

*Previously in Star Trek: Personal Logs...*

*Soon after entering the Gamma Quadrant, the Federation starship USS Sarek detects an unexplained phenomenon that causes two planets in the nearby Theta 317 star system to disappear. Upon investigation, the Sarek discovers a life pod containing Lieutenant (JG) Sean Elliott McIntyre, a Starfleet officer last seen in the Alpha Quadrant sixty-eight years earlier.*

*McIntyre is returned to the Alpha Quadrant and placed in the care of the infirmary aboard starbase Deep Space Nine, where his records are altered by order of Starfleet Intelligence and the Office of Temporal Investigations to read as John Doe.*

*After awakening in the infirmary and accessing the computer to learn where, and more importantly when he is, McIntyre escapes the infirmary undetected and explores the Bajoran space station, obtaining a few required items before meeting Captain Amanda Hardy - master of the converted Miranda-class transport ship SS Shenandoah Valley - at Quark's Bar, perhaps the one person who can get 'Mack' off the station and where he needs to go. However, McIntyre's escape from DS9 is short-lived, as the transport is intercepted by the starship USS Galveston with Captain James Ralston of Starfleet Intelligence and two agents of the Office of Temporal Investigations on board. In spite of Captain Hardy and her crew's attempts to claim Mack has been their chief engineer for several years, McIntyre is taken into custody and incarcerated in the Galveston's brig for return to a secret Temporal Investigations facility.*

*And now the continuation...*

*Three Months Later...*

Paul Stevens walked down the corridor of the Temporal Investigations facility, heading for what appeared to be a small but comfortably appointed apartment but was in fact a holding cell for TI's newest resident - Sean Elliot McIntyre, a former Starfleet officer who had disappeared during a mission near the Romulan Neutral Zone in Earth year 2302, only to be discovered sixty eight years later, relatively un-aged, in an escape pod in the ruined Theta 317 star system in the Gamma Quadrant.

Stevens tapped the access code into the padd beside the door. The outer door of the apartment/cell opened, allowing the Temporal Investigations agent ingress to an airlock-like foyer. Once the outer door had re-sealed, the inner door opened.

The apartment/cell appeared much like a single occupant apartment one might find in any urban area on Earth, like the city of San Francisco. On one side a wide living room with a small attached dining area, meals and beverages provided by a replicator in one corner; a small bedroom with a double bed and private bathroom on the other. The only differences from a regular apartment were that instead of windows there was a large curved viewscreen in the wall of the breakfast nook that could display any view at the preference of the occupant - currently programmed to appear as the view of the Rocky Mountains as seen from the city of Denver - and the fact that the cell's primary occupant was unable to leave at will.

"Mister McIntyre?"

McIntyre emerged from the bedroom half-dressed. He had evidently been taking a sonic shower as he stretched a fresh shirt over his lean torso.

"Might be nice if you knocked once in a while," McIntyre remarked. He nodded toward the bedroom and added, "What if I had a visitor?"

Stevens smiled slightly at the attempted joke, knowing that only he himself and his TI partner had access to McIntyre's holding cell.

"I've got good news and bad news for you, Mister McIntyre," Stevens said.

“Give me the good news first.”

“You’re getting out of our facility. Today.”

A genuine smile appeared on McIntyre’s lips.

“Our research and interviews with you have indicated your foray through time has not interfered with the time stream in any appreciable way. However, that only means you’re being turned over to Starfleet Intelligence for debrief and eventual court martial.”

The smile quickly faded from McIntyre’s face. He turned around and headed back into the bedroom, mumbling, “I’ll pack my things.” Several minutes later, the pair exited the holding cell.

Space, the Final Frontier...

## Star Trek: Personal Logs

### “Arrival - Part 5” By PJK

Based on characters and situations developed by Kevin Fossett

*Three Weeks Later*

*Office of Starfleet Intelligence*

*San Francisco, Earth*

McIntyre was still undergoing his debrief under the supervision of Captain James Ralston. When it had begun, Ralston had acted like he singlehandedly captured a Romulan spy operating in the upper echelons of the Admiralty. But as the days dragged on with little information forthcoming from McIntyre, Ralston found himself becoming ever more frustrated.

“You want to hear my story again? How many times is this now?” McIntyre asked. He was sitting across a table from two intelligence officers, the same two who had been questioning him for the last three days regarding what had occurred in 2302.

“Let’s start from the top,” Lieutenant Holbrook replied amicably. “In 2302 you were transferred from your assignment as an engineer aboard the *USS Roosevelt* and put in charge of a prototype heavy shuttle named the *Arguilius*.”

“Correct,” McIntyre replied. “I was told I was a test pilot. That the *Arguilius* was built to test several new technologies, not the least of which was a new long-range capable micro-warp drive giving a ship not much larger than a Type IV shuttlecraft the range and speed of a Class One starship. However, when the test of the warp drive began, that’s when the problems started.”

“Explain,” the lieutenant prompted.

McIntyre exhaled a deep breath, growing tired of reciting the same tale over and over. He knew why the intelligence officers were asking him to repeat the story so often; partially to confirm the consistency of what McIntyre was saying; partially to glean any additional information his repeated recitation might jostle from his memory.

“I can remember the start of my mission like it was yesterday. Heck, from my perspective it’s been less than four months! The *Arguilius* was launched from the *USS Roosevelt* in the vicinity of the Tarod system. Once clear of the main shuttlebay and beyond fifty thousand meters from the ship, I programmed a course into the helm and activated the micro-warp drive. But instead of forming a warp bubble around the ship, the drive created a tunnel connecting to a parallel quantum dimension. Before I could regain control of the *Arguilius*, I found myself in this other reality. That’s where I encountered the Qatar.”

From that point, McIntyre's story became disjointed. He could remember trying to escape the powerful Qatar frigate that seemed to be waiting specifically for his arrival and managing to avoid capture for a short period of time. Once he was captured by the Qatar, however, his memories became fragmented and unreliable. McIntyre believed the *Arguilius* was taken aboard the Qatar frigate, which was called the *QFFH Ror'Kaan*, but what happened aboard that alien vessel seemed dream-like and vague. He could recall learning that the Qatar had the ability to travel through time in their own dimension the way Federation starships were able to navigate through space, and as a result were the dominant species in their galaxy by choosing their next conquest and then going back in time to attack that civilization before it was capable of adequately defending itself. Like the Klingons, their civilization thrived on battle and conquest, and having subjugated their own galaxy, the Qatar were looking for new life and new civilizations to overcome, and the *Arguilius*' arrival in their quantum reality may have provided exactly the opportunity the Qatar were seeking.

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In the next room, Captain Ralston and another officer from Starfleet Intelligence were watching McIntyre's interrogation on a viewscreen.

"I'll say this about him," Ralston said off-handedly to his assistant. "His tall tales are consistent."

"What do you mean, sir?" Lt Commander Dunbar asked.

"I've listened to McIntyre's fairy tale at least a dozen times already, and there has been very little if any variation. It's pretty amazing, really. In similar circumstances, most subjects start to embellish their story after the second or third telling."

"Isn't that why we conduct repeated interrogations like this, sir?" Dunbar asked. "To weed out inconsistency? The general rule is; if the story remains unchanged over multiple tellings, then the likelihood is the information being relayed is true."

Ralston looked over at Dunbar, contempt in his eyes as he said, "Commander, do you really believe there are powerful aliens living in another dimension and capable of traveling through time as easily as you or I would travel to Starfleet Headquarters over in Horseshoe Bay seeking a way to invade the Federation?"

"Captain, the loss of the starship *Defiant* to interphase and the *Enterprise* crew's interaction with the so-called mirror universe last century have proven beyond a doubt that parallel realities exist," Dunbar replied. "What makes Mister McIntyre's story any less believable?"

Ralston made a dismissive noise, then returned his attention to the viewer.

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In the interrogation room, McIntyre was continuing to convey what he could remember of his remarkable journey. The feelings of disorientation from being thrust back and forth through time at the whim of his captors, though he could not recall if the time he spent aboard the Qatar ship was mere hours or many years; working with several dissidents aboard the frigate - descendants of races the Qatar had conquered throughout history - trying to prevent the Qatar from reverse-engineering the *Arguilius*' warp drive, only to have them make enough of a breakthrough that the *Ror'Kaan* and a heavy battle cruiser were able to break through the fabric separating realities and attack a fleet of warships in another dimension not McIntyre's own; and how finally, with the help of those dissidents, he managed to take control of the *Ror'Kaan* and figure out how to navigate it back to his own quantum reality. After taking on a mission that would have significant consequences if successful, McIntyre piloted the *Ror'Kaan* through the dimensional veil, the technology reverse-engineered from the *Arguilius* within his control, and set the huge warship to self-destruct; allowing his allies to escape from their servitude to the Qatar while at the same time destroying the means the Qatar had devised to penetrate the dimensional walls that had - until now - protected the Federation from the Qatar. The destruction of the Theta 317 system was an unintended consequence, but McIntyre hoped it would serve as a warning to the Qatar not to pursue their objective.

Deep down, he did not believe the Qatar would remain defeated permanently.

Early 2371  
Stardate 48184.5

Lieutenant (JG) Sean McIntyre approached the hearing room, his court-appointed JAG lawyer by his side. The building had been closed off to all personnel except those directly involved in McIntyre's prosecution or defense. For the first time since his disappearance in 2302, McIntyre was wearing a Starfleet-issued uniform with his proper rank insignia on the collar, though it was the modern jumpsuit-style uniform with gold shoulder panels instead of the maroon jacket with the shoulder strap the engineer had been used to. The two were conversing as they walked down the corridor.

"I expect you will get at least some sympathy due to the nature of the charges against you," Lieutenant Gene Able remarked. "After all, you had no idea when you activated the warp drive aboard the *Arguilius* that it would send you into another dimension rather than into warp speed..."

"Don't expect too much sympathy," remarked Captain Ralston - who had been loitering near the hearing room door, awaiting a good seat near the front once the court martial began - as McIntyre and his lawyer approached. "Sure, you may be lucky and get a compassionate tribunal member that is not willing to lock you up for the rest of your natural life for the damage you have caused, but I can guarantee that no matter what the outcome, you will never wear a Starfleet uniform again." He looked down at the clothing McIntyre was wearing with disgust.

Lieutenant Able motioned for McIntyre to wait where he was several steps away from Ralston before approaching the captain from Starfleet Intelligence himself.

"Say another word - ANY word - to my client before the end of this court martial hearing, and I will have you charged with witness intimidation and whatever other charges I can make stick... Sir!" He then gestured for McIntyre to join him inside the hearing room, leaving an angry Captain Ralston stewing out in the hallway.

As McIntyre and Able made their way to the two tables near the front of the hearing room and sat down behind the left-hand one, McIntyre was surprised to realize Agent Stevens and his partner from Temporal Investigations were already sitting in the gallery on the right side of the room. McIntyre wondered if they had been called as witnesses against him.

Several minutes later, the hearing room was opened to anyone with clearance wishing to watch the proceedings. Very few entered the room, but as expected, Ralston was the first through the door, and he took a seat in the front row directly behind McIntyre. The young engineer imagined he could feel the captain's breath on the back of his neck, but resisted the urge to turn around and glare.

Lieutenant Able noticed Ralston's presence and quickly scratched a note on a legal padd and slipped it toward his client. McIntyre looked down to read the note, which said, *'What is up with Ralston? It's like he had a personal vendetta against you.'* McIntyre looked at his lawyer and shrugged, unsure why the Starfleet Intelligence officer had such a crusade against him.

"All rise!" the bailiff, a Chief Petty Officer, called out. "Now hearing the matter of Starfleet v. McIntyre, Sean E., Lieutenant (Junior Grade)."

Three Starfleet officers, one captain rank, the other two lieutenant commanders, stepped into the hearing room from a side door and took their seats at the table at the front of the hearing room. "You may be seated," the captain ordered, prompting everyone in the room to sit back down. "Prosecutor, you may call your first witness."

The hearing proceeded quickly, the facts as they were known; that Lieutenant (JG) Sean Elliott McIntyre was assigned to test the new systems installed aboard the Federation heavy shuttle *Arguilius* and that the ship was lost - presumed destroyed for almost seven decades until McIntyre was discovered adrift in the shuttle's escape pod almost 100,000 light years away from where the test flight was to have taken place. Temporal Investigations Agent Stevens testified that, while unauthorized, McIntyre's purported forays through time were outside of his control and had likely not caused any damage to the known space-time continuum. Captain Ralston was then called as a witness, describing how sensitive Federation technology (for its time) was either captured by or (in his opinion) given freely to potentially hostile life-forms and his belief that McIntyre was not working alone when the *Arguilius*

was lost. It was during cross-examination when at least some of the source of Ralston's hostility toward McIntyre finally came to light. McIntyre's defense lawyer had evidently been doing some homework during brief recesses in the hearing.

"Captain Ralston," said Lieutenant Able. "You are not the first member of your family to attain a commission in Starfleet, are you?"

"No," Ralston replied. "My family has faithfully served Earth and the Federation since the Earth-Romulan War of two centuries ago."

"So I noted. I took the liberty of looking up your family history, Captain Ralston," Able remarked. "There are many captains like yourself. Even several rear admirals and vice admirals... Would you be so kind as to tell this tribunal about the career of your grandfather, for whom I believe you were named... Commander James Ralston."

The court martial prosecutor stood up and addressed the members of the tribunal. "Relevance?" he asked.

Lieutenant Able also looked at the three tribunal members and stated, "I believe Captain Ralston holds a grudge against my client that originates with the incident in question for which this court-martial has been instigated."

The captain in charge of the tribunal looked at both Ralston - who appeared angrier than when he had first taken the stand - and Able before ruling, "This is highly unusual, but I will allow it... for the moment. If I see no relevance in this line of questioning very quickly, I will instruct the tribunal to disregard the testimony and move on. Am I understood?"

"Yes, Captain," Able responded, then turned his attention back on Ralston. "Now, Captain Ralston, would you explain to the tribunal what connection your grandfather, Commander James Ralston, has with my client, Lieutenant McIntyre?"

Ralston glared at the defending attorney. It was obvious he did not want to answer the question, but was left with little choice when one of the tribunal members said, "Please answer the question."

"In the early years of the 24th century, my grandfather was in charge of a Starfleet-run secret project."

"Come now, Captain, it has been almost seventy years. Surely the project isn't so secret anymore! What was the name of that 'secret project'?"

With a look of restrained anger, Ralston answered, "*Project: Arguillius*." A shocked murmur briefly erupted in the hearing room, until the captain in charge banged his gavel to restore order.

Suddenly a whole new series of memories came flooding back to McIntyre. Ralston, the name of the Starfleet commander in charge of the project developing the ship he had been assigned as test pilot. He had been introduced to him formally once, back when he first reported to the shipyard where the *Arguillius* was under final stages of construction. After that he was only ever referred to as 'The Commander' or the 'OIC.' No wonder McIntyre had not recalled the project commander's name nor made the connection when Captain Ralston had introduced himself aboard the *Galvaston*!

"And could you describe your grandfather's career path following the loss of the *Arguillius* in 2302?" Able requested.

"My grandfather was removed from command of the project pending an investigation. When it came to light during the course of the investigation that the technology being tested aboard the *Arguillius* was intended for crossing dimensions, not space, the project was shut-down permanently and he was reassigned to a border monitoring station on some backwater planet near the Klingon neutral zone for the short remainder of the rest of his career. He was the only member of my family line never to have been promoted to the rank of captain or higher. The only one whose career ended in disgrace."

"And for that you blame Lieutenant McIntyre?" Able asked.

"Of course I blame McIntyre! Who else should be blamed?!" Ralston blurted out. "...If not a traitorous spy who by his own admission turned over the secrets of that ship's prototype dimensional drive to a potentially hostile alien race in an attempt to overthrow the Federation?!?"

The hearing room was silent for several second, save for the heavy breathing of the man on the witness stand. Finally, Able turned to the tribunal members and said, "Request Captain Ralston's last remark be stricken

from the record, as there are no facts in evidence to prove such an allegation and the statement is highly prejudicial to my client's defense."

"Agreed," the tribunal captain said. "Strike the witnesses' last remark from the record."

"I have no further questions for this witness," Able added before returning to the defense table.

"You are free to step down, Captain Ralston," one of the other tribunal members stated. Ralston got up off the witness stand and, after pausing to glare at McIntyre briefly, departed the hearing room.

"Prosecution may call the next witness," the tribunal captain said.

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The court-martial lasted only a few more days. McIntyre noted that Ralston did not attend any further sessions of the proceeding until the afternoon the tribunal indicated their verdict would be announced.

Sitting at the defense table next to his counselor, McIntyre asked the lieutenant, "What do you think is going to happen?"

Able pondered the question for a moment before replying, "Best case scenario; the tribunal clears your name and - if you choose - you continue your career in Starfleet, or wherever you choose to go from here. Worst case; they find you guilty of treason and sentence you to a penal colony for the remainder of your life. While I doubt that will happen, I have to admit I'm having a hard time reading the tribunal members. I'm sorry to say this, but I don't think you are going to come out of this completely unscathed."

McIntyre sighed as he remarked, "All because I volunteered to become a test pilot for what I thought was an experiment in warp propulsion theory." He sighed again when he noticed Captain Ralston slip into the hearing room and take a seat in the back row on the opposite side, as if wanting to be as far away from McIntyre as physically possible. A moment later the bailiff spoke.

"All rise. Resuming the matter of Starfleet v McIntyre."

Again, the tribunal of officers entered and took seats at the forward table, instructing all in attendance to be seated. The tribunal captain then added, "Lieutenant McIntyre and Counsel, please stand."

Both McIntyre and his JAG lawyer stood.

"Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Sean Elliott McIntyre. While the evidence presented in these proceedings could in no possible way support a charge of treason against you..."

The tribunal captain's sentence was cut off by a loud sound from the back of the room. Everyone present, including the tribunal members, McIntyre and his lawyer, and the prosecuting attorneys, all looked to see Ralston smash a small padd he had been holding on the floor, get up, and storm out of the hearing room. A slight smile in spite of the tension of the moment appeared on McIntyre's lips until the presiding tribunal member banged his gavel and resumed speaking.

"As I was saying, before being so rudely interrupted... While this tribunal can in no way sustain the charge of treason brought against you, we find that we can not find you completely blameless in regards to the incident involving the heavy shuttle *Arguillius* and the Theta 317 system. The evidence indicates you to be negligent in operations and procedures that should be second nature to any test pilot. Additionally, you showed a severe disregard for life in the manner in which you attempted your escape from the Qatar. Aside from the countless Qatari aboard both the alien ship you commandeered and the cruiser that attempted to follow you across the dimensional divide, imagine if you will what could have happened had you emerged back in our reality in a populated system, such as Bajor, Q'onoS, or - God forbid - the Terran system! Because of this lack of judgement on your part, we cannot find you completely blameless."

McIntyre found himself nodding silently as the captain recited his remarks. He wondered what would be his fate?

"Having said this, and taking into consideration the events that have befallen Lieutenant McIntyre during and following the Theta 317 incident, this tribunal rules that the defendant will not be incarcerated for his crimes." Lieutenant Able patted McIntyre on the shoulder in congratulations as the time-displaced man released a deep breath he had been holding. The celebration was short-lived, however, as the captain continued, "However, given the

evidence and circumstances, it is with great reluctance that we rescind the Lieutenant's Starfleet commission. He will begin the process of separating from Starfleet at the conclusion of these proceedings. This court-martial is concluded."

As the tribunal members all stood up, prompting everyone in the hearing room to do likewise, and left through the side door, McIntyre remained standing where he was, speechless. He had known that - given the circumstances - he was likely to receive some form of punishment for what had occurred. He had not expected Ralston's prediction - *'No matter what the outcome, you will never wear a Starfleet uniform again!'* - to come true.

"Just say the word and I'll file an appeal before the close of the business day," Lieutenant Able said, gathering his padds and isolar chips and quickly stuffing everything into a small briefcase.

"Don't bother," McIntyre said when he finally found his voice. His face still looked like it had been drained of blood. "I'm a man out of time. Perhaps Starfleet is no longer the place for me anymore."

"Are you sure?" Able insisted. "I'm positive, given the severity of this sentence in light of what actually occurred, that I can get this overturned on appeal!"

"I'm sure. I think... I think it's just time for me to move on. Find a place where I can fit in." McIntyre's thoughts turned to the *SS Shenandoah Valley* and wondered what methods existed to get in contact with Captain Hardy? The transport ship could be literally anywhere in the galaxy for all he knew.

"Well, I'm going to look into some regulations and precedents, just in case you change your mind," Able remarked, quickly heading out the back door of the hearing room as he added, "You'll hear from me soon."

At that moment, the Chief Petty Officer bailiff approached McIntyre and said, "If you will please follow me, I'll escort you to where you can get the process of separation started."

"Lead the way, Chief," McIntyre replied, following the non-com out through one of the side doors of the room.

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The process of separation took less than a week to complete. First, they collected all properties and materials in possession of McIntyre that belonged to Starfleet, which consisted of the several uniforms that had been replicated for his use during the court-martial. His official records - which until recently had listed McIntyre as deceased - were updated to reflect his recovery and subsequent separation from the service. The final step, a physical exam, was conducted at the headquarters of Starfleet Medical in San Francisco, where the doctors and technicians took numerous blood, tissue, and hair samples to study for the effects of the trans-dimensional and trans-temporal travel his body had experienced in attempts to better understand the side effects on humanoid bodies. When asked where he wanted Starfleet to transport him to begin his new life, his answer was that he wanted to simply walk out the front door.

McIntyre was surprised by how little the city of San Francisco had changed in the nearly three-quarters of a century he had jumped over. Most of the streets he remembered still existed. Some of the businesses he had patronized as an Academy cadet were still operating. Even the world-famous cable car system - running for centuries through periodic upgrades - was still a timely method of travel throughout the city. McIntyre found himself aboard one of those cable cars and heading toward the piers of the city's waterfront, where agents for various shipping companies were known to be located. Figuring his brief time aboard the *Shenandoah Valley* was successful enough, he could apply for a job aboard one of the countless civilian transports plying the space lanes.

"What can I do for you?" asked the shipping agent behind the counter of the first agency he came across.

"I just got out of Starfleet," McIntyre responded, not really a lie. "I was hoping to 'ship out' again. Know of any ships looking for a hard-working deck hand with engineering experience?"

The agent consulted his computer monitor as he remarked, "There's always some ship looking for a warm body. Let's see what I've got... Have a small interplanetary tramp freighter, makes the run between Earth, Mars, and Jupiter Station once a week."

"I was hoping for something a little more long distance. I'd like to get out of the solar system if I can," McIntyre said.

“No family or attachments I take it. That’ll help. Let’s see... Yeah, there’s an old converted Miranda-class ship being used as a cargo transport, currently in orbit and looking for an engineer. If you’re ex-Starfleet, you should have some experience with those old systems they got.”

“Surprisingly recent,” McIntyre replied with a tone of irony. “Who do I contact?”

“Owner is listed as H & D Shipping, LLC. I have a contact frequency if you want to give ‘em a try.”

McIntyre nodded, then accepted a small reader device with the information on it. The agent pointed at several consoles against one wall of the office and said, “You can use my subspace transmitter, but you may want to hurry. That transport is scheduled to depart orbit sometime this evening.”

McIntyre nodded and stepped over to the nearby transceiver, tuning it to the specified frequency and hailing the ship at the other end. The voice that responded did not sound familiar – not that it should have given McIntyre’s circumstances, but within minutes he had an appointment for an interview with the ship’s master an hour later.

Forty-five minutes later, McIntyre made his way to a nearby public transporter station and handed the coordinates to the operator behind the console.

“Civilian ship in orbit?” the operator confirmed, and the former-Starfleet officer nodded. “Step up on the pad. Keep your arms and legs inside the confinement field. You may experience some brief nausea.”

“Trust me, it couldn’t be any worse than the transporters I had to use seventy years ago,” McIntyre remarked, causing a look of skepticism mixed with admiration on the operator’s face.

“Well, you don’t look a day over fifty,” the man said as he programmed the coordinates into the console, causing McIntyre to frown. “Stand by. Energizing.” A moment later McIntyre felt the annular confinement field grip hold of him and his vision faded into a swirl of sparkles, quickly resolving itself into the small but brightly-lit transporter room of a commercial transport ship. He was immediately greeted by a man wearing the same style and color of coverall the *Shenandoah Valley* crew had worn when he was aboard that ship, and wondered if all civilian transport crews wore the same functional and efficient clothing.

“Welcome aboard. The Captain is waiting to meet you. Follow me please,” the man said, leading McIntyre into the corridor. The interior of the ship reminded him of the *Roosevelt*, the starship he had been assigned to prior to the fateful *Arguillius* mission, indicating it was likely the ship he had just boarded was at least as old as McIntyre was.

Stopping in front of a non-descript door, his escort said to McIntyre, “The Captain is waiting for you. Good luck. We could use a good engineer after unexpectedly losing our last one.”

McIntyre was going to ask his escort how the ship had lost its last engineer, wondering if some dangerous condition existed aboard the ship and starting to have second thoughts about the interview, but the man simply turned and left to resume his normal duties preparing the ship to depart orbit and the door he was standing in front of swished open. A female voice called out, “Come in.”

Straightening the shirt he had been issued by the separations officer at Starfleet, McIntyre entered the room, quickly realizing it looked quite familiar. To one side was a desk, behind which sat a blonde-haired woman looking like she had not slept properly in days. McIntyre could not help but smile as he recognized Amanda Hardy. She had not looked up at him yet, pouring over manifests, status reports, and invoices spread across her desk.

“Sean Elliott McIntyre, reporting for an interview as ordered,” the former-Starfleet officer remarked. Hardy’s eyes went wide and she froze momentarily before finally looking up.

“Mack?!?!?”

*STILL to be continued...*