

Destination Azahar

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UNIVERSE: The Swarm Cycle

Chapter 14 - Veterans and Misfits

Asimov was laying over at Dothan for a few days to give her crew a bit of time away from the *Darjee*. Working with the incredibly sensitive and easily shocked creatures put quite a strain on the average human. Even laid back and straight-laced proper humans began showing signs of stress after tiptoeing around *Darjee* sensitivities for more than three or four months.

The pods that would be transferred to *Sir Galahad* remained attached to *Asimov*, which was orbiting near the space docks that were working on the damaged *Sir Galahad*, but not in a place where the battle damage could be seen from *Asimov*'s bridge. The sight of the carnage that had been inflicted on the Confederacy vessel could give the *Darjee* crewmembers disabling anxiety attacks.

The habitat pods were actually rather spacious, even when restricted by the dimensions of a colony transport ship's mounts. However, the Clark habitat seemed to be approaching the maximum load limit with ten kids, six concubines, and two sponsors. There remained some sexual tension between fifteen-year-old, sponsor-qualified Jason Lawrence and his mother, Rebecca, who had been accepted as a concubine by Lieutenant Clark.

Space in the Avalareddy pod was at the opposite end of the spectrum from the Clark pod. Where just about every square meter of space was trod upon daily in Clark's, no one had set foot on the upper level of the Avalareddy residence since it was discovered two days after their pickup.

Madeline and her infant son, John, occupied the rooms next to the master suite. She never asserted herself, but didn't shy away when Meghrani pushed Naveen into inviting the pliable girl to join him in bed, although Madeline rarely stayed the night. Even with the AI monitoring John, she didn't like to be away from her baby for more than an hour or so.

Where Madeline was slowly exhibiting an increasing interest in sex, Meghrani had leapt from demure lady to wanton tigress within days of the pickup. The nanites had not only removed the impediment to her successfully becoming pregnant, but had also removed the discomfort of penetration. Sex was suddenly fun! Her sexual appetites had expanded, and her sex drive had shifted from an economic cruise to warp speed after one

trip to the ship's medical bay and a night of sex that made her honeymoon seem like a chaperoned date.

Being pregnant with a certainty of carrying the fetus to term after so many years of disappointments seemed to have completely destroyed all of her inhibitions. When Meghrani saw that Naveen and Madeline had become comfortable sharing sex with each other, she upped the stakes by coaxing Madeline into participating in threesomes, and not just for the two of them to share Naveen's masculine spike and talented tongue.

Now that she long longer feared becoming gay, Meghrani wanted to explore Sapphic pleasures as well as the more indulgent heterosexual adventures. She was leaving no sexual stone unturned as she explored the fringes of bisexual combinations. She even had aspirations that Naveen would allow another male to join them for a threesome in order to indulge in activities that were not possible with Madeline and Naveen. But she could not bring herself to voice her desire to satisfy two men at the same time for fear of offending Naveen's masculine pride.

Naveen's stamina was being severely taxed, and he began looking for ways to catch his breath and recharge his sperm bank. Meghrani would pout, but accepted that Naveen must be allowed to get some work done. During one brief respite in his study, Naveen was delighted to learn that the AI had a complete record of every botanical paper that had ever been published, plus thousands more that had never gone to press. He would typically study them in Dr. Brown's quarters to avoid solicitous interruptions. Meghrani would frequently ask if he needed anything even when she was trying to avoid making demands on his attention and energy.

Naveen and Jason Brown were having a cup of tea in the Brown abode one afternoon. Jason told Naveen, "I've been doing a little research of my own that confirms what I've long suspected. Really fast growing plants like hybrid domestic corn produce the most oxygen with the least amount of acreage. A Canadian researcher did some experiments and claims that the average hectare of corn produces enough oxygen in a single sunny Saskatchewan day to supply the oxygen needs of a typical adult for 352 days."

"I saw that paper as well," Naveen agreed with some skepticism. "But the growth rate and oxygen production of corn dramatically drops as the carbon dioxide concentration approaches as little as one percent. One of the most carbon-dioxide-tolerant species that doesn't require insect pollination is the relatively slow growing coconut palm."

There was a long pause in the conversation. Jason was curious, but didn't know how to ask Naveen about the progress of his domestic life. He moved off professional topics by commenting, "Congratulations for being an expectant father. I understand this will be your first."

"Yes, Meghrani has been beside herself with joy. She had a medical condition that made getting pregnant difficult and carrying a fetus all but impossible. The ship's medical

facilities were able to correct the problem in one short session!" Naveen looked like he wanted to say more, but hesitated.

Jason was clearly uncomfortable when he commented, "You've been spending a great deal of time in my pod, Professor. I'm delighted to have the company and the respite."

"I apologize for imposing upon you, but Meghrani has become... insatiable. I have difficulty keeping pace with her," Naveen wasn't really complaining and hoped that his colleague would understand.

"No apology needed," Jason assured Naveen and held up two fingers. "I have two athletic sex fiends in this pod. Your presence gives me a rest from their almost constant demands."

The two men exchanged a startled look; then laughed at their similar, but ludicrous domestic problems.

Jason embarrassed himself by admitting, "I've even considered making a second augmentation upgrade appointment with *Asimov's* med-bay tech in order to acquire enough stamina to keep up with my sexual Olympics tag-team champions, Malinda and Saundra." Brown blushed even more when he added, "My concubine, Alicia, who's no sexual slouch herself, remarked that Malinda and Saundra could fuck a wooden post into hard ground."

Speaking of the pair prompted Jason to review their attributes in his mind, but felt far too embarrassed to voice his mental enumeration. Malinda had incredibly responsive nipples and clit and had impressive muscular control in her vagina. She could milk sperm from a cucumber. Saundra could suck the chrome off of a trailer hitch. She loved to warm up with doggie style before taking it hard and fast up the ass. The pair worked well together and seemed to be capable of performing feats of sexual prowess all night, every night. Jason believed he was losing weight in spite of his nanite watchdogs.

His mind drifted to include his other acquisitions from the little Starbucks near Georgia Tech. Spending the night with the shy redheaded Nikki was only slightly less invigorating. She would blush, hide her face, and stammer as Jason explored her curves and crevices, but would respond like a thoroughbred breaking from the starting gate when he climbed into her saddle. On rare occasions he could coax her into impaling herself on his stiff rod, but she was typically too inhibited to expose her treasures and do something so forward.

Spending time with his feisty soccer-mom, Alicia, was almost like having the night off, except it seemed like his balls were completely dry for days afterward. Sex with her may be slow, deliberate and extremely comfortable, but she coaxed everything from him as she caressed, consoled, and comforted her master.

His reverie was broken when Naveen asked, "Are you not feeling well, Dr. Brown?"

"What? Oh, sorry. My mind was just wandering a bit. I'm not at all used to so much female companionship and enthusiasm." Jason was blushing both for letting his mind wander off when he had a guest and for the subject that had corralled his attention. "It's taking me more time than I would have thought to adjust to an active sex life. Thank heavens my other two concubines aren't as demanding as Malinda and Sandra."

"I do not envy you your situation," Naveen sympathized. "Meghrani's enthusiasm even extends to insisting that Madeline join us." Naveen's blush was apparent in spite of his dark complexion. "I do not believe Stanley or Josh have similar issues, though." It was Naveen's turn to let his mind wander to his two assistants.

"Stanley Cramer, the quiet and reserved botany assistant who was picked up with us at Starbucks, seems very pleased with his choices of concubines," Naveen related to his host. "He has mentioned that both of his companions have frequently expressed their gratitude for being selected, and both are now pregnant with twins."

Naveen smiled as he related a fond memory, "When I told Meghrani that Stanley's ladies were both pregnant, she insisted that I invite the three of them to tea so she could congratulate each of them in person and establish a relationship with other first-time mothers-to-be. The three women embarrassed poor Madeline with all kinds of intimate questions about pregnancy and delivery. Madeline wasn't able to tell them much. She had simply done as her grandmother instructed during each stage of her only pregnancy."

A cloud gathered on Naveen's forehead when he spoke of his other assistant, "Josh Rawlins, my other assistant who was also collected at Starbucks, treats his poor concubines as nothing more than sperm receptacles. The more they cower and try to avoid his disdain, the worse he treats them. It has degraded into regular physical abuse, and I fear for their continued wellbeing."

Both men sat quietly for several minutes before drinking their tea and turning their attention back to their research.

Shortly after *Zephyrus* arrived at Haru with Jason's horticultural treasures, Naveen accompanied Jason as he boarded the *Aurora*-class colony ship to check on the two greenhouse pods that housed his botanical collection. Jason's groundskeeper, George, had accompanied the collection from Earth and was beaming like a proud father as he led the two men through the pods.

Naveen was visibly in awe. "Dr. Brown, this collection is even more impressive in reality than on paper." Turning to the groundskeeper he added, "You are to be congratulated for the loving care you have given these beauties, Mr. Alexiou."

After spending three hours examining the content of the two greenhouse pods, the two men made their way to *Zephyrus's* transporter room for the trip back to their own residential pods. As they walked the quiet passageways, Naveen asked, "Dr. Brown, I hate to impose. Josh Rawlins is not keeping up with his assigned tasks, and I am anxious to identify the crossbreeding parameters for your collection. Is it possible for me to obtain your assistance?"

"Please, call me Jason," Dr. Brown requested. "I'd be delighted to assist. I assume you're looking for ways to increase their tolerance of carbon dioxide?"

Naveen nodded, "Just exactly so. The atmosphere at Azahar might as well be pure carbon dioxide. The environment presented to the experimental variations will require some kind of isolation to limit the carbon dioxide, but we need to work toward maximizing their tolerance."

During the weeks ahead, Naveen would often accompany Dr. Brown as he checked on his "babies" twice a day. It was totally unnecessary because George was in the greenhouse pods for more than twelve hours a day. The collection was well cared for by a skilled gardener.

Things would be a bit crowded aboard *Sir Galahad* for the first two weeks of their journey. The ship had gotten bumped from the orbiting shipyard when battle damaged ships began arriving from skirmishes at Tulak. The pod mounts had been installed, but not the companionway that connected them to the airtight compartments in the aft section of the ship. It would take the shipboard nanites two weeks to complete the connections. The captain, Lt. Col. Joseph Collins, would not allow anyone to ride in the isolated pods, and he didn't want to wait two weeks before leaving for Azahar.

A compromise was reached with Collins when Brown insisted that he or his groundskeeper had to have daily access to the greenhouse pods that had recently arrived from Earth aboard *Zephyrus*. Captain Collins agreed to wait the three days that it would take to attach a temporary corridor to the forward end of the two greenhouse pods.

Meghrani was not displeased by the prospect of spending two weeks in a small room with Naveen, Madeline, and little Johnny, but was becoming even more distressed than Naveen when encountering Josh's concubines in the common areas of the overcrowded ship.

Dr. Brown did his best to curtail all sexual activity while Alicia's kids were bunked in the quarters next door that shared a head with his stateroom. However, squeezing five adults into two beds was not as uncomfortable as expected, but it made the best-laid plans for sexual abstinence all but impossible. The kids complained bitterly about having to share beds even for such a short span of time, but they survived without major injuries.

Marvin was tempted to bunk Rebecca in Jason's quarters, but Sasha volunteered. She was developing a comfortable relationship with Jason, Angela, and Donna. Marvin was pleased with the way Sasha was helping Jason mature. He was becoming much more in tune with his partners, and Marvin was certain that it was due to Millie's subtle lessons and Sasha's practical demonstration of those lessons.

The youngest four of Julie Ann and Rebecca's kids were bunked in one room and the six older girls in the adjoining room. The kids were right across the companionway from Marvin and Jason's adjoining quarters.

When Rebecca complained about sharing a bed with Julie Ann toward the end of the two weeks in the tight quarters, Marvin sent her into Jason's room with Sasha and asked her to send Angela and Donna back in her stead. Marvin's scowl, when she tried to object, sent her meekly on her way. Sasha barely contained her mirth as she witnessed the exchange.

Marvin shared his bunk with Millie and Julie Ann that night, and never asked what had transpired in Jason's quarters, but it was a long time before Rebecca lodged another complaint with Marvin about anything.

The tight quarters were also uncomfortable for Lieutenant Mark Wallace and his family. He had been allowed to bring his entire menagerie to Azahar. The plan was for Azahar to equip *Sir Galahad* with whatever Wallace needed to establish an outpost on Hielo, an ice covered planet in the vicinity of two Sa'arm planets: Sa'Triste and Sa'Astillero. Following the death of Lieutenant Geraldine Timmons on Sa'Triste, Wallace had inherited her concubines Sara and Rush giving him three female and one male concubine even though he only had a 6.7 average CAP score.

Wallace had gotten both Janet and Sara pregnant during the return from Sa'Triste, and had Annita knocked up again as soon as his sperm count recovered from a homecoming celebration in Major Bronson's quarters the day after they return to Dothan. Bronson still loved to take on Wallace, Rush and her aggressive concubine Hasid at the same time. This time she included Wallace's Janet and her second concubine Dorothy, who turned up pregnant the next day. Wallace was pretty sure Hasid was shooting blanks. He knew Rush was.

Wallace was mildly surprised and greatly pleased that his connection with the enigmatic Major Sarah Bronson remained close even after their return to Haru. Bronson was given permission to bring the pregnant Dorothy with her on the trip to Azahar. Bronson was elated with the approval because she wanted Dorothy to learn about motherhood from Wallace's concubine, Annita, who was pregnant with her fifth child and seemed to have healthy, happy, and well-adjusted offspring.

Annita thoroughly enjoyed having her master back in the habitat pod. Wallace had not left her much in the way of sexual distractions for the year he was gone. She had been left to nurse their toddler, Keenan, and take care of her other three children. Wallace had extracted her three older kids from Earth when she was accepted as his number one

concubine. She was deeply ashamed of herself for teaching her oldest son, Bobby, the finer points of oral sex not long after he turned thirteen. It was a gigantic effort on her part to refrain from fucking the boy silly.

After a steamy session with the talented Rush, she prayed that Wallace would keep him in case she was ever left behind again. Bobby would be fourteen soon and she really didn't want to take that relationship to the next level. Rush was a very satisfying fuck, both coming and going. Annita had never been a big fan of anal sex, but the long dry spell had changed many of her sexual attitudes and appetites. She discovered that having two men working her over at the same time was a gift from the gods. She could get used to that kind of male attention.

Lieutenant Wallace had raised an eyebrow when he learned of Bobby's sexual experience, but didn't discourage it. He even allowed the boy a taste of Janet and Sara's nectar. Janet was a little wigged at having oral sex with someone so young, but Sara thought nothing of straddling the young man's face while sucking a load from his short shaft.

Annita's daughter Laura would be thirteen a few weeks after Bobby's fourteenth birthday, which would be coming up before they left for Hielot. Wallace was a bit troubled by the thought of giving the young girl Oral Sex 101. She didn't even have budding breasts, yet, and her waist was almost a straight line from her ribs to her hips. She had her mother's long carrot-colored hair, milky white skin, soft pink lips, and pale freckles, but had managed pale green eyes from somewhere. It was very troubling to him that his cock twitched when he pictured that innocent face looking up at him from his groin.

Bronson invited Rush and Bobby to bunk with her for the two weeks in close quarters. Annita slept with her kids in one room while Wallace shared a room with Janet, Sara, and Dorothy in the adjoining room. Bobby's carnal education didn't stagnate in the two weeks he bunked in Bronson's temporary quarters. He was given very graphic demonstrations of both vaginal and anal sex in the wide range of gentle to aggressive techniques including pointers for when each is appropriate.