

# ***Destination Azahar***

Copyright © 2009 By deGaffer

CONTENT: MF ScFi

UNIVERSE: The Swarm Cycle

## ***Chapter 34 - Duplicating Success***

Midshipmen Kim Nguyen and Sara Crews had no difficulty passing their high-school equivalency examinations when they returned from Dargo. The sleep trainer had packed four years of schooling into a year. They were a little behind on history, art, and literature but neither one sat on her laurels. Both were absorbing William and Leonardo while backfilling the gaps they had in the evolution of human societies.

They no longer looked like school kids, having used the medical tubes on *William Penn* to advance their physical development during the long trip. Both were more interested than ever in pursuing careers that would put them on starships.

Sara dragged Kim along with her when she went to talk about their career options with Admiral Grayson.

"Is that really you, Sarita?" Ben Grayson met the young women at his office door when his aide announced them.

Sara gave him a kiss on the cheek before telling him, "I haven't been called Sarita in months. I doubt that my friend Kim, here, has ever heard anyone call me that."

"I'm pleased to see you again, Kim. I would not have recognized you in a crowd," Ben said as he held on to Sara. He held her at arm's length to look into her face. "Speaking of months, I haven't seen you in a while, Sara. What's been taking up so much of your time?"

"Kim and I shipped out as midshipmen on *William Penn* when she left to get a colony started on Dargo." Sara could hardly contain her pride and excitement. "We've managed to complete high school and want to continue a career in the Confederacy Navy or Fleet Auxiliary. We're looking into the schooling options for ship's crewmembers, but it looks like we need something more advanced than a high-school equivalency before entering the training programs at Poseidon or Haru if we're going to be anything more than cargo handlers. I'm not sure that the academy at Camp Timmons is up our alley, either."

"It might be," Ben mused. "Even though it's being run by the Marines it's mostly a generic college-level facility for developing the command potential in its students. You could do worse. I'll bet Colonel Bryant can help with this, or Commandant Schultz, whom he stole from my staff and put in command of the academy. Shall we try to talk

them into having lunch with us?" It was clear that Ben was pleased that Schultz had been asked and had accepted the teaching assignment.

-----

Lunch with Schultz and the girls was going well. There were the usual distractions and interruptions when Governor Grayson joined them in the administration complex's cafeteria.

"It's so good to see you out and about," Schultz said warmly. It was a clear reference to her size. "When are you due?"

"Any minute now," she replied in jest.

Schultz was not surprised that each of the two young volunteers had aspirations of captaining her own starship. He was not even totally surprised that Sara wanted a frontline combat command.

"I took the liberty of reviewing your records this morning. Very impressive," Schultz admitted. "Each of you exhibit natural leadership. You don't have to be put in charge by your superiors. It doesn't take long before members of a group follow your lead and start looking to you for direction.

"While you are far from timid, Kim, Sara seems to have inherited a knack for coolheaded aggression from her mother. Sara thrives on pressure without becoming an adrenaline junkie."

"Oh, my!" Martha Grayson exclaimed as she put both hands on her abdomen. "Please excuse the interruption. It's been a while, but that was most definitely not gas. I'm about to have a baby!"

Ben jumped to his feet like a first-time expectant father. "It's a pretty good hike to medical from here. Can you make it or do I need to carry you?"

Martha's scowl spoke volumes, but she calmly told him, "There's an orderly on the way with a wheelchair even though I'm not an invalid. The nanites have been doing their job surprisingly well, considering my situation."

"Her reproductive system was transplanted from a donor," Ben responded to Schultz's puzzled and concerned look. "It's not an exact match, but it was accepted by Martha's immune system using Earth medicine. Darjee technology doesn't rely on transplants and there was some confusion during her early treatments on *Zephyrus* shortly after our extraction. Even her age regression and enhancements are being done very slowly.

"Please, finish your lunch and your interview. The two of us aren't really adding anything to the subject anyway. If Martha is true to form, then it will be a while before the baby is delivered."

The nanites blocked the majority of the pain of childbirth and assisted during the delivery by expediting the reconfiguration of the birth canal from a tight playground to a wide-open baby-factory discharge chute. Martha gave birth to Lynden Oscar Grayson in less than an hour from the first contraction.

The infant clearly had some black ancestry which supported the claim that the donor was a Bahamian native and not a tourist. Martha would respect the privacy of the young woman whose tragic death was her salvation. Oscar may never have the chance to visit the Bahamas, but he would know all about the history of the islands.

"But, I've never felt so fit and energetic after a delivery," Martha argued.

"Your staff will just have to muddle along without you!" Ben insisted. "You've chosen them well. *We* need to spend the next couple of weeks bonding with *our* son," he held up a hand to forestall her objections, "without distractions, thank you very much!"

-----

It's a rare person who'll deny favors to a top admiral, especially one who is celebrating the birth of a son. Before the sun went down over the western ocean Kim and Sara were enrolled in the next session at the academy and would spend the interim riding to Ammit and back as crew of *Stagecoach* transports. These were totally automated craft, but as fully functional starships the Confederacy also required that a qualified pilot be onboard.

The AIs had reservations about turning two starships, not matter how small, over to midshipman-level volunteers, but both girls were qualified shuttle and lighter pilots, as well as novice astral navigators. The AI agreed, with the caveat that the vessels be inhibited from leaving the Azaharat planetary system. They couldn't get totally lost or into serious trouble if they remained within a light-hour of Azahar.

The girls were really pleased that they didn't have to sit around working on their tans and waiting for school to start. Even though they had been sexually awakened, sex wasn't the only thought that they had when boys were around. They flew over to the beach and were impressed by the surfers, but not enough to jump onto the first dick that emerged from the waves like some of the other girls.

While the two girls had been off-world on *William Penn*, the colonization ship *Daniel Boone* was launched, loaded, and sent off to the next charted world on Azahar's list to colonize. The *Kilo*-class transport *Cassio* would probably launch before the term started, but they couldn't be much more than gofers for Commander Milford if they wanted to be part of the shakedown crew of that monster ship.

Sara waited a few days before taking one of the small freighters to Ammit. She wanted to spend some time with her mom before she left again on *William Penn*. The mission would take much longer than the wait for the next academy class. It seemed a bit silly that they wanted to spend time together since they had been on top of each other, literally in some cases, during the mission to Dargo, but this would be the first time that the two of them would be apart for any length of time, and they were missing each other before *The Penn* was loaded for departure.

Sara would be turning fifteen before Lesa returned. It would be the first of Sara's birthdays that Lesa would miss and that fact alone left both of them emotionally fragile for weeks after *William Penn's* departure.

The *Stagecoach* duty assignments gave the two teens experience and confidence with communications protocols and procedures. The short hops between Ammit and Azahar weren't long enough for even a fourteen-year-old to get seriously bored, but being alone in a starship did give each of them flights of fancy during the weeks that they relieved the regular crew members. Being in command of a starship — even one as small and limited in capability as a *Stagecoach* — would also look good on their résumés.

The time they had while alone in transit gave them ample opportunity to investigate and learn to appreciate some of the great pioneers in science, medicine, and technology from the little ship's sleep trainer and library. They were both a bit dismayed to learn that the major advances in all three of these disciplines usually occurred during times of war. The bigger the war, the greater the leap forward.

Giving up piloting the *Stagecoaches* in order to return to school was a bit of a letdown. On the brighter side, they would be working shoulder to shoulder with Jason Lawrence who appeared to have matured a good bit since they last saw him.

Kim in particular was disappointed that Bobby Wallace had opted to join the Marines instead of continuing his education. She knew that Sara would share Arliss, and she was sure she could talk Jason into scratching her itch with his downsized equipment — now that he was no longer Sasha's favorite project — but she wanted something a bit more stable, something like the controlled chaos of her dad's home.

They had heard some interesting stories about Jason from his little sister. Sara knew from firsthand experience that little sisters could remember what they wanted to remember. Jason was being very charming and helpful with them even though they had kept all of their clothes on. This gave credibility to Shelly's stories of his prowess and maturity as far as Sara was concerned. Shelly actually liked her big brother now that he'd moved out and was no longer underfoot.

Jason's concubines, Angela and Donna, were both pregnant, and Kim began hoping that Jason would need some physical consoling when they became too big for sex. She was sure that he would have other outlets for his excess spermatozoa, but she was also confident that she could qualify as a member of his sex-circle.

Kim knew that Jason would just be a diversion. After all, he was going to be a platoon leader when he graduated, and she would be aboard a colonization transport. If he remained on Azahar with the 504<sup>th</sup>, then she may only get the chance to see him once a year.

She was being pressured to sponsor a concubine, but didn't want the responsibility or commitment needed to successfully run a household. She knew that responsibility and commitment were the very lessons that those pressuring her to take on a pair of concubines wanted her to learn.

She really wanted someone like her dad to be in charge of her dependents, not another kid her own age. Decurion Cohen promised to let her know if a mature male became available. She really didn't want to be saddled with females until she had her male concubine picked out. She was resolved to hold out until she got what she wanted. This attitude was not new territory to Kim, as her father well knew.

-----

Lesa Crews and Jake Caulfield were lying naked on the floor of his study quietly talking about her upcoming mission on *William Penn* after an impromptu session of gentle sex. While both knew they were drifting apart, they still loved and respected each other.

"I'm considered bringing Sven on the mission, but I don't think he'll learn much or contribute more than a hard dick." She giggled as she fondled Jake's soft, messy member. "He has a bit more stamina than most, but I'm not sure that there'll be enough pussy available onboard to keep him occupied."

Jake chuckled and rolled on top of Lesa. "You are an insatiable bitch," he whispered before biting her neck where it joined her shoulder and began tickling his pinned prey's ribs. Lesa was laughing and squirming under Jake and attempting to push him off until she felt his glans push its way through her slick folds and return to her recently vacated vagina.

Lesa moaned, "You rat!" and pounded Jake's ribs as he began slowly stroking his renewed length in and out of her slick depths.

Without breaking his rhythm, Jake propped his torso up with his elbows to allow her to breathe and asked, "So, you were considering taking Sven, but thought he might become bored and get into trouble. Speaking of trouble, have you noticed the way Takashi has been pestering his sister since he scored a six-point-six on his birthday?"

"Uh huh," Lesa grunted and noted, "How can you think clearly while fucking me? Am I that boring?"

"Not at all," Jake assured her with a kiss. "I have to detach a bit to keep from blowing my wad in thirty seconds, and I'm good at multi-tasking."

"I guess everyone has to be good at something," she quipped in response.

Jake thrust deep and crushed her clit with his groin eliciting a small gasp and robbing her of speech for a short time. "Now, where was I before being so rudely insulted? Oh, yeah. Saika seems to be getting moon-eyed with me and not concentrating on her studies. Maybe you can take her instead of Sven. She's actually quite smart, but needs some encouragement and confidence. I want her to drop the subservient Japanese wife crap. I don't know where she gets it. Her mother isn't like that."

"You're just jealous of Sven and want to keep me all to yourself," Lesa teased. The effect was dampened by her moaning and gasping as she tried to speak. She resolved to get even with Jake and began rippling the muscles in her vagina until he was the one gasping and grunting. She tightened her grip on his shaft on each outstroke and both of them lost the ability to speak until their orgasms released them several minutes later.

"I would love to expand Saika's sexual horizons," Lesa continued when sanity returned. "Do you think she'll let go and enjoy sex with anyone but you?"

Jake sighed, "She needs to try."

Lesa was to take Tuan Nguyen's place as the lead colony engineer aboard *William Penn* for its next colonization mission. She would miss teaming up with her daughter on unsuspecting sweethearts like Tuan. Saika was hardly a replacement for her sexually adventurous daughter.

There was a tearful parting of mother and daughter as Lesa was about to step into the transporter stream that would take her and Saika to *William Penn*. Thanks to the medpods her daughter already looked all grown up even though she was still only fourteen. Lesa had left some keepsakes with Jake who would give them to Sara on her birthday.

"I'll be back; this mission won't last forever," Lesa told Sara with little conviction.

"I know, but it'll feel like forever," Sara countered. "I love you, Mom."

"I love you, too." With that remark Lesa was gone.

-----

"Let's get this little cabin organized," Lesa suggested as she ushered the somewhat reluctant Asian beauty through the hatch. "This is going to be a lot different than the last time you were on a starship, but I'm sure you'll learn a lot. You might even have some fun if you can loosen up a bit."

"Yes, Miss," Saika sounded like she was on her way to prison or exile if not to the headsman's block.

Lesa sighed. She was going to have her work cut out for her. She was missing Sara's cheerful and inquisitive persona already, and it had been, what? five minutes since she'd seen her? What was she thinking to let Jake talk her into bring Miss Stick-in-the-Mud along!

There really wasn't that much to unpack. They each had a few personal items. The replicator took care of clean uniforms, toothbrushes and the other implements of hygiene as well as the other paraphernalia that travelers have schlepped along with them for centuries.

Before leaving Azahar, Lesa had been introduced to one of the midshipmen assigned to this mission. Midshipman Gordon Mathews had a little Italian goddess with him who was planning to use this opportunity to learn how to fly shuttles. Lesa intended to make sure that she learned a lot more than just how to fly shuttles.

Gordon would prove to be very helpful in many areas. He was eager to assist Lesa with her manufacturing duties, and he was no beginner in the bedroom either. He showed both skill and creativity when she finally charmed her way into the quarters Gordon shared with Evita. Lesa quickly realized that this wasn't the first time Gordon had been called upon to sexually satisfy two women. His stamina and size reminded her fondly of Jake.

"You really should let Gordon into your pants, Saika, if you wore pants," Lesa suggested one morning during breakfast. "Anyway, I guarantee that he'll tickle your fancy. He reminds me a lot of Jake. You really need to learn new things if you plan to keep Jake interested. You'll need to learn about a lot more than just sex if you want to be his favorite."

"I don't know," Saika countered. "Do you really think Jake wants me to have sex with other men?"

"Didn't he tell you to try to overcome your shyness and enjoy the company of other men?" Lesa asked.

"Yes, but—"

"Has Jake ever lied to you or misled you?" Lesa interrupted.

"No, but—"

"Then I think you should take him seriously, don't you?" she interrupted again.

"Yes, but..." This time Saika just let her rebuttal trail off into silence.

Lesa cocked her head and asked, "But, what?"

Saika hesitated before stamping her foot and replying with a little-girl whine in her voice, "But, I don't want to!"

Lesa was getting close to losing her patience. "Have you tried it with someone else?"

"No!" Saika answered emphatically.

"Then how can you know you don't like it if you haven't tried it?" Lesa knew it wasn't exactly what Saika had said, but it was the kind of logic she had used to get reluctant children to try new foods, and she believed that Saika was behaving childishly.

Saika gave Lesa an exasperated look, but remained silent. Lesa almost laughed. It was the exact look Sara would use when refusing to respond to a stupid question.

Lesa did get Saika into the sleep trainer to learn the controls of shuttles and lighters. The math skills, multi-tasking ability, and the manual dexterity needed to safely pilot these small craft came quickly and easily to Saika. She found herself being paired with Evita during some of the simulator sessions and the two young women became friends by the time *William Penn* returned to normal space at their destination.

Where Lesa only met with resistance when suggesting a liaison with Gordon, Evita had no trouble convincing Saika to return to the cabin she shared with Gordon one evening. Saika had gone without sex long enough to be rather horny, and when Evita began to get frisky with Gordon it didn't take much persuasion before Saika joined in. She had a lot of guilt riding on top of the lust she was feeling and almost lied to Gordon when he asked if she had permission from her sponsor to have sex with them.

After spending ten days searching the planet they were circling, they had not yet found a significant titanium or copper deposit by the time the two factory replicators were deployed and ready for production. The two factories hungered for large quantities of titanium and copper in order to build habitat pods. The shortage of these vital metals was seriously impacting the productivity rates of the big machines. The industrial replicators did their alchemy by sifting the needed materials out of tons of dirt and supplied the big guys with small quantities of these items, but not nearly enough to feed the beasts at their potential rates.

Lesa scheduled one of the factories to build prospecting drones through the night without first checking on the rate at which they could be built. Everything she had scheduled so far was taking an agonizingly long time to appear in the completed inventory pool, and it hadn't occurred to her to check on the production rate. The next morning she and Gordon were frantically programming destinations and deploying hundreds of the little buggers.



It was three days before they finished sending them all to the surface. On a whim Lesa even sent several dozen into the shallow seas along any fault line she could identify.

Some marginal copper deposits were finally found on one of the land masses, but they would need to search off-planet for sources of titanium if they were going to run the two factories anywhere near their potential rates. One of the drones sent into shallow water finally found a rich deposit of copper and another drone found an equally rich source of tin. Lesa anchored a habitat pod equipped with a transporter pad, an airlock, and three machine shop replicators to the bottom between the copper and tin mines.

This pod could have been located anywhere, but she was curious about how it would work underwater. She diverted small quantities of these and other raw materials into the pod's holding areas and used machine-shop replicators in the pod to manufacture small arms and ammunition just to prove that it could be done. She configured the transporter to deliver the finished products to the colony's armory. She was confident that the local militia would put them to good use when they got organized.

She soon realized that she would need Tuan's help to improve the efficiency of the airlock to accommodate divers and especially to accommodate large mechanized equipment. The transporter could handle squad weapons, but not vehicles. Manufacturing big ticket items underwater was going to require more than just a manufacturing pod anchored to the seafloor.

*William Penn* went on a quest for asteroids that contained items that the planet was keeping to itself, if they were present at all in any quantity. Lesa produced more *Stagecoach* freighters than were needed to transport methane from the gas giant in the system after she had used several supraluminal drones to negotiate resource balancing with four of the nearby fledgling colonies. When the first of the new freighters returned from nearby Drago, she finally got habitat pod production running at a rate that allowed her to return to Azahar.

As *William Penn* was preparing to enter hyperspace for the trip back to Azahar, Saika entered their cabin followed by Gordon and Evita.

"I'm sorry I've been such a trial for you, Miss Lesa," Saika began. "I've really learned a lot from Evita and Gordon and you during this trip, and not just about flying shuttles and exploring planets. I've watched you orchestrate searches for raw materials, deploy mining equipment, and schedule all kinds of big things with the replicators. I thought that I'd be bored silly on this trip, but it's been very exciting."

Saika looked at Evita and then Gordon, "I've also tried some things with Gordon that I haven't done with Jake. He seems to think you'd like to join the three of us after our evening meal. But I think you'll need to bring Ensign Sidorov along to reduce the wait. Three-on-one is a bit much for any one man, isn't it? I'll bet I could take on three guys at once, but I don't know how one guy can take on three women without one of them getting bored."

"Oh, you'd be surprised," Lesa replied; then added, "You think you can handle three at once, huh. I think I'd like to see that. How about you Evita? Would you like to see Saika being checked for an airtight fit by three hard cocks at once?"

"Yeah," she said as she nodded. "I've done it, but have never seen anyone else do it. I'll bet it's really hot to watch!"

Sidorov was asked to bring a friend and it was as hot as Lesa and Evita thought it would be. Saika would have burned an old wooden ship down to the waterline. It was a good thing that few items in *William Penn's* staterooms were flammable.

*Jake asked for it, Lesa thought to herself. I hope he's ready for it. Saika is becoming a force to be reckoned with. He's going to miss me when I'm gone. Having someone around with Saika's potential will help him through the transition.*