment as first officer of the U.S.S. *Shenzhou* NCC-91227, under the command of Philippa Georgiou. The *Shenzhou* was the second of the new *Walker*-class starships.

During her time on *Shenzhou*, Michael showed signs of mental instability. Not only that, she had an air of superiority about her and would often interrupt her captain

and treat her subordinates with disdain. She also had delusions of grandeur. As the years passed, Michael's mental instability grew worse, and Captain Georgiou began to consider ordering another psychological evaluation for Michael.

It is now the tenth anniversary of the deaths of Michael's parents. The *Shenzhou* drops out of warp, entering an uncharted binary star system. There they encounter a strange object. Strangely, Michael Burnham identifies it as the "Beacon of Kahless", which elicits looks from the remaining bridge crew. Georgiou, fed up with it all and believing that Michael had finally "lost it", relieves Michael of duty and orders her to sickbay.

Michael leaves the bridge, but instead of going to sickbay, she takes an unauthorized "jaunt" to the object in a spacesuit. There, she meets a humanoid alien in an overly ornate spacesuit, wielding a weapon that resembles a bow. She hallucinates that her helmet's HUD identifies the alien as "Klingon", and she attempts to combat the alien. She is summarily defeated.

Severely injured, unconscious, and adrift in space, Michael is beamed directly to sickbay. She wakes up during her treatment, leaving for the bridge against her doctor's

advice. Arriving on the bridge in little more than gauze, Michael sees a giant alien vessel, resembling a "Gothic cathedral in space", decloak on the main viewscreen.

"Tactical, fire on that ship!" Michael orders brazenly.

Turning to look at her, Georgiou barks, "Michael! Security, take her back to sickbay!"

As security officers approach her, Michael shoves the tactical officer aside, raving madly, "Fire! FIRE!" She launches a barrage of phasers and torpedoes at the alien ship. The security officers then pry her from the console.

"Attempt to hail them!" Georgiou orders.

"No response, sir!" the communications officer replies.

Resuming their station, the tactical officer warns, "Incoming fire!"

Michael snarls as she fights the security officers. The *Shenzhou* is then rocked as the alien weapons impact the shields. In the chaos, Michael boards and launches an escape pod. The *Shenzhou* is destroyed shortly thereafter, and the giant alien vessel reenters cloak.

Ten days later, Michael's escape pod is found by the U.S.S.

Discovery NCC-91031 of the *Crossfield* class. The crew opens the escape pod, where Michael is found to be in a catatonic state, still wearing the gauze. With no one on the ship qualified to deal with her, the *Discovery* takes Michael to a starbase orbiting the planet Hima for an evaluation. While there, she comes out of her catatonia and begins to attack people while shouting about Klingons. After sedating her enough to calm her, a psychologist begins to ask her questions. They first ask her her name.

"Michael Burnham."

"Who are your parents?"

"Gabrielle and Mike Burnham."

"Where were you born?"

"The city of ShiKahr on Vulcan."

"What is the current date?"

"May eleventh, twenty-two-fifty-six."

"Ms. Burnham, today is May twenty-first, twenty-four-seventeen. You were found in an escape pod belonging to the U-S-S *Shenzhou* by the U-S-S *Discovery* in a catatonic state. You were later brought here. Don't you remember?"

"May eleventh, twenty-two-fifty-six," Michael repeats. The

psychologist closes their eyes and shakes their head. A man who overheard them then approaches her.

"Hello, Ms. Burnham, I am Doctor Gabriel Lorca, the director of the Federation Funny Farm on the planet below. I happened to be visiting the starbase today and was listening in on your conversation."

Michael says nothing.

"Upon learning that you were born in ShiKahr on Vulcan, Ms. Burnham, I couldn't help but wonder: are you familiar with the late Ambassador Spock?"

Michael suddenly looks up, answering, "*Late? Ambassador?* Spock is alive, serving under Captain Christopher Pike of the *Enterprise*."

Intrigued by her answer, Dr. Lorca asks her another question, "What is your relationship with Spock?"

"He is my adoptive brother."

The Federation Funny Farm has branch facilities in several different star systems. The primary facility is on Eris in the Sol system. Michael is sent to the branch facility on Hima. It has been around two months since Michael Burnham was "welcomed" there. She has recently come out of one of

her catatonic states. She continues to insist that the year is 2256; that Spock is her adoptive brother; and that they were raised together by the late Ambassador Sarek and Amanda Grayson.

When asked where she is, Michael says that she is on a starship called *Discovery* and that it is a *Crossfield*-class vessel with the registry NCC-1031. She believes that Dr. Lorca is the captain and that his female assistant Landry is his first officer. Michael's role is apparently that of a "specialist"; although, she never specifies what she specializes in.

Other residents and employees of the Federation Funny Farm include:

Sylvia Tilly: A socially-awkward intern who Michael thinks is a Starfleet cadet assigned to the *Discovery*.

Dr. Paul Stamets: An astromycologist and former Starfleet officer who served on the *actual* starship *Discovery* NCC-91031. He was court-martialed and dishonorably discharged for misusing experimental mycelium meant for terraforming. He and his fiancé, Dr. Hugh Culber, discovered the hallucinogenic properties of the mycelial spores, and they were caught smuggling it to fellow "enthusiasts" for gold-pressed latinum. Dr. Lorca

hired them because he was one of their "customers" and wanted "in" on the deal, turning the Federation Funny Farm into a secret "hub" for what has been dubbed the "mycelial network".

Dr. Hugh Culber: Dr. Stamets's fiancé is the former chief medical officer of the *Discovery*. He was court-martialed and dishonorably discharged along with his "partner in crime" and now works alongside him at the Federation Funny Farm. Culber and Stamets, along with their friend, Ephraim, have "secret sessions" at night where they inhale spores to get high.

Ephraim: The Federation Funny Farm's chief engineer is a large alien that resembles a giant tardigrade. (No, he is *not* blue, and he only *thinks* that he can travel across the universe in an instant, at least when he's high.) He is also in a "relationship" with Landry, but they have yet to "get physical" because of their vastly different biologies.

One night, while wandering around the poorly-monitored corridors of the Funny Farm, Michael overhears a conversation between Stamets, Culber, and Ephraim during one of their "sessions". They are very high and spouting nonsense, but unfortunately, Michael knows no better.

"You wanna know why Hugh and I were *really* kicked out of Starfleet, Ephraim?" Stamets asks.

"Why?"

"We discovered their secret, man! It was all a conspiracy involving Section Thirty-One! The mycelium wasn't *really* being used for terraforming; they had discovered how to use it to travel instantaneously from one point to another throughout the universe! The *Discovery* was being used as a testbed for the technology!"

"Oh, come off it, man!" Ephraim responds.

"He's serious, dude!" Culber says. "The ship goes to like—uh—black alert, and-and like the saucer rotates, and the ship enters some 'mushroom realm' that's like spread throughout the Multiverse or something!"

"Both of you are full of it!" Ephraim says, and they laugh.

It is September 24, 2417, Michael escapes from the Funny Farm by stealing Stamets and Culber's warp-capable private starship. Unfortunately, it is filled nearly to the brim with hallucinogenic mushrooms. As she evades the pursuing police shuttles launched from Hima's starbase, Michael starts to get high from the spores being generated

by the fungi.

Unable to think clearly, she takes the ship to maximum warp without setting a course, while the ship's bow points towards Hima's sun! As the ship approaches the star, Michael passes out, and the auto-pilot takes over. However, the ship is so close to the sun that the auto-pilot has no choice but to perform a slingshot maneuver around it. After the slingshot, the ship disappears in a flash of white light, leaving behind glowing blue and red trails corresponding to its warp nacelles and impulse engines, respectively.

The date is now October 15, 3188; it has been over 27 years since the foundation of the United Suprederation of Galaxies. In orbit of Hima, a starship piloted by one Cleveland "Book" Booker is being pursued by another starship. The pilot of the pursuing ship is attempting to reclaim cargo that Book stole from him.

"Temporal anomaly detected," warns the computer of Book's ship. There are three flashes of white light, and Michael Burnham's stolen ship appears upon the third, exactly 771 years and three weeks after it had disappeared. While Book is distracted by the computer's warning, his ship takes a decisive hit from its pursuer. Book loses control, and his ship is caught in Hima's gravity,

plummeting toward its surface.

Burnham's ship, meanwhile, sustained damage from its proximity to Hima's sun, and as she is still unconscious, the computer sets a course for Hima as that was its last location. As the ship approaches the planet, its systems fail, and it, too, succumbs to the planet's gravity.

It is now September 29, 3301, two days before the launch of the *Enterprise-AA* and the 140th anniversary of the United Suprederation of Galaxies. Michael is 145 years old, having outlived Book, whom she had eventually married after meeting him on Hima. However, she didn't change her surname; why Book married her is also a mystery.

She meets with Admiral Allen Kreutzmann in her home on a planet in a rogue star system outside the Milky Way. He claims that someone named Joshua Picard-Kirk will attempt to murder her alleged adoptive brother, Spock. (Of course, Spock would be dead by 3301, but Michael, in her compromised mental state, doesn't know any better.)

Kreutzmann lies by telling her that Pike's *Enterprise* was decommissioned, and that Picard-Kirk would be captaining its soon-to-be-launched successor. He gives her a massive cylindrical starship capable of generating a sensor-scrambling hot pink cloud 100 astronomical units in

diameter.

Kreutzmann instructs her to "invade" the Milky Way near Delta Vega on September 30, to destroy the Delta Vega Border Guards and the Zeta X subspace communications station, and to set a course for Earth. The *Enterprise* would then be sent to intercept after its launch on October 1, and the rest—as they say—is history.