

# ***Destination Azahar***

Copyright © 2009 By deGaffer

CONTENT: MF ScFi

UNIVERSE: The Swarm Cycle

## ***Chapter 3 - Reality Check***

"May I have everyone's attention, *please*?"

The noise level in the transporter room quickly dropped to whispered murmurs. Sgt. Landry continued, "Sponsors, please collect the CAP ID from each of your concubines. Ask them if they have any immediate medical issues such as high blood pressure, HIV, diabetes and the like. Also ask them if they have children under fourteen and where they might be found if you elect to have them extracted. Once you have those questions answered and everyone in your group is seated, please join me over here."

The hollow room echoed with many voices as Landry's instructions were carried out. Tuan stepped over to Landry and stood next to the large woman who had choreographed the sex show involving Phaninath and Aswani Qureshi, the restaurant's owners.

When Landry looked at Tuan, he handed her the five CAP cards in his hand and told her, "Margret has high blood pressure, and I have five dependents to be retrieved including my own daughter."

Landry nodded and kept working her way through the cards presented to her by the other four sponsors. She then handed the stack of cards to Corporal Whitcomb. "The relatives of record will be notified to not expect any of you to be home for dinner this evening," she told the group with a friendly smile.

When the laughter died down, Landry continued, "Since your lunch was interrupted, we can continue this briefing in the mess hall. Once we've given everyone the standard orientation briefings, each of you will be assigned a pod. This will be your home for the foreseeable future. It'll be detached and transferred to the colony surface when we arrive at Dothan or to another ship if Dothan isn't your current destination. Don't be shy about asking the AI to change the configuration of your accommodations.

"We will begin rotating everyone through medical for evaluations after the priority cases have been dealt with. You need to settle your concubines into your quarters and return to this room with the parents of any dependents you wish picked up. Dependent pickup is encouraged but not required. The option of retrieving any, all, or none of your qualified dependents is your decision and yours alone, unless you promised dependent pickup before accepting a concubine's submission. Questions, anyone?"

When no one voiced a question, Landry slowly headed toward the open doorway, "Then please gather your concubines and follow me. There's another group about to be beamed up and we need to be out of their way. Please take one of the PDAs from Private Mathews on your way out of the transporter room."

Each of the sponsors gathered their little groups and followed Landry as she made her way through a maze of corridors and ended up in a well-lit cafeteria. "I've enlisted the aid of several crew members to assist you with learning how to use the food replicators. Once you've retrieved your selections please take a seat and remain quiet," Landry advised the group. "Before anyone leaves this room, please listen and understand that what you are about to hear is very important and can mean life or death for some of you, especially for those of you who are concubines.

"Sponsors, look around the room. You may do as you like with your own concubines, but everyone else's is off-limits without specific permission from the appropriate sponsor. Uninvited physical contact with anyone other than your own concubines can have serious consequences.

"While we're on the subject of sex, don't even think about sexual relations with anyone under thirteen. It's simply not tolerated. Sexual contact with thirteen-year-olds is limited to oral and anal activities. Vaginal penetration is *not* permitted until a person's fourteenth birthday. This is a zero-tolerance policy. The Confederacy will cut you some slack about many violations for the next couple of weeks, but this isn't one of them."

Landry took a breath as she looked around to be sure her warning had penetrated the blank faces. "Concubines, your human rights ended when you boarded this ship. You live or die at the whim of your sponsor. Whatever hold you think you might have had because of previous relationships or deals is no longer enforceable. This is instant divorce for everyone, sponsors and concubines alike. I know there are some previously married couples in the crowd. Get over it, and get over it quickly.

"Sponsors!" Landry shouted to get their attention. "Your concubines have no rights, but you will be held responsible for anything any of your concubines do, or don't do. If they make trouble for anyone, *you* will be required to answer for it, not them."

It took longer than Landry expected for everyone to make selections from the large replicators and return to their seat in the sparsely occupied cafeteria. Landry grabbed a sandwich for herself and sat down. With no children present, the room remained mostly quiet as the group ate. There was very little discussion. Everyone appeared to be too shocked by the events and the graphic warnings.

When it looked like most of the people who were going to eat had done so, Landry again stood to get everyone's attention. "There are only a few of you with medical issues, mostly smokers. If you'll queue up by the entrance and follow the corpsman he'll take

you to medical to begin your treatment. Each of you will be escorted to your pod once that has been accomplished.

"The rest of you need to make your way to your pods and get settled in. Those of you with dependents to be extracted need to meet me in the transporter room in thirty minutes. The PDA will give you directions both to your pods and to the transporter room. If there are no questions, let's all get moving!"

Tuan directed Margret to follow the corpsman. He and the rest of his group made their way to Blue Seven. The door didn't open until Tuan stood in front of it. Tuan ushered the three women through the portal and followed them into a very spacious apartment.

"It's big, but incredibly drab," Beatrice commented. "I wonder what can be done about these gray walls."

"I don't know," Tuan replied. "But I'll ask someone when I get a chance."

A disembodied voice came from the ceiling, "There is a large selection of colors and patterns available for all of the surfaces in the pod. The sponsor can request changes at any time."

Everyone including Tuan jumped as the ghostly voice spoke to them.

"Sweet Jesus!" Tuan exclaimed. "Who said that?"

"I was responding to your inquiry." the even-toned voice explained.

"Maybe it's the AI Landry talked about," Beatrice posited.

Nancy made the smart-assed observation, "Well, duh!"

Tuan snapped his head around to look at Nancy, who blanched at the sudden attention. But Tuan's smile and soft chuckle were reassuring, "Looks like someone is recovering from her ordeal. AI, is there something you can do about Nancy's torn clothing?"

The AI responded with, "I cannot repair the garment she is wearing, but there are various sizes of shifts in each of the concubine's quarters."

Tuan turned to Beatrice. "Can you help her change and maybe put an icepack on that eye? I probably should have sent her to medical to have them check on it." Turning to Nancy he added, "I'm sorry, dear. With all that's going on I just didn't think about it."

"That's okay," Nancy replied with a smile. "I've had worse." She turned to follow Beatrice as they searched the place for concubine quarters.

Tuan watched for a minute then asked, "AI, where are the concubine quarters?"

"On the second floor, the blue circle marks a personal lift between the two levels."

Both women were wearing the gray shift of a concubine when they rode the blue disk back to the main floor giggling like school girls, which one actually was.

Tuan greeted the pair and handed the icepack he was holding to Nancy. "I didn't think you'd be able to find an icepack upstairs, so I had one put together down here. Not as easy as it sounds."

He stepped back to admire his lovely acquisition. Tuan was not typically aroused by teenagers, especially one so close to his own daughter's age. "I can see why your councilor was taking you to lunch and taking liberties. That's not a terribly flattering outfit, but it doesn't hide the fact that you are a *very* desirable young woman."

Nancy blushed deeply as Tuan examined her long athletic legs. The small round butt at the top of those legs was barely covered by the hem of the drab garment. Even through the crude material it was clear that she had a flat abdomen. The shift hid just how small her waist really was, but Tuan could tell that she wasn't very big around between her hips and ribcage. The wide base of her C-cup breasts produced more of a conical shape than spherical. Her long, elegant neck was topped by a rectangular face with delicately chiseled features. Tuan's cock began to swell when his mind's eye pictured this blue-ribbon brunette giving him a ride.

Tuan shook his head in an attempt to disperse the erotic image. "Earth to Tuan," finally penetrated his consciousness, and he turned his attention to a laughing Beatrice. "Are you in there? She may not be getting good grades in school, but Nancy certainly has the power to make the men around her stupid, doesn't she?"

Nancy's blush deepened from hairline to cleavage. She had been undressed by men's eyes more than once, but this guy was different. It didn't feel dirty when he did it, and she wasn't sure why.

An equally blushing Tuan took a swipe at Beatrice's butt, which only got her laughing that much harder. "Isn't it time for us to head to the transporter room?" she asked. "We need to fetch the kids."

"Right," Tuan agreed through his testosterone-induced haze. "Take care of that eye," he admonished as he smiled at Nancy. Turning to Celeste he added, "We'll be back before long, I hope. See what you can find out about what makes things tick around here."

Tuan and Beatrice followed the directions displayed on the PDA. Excited children could be heard up the companionway as they approached the transporter room. A smiling Aswani was surrounded by a half dozen children, each demanding her attention. Her sponsor was laughing as she followed them from the room, "Phaninath makes beautiful babies," the sponsor said. "I can't wait until he plants one in both me and Judith. Leroy

will have your belly swelling again before you know it. I'm so glad that all of you agreed to come with me."

Tuan and Beatrice stepped aside to allow the gaggle to pass; then continued on up the companionway and into the transporter room.

Landry looked up. "Ah, just in time. I was about to send for you. Shall we head down for yours first, Beatrice?"

Beatrice smiled and nodded, "It hardly matters. Tuan is my next-door neighbor and my kids are at the house diagonally behind mine. Kim should be home from school by now, shouldn't she?"

A smiling Tuan nodded and then asked, "Who was the sponsor who just left with Mrs. Qureshi?"

Landry appeared puzzled for a moment before answering, "That was Constance McKinsey."

"Really!" Tuan's eyes popped open, "Not the McKinsey of McKinsey and Phillips Engineering?"

Landry had a faraway look for a moment, "Yes, it seems that she was a partner in that venture. Do you know her?"

Tuan shook his head, "Only by reputation. We've competed for some of the same jobs."

Beatrice smiled and asked, "Can we go get the kids now?"

Both Tuan and Sgt. Landry laughed and nodded.

The drone had positioned a nexus by the pool at Charlene Dunn's house. Charlene was not surprised that Beatrice was at her back door, but was leery of two huge people with her and... Tuan? "Hi, Bea. What's going on?"

Beatrice answered her neighbor through a big grin, "Hey Charley. Are my kids ready to go? I really appreciate you watching them for me."

Charlene nodded, "You're early. I'll get them just as soon as you tell me what's going on! Who are all these people with you?"

Beatrice cocked her head, "This is our neighbor, Tuan. You know... Kim's dad?"

Beatrice weathered the exasperated look from Charlene before continuing, "Tuan happened to be at the restaurant where I met the girls... and there were these Marines... and we kind of got picked up."

Charlene squealed and threw her arms around Beatrice, "You got picked up! I'm so happy for you. I know you've been lusting after him for years. Have you gotten a test drive from him yet?" Charlene's flashing eye's cut to Tuan. She somehow knew that he was Beatrice's sponsor.

Beatrice shook her head, "Not yet, but I've seen him in action. Oh m'God! I'm going to die and go to heaven the minute he blasts off in me."

The irritated voice of Sgt. Landry spoke up from behind, "Ladies, please! We're short on time."

"Mommy!" The strong voice of a small child could be clearly heard through the back door.

Beatrice stepped through the door and was assaulted by a knee-high munchkin followed by three others who had emerged from the den where they had been watching television.

The ten-year-old Nora asked, "Hi, mom. What has you here so early?" She wrinkled her nose and added, "What on earth are you wearing? That thing looks awful on you!"

Beatrice put her hands on her hips and laughed as she said, "Well thank you very much. I'm pleased to see you as well. Are you going to turn me in to the fashion police?"

Nora shook her head, "Someone needs to, though. Hey, that's a concubine shift you're wearing!" She then looked up and saw Tuan and the two Marines. She began jumping up and down as she asked, "Where are we going?"

"Don't know and don't care as long as it's far from those lizard things," Beatrice responded calmly. "Get your things together. The transporter is out by the pool and we're heading straight up to the ship."

Four excited youngsters went racing out the back door followed by their equally elated mother. She gave Charlene a hug and followed them onto the deck adjacent to the pool.

Charlene gave Tuan a hug as well and admonished him, "You take care of them, or else. I know where your grandmother lives!"

Tuan laughed, "Yes, ma'am. There's no need to involve Nana!"

Corporal Whitcomb activated the nexus and escorted Beatrice back aboard *Asimov*.

Landry asked, "Shall we?" as she gestured toward the active transporter.

Tuan shook his head, "My house is right over there. I'll get Kim and be right back."

"Hold on a second," Landry responded. "Let me get someone down here to guard the nexus and I'll go with you."

The transporter was quiet for a second; then reactivated a steady red. Private Mathews stepped off the pad and smiled.

Landry caught up with Tuan and the two walked across Beatrice's yard to Tuan's house.

"Hey Pop, you're home early. What's up?" Kim was slouched on the couch listening to music videos and doing her math homework. She had only been home from school for a few minutes.

Tuan told her, "Put your shoes on, kiddo. We have places to go and things to do."

Kim looked up and finally saw that tall woman in uniform standing behind her father, "Holy shit! You've been picked up! Give me a second." Kim shoved her feet into her flip-flops and dashed up the stairs.

"Where's she going? She doesn't need to bring anything with her." Landry was becoming concerned that this was going to get slow and ugly.

Kim came thundering back down the stairs with an armload of Teddy bears, a blanket, and her travel makeup bag. Tuan had returned her MP3 player to her backpack along with her video games.

As she entered the room Kim said, "Can you grab..." She realized that Tuan was holding her backpack and smiled at him. She was only thirteen, but she was barely a head shorter than her father. "Thanks, Pop. I'm ready to go."

A laughing Landry led the duo back across the neatly trimmed lawns and through the gate to the waiting Private Mathews. Kim ran over and gave Charlene a quick hug before following her father through the transporter.

"Whoa! That was a rush!" A very excited Kim exclaimed as her laughing father pulled her off the transporter pad.

"Let's go meet the family," Tuan suggested as he took Kim's arm. He turned to Sgt. Landry and said, "Thanks for your patience."

"No problem," Landry smiled in response.

"Are we really in space? Do I know anyone here? Where are we going? Will I have my own room? Are there any kids here my age? Is there a softball team?" There was an endless stream of babbled questions from a very excited thirteen-year-old who didn't wait for any answers and was clearly on an adrenaline rush all the way from the transporter room to Blue Seven.

It had only been a few hours since he had driven into Jackson for lunch, but it seemed like days. Tuan was feeling very tired as he ushered Kim into their pod. But anyone over the age of 25 would get tired just from watching Kim burn countless calories without really doing anything.

Margret shouted, "You're back! Who's this? That tall drink of water can't be Kim!"

Kim dropped her bears as well as her jaw when she saw a very naked blonde woman wrap her arms around her father. The woman wasn't grotesquely fat, but she was seriously overweight and shouldn't be running around naked, or even in a bikini.

Looking around somewhat fearfully and uncharacteristically quiet, Kim spotted a striking brunette with a black eye that was almost swollen shut and a rail-thin redhead. Both were in the same kind of outfit that Mrs. Walters was wearing. The brunette was almost as tall as her dad, but couldn't be more than fifteen!

Kim could hear her dad talking, but she couldn't focus on what he was saying until....

Tuan asked, "Kim, are you okay? I know this is a bit of a shock. Let me try again. Nod if you can hear me, okay?"

Kim nodded and tore her eyes away from the stunning brunette.

Realizing that it was as good a place to start as any, Tuan began the introductions again. "This is my thirteen-year-old daughter, Kim. Kim, this is Nancy, who is just a couple of years older than you. Of course you know Beatrice and her kids. You've also met Margret and Celeste, but you may not remember them. It's been a long time."

Kim's eyes again locked on the naked blonde. From the thick patch of yellow fur below the rotund belly Kim could be sure that Margret didn't have a half-completed dye job, if her hair color wasn't natural.

A moderately embarrassed Margret said, "Sorry to be so shockingly naked, but Abdul the tent maker didn't supply any of the concubine clothing, so there's nothing here that'll fit me. I should be down to just 'overweight' in a couple of weeks. I might be able to make a toga out of a bed sheet if that would make you more comfortable."

Kim managed to shake off most of the shock. "No, that's okay. I'm just not used to having naked people around since my mom died. She used to run around the house naked when I was little. I'll be okay, honest."

"Actually," Tuan interjected as he turned his attention to Margret. "The makeover that the med bay pod is capable of providing can have you neat and trim sooner than that. Right, AI?"



"Indeed," spoke a voice from nowhere that startled Kim. Beatrice's four almost bowled her over as they clung to her legs. The voice continued, "Depending upon the extent of the changes it may only take a few hours in the pod. The subject may be uncomfortable for a few days as her body adjusts, but the change in her appearance will occur rapidly."

"So," Tuan smiled as he turned to Margret, "just how slinky and sultry do you want to be?"

Margret shook her head. "With my skeletal structure the words 'slinky' and I will not cross paths unless you do some major changes. How about just trimming me down to human size?"

Celeste requested, "I don't want to be any heavier than I am. Maybe we can just shift some fat off of my flabby butt and thighs to give me enough tits to look female."

Beatrice took Tuan aside. "Is there any way that you and I can have some private time? I'd rather the kids not see what I want to do or hear what I have to say."

Tuan nodded as Kim dragged him off to tour the quarters and discover what distractions it could offer.

After dinner that first evening Tuan asked Kim to take the other kids upstairs to the playroom that he had requested earlier while touring the second floor. Kim had her video games set up in there and had found a library of children's videos that were popular with the younger kids. These could be shown on the display integrated into the pod's wall.

When the last of the kids disappeared up the lift Tuan turned to Nancy, "You haven't made a request for any changes. What would you like the nanites to do to you?"

Nancy shrugged, "Maybe straight white teeth and no contacts. I hate having to deal with them." She blushed a bit as she added, "And maybe a bigger bust."

Tuan shook his head, "I'm sure we can give you a toothpaste model's smile and sparkling doe eyes, but I doubt anything needs to be done with your figure. Take off your shift and let's have a look."

The shy virgin hesitated for a moment; then pulled the plain garment over her head.

The four adults gasped when the hem cleared Nancy's shoulders. Her breasts and hips were too big for her to be a runway model, but she could make a fortune modeling for a women's lingerie catalog.

"Hold your arms out straight and turn around," Tuan directed. He looked at his other three concubines, "What do you think ladies? All I can see that limits her from perfection is an appendix scar and a few stretch marks where her hips and breasts seem to have blossomed a bit too fast. We may have to limit her breasts to the size they are now."

When Nancy's face showed her disappointment Tuan stood and gathered her into a gentle hug before saying, "I wish I could show you how silly you'd look with big boobs."

A holographic projection of the tall, athletic girl appeared in the middle of the room sporting a DD bust that looked silly on anyone who wouldn't be making their living as an exotic dancer or porn star.

"Thank you, AI," Tuan said; then asked, "Can you project what she would look like in four years?"

The face and hips changed to that of a nineteen-year-old and the big tits still looked ridiculous.

Tuan smiled, "Now let's show her what she'd look like with her present bust size softened a bit with maturity."

The shocked fifteen-year-old put her hands to her mouth. "Will I really look that good with a C-cup? If I had blonde hair I'd look like a Barbie doll!"

The voice in the air replied, "I believe this is an accurate depiction of your figure without your baby fat and with matured pelvic development."

Tuan kissed the girl's forehead. "I take it you'll be happy to look like that?"

The speechless girl just nodded emphatically as the rest laughed with her and put her in the middle of a group hug.

"Thank you for your help ladies," Tuan told them. "You can put your shift back on, Nancy, unless you're ready to lose your virginity. I'm not sure I can hold out much longer under so much visual stimulation." Tuan's smooth voice and smile reassured Nancy that he was mostly teasing.

Tuan then asked, "If the rest of you can head upstairs with the kids, I'd like to speak with Bea about the changes she wants done."

Beatrice stopped the retreating women. "It's okay if you guys are here. I just didn't want to talk about this in front of my children." Beatrice removed her shift to display the trim body of a thirty-something woman with a moderately protruding abdomen that was marred by huge stretch marks from carrying big babies. She also had the sagging breasts of a nursing mother.

"Well?" Beatrice seemed to be waiting for criticism about her body.

Tuan furrowed his brow in some confusion, "We're waiting for you to describe what you want to look like."

Beatrice cocked her head, "I don't really care. You undoubtedly have it in your mind that I'm to be the den mother of this little troop, and that's fine as long as I get a turn at adult fun." She turned her back to Tuan. "What will it take for you to deliver the ass fucking I offered for bringing my kids along?"

"That's not really necessary," Tuan responded. "I want your kids along almost as much as you do."

Beatrice nodded as she turned halfway around, placed her hands on her knees, and looked around her shoulder at Tuan. There was nothing to mar her appearance from behind. She had shapely legs and just enough roundness to keep her ass from looking flat on her wide hips. The furry lips of her plush pussy were clearly visible below a butt crack that was just tight enough to mask her anus. The erotic pose elicited a twitch from Tuan's cock.

"I kind of figured that you wanted my kids to come along. But, I really want that ass fucking." Beatrice was losing her nerve, but pressed on. "You can make me look any way you like as long as I get fucked several times a week. It can be in my pussy most of the time, but I want it in the ass periodically." She stood up straight and sighed. "Is that too gross of a concept for you to even try? I had to trip my ex and beat him to the floor in order to get him to stick his dick into any of my holes. Am I really that unattractive? Do whatever you want to this body to make it look fuckable to you. Whatever you want, whenever you want it. I'm really, really horny most of the time!"

Nancy's mouth was hanging open in shock, and both Margret and Celeste were giggling like teenagers. Tuan's mouth was working, but no sound was forthcoming. When he realized he couldn't speak he reached up and pulled Beatrice into his lap. He put his left arm around her shoulders, took her left breast in his right hand, and leaned in to kiss the junction of her neck and shoulder. Beatrice squealed and scrunched her neck and shoulder together in an attempt to block his target.

Tuan leaned back to look Beatrice in the eyes. He was unconsciously tracing the margin of the areola on the breast he was holding captive. Beatrice was gasping for breath when she pulled herself up to confront his lips with hers. Their lips locked in a prolonged French kiss that left both of them panting.

"Please, don't start something you're not willing to finish," Beatrice begged.

Tuan shook his head. "I find you to be profoundly fuckable just as you are, Bea. Shall we retire to the bedroom in case one of the kids gets hungry and comes down for a snack?"

Beatrice struggled to get off of Tuan's lap; then helped him get up from the chair. Tuan looked at the other three women. "Excuse us ladies. I seem to have some urgent business to take care of." Everyone except Beatrice started laughing. She appeared a bit worried

until Tuan stepped up close behind her and pressed his erection against her soft ass. "You *are* ready to take care of my urgent business right now, aren't you?"

When Beatrice smiled and nodded, Tuan told her, "Go on into my room and turn down the bed. I'll be right behind you." He turned to the other three, "We're likely to be a while. I need to convince Beatrice that I'm not teasing her by teasing her and taking a long time to give her what she needs." He looked up at the ceiling. "AI, are there any personal lubricants in the pod?"

"I have sent several selections to the replicator," the AI replied.

"Thank you," Tuan replied before collecting them and disappearing into the bedroom.

He found Beatrice lying in bed under the covers and shook his head, "No, no, no. Get out from under the covers. Someone wanting to get butt fucked should have their bare ass high in the air, not hiding it under the bedding."

Beatrice threw the covers back and started to roll onto her knees when Tuan stopped her to examine her open thighs. There was a glistening sheen of female lubricant matting Beatrice's pubic hair and coating her upper thighs. There was no doubt that she was ready. Additional teasing would only add to her frustration and not to her arousal.

"Lie on your back, spread your legs, and play with yourself while I get out of these clothes," Tuan instructed somewhat breathlessly. The aroma of an aroused female was definitely having an effect on him.

Beatrice was clearly embarrassed, but did as she was told. Within seconds, Tuan was crawling onto the bed. He passionately kissed each of her nipples before hovering over the supine body beneath him. She guided his erection to her wet opening and gasped when Tuan thrust into her. He sank to the hilt into her soft, wet sheath with his first plunge.

He began furiously fucking the wildly bucking woman under him, abandoning all thought of taking his time even when Beatrice screamed in climax and collapsed motionless beneath him. Tuan surrendered to the primitive need of human males and tried to push his cock all the way through the woman below him as he filled her tunnel with semen.

Tuan barely managed to roll off of the panting woman before collapsing beside her in total exhaustion. Consciousness slipped away from them as the pair relaxed in sexual bliss. As consciousness escaped her, Beatrice knew she wasn't going to get the promised ass fucking tonight, but was content in the certainty that it was not far away. Tuan had taken her to heights that she hadn't achieved since getting married. He had vigorously and skillfully fucked her with more enthusiasm than she would have thought possible after nailing the other two women earlier today. Yes, she would even be happy if he never took her in the ass.

---

Everyone but Kim was up early the next morning. She was grumpy and disoriented until she realized that she was no longer on Earth. She was on a starship! She sprang out of bed so fast that she almost forgot to put on clothes. She was ready to go in seconds, rather than her typical forty-five minutes.

Tuan apologized to Beatrice for falling asleep and for not continuing their sexual explorations when they woke. He told her that they really didn't have time for sexual antics this morning, but he promised that he would make time as soon as he could. Beatrice smiled and assured him that she was not at all unhappy. After they had a quick shower together, she helped gather everyone together for a trip to the mess hall for breakfast. There were more lectures scheduled for sponsors and concubines alike and they needed to hustle.

When Beatrice set a plate of cornbread and a glass of buttermilk in front of Tuan he looked puzzled and asked, "Don't they have iced tea glasses and spoons?"

It was Beatrice's turn to look puzzled, "Why?"

Tuan smiled as he shook his head, "I thought you were raised in Mississippi. The correct way to eat leftover cornbread is to crumble it into a tall glass, pour buttermilk over it, and eat it with a spoon like cold cereal."

When Tuan started to stand up Beatrice stopped him and with a bit of a giggle in her voice told him, "Sorry, I'll get a glass and a spoon so the country boy can do it right."

"Cheeky concubines get theirs in the end," Tuan threatened with a smile.

"Ooh, promises, promises!" Beatrice remarked as she retreated while exaggerating the swing of her butt.

---

When Margret returned from her second visit to med bay she was on her way to being solidly constructed, like the proverbial brick shithouse. Her glandular problems had been corrected, but the extra weight she carried continued to threaten her health even with nanites protecting her vital organs. She still had delicate nipples on D-cup globes that spanned her chest, but they were already just a bit firmer and sitting just a bit higher above an abdomen that now only had a soft bulge from sternum to pudenda. The narrow band of honey-gold hair on her new abdomen ended just above her perpetually swollen clitoris. She needed to drink a lot of water to flush the debris as the nanites systematically destroyed the excess fat cells.

Tuan planned to let Celeste keep her slender legs and smallish breasts when there was an available tube, but he insisted on a pelvis that was just a bit wider to make birthing easier

and a junction that sported a well padded pudendum with thick, hairless lips to make getting her pregnant a bit less hazardous. He would also ask the technician to leave a thick red pelt above her slit to mark her as a true redhead.

The concubine lectures had concluded when Tuan returned to his pod after attending the last of the briefings about the benefits and pitfalls of being a Confederacy sponsor with concubines and small children. He found the idea of allowing the thirteen-year-olds to engage in oral sex a bit disturbing, but with full sexual activity expected at fourteen it made some sense.

Mid-afternoon on their second day aboard *Asimov* the AI told Tuan that one of the other sponsors was asking to speak with him.