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WARNING: May contain coarse language, violence, gore, or sexual content. Reader discretion is advised.

Chapter 19. "Respect"

"Did you see the size of his cock?" One female said, unabashedly. "The human's, too."

"No joke. Yum!" Another female said, gleefully.

"It's too bad that one's human and the other's gay," a third female voice said with disappointment.

"That thing Luger wields would split even *me* in half," the first female said with excitement and a giggle.

"Yeah. Me too," the second said, joining the first's excitement.

"Highly doubtful," a fourth one said evenly. Her voice sounded like she was much older than the other three.

They were quiet for a brief second before they all started laughing.

They quieted down and the third one chimed in. "I'd love to squeeze that gazelle sack and have those ripe fruits spill their juices all over me. I bet he cums like a hydrant!"

They collectively agreed and sighed with whines as if - Troy assumed - they were imagining it.

"How come I've never seen him naked before?" The first asked.

"You forget about Colonel Rutherford?" The fourth asked.

They passed several rows of lockers and Troy still didn't see who was talking. They sounded like school girls gossiping. Troy never cared much for that type.

"Made him wear clothes in here," the fourth continued. "There were those rumors going around that he used to beat him for no reason. He even forced him to wash late at night when the rest of us were sleeping. No one ever saw scars or bruises on him so it's just a rumor."

"Yeah, but Rutherford's been dead for, like, five years now," the third said.

"Honestly," the second one started. "The last time I saw Luger shower in here, I felt dirty looking at him. He was just a boy. It was just after we found him. He was no older than ten by the looks of him. That was before he was assigned to Rutherford..."

"Do you really think he's gay?" The first one interrupted.

"Don't know," the third one started. "I was staring at him when he walked into the showers. Poor guy must be backed up and really horny with how much he was peeking when he walked in."

Troy passed by another row of lockers. He finally found who was talking. He stopped to listen for reasons he wasn't sure of. Maybe they would talk about him again.

"You were staring at him when he walked in?" The fourth female voice asked plainly - as if doubting it.

"Oh, like you weren't," the third one kidded and began to giggle.

They all giggled. They all seemed to hush when Troy made eye contact with one of them. They were quite far down the row.

They looked like skunks - judging by the white stripes along the middle of their long, fluffy, slightly curved, black tails. They were all black with white features and white hair.

One had a black face with white circles around her eyes, a light pink nose, and a white anterior that started on her throat and went down to her inner knees. Her hair looked like a long, feathered mohawk that reached down the back of her neck.

The second had a white face with two thin, black stripes down the side of her nose bridge to her gray nose. Her anterior was much like the first's and her hair was straight down the sides to her jaw and shoulder length in the back.

The third had a white mask with the two thin, black stripes along her nose ridge with black coming around her cheeks and ending just under her muzzle that ended in a darker pink nose. Her neck was black until it exploded into white on her chest down to her inner knees. Her hair was longer and reached to the middle of her back.

The fourth did, indeed, look older. She had a black face with a white stripe down her muzzle bridge that circled the end of her muzzle capped off with a black nose. She had a single tuft of white fur below her neck. Her hair was a white stripe down the middle with black hair on the sides. The white part took over as it stretched down to the base of her tail. Her anterior was otherwise all black.

Troy glanced away when he noticed the oldest one was riding on a random male's lap - grinding and gyrating on his penis as they talked. He continued to thrust inside of her as the women all stared at Troy with blank expressions. Their demeanor slowly turned into lust-filled, lip-licking expressions as their eyes seemed to gobble him up. Troy fully turned his head back and tried to catch up to the canine. Troy tried to tune them out as they giggled and whispered about him.

"Seriously!?" Troy screamed in his head. "Not *one* of these manimals has any shame or a shred of decency about them!"

Troy caught up with the canine as he stood by Troy's locker. He held his hand up to his muzzle and began to speak quietly to Troy.

"Steer clear of those four unless you're into some weird shit," he said and looked around like he was making sure no one heard him. "We've lost count as to how many men they've fucked. I'd take a turn if I thought I'd live through it."

Troy looked unamused as the canine winked and mocked panting really hard as he thrust his hips - his hands gripping an invisible torso. Troy grabbed the communicator from the locker and shut the door while the canine guffawed. Troy rolled his eyes as he stepped in front of the door and tapped the switch. He wiped his feet and stepped out into the hallway.

The canine pushed past him and hit the switch for the laundry room. Troy followed him in with the towel around his waist and they stopped by the counter. The large cow was still amusing herself and humming as she folded the last of her laundry

pile. The tigress appeared to have left the room. A husky...er...Husky male was shoving a load of whites into one of the washers. He slammed the door and turned his head to look at the two that entered.

“Stella!” The canine suddenly shouted.

The cow looked up and joined the husky in looking at the pair. The husky winced, then shrugged and turned back to set the wash cycle. The cow’s eyes parted to show her light brown eyes. She looked at Troy like he was an oddity. She smiled as she squinted her eyes again and licked her lips.

“Yummy,” he heard her say quietly.

Troy hoped that was just another one of his daydreams. He shuddered and looked away from her, then jumped when the canine yelled again.

“Stella!”

The loud sound made Troy’s head start pounding and his ears started to ring. Everything sounded muffled. This bout didn’t last as long as the previous one. His hearing cleared and his head quit pounding, but it didn’t sound as clear as it did a moment ago.

“Savior free us from all this fff-UCKING RACKET!” Said a higher-pitched, yet soft and raspy female voice that turned to a shout. A rough-looking...porcupine(?) emerged from a curtained-off back room. “I’m coming already.”

“I think I’ve seen it all,” Troy thought as he watched her slowly move from around the curtain. “There can’t possibly be any more species.” He thought for a second. “I haven’t seen any fowl or fish-like species, though.”

He caught a glimpse of the tigress behind the curtain at a table, staring at an electronic memo pad, and munching on a snack. He couldn’t tell what she was looking at or eating.

The porcupine started to chuckle as she made her way towards them. “Haven’t said that in years,” she muttered and continued chuckling to herself.

She stopped at the end of the folding table by the canine. Her hair looked to be made of quills - lots of them. The quills on top were about four inches long and the ones on the back of her head and neck were slightly longer as they met her back. The quills

on her back were between a foot and a foot and a half long. The quills themselves were mixed shades of grays and browns. The fur on her face and neck was really short and mostly gray to silver in color. Despite its length, it appeared to be very soft and fluffy. A definite contrast to the quills. Her muzzle was very similar to the Colonel's. While the Colonel's had a pink undertone beneath the sparse, short fur, Stella's was dark like used coffee grounds. Despite the quills, her body was small and frail. She was wearing an apron and nothing else. Troy assumed it was very difficult for her to wear proper clothing. Her hands were smaller in size and appeared to be arthritic - her knuckles were larger and her fingers all bent out from a normal straight out position. Her dark amber eyes squinted slightly over at Troy. The iris filled the space around her eyelids, but she had a white sclera when she looked over at something to the side.

"Well, now. There's a sight," she said as she looked Troy up and down. "Haven't seen one of you in a while." She cleared her throat. "Here to get measured, I gather?"

The canine rolled his eyes. "Yes, Captain Obvious," the canine said snarkily.

The porcupine gave him 'the look.' She grabbed the large-framed glasses hanging from her neck and slid them on. Troy heard a '*click*' of magnets snapping together behind her head. She brought her hands down slowly as she stepped up in front of the canine. She looked down her nose at him through the thick lenses.

"I've just enough life left in these bones to whip your ass, punk." Troy saw her right foot slide back and she brought her left hand up to poke the canine in the chest. "I haven't floored a grown man in a long time. Not since your father ate a table and begged me to let him go as I choked the breath out of him."

"Oh? Your famous 'Triangle Choke?'" The canine asked smugly and chuckled as he brushed her hand away. "He told me he begged you to let him go because of the smell of your..."

Stella grabbed the barrel of his gun and sharply brought the butt into the end of his damp, black nose. She growled as she squatted into a martial arts pose with her left palm by his chest and her right palm facing him near her head.

"My...what?" She dared him to say as her stained teeth came into view.

Her front teeth were a reddish color and slightly longer with flat edges. She didn't appear to have lateral incisors or canines. Her other teeth looked like normal molars.

The canine stumbled back while clutching his nose.

"Ah you," he growled as he brought his hands away and looked at the blood pooling in his palms.

Blood pooled in his nostrils and leaked down to his mouth. Sheer anger and hatred filled his eyes. He balled up his fists and slid his right foot back into a boxer's pose.

"You bih-

In a fluid motion, Stella grabbed a handkerchief from her apron pocket, shuffled up to the canine, and pressed the cloth to his nose. The canine flinched.

"I don't care if you *are* my godson. You need to learn to *watch* that mouth, *respect* women, and *respect* your elders," she growled sternly.

The canine growled deep in his throat. He jerked the handkerchief from her hand, held it to his nose, and shoulder-checked Troy as he stormed towards the door.

"Tell that asshole father of yours I'll be speaking to him after dinner about your attitude," she called out to the canine as he left the room.

Her scowl followed the sound of his stomping feet down the hallway. Her expression softened as her eyes lingered, then snapped to look at Troy. She sighed and straightened up her posture. She winced as she stretched her back and neck, then her hands. Troy clenched his teeth in hopes he wouldn't have any visions of mating with her.

"Oh my," she said and cleaned her glasses off with another cloth from her apron pocket. She placed the glasses back on her nose and said, "You ain't half bad." She stepped over in front of Troy and slowly brought her hands up to each side of Troy's face. "Definitely cuter than the last one," she said and giggled as she squinted her eyes. She grabbed Troy's towel and tossed it into one of the bins behind the counter. She reached in her pocket and pulled out a roll of cloth tape with blue markings along the edge. "Relax and let momma measure you," she said, more friendly than she had been.

She held the end of the roll in one hand and let the remainder fall in front of her. It was about a yard of tape with metal ends - the side in her hand had a loop of metal swinging on the end of it.

She reached up and wrapped the tape around his head. She muttered a number, then wrapped it around his neck. She stepped around him and measured his shoulders. She pulled something out of her pocket and set it on the counter. She began to write numbers down onto a small, spiral-bound notebook. She measured his arm's length and width, then his chest and stomach. She continued down to measure his hips and legs. She shooed his hands away so she could measure his inseam. Troy was glad his senses were dulled right now.

Troy fumbled with the communicator as her rough hand brushed against his genitals. "You've seen another human recently?" Asked the robotic voice.

She paused for a moment with her hand in his groin. She sighed as she rolled the tape up in her hands and groaned while standing. Her knees and hips popped until she was upright. She backed against the counter and leaned against it. She jotted down a few more numbers and set the pen down, then looked up at him with sad eyes.

"Perhaps these loose lips have said enough, hun," she muttered and sighed again.

She seemed to stare at the paper while fiddling with the tape in her hands.

"Please. Anything you can tell me?" The monotone voice said from the box. It didn't match Troy's intended vocal inflections.

She finally looked at him and pulled the glasses from her nose and let them hang near her small chest. The topic seemed to cause her to tear up, but they didn't leave her eyes.

"I'm sorry, hun. He wasn't here long. I don't have much to say about him. He seemed like he was on borrowed time and on a mission. His clothes were delivered to his room, but he only wore one set. He spent the majority of his time working on a project. That's all I know. He was gruff, but friendly. Still..."

Troy could hear her quills ticking together as she grabbed her notebook and walked away from him. She seemed to move much slower than she had before.

Troy watched her walk away and disappear behind the curtain. His head lowered, his shoulders slumped, and his knees bent slightly. His expression was caught between happiness, confusion, and extreme sadness. Everyone here has treated him better than the last group, but he still felt alone. He didn't belong. Without another human, he was the outcast. The freak. A mere toy to them.

But...*they* were the freaks...right?

Stella shuffled out of the back room holding a pile of clothes. She didn't look at Troy once as she moved to the end of the table and set the clothes down on the counter.

"Wear these for today. I'll have more delivered to your room. The others should be taken out by now." She sighed and cleared her throat. She turned away from Troy. "I really am sorry, hun. I've already said too much. You'll have to get more from one of the ranks or President Alundra." She shifted her minimal weight to one side. "I gotta," she said, sounding choked up. "I gotta get back to work."

With that, she walked back to the curtained area and disappeared.

Troy looked at the clothes and wondered if he should get dressed here or take them to his room. He really didn't feel like walking in the halls in the nude. He might have another episode and get himself killed if he were to show an erection like before. He was protected, but even the President said she'd harm him if he were in that state in front of her again. He didn't know all the ranking officers, either. The majority seemed female, but he wouldn't want to stare at another female as a vision played out only to have her be coupled with a ranking male he wasn't aware of. He decided to dress here. If anything to save what was left of his dignity.

Troy set down the communicator next to the pile of clothing. He picked up the red shirt on top. The print was a white, cracked check mark with words underneath. He found himself confused. He was out of it before and it didn't click until just now, but the Major was wearing clothing he could read as well. This shirt said "Nike" or "Mike." Perhaps "M.K.E."? He wasn't sure, but "Nike" seemed to fit better given the lack of extra lines to make an "M." He didn't know what a "Nike" was. It felt and smelled clean. It felt well worn and a bit scratchy as he pulled it on.

Beneath the shirt was a pair of slightly stained white briefs. He didn't like briefs, but he didn't want to be ungrateful by asking for boxer briefs. The pants were cloth like the shirt, but a bit thicker like jersey material. Not the scratchy, plastic type worn by athletes, but the thicker cloth like uninsulated sweats. He pulled them on and tied the rope belt. He wasn't sure how anything fit. His skin receptors were on the dull side again. He couldn't feel the cloth on him.

The socks seemed newer. Maybe this went along with wiping feet. Feet seemed to be important to them. None of them seemed to wear anything on their feet. Though, there were the ones on the other ship that had foot wraps and makeshift boots.

Troy pulled on the socks and slid his feet into the shoes. They seemed to fit him well. He wasn't sure what the slanted "N" stood for. Perhaps it went along with the "Nike" on his shirt. Though, they didn't have the check mark.

Troy looked up to the cow and gave her a fake smile. Her muzzle lowered and she appeared to be slightly glaring at him. He quickly looked away, grabbed the communicator, and walked to the door. Troy wasn't sure where he should go. Perhaps back to his room?

Troy began to walk down the hallway. He glanced up from his downward stare to see the canine walking back towards him. He was still clutching the handkerchief to his nose. He seemed to have calmed down from earlier, but he still didn't look happy. Troy couldn't help the feeling of wanting to look over his nose - check the surrounding tissue, check for any displaced cartilage, and make sure nothing was broken. The urge left him as he remembered these were not people. His people. He wasn't his friend. It wasn't his problem.

"I still have a job to do," the canine growled and turned away from Troy. "Let's move."

Troy followed his escort down the hallway to another door. The canine slapped the button on the wall, then pulled the doors open.

"I guess these doors stick?" Troy thought. "He's probably just letting out some steam from earlier."

Troy watched as the canine turned towards him and grabbed his shoulder. The canine grunted as he shoved Troy into the room.

"Get the fuck in there and don't come out unless I tell you," the canine shouted as Troy stumbled into the room.

The door closed behind him as Troy regained his balance. He was back in his room. He hadn't realized where they were going. Troy slowly breathed in to calm himself, then slowly breathed out. He stared at his bed for a moment before looking around.

“Guess I should get better acquainted with this room. I feel like I’m going to be seeing a lot of it,” he thought and looked around.

Some of these things weren’t here before. To the right of the bed was a two person couch across from a television on a stand. The television looked like a flat screen from his planet. The stand had a long, slim drawer underneath with two doors below it. To the left was a stand-up closet with two doors. Next to it was a different dresser than before. There was a strange contraption next to the wall by the door. It looked like an all-in-one workout bench with cables on the ends attached to weights. It branched up to a tree that had two more handles on it. The other end had an I-bar for various leg exercises.

“Am I supposed to use that?” He thought and moved towards the bed.

He took off the shoes and placed them next to the bed. He felt nervous as he sat on the edge of the bed. He wasn’t sure why. Perhaps his brain was shorting out again. He was feeling a bit drained. He decided to lie down and get some rest.

“Wake the fuck up!” Shouted a familiar voice.

Troy startled awake to see his canine escort hovering above him. Troy wasn’t sure how long he was out, but he felt much better. He rubbed his eyes and sighed, then wiped a hand over his forehead and bald head. The canine huffed and turned towards the door.

“Chow time,” he muttered walked from the room.

His voice sounded different. Troy *did* notice cotton poking out of his nostrils. That old porcupine sure got him good.

“Bill,” called a voice on the other side of the canine. “You’re all set, brother,” said the medium-range male voice with a strange accent.

Troy felt strange when he saw the new manimal. He looked very similar to Horns. Perhaps that was shallow to think. This “Horns” was completely desert sand brown with shorter horns that twisted opposed to being ribbed. Troy assumed he was his new escort.

“Fuck me dead. What happened to you?” Spiral - Troy decided to name him - asked the brooding canine.

“Don’t worry about it,” the canine snapped as he shoved the gun into Spiral’s hands and marched down the hallway.

“Go off then,” Spiral said as he turned to watch Bill walk away. “Bloody crook,” he muttered.

Spiral’s ears were flat against his head and he appeared to be irritated. Possibly disappointed. He shouldered the strap for the gun and looked at Troy.

“Must be stuffed. Somethin’ got his daks in a twist,” Spiral said as he thumbed the way the canine stormed off. “Get your shoes. Grub time.”

Troy shoved off the bed and put the shoes on and laced them up. He wasn’t entirely sure what “chow” and “grub” meant, but he hoped it was food. He felt a familiar pain in his stomach. It had been a long time since he felt this feeling.

Spiral led him through a familiar hallway, then switched to going right instead of left at the intersection. Just inside the door were several wash basins. Spiral stopped at one of the basins and placed his hands under the faucet. It must have sensed his hands because water started to pour out of the spout. Spiral began to rinse his hands. There was a peculiar smell as the clear water turned to bubbly water. Spiral rubbed his hands to a lather, then the water turned clear again to allow him to rinse.

Troy decided it was best to do the same. It was an interesting contraption. The soap was delivered directly into the water, then was gone. Troy had seen similar basins on his planet, but the soap dispensing was new. It was efficient if anything. Especially when the water was replaced with air to allow you to dry your hands.

“You can skip this part, brother,” Spiral said as he stepped by holes in the wall.

He placed his hands in and Troy could hear a vacuum-like sound.

“This part picks up any stray fur from our hands and arms so that we don’t shed into the food.”

Troy wasn’t sure what he meant until he followed Spiral through the archway to the right and he saw two large, long buffet lines. Troy couldn’t really smell the food, but

he could see it. They stepped in line and took a tray, plate, bowl, silverware, and a cloth napkin.

Troy looked over the selection. There were tons of fruit and vegetable dishes. Down the line were raw fruits, vegetables, and nuts with a selection of dips and sauces. With the hot foods, there was even pasta and pizzas.

No meat. He found that very odd given all the carnivores.

"I usually top the lettuce with various vegetables and a dressing, then top it with nuts. We do have meat and meat substitutes at the end. The fish, chook, and other fowl are fresh. The meat substitute is a bean and soy mix to taste like beef." Spiral leaned in and whispered. "Though tempting, I don't suggest eating one of us. Cannibals are immediately executed." Spiral nudged Troy's arm with his. "Seconds are encouraged - especially the protein. There's water and juices at the end. There's blenders you can mash a bunch of veg or whatever in to make smoothies." He leaned in and whispered again. "I don't recommend radish or onion in your smoothie. Bleh" Spiral stuck out his tongue with a grimaced expression.

Troy nodded slowly and looked back over the selections. A bunch of them looked familiar. Troy spooned a vegetable stir fry onto his plate, then stacked some raw vegetables on the side. There were various soups as well. Troy grabbed what looked like chicken noodle soup and filled his bowl. At the end, he placed - what looked like - a slab of meatloaf onto a small plate and placed it on his tray. It at least smelled like what he was used to.

At the end of the line, Troy saw the juice and water dispensers. No milk. He could understand that. There was even a coffee and tea dispenser. Troy grabbed a glass and looked at the juice dispenser. He assumed orange was orange juice, dark orange was maybe carrot juice, purple was grape juice, red was cranberry juice, and tan was apple juice. Troy placed his glass under the red tap and dispensed the tart-smelling liquid. He placed it on his tray and followed Spiral through another archway into the dining area.

It was rather loud. Laughing, talking, yelling, and various other noises could be heard. Troy seemed to lose his escort as he looked over all the bodies. He couldn't see him, the canine, the doctors, or anyone he knew to sit next to. His eyes located a seat next to a...donkey? Maybe a mule? He wasn't sure. Troy began to move his feet when someone bumped into him.

"Watch where the fuck you're going, smooth skin!" A familiar voice yelled.

Troy just wanted it to slide. He *was* blocking the way. He began to move towards the open seat when he noticed the room was oddly quiet.

Troy looked over and saw the enraged face of the Major.