



# Gauntlet

*Michael Jan Friedman*

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## **Gauntlet** Michael Jan Friedman

Long before he took command of the starship *Enterprise*, Captain Jean-Luc Picard led another proud vessel through the uncharted regions of the galaxy: the *U.S.S. Stargazer*. Thrust unexpectedly into the center seat, the twenty-eight-year-old Picard must live up to the challenges of starship command -- and a crew that hasn't yet learned to trust him. The pirate known as the White Wolf has been wreaking havoc across several sectors, and the inexperienced Picard has been given the assignment to stop him. Surprised at getting such a challenge, Picard soon learns that he is expected to fail in his duty and have his captaincy disgraced before it can even begin.

Given an untested crew and an impossible mission, Picard must beat the odds and apprehend the White Wolf -- but the pirate keeps a shocking secret that leaves Picard to make a deadly decision.

## **Gauntlet Details**

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Author : Michael Jan Friedman

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# From Reader Review Gauntlet for online ebook

## Ryan says

Prequels are a tricky business. We already know the ultimate fates of the characters featured in them, so a lot of the drama is taken away from them, and instead we have to focus on how the decisions they make ultimately inform the versions of the characters that we already know.

Unfortunately, we don't really get any of that in *Gauntlet*, the story of Jean-Luc Picard's first starship command. Instead we get a very paint-by-numbers pilot story, where all of the characters are introduced and given equal focus, which means that we don't really get to know any of them in any real detail. The plot fizzles somewhat, as well. Picard and co. have to track down a space pirate who, we learn, really isn't a pirate, and it's made clear that if he doesn't succeed, his career his career is doomed to failure. So he lets the not-really-a-pirate-but-a-heroic-ethnobiologist White Wolf go, which as we can tell from later books and TV series has no real affect on his career.

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## Tammy says

According to the forward, this is the start to a spinoff, based on Picard's first captaincy on the Stargazer, much in the way of Peter David's New Frontier series. I love this idea. This approach gives the author a great deal of freedom with the plot and characters, and there is less of the reset button pitfall. Much of the first book is spent on establishing the backstory and context for the crew. The characters are quirky (not quite as eccentric as that of the Excalibur) and interesting, and did a good job of drawing me into the series. The plot and action were great, but I'm a little dubious about the resolution. However, I'm looking forward to reading the rest of the series.

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## Scott Vout says

A half decent, dont really have to think about it read.

Lots of "set the story up detail" need i guess to introduce the main players in a 6 book series.

The ending is a little weak but enough hints are dropped to foreshadow the coming "evil"

I am currently reading book two and i will continue to work my way through all six.

Might need to read something else in between if the endings continue to be weak.

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## C Moore says

This is a 4.5 star novel! Michael Jan Friedman ably blends the stories of a large cast of characters to establish the narrative that is life on board the USS Stargazer under Captain — Commander(?) — Jean-Luc Picard. I appreciated his blend of human and non-human characters, as well as high and low-ranking personnel. I'm immediately jumping into book two!

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## **Steve says**

This book was far different from what I thought it was going to be. Turns out reading about the Picard we all know and love as this self-doubter was not a brilliant plan, but I understand the premise. Also watching some of the upper echelons of Starfleet not acting in the best interest of the fleet was surprising. The climax was over a little quickly, and there was next to no resolution.

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## **Benjamin Plume says**

Pretty satisfying, quick read. I've been curious about this miniseries for a while but never quite felt like digging in. The first one didn't blow me away, but I'm glad I read it. Picard's original crew is full of characters with potential.

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## **Mrklington says**

Well, if Picard's coming back - what better time to read about his history?

This is a nice backstory showing Picard's beginning as a commander - as a CAPTAIN, that is - even younger than Kirk! It's a decent space opera yarn, and with details of crew and their development. On to the next one!

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## **Daniel Kukwa says**

This feels like an anti-climax after "The Valiant" provided an electrifying start to this series. That said, it certainly works as an interesting introduction to a number of new crew members aboard the Stargazer...but it does feel like a light snack, compared to the banquet that was the first Stargazer novel, especially in the rather quick wrap-up to the White Wolf storyline.

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## **D. H. says**

[firing on a ship without even an attempt to hail it (hide spoiler)]

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## **Joe says**

I am a Stargazer fan.

Picard at the beginning of his career.

What a great crew.

It feels like we have seen this crew on-screen.

Great work.

Fun ending.

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### **Nicolas says**

Surprisingly I found this to be a little weak. I usually enjoy Friedman's stuff, but this one seemed watered-down and anti-climactic. It was good enough to hold my interest, but definitely not a stand out. It seemed like the author wanted to give each of his original characters their own gimmick. The ensign who is basically a spacial anomaly in a containment suit, the security guard shaped like a turkey... it was a little forced. I liked Ben Zoma and Pug Joseph but there were a whole lot of weak characters that brought the story down. There were a lot of similarities between this and the Titan series that stars Will Riker. I wouldn't be surprised if that drew a lot of inspirations from this series. I would rate this a "whatever."

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### **Mårten Ericson says**

A strong 2.5. Lesiure reading for a Star Trek fan. No real descriptions of anything, it's mostly just things happening, language is simple, no intellectual depth what so ever. Has a few too many charachters. The book does its part on a hot summer day.

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### **Amber Colored Wolf says**

For something a little different. This series instead of focusing on one of the main Star Trek TV series instead tells the tale of Jean-Luc Picard when he first reaches his title as Captain aboard the Stargazer.

This book was in interesting read if only for the fact that it was so different to see young Picard sometimes floundering and having so much self doubt about his abilities. It just made it all the more satisfying when we get to see him be great and we see small steps towards him becoming one of the greatest Captains in the history of Starfleet.

This series also has a lot of different and new characters that took some getting used to, but were all unique enough and fleshed out and well written that I found myself at times more interested in their plights then even that of the Captain or the main plot.

My one complaint it that there are so many new characters and they really do such a good job at developing them that the story drags a little in the middle with so many introductions and the reader just waiting for the main story (Of Picard chasing a space pirate to progress).

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### **Bradley says**

A fairly solid read, not for me. Off to listia with you. =)

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## **Roberto Lagos Figueroa says**

Primera novela de la serie dedicada a Picard como un novísimo capitán de la USS STARGAZER. En esta entrega relata lo que aconteció tras la novela VALIANT, y más que contar una aventura en sí, nos sirve para presentar a los personajes que serán regulares en esta serie de la mano del siempre efectivo Michael Jan Friedman. Desde ese punto de vista, no hay ningún problema. La misión en sí se resuelve con un interesante giro y creo hubiese quedado bien si se hubiese tratado de un piloto hipotético de tv. Veremos que más pasará en las próximas novelas de la serie.

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