

The Queen and The King of the SpaceHighways

B02 ~ The Queen and the Phoenix, The Couple

I blink and yawn. I feel warmth and happiness.

Aia is hugging me in her sleep.

I look at her relaxed, calm, sleeping face. Such a beautiful awakening. Our legs are intertwined, and our chests press against each other.

My free hand brushes through her beautiful, disheveled hair.

“Aia, my love,” I whisper.

She sighs in her sleep as if she’s hearing me and answering.

I let her sleep. I don’t want to awake the beautiful blueish angel yet.

Light is flooding the bedroom. It must be mid-morning by now... I try to look over her and find her or my terminal. Right... They must still be in the living room.

I sigh deeply in happiness as I look at the onyx ring Aia gave me. Last night was not a dream. I gathered all my courage and proposed to her. And she said yes! And she proposed to me afterward. This warmth... I sigh again. This is what I longed for.

Even if being embraced by her, the two of us lying on the bed, together, naked, I still can’t believe it. Much happened yesterday... We began to make out when I came home. I took her out, and we had our best date ever. We even proposed to each other. And, back at home, we had a long loving night together.

I’ve never dreamt that the usually shy Aia, at least in matters of love and sex, would be so assertive, luscious, and insatiable.

“Hmmm~” Aia sighs while I keep brushing through her beautiful hair. I chuckle, in our lustful, late-night play, she forgot to remove her makeup and still has some

smears left around her lips and eyes. The blusher and most of the makeup seem to have been lost in our insatiable pleasure of our first night together...

Aia's face changes factions, and her eyelids begin to lift.

"Morning, Aia, dear," I whisper with a smile.

"Morning, love," she says, and her lips curl up into a radiant smile. "No dream..." she sighs happily.

"No dream," I chuckle and give her a peck.

Her free hand finds the back of my head and pulls me to a deep kiss, which lasts many joyful minutes.

We break our kiss, and she caresses my cheek with her slender fingers.

"Such a wonderful awakening," she whispers. "For how long have you been awake already?"

"Half an hour, I suppose," I calculate.

"You could have wakened me up."

"I wanted to observe your sleeping face for a bit longer," I say brushing over her burning cheek.

"Oh, you..." she giggles. "You can always wake me up, just to be able to see you~"

"Yeah~"

"Ahh~" she sighs. "I feel alive..."

"No hangover? Nor weariness?" I joke.

"Nope," she giggles. "You?"

"Nope," I imitate her.

We keep caressing each other.

"Kira?"

"Yeah?"

"This is real, right? I'm not dreaming, right?"

“This is real,” I confirm.

She sighs deeply.

“You took me out to a fabulous dinner...”

“I did.”

“Before that, we began making out together.”

“We did.”

“You proposed to me.”

“I did.”

“I proposed to you.”

“You did.”

“We fucked for hours...”

“We did.”

“And now we’re talking nonsense, hugging and petting each other...” she giggles.

“We do,” I confirm chuckling.

My terminal still somewhere in the living room calls for attention. We look at each other and chuckle. A moment later, Aia’s terminal sounds.

“Let’s stay a bit long—” Aia’s sentence is interrupted by a light growl from her stomach.

We burst into laughter.

“Perhaps, we should make us some breakfast,” I chuckle.

“Yeah~” Aia giggles. “But I don’t want to see how we left the bedroom nor the living room.”

“Me neither...” I sigh. “Let’s share the work.”

“I’ll make breakfast while you tidy up?” she asks with an impish smirk.

“Deal.” I laugh. “But you should clean your face first. You still have some red smears—”

“Shit...” Aia interrupts me, “really?”

“Yeah, but don’t worry. You’re beautiful even with smeared makeup.”

“Dummy~” she giggles.

We untangle our legs and sit up.

“Wow...” I sigh at the scene.

“Oh, my...” Aia giggles. “Bedsheets and blankets scattered on the floor around the bed... Retro-condoms scattering the whole landscape... What the fuck happened here?” she giggles.

“Look at your vanity’s mirror, at the top...” I laugh.

“So *there* was where my panties landed...” Aia giggles.

Laughing and giggling, we gather the bedsheets and covers.

Laden with laundry, I step into the living room while Aia tries to get rid of some of the smeared makeup and brushes her hair.

“Aia, dear, you have to see the living room,” I laugh.

“Now I don’t want to see it...” she giggles. “Oh, my... what happened here?” she asks giggling as she comes out of the bedroom. “Top hat under the threshold of the bathroom door, my red dress in front of the apartment’s door, your shirt hanging from the plant, the coat lying in the midst of the floor, my purse’s at the door’s step, your pants lying on the kitchen table, and...” she giggles again, “my bra hanging from the ceiling lamp... What the fuck happened here?”

“Don’t ask me...” I shrug. “I was the whole night with my girlfriend...”

“Well, I was the whole night with my boyfriend...” she giggles. “Then, who was it?”

We keep laughing as I enter the bathroom and stuff the sheets into the washer. Afterward, I also brush my hair and get rid of the knots formed during the wild night.

“Oh, no... the beautiful bouquet...” I hear Aia lamenting.

Back in the living room, I find Aia putting the rescued bouquet into a vase. I notice the clock displayed on the video-wall... Wow! It’s still early morning! And I

thought it was late already. But we both are full of energy... I shrug it off and go back to the tasks at hand.

While I gather the rest of the clothes, Aia goes to the bathroom to clean her face and to do other things.

“Ah, my dress and my lingerie have to be washed cold...” she informs me sitting on the toilet. “Put your and my clothes together in another wash.”

“Sure,” I confirm and do as told.

Once the living room is clear, I head back into *our* bedroom.

What the fuck? How many of these retro condoms have we used? I can't remember... but there are certainly too many... Most of them are completely empty...

I gather them all and go to the kitchen, where Aia started to take food out of the fridge.

“Aia, into which trash should I drop these?” I ask her.

“Huh? Ah, the retro condoms?” She looks at me and blinks. “Dunno...” She shrugs. “Those from nowadays are biodegradable and thrown into the organic trash. But these... better into the generic one.”

“Okay.” I step towards the trash tubes which connect directly into the city's waste disposal system. “Oh...”

“Yeah?” Aia asks, having noticed my sudden doubt.

I turn around and face her.

“By the way... I know it's not the right moment, sorry... But... is it possible for us to have children?” I ask her a bit moved.

“Ugh~” she clearly swallows empty. “I... I don't know...” She looks down.

Hastily, I near her and embrace her, letting the condoms fall.

“I'm sorry, Aia, dear. It was just—”

“We're from different species...” she sighs a bit shaken.

“It won’t change what I feel for you, Aia, my love,” I reassure.

“But I want to...” she sighs again, “to have children with you.”

“Me too, Aia, dear, me too,” I tell her while I caress her back in our embrace.

“It came to my mind before... but I dismissed it... My blood, at least, is over ninety percent similar to yours. But now...” she sighs.

“Don’t brood over it, darling. It isn’t so import—”

“For me it is...” she sighs again.

“Then let’s find a specialist and check it, okay?”

“*Hm.*”

“Don’t worry, my love. Even if it isn’t possible, I’ll still love you.”

“Thanks, darling,” Aia sighs in relief. “You’re such a dear.”

She steps back and gives me a peck.

“Don’t brood over it now. It’s just our second day as a couple.”

“Yeah, true...” she giggles. Phew... She’s back to her usual self. All this stuff of being unique must have a heavy toll on her, in every detail.

She giggles again as I gather the tied condoms from the floor.

As I throw them down the generic trash tube, I notice Aia behind me. I turn around.

“Hmm~ How’s that it was that many?” she asks with an intrigued look on her face.

“I’m not sure...”

“I mean, is it unusual for guys to last for so long and so many times. Isn’t it normal to have just two or three erections during sex without stimulants?” she asks. “That’s what I’ve read in medical school and magazines... at least for Humans.”

“I’m puzzled myself,” I confess. “It must have something to do with my *cryo* or the many drugs I was infused with from the bionic members...” I sigh. “These are the only possibilities I can think of.”

“True... But still too much... And...” she begins to giggle coyly, “I can’t remember how many times we did it anyways... I was way too horny to count ’em.”

“Me neither...” I chuckle.

“Anyways, I still have to prepare breakfast,” she giggles. “We’ll find out if it was just because it was our first time together or it’s permanent...” She smirks impishly and turns around.

Fuck me... has this woman changed... in one night.

I go to the toilet while Aia is busy in the kitchen. With my bladder relieved, I step back into the living room.

Aia is standing in the kitchen with just her apron on. So sexy. Both of us are still stark naked...

I step behind her with the intention of embracing her.

“Kira...”

“Yeah?” I whisper into her ear, and she shudders.

“While you’re there, hug me...” she coos.

“Sure.”

I do what I wanted to do anyway. My arms embrace her around her stomach.

“Hmmm~” she sighs. “So good~ You can do this anytime. Just don’t startle me while I’m handling knives,” she giggles.

“Yeah, I just wanted to hug you.”

“Oh, Kira~” she purrs. “Anytime, anytime...”

“Need help?”

“If you could prepare the sofa and the tea table... I’d prefer to have our first breakfast together there.”

“As you wish, my queen,” I say tensing my arms a bit, then let her go and step back.

“Oh, you...” she giggles.

I prepare the sofa and put a fresh table cloth on the tea table and put our terminals on the small side table.

Aia brings the rich breakfast to the tea table.

“Breakfast is ready,” Aia giggles as she takes her apron off.

“Smells good,” I say hungry.

“Then dig in,” she giggles. “Ah, right... the messages... Have you checked your terminal yet?”

“No...” I sigh and grab mine. “Fuck...” I sigh, “so many messages... And most are from... Enya?”

“Huh? Is something about her? Is she okay?”

“Yeah,” I laugh as I read through her messages. “I must confess, she helped me to plan yesterday’s date.”

“Oh...” She looks at me intrigued.

“Here is one of her last texts: ‘have you done it? Have you done it? Tell, tell...’ and the next one is like, ‘c’mon, man, tell... How was it?’ While in the first ones, she asked if our date was going okay...”

“Oh, Enya...” Aia giggles. “She texted me too... Asking roughly the same thing. That you’ve told her that you would have a date with me, and she asks how it was...”

“This Enya...” I sigh, then chuckle.

“So... she helped you?” Aia asks impishly.

“Yeah, I asked her for help to plan this date. She told me about the Dutchess, and gave me some pointers...”

“And now she wants to know if the plan worked,” Aia giggles.

“Yeah...”

“Then let’s send her a pic.”

“Huh?”

Aia extended her arm to take a selfie while her other arm pulls me into a hug. We look into the camera.

“Better a kiss...” giggles Aia.

We kiss in front of the camera. Several times... until Aia got the shot she likes. It is quite evident that we two are naked and French kissing...

“That should do it,” Aia says giggling and hits the send button.

A second later, a notification sounds from Aia’s terminal.

“She already answered,” Aia giggles.

“Really? That’s SpeedKitty for you,” I laugh.

“Yeah,” she giggles. “Her text says, ‘no way! Really? Congrats! Enjoy your time! A round is on me when we meet again.’ I’ll just answer with a heart emoji. Should be enough,” Aia giggles again.

“Yeah, but your splendid breakfast is getting cold...”

“Oh, right...”

“Delicious,” I say between bites.

Aia just giggles happily and blushes.

We finish the delicious breakfast Aia prepared, and we both light a fag each.

“Ah, Kira?”

“Yeah?”

“How many free days do you have now? I mean, to be together.” Aia giggles and smirks.

Just as I want to answer, a harmonious notification from both our terminals sound.

“Huh?” we both look at each other, then at the terminals.

“No way...” I say stupefied.

“That’s our boss...” Aia giggles.

“Did you receive the same message?”

“Informing us that we have a week-long holiday?”

“Yeah...”

“Yup... He also congratulates us for our engagement.”

“And hopes we would meet him this week, without talking about work. This guy is freaking awesome! He’s already informed...”

“Yeah...” Aia giggles. “Then...” she smirks, “what do you want to do for our engagement honeymoon?” she asks giggling.

“Good question... Something calming. Without a lot of people.”

“Yeah... And...” she purrs sultry, “a lot of hot, steamy sex.”

“Oh, you, Aia, my love,” I chuckle. “Sure,” I add.

“At least, we’re already comfortable enough to hang out in the buff,” she giggles again. “Finally...” she sighs and stretches herself out, “I can be fully bare again at home.”

“What do you mean?” I ask cuddling her.

“I always loved to be naked at home...” she giggles.

“Really? Thankfully you didn’t do that before...” I sigh.

“Yeah... But it’s hard to get used to being clothed at home...” she sighs in relief.

“Aia...” I chuckle.

“Let’s shower? Together?” Aia asks wearing an impish smirk.

“Sure,” I chuckle.

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A long, refreshing, and sexy shower later...

Giggling and laughing, we let us fall on the sofa wearing our bathrobes. This time, the bathrobes are just loosely tied together and do not hide anything.

“Aaahh~” Aia sighs happily. “That felt good...”

“The shower or the fuck?” I ask wearing a smirk.

“Both,” giggles Aia.

“By the way...”

“Yeah?”

“I don’t want to sound insensible, but—”

“We’re a couple now. You can ask me anything,” Aia says snuggling against my side.

“I’ve noticed... You’re more assertive... since—”

“Yeah,” she interrupts me giggling, “I’ve noticed it too... Is it not—”

“I love it, Aia,” I assure her. “It’s just—”

“Different?” I nod at her question. “At least together, right?”

“Of course, Aia. You’ve always been assertive, but not so much—”

“Related to love and sex, right?” she interrupts me again, and I nod again. “I don’t know why...” she sighs cuddling against me, “but I feel that I finally can be myself at your side. Ah... I don’t mean to say that I couldn’t be myself while we were together. I mean, just related to those topics...”

“I always felt insecure in those matters, more so at your side. You know, being a legend for being a womanizer...” She giggles. Just as I wanted to say something, she goes on, “I know you don’t see it that way, darling. I also felt that insecurity when talking with my girlfriends, not that much, but enough to feel a bit out of place...”

“But now...” I smile at her, “now that we tore this wall between us down... you can be yourself even like this...” Playfully, I grab her tit.

“Yeah~” she giggles lusciously. “More so after a steamy hot bareback shower-fuck,” she adds wearing an impish smirk.

I chuckle and laugh at her remark.

We reach for our tobacco and cuddle a bit without a word.

“Ah, yeah...” Aia whispers after a happy sigh, “what I’ve told you in the shower, that I love you filling me... it’s true, not just because I was excited. I know from

girlfriends and what I've read in magazines, that there are women who don't like it, even hate it. I actually never thought that I could love such a thing... Well... what I want to say is that I want to do it, from now on, without a rubber. It felt even better than yesternight."

"Aia, dear..." I sigh moved, "yeah, it felt way better. Regarding rubbers and other kinds of protection, I want you to have full control over it, I follow suit. I mean, I take the responsibility, but I want you—"

"Kira~" Aia purrs. "Thanks. But we share the responsibility. I really want to have a child with you."

"And I with you, darling," I confirm. I truly want it.

"Kira~" she purrs again happily. "Then... no more rubbers from now on," she adds with a sultry giggle.

"But we have to make one exception..." Aia looks at me intrigued while I smirk, "in zero-grav..."

"Oh, you..." Aia laughs loudly. "Right... it would be a terrible disaster..."

"Yeah..." I also laugh.

"That brings me to... we have to try it in zero-grav..." she says wearing an impish smirk.

"You are insatiable..." I chuckle.

"Yeah..." she says bashfully. "Is it wrong?"

"No, Aia," I assure caressing her. "I love you, how could it be wrong?"

"Then I want to experiment. We should get a sex position guide and try everything out..." she giggles lusciously.

"Oh, Aia, dear..." I laugh. "Then we should buy a Kama Sutra."

"Is that a book or the like from your times?" she asks intrigued.

"Oh, it's actually quite older... If I remember well, it was composed at the beginning of the Gaian Common Era... It's well over three thousand years old..."

"Woow... Such thing really exists?" Aia asks flabbergasted.

“Yeah. It’s actually more than just a sex guide. It is an ancient Hindu guide of love, family, and pleasure, if I remember well.”

“Wow, now I want to read it,” Aia giggles.

“Then let’s see if we find one...”

“Yeah.”

A message on my terminal interrupts our conversation.

“Enya, again?” I sigh.

“What does she want?” Aia asks intrigued.

“Hey Kira, hope I don’t interrupt some new horizontal dance moves with Aia...” I read aloud chuckling while Aia giggles. “The shitty press is littered with your date... here, a link...”

“Oh... fuck...” Aia sighs. “What do they spit out about us now?”

I tap the link, and the Gaia News aggregator opens...

“There are hundreds of rumors...” I sigh.

“Already?” Aia sighs too.

“Yeah... but it’s just about the date... That we’ve been seen taking a limo together. And that the *journalists* lost us in traffic. The rest is just speculations...”

“We have to make it somehow official...” she finally says with a long sigh.

“Yeah...” I sigh too.

“But how?”

“How about through the ISTM?” I suggest.

“You mean like a press note? Or even a press conference?”

“Yeah... I don’t like it. But... I doubt that we could hide it...”

“True... I want to be able to hold your hand, even kiss you in public without making a huge fuss.”

“Yeah... And the wedding? That is something we can’t possibly hide...”

“Right,” Aia giggles, “I forgot the wedding... I was so happy that we’re finally dating, that I forgot that after an engagement, we would marry...”

“I actually too...” I chuckle. “But what I mean is that if we publish it just before the wedding, it could easily ruin it...”

“True... Better go through it now, not when we marry or even when I get pregnant...”

“Yeah, it will be newsworthy anyway... I just hope we can, somehow, dilute it a bit...” I sigh.

“Good idea. Then, should we do it this week?”

“Yeah, I believe so.” I nod.

“Around mid-week...” Aia says. “I want to enjoy our time together first.”

“I agree. Then, do you have a wish to go somewhere? The weather is great...”

“True... Although I want to stay with you alone, I’d love to stroll the promenades of Long Beach together with you.”

“Nice idea. Should we leave now?” I ask.

“Yeah. Perhaps, we can eat a late lunch at a place I know.”

“Sounds good.”

The weather is quite nice for being early Autumn. These season changes don’t really help... Who’d have thought that early Autumn could begin in late August...

Aia chooses a beautiful blue summer dress and fancy underwear while I grab a pair of jeans and a Rolling Stones teeshirt, the one with the tongue logo.

“Ready~” Aia sings twirling around, showing off her dress.

“Beautiful, darling,” I say and receive her in my arms. She gives me a peck.

“Thanks~” she giggles. “Ah, honey... Why don’t you leave your hair open? I’d love to see it floating in the wind.”

“Oh... Sure.”

I take the scrunchy which holds my hair into a ponytail off.

“Such beautiful hair...” Aia muses and brushes it.

We wander down the streets with our hands taken towards the ample promenade along Long Beach.

“Such great weather...” Aia sighs happily. “Oh! An ice cream cart! Let’s have some.”

“Sure,” I chuckle while she drags me to the stall.

We choose a two-flavors cone each and enjoy the icy sweet walking along the promenade.

“What are you thinking, dear?” asks Aia, “Now that we are together?”

“That I’m the luckiest guy of the whole universe,” I say, grabbing her hand firmly. “You?”

“The same, actually,” she giggles. “Anything else?” she adds with a smirk.

“Too many things go through my mind right now,” I sigh. “I’m really moved about what happened yesterday and today. At least, some of my confusions seem to have decreased.”

“That’s a good sign, right?”

“Yeah...” I sigh. “I even can assure that some things are quite clear now, and that I am sure, at least, about some things.”

“Such as?”

“Us. Our relationship. That I love you deeply. That I want to form a family with you. These are absolutely clear and reassuring.”

“Oh, Kira~” Aia giggles happily, then she sighs. I look at her questioning, she shows me a weary smile. “Sorry if I was partially the reason for your confusion.”

“Don’t be, Aia,” I say and gently grip her hand in mine. “Perhaps, I needed it.”

“You needed it? But Kira, love, I basically tortured you by avoiding your advances while seducing you continuously.”

“Yeah...” I sigh, “I truly was...”

“I’m so sorry, darling...” Aia sighs and looks away.

“It was good...”

“How could it be good?”

“Perhaps, I needed to go through your emotional therapy.”

“Therapy?” Aia asks looking at me astonished.

“Yeah.” I nod. “Your way of being, your way of enticing yet avoiding me, had a strong effect on me. At first, I was excited, weeks later, confused, but not just because of your seemingly erratic behavior. I mean, flirting with me, then pushing me off and such. My main confusion was about my own reactions.

“I was unsure why I was so entranced by you. There was obviously the physical attraction but—” I sigh, “I was battling against my old habits. You had me so mesmerized that I had to fight my instincts, my—” I sigh again, “old Casanova habits... I wanted to get rid of my past womanizer image, at least partially. I got into too many troubles in the past because of it. I wanted to change that, and more regarding you.

“You took me in, without questioning my past nor my possible behavior. Your caring way of helping me out without any second thought, was the first trigger of my decision to change myself.”

“Wow... Kira...” Aia sighs interrupting my long speech. “Then, my strange behavior made you go through so much?”

“Yeah.” I nod. “Actually, right now, I feel like I’ve gone through a long process. I needed it. I doubt that we could have become a couple if I hadn’t gone through it.”

“Such a strange therapy...” Aia giggles.

“Yeah, but worth it,” I chuckle and give her a peck.

“Then...” Aia sigh, “I went through a smilier therapy...”

“You did?”

“Yeah.” She nods. “Regarding guys, love, and sex. I’ve told you that I always had bad experiences...”

“You did,” I confirm. “Has it to do with your origin or upbringing?” I ask her.

“Yeah... You’re right, darling,” she sighs. “In particular the way I was, and still am, seen by others...”

“My childhood was actually really good. My loving parents, even if they are my foster parents, always cared for me as if I’m—No...” she smiles heartily, “I am their true daughter, and they are my true parents, even if we don’t share genes.”

“My parents found me in a small rescue capsule on the outskirts of Mars City, near their home. They took me in and adopted me. Once I was old enough to question them about our obvious differences, mostly our skin and hair colors, and my ears, they told me the whole story.” I gently strengthen the grip on her hand. “Despite being humble farmers, they gave me everything I could have wished for. A nice home, a good education, a loving family...” Aia sighs emotionally.

“I grew up fast, not only physically, but mentally. I learned to read thanks to Mom at the age of four and a half. Dad taught me the basics of nursing while caring for the farm’s animals. That was the inspiration of me wanting to become a doctor.”

“At first, it wasn’t a big fuss about being so different, I mean with other kids. It was the adults, their parents who made a fuss about them playing with me, an alien of an unknown species...” she sighs deeply.

“Aia...” I sigh. “I can relate. At some point, I also was the sole Asian boy in a class. Some parents can really be some huge assholes...”

“Yeah... Thanks, Kira.” She produces her pack of tobacco and offers me a fag. Obviously, I accept, and we light one each. “To bigger challenges for me came during early puberty. Well... the usual age of puberty...” she sighs.

“What do you mean, dear?” I ask her.

“At that time, when every girl of my age began to look at boys, or other girls, I had absolutely no interest...” She shrugs. “But that was not the problem. The problem was the boys, and some girls, who began to have interests in me... romantic and sexual interests, I mean. Soon, I was known as the frigid Smurfette...” she sighs deeply.

“No way, Aia. I’m sorry...”

“Thanks, dear,” Aia says smiling. “Meanwhile, I skipped several years of school because I learned just by reading...”

“You’ve told me.”

“On our first haul together, wasn’t it?”

“Yeah. So, you managed to skip whole years just by reading all the school books?”

“Yup...” she giggles. “My parents taught me to love reading and always let me borrow books from the library. At least, most teachers loved my dedication to the studies, as I wasn’t too absorbed by chasing guys or girls like to others did. Obviously, I was always named the nerd of the class.”

“Were you bullied?” I ask concerned.

“Yeah... At first, I was... Be it because of my origins or for being a so-called nerd...” she sighs. “But soon enough, I found a good hobby which helped me defend myself... I’ve had a Reaf phys ed teacher who introduced me to the reth’the martial art. I fell in love with the elegant but powerful movements of this art. She was a master in these ancient traditional Reaf martial arts and started instructing me after my parents gave me their blessing.”

“Wow... Then your fighting style I’ve always admired, is this ri-eth-ck-thee...”

“Yup,” Aia giggles. “But it’s pronounced reth’the...” she says slowly.

I try it several times until I get the correct pronunciation.

“Good...” she giggles again. “Anyways, yes... I’ve kept on practicing reth’the till nowadays. Being able to beat the bullies to pulp was a powerful message. Although, I didn’t use it too much. Only when things became physical, in self-defense. That’s mostly because of the martial art’s philosophy. It’s thought to be only for self-defense and never meant to attack others.”

“I understand.” I nod. “That’s also part of Nippon Kempo’s philosophy, the martial art I practice. It’s actually both, a philosophy of life and the art.”

“Cool, then it’s similar...” Aia giggles. “But your movements are straight to the point, without excess motions...”

“Yeah, exactly. It’s to keep the stance and avoid any loss of power.”

“In case of the reth'the, the extra fluid movements are used as a distraction.”

“Oh... But it helps you to keep the flow and is even more powerful as it looks...”

“Exactly.”

“Then... your elasticity...”

“Yup, is because of practicing reth'the. Not only, I was already quite elastic as a kid, not so much as any Reaf, but enough to be introduced into the art. That's why my teacher showed me.”

“Impressive. And it did help you a lot.”

“Of course. But the harassments kept on anyways...” she sighs. “At least the verbal ones...”

“Anyways, I've entered university at the age of sixteen Gaian years. I was a bit overrun by all the stuff that happened there. But summing up, I advanced rapidly through the degree of medicine. Despite having a great scholarship, I part-timed for a delivery firm. You know, those rushing around on hoverbikes hauling about anything, most obviously food. There I started to love piloting. I always sent most of the earnings back home, to help my parents, even if they insisted on not to...”

“With relationships, however, things weren't going so smoothly...” she sighs deeply. “At one point, I began to force myself to try it, you know, dating...” she sighs again. “But it was a disaster. I've only started to develop crushes at the age of twenty, twenty-one...”

“Aia...”

“But not even then, things were good... I've already started to work for the ISTM because I loved piloting more than practicing medicine. I started dating, really dating around that time...”

“I can only think of the possibility that until then, I was not sexually developed, because of my species. But...” she sighs, “that can't be really true either... I started to have interests in sex and self-pleasure quite early on, but not to the emotional attachments you would develop at the same time... I dunno...” she sighs again.

Baffled by her story, I'm unable to interject but only to nod and hold her hand firmly...

“Once I started to date, I never liked what the guys did to me, I mean in intimacy... Nor how they behaved once we became more than friends and went further. I did like the flirting, the crushes... all that stuff. But once it became more intimate, I hated everything they did...”

“What did they do to you?” I ask angrily.

“Ah, no... darling... they never hurt me physically.” I sigh in relief. “Thanks, Kira, dear,” she giggles. “I had several types of bad experiences. Some were obviously their fault. Like those who just wanted me to be their trophy girl—”

“Such assholes!” I grunt angrily. “If I meet them I’ll—”

“Don’t worry, dear,” Aia giggles. “I myself beat them up once I found out. Thanks for caring...” she adds with a beautiful smile. “Other guys were just attracted to the obvious, my appearance. I’m aware that most guys, even girls, feel attracted to my looks and my species. I’m quite unique, after all...” she giggles.

“You are, Aia, dear,” I say wrapping my arm around her waist.

“Oh, you~” she giggles again. “Yeah. But omitting the jerks, the perverts, and the creeps, the nice guys’ advances somehow didn’t feel good to me...”

“How so?”

“Dunno...” she shrugs and also wraps her arm around my hip. “Everything went okay till we started to make out...” She sighs. “I didn’t like their caresses, nor their kisses... It didn’t even turn me on... In fact, it turned me off...”

“Really? But with me—”

“You are the first one,” she giggles and smirks coyly. “But with the others... More often than not, I forced myself to fake pleasure and to reciprocate, even if I didn’t enjoy it.”

“No way, Aia...”

“Yeah...” she takes a deep breath and sighs. “That’s why I’ve never had a *real* boyfriend, and why I’ve never had sex with anyone before you.” She tenses her arm around my hip.

“Actually...” she goes on, “I never slept well sharing the bed with a guy. I didn’t have that problem with most of my girlfriends, as I always identified myself as

heterosexual. I almost freaked out the first day we fell asleep on the sofa together. I've never slept that well with someone at my side," she giggles. "From then on, I wanted to see if it was just a one-time thing, and started to confront my fears and uncertainties."

"When you began to hang out topless at home..."

"Yeah..." she giggles, "exactly. I nearly freaked out again... Not only did I like to show myself to you, but it turned me on. I decided to experiment with this feeling. I'm sorry for having used you..." she sighs, but ends giggling.

"Aia..." I chuckle. "That was actually the real start of our therapy."

"Seeing it that way, true..." She also giggles. "But back to the things I didn't like or didn't give me pleasure..." I hug her hips a bit tighter. "The strange thing was that I never had problems with self-pleasuring. As I said, I started masturbating quite early on. But even if the guys went down on me, neither by tongue nor fingers, they were able to make me cum..."

"Really? Aia... But yesterday and today in the shower..."

"Yeah~" she giggles lusciously. "With you... I simply enjoy it to the fullest. But I don't know why..."

"I doubt that I am that good," I say convinced. "Even if having a lot of experience, I don't believe that my technique is better than anyone else's."

"Oh, Kira..." Aia giggles again. "No, you're right. There must be another explanation. But anyways, the most I did with a guy was oral sex. I actually disliked it, no matter if I was the receiving or the giving one. Giving head was the worst for me. And swallowing? Yuck! Even the smell grossed me out..."

"Aia... But you did it to me, twice already."

"And I love it..." she giggles sultry.

"But—"

"I don't know, Kira," she sighs. "At first, I never thought I would do it. But in the heat of the moment, I was so turned on, I just wanted to do something sexy for you. I was astonished that I didn't feel grossed out, not even slightly. In fact, I loved it. I wanted to try it. Even when giving you head, I got hornier. That was when I wanted to try it... I mean, swallowing. You even warned me... I know you

did it so I could decide what to do. I was so turned on by the thought, that I only could try it. My biggest surprise was that not only I didn't like it, but that I love it..."

"Aia..." I say overwhelmed by her frankness.

"So~" she purrs lusciously, "I like to do it when you're up to it~"

"Oh, Aia," I chuckle. "Then, of course, I'll reciprocate. I have to say that you have the most delicious pussy I've ever tasted." I smirk.

"Oh, darling~" Aia giggles coyly. "Oh! Why don't we have a beer in that place over there? We have to toast to it," Aia says giggling and pointing at a terrace.

"Good idea," I laugh.

We find a nice table and order a beer each.

"Cheers, Kira!"

"Cheers, Aia!"

"By the way, Kira, love?"

"Yes, darling?"

"Did you sleep with any other woman these past months?" she asks smirking.

Oh, shit... I knew this would come sooner or later. Now that she is totally into it, she wants to know everything. Obviously, I'll come clean and tell her everything.

"Yeah..." I say and sigh.

"Tell me..." she purrs sultry.

"I had a one-nighter with three women," I confess. "Xivaz, a Wigmez, a stewardess for the IR; Visayic, a Reaf, working as a port manager; and Bea, a Human girl, working as an acrobat for a traveling circus." Aia nods wearing an impish smirk. "I met the first two in entertainment joints during hauls. It was, I think, during the first months or two. I was so backed up from your flirting, that I needed release..."

"*Fufu~*" Aia giggles lusciously. "No need for apologies, Kira. We weren't dating at that time. I told you, didn't I? That you could have your playmates meanwhile."

“Yeah, you did, Aia. However, I always felt guilty afterward.”

“You did? Why? You weren’t cheating on me, we weren’t dating at that time.”

“Not because I slept with them...” I sigh. “The sex was great, the girls stunning. But...” I sigh again, “more often than not, you came to my mind while having sex with them.”

“You did?” Aia asks wearing an impish smile.

“Yeah... I felt bad, both for them as for you. For them, because I wasn’t completely with them. For you, because I saw you this sexualized way. I didn’t want to see you that way at that time, mostly because of your feelings... I didn’t want to hurt you.”

“But you never hurt me. Quite the contrary, you healed me,” Aia says taking my hand lying on the table.

“Aia...”

“And the human girl?” she asks.

“That happened just after the black hole incident...”

“Oh! There I entered my phase...”

“Yeah... exactly.” I nod and sigh. “I was so turned on, that I needed to fuck it out. I met Bea in the lobby of a hotel where I stayed over for the night. Being from the few humans around, we felt attracted to each other, and we ended in my room for the night. There...” I sigh, “it was worse...”

“Worse? How so?”

“I came thinking of you, instead of her...” I sigh again.

“Oh, Kira~” she giggles.

“After that, there were no more one-nighters. Other girls didn’t turn me on. But just by seeing you, at home, or anywhere else, I got helplessly horny.” Aia giggles again. “And...” I sigh and look down.

“Enya, right?” Aia suddenly asks.

“Eh...” I hesitated for a second, I know I have to tell her. But this is more difficult than I hoped for.

“You can tell me, Kira. I know she loves you deeply and that you have a Feli skinship with her.”

“A deep skinship,” I confess.

“A deep one?” she asks. Her factions, however, are not the ones I dreaded. Her face hints more to curiosity, rather than disgust.

“Yeah,” I confirm. “You know—”

“You have had *barely* sex, right?”

“Yes.”

“As in petting and oral sex, but no penetration.”

“Yes.”

“Do you love her?”

“I...” I stammer, “I don’t know...” I end saying followed by a long sigh. Right now, I am genuinely unsure. I love Aia so much...

“But enough to spend intimate time with her, right?”

“Yeah...” I sigh looking down.

“Kira...” she says lovingly. “It’s okay.”

“It is?” I look up dumbfounded.

“Yeah.” She nods, still caressing my hand. “I mean, we weren’t dating after all.”

“I feared to tell you about it...” I confess.

“You did?” she asks shocked. “Why?”

“Because...” a lump in my throat forms, “we feared you would try to get us together, and you would step away...”

“Oh, Kira~” she sighs relieved.

“We didn’t want to hurt you.”

“Kira, that’s so sweet of both of you. I, honestly, suspected it.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, it was kinda obvious. At least, that both of you had feelings for each other.”

“Aia...”

“But you’re right...” she sighs and tenses her grip on my hand. “At that time, I would have done that. But now... now that we’re engaged, I know that you wouldn’t hurt me in any way.”

“Aia...” I sigh relieved. “We’ve talked it through many times, that you have to know it. But it was difficult for me to tell you.”

“I believe you, darling,” she says with a charming smile.

“And... we couldn’t tell you, not before you and I had sorted our relationship out.”

“So much thought... Thank you, by heart.”

“But...” I swallow empty.

“You want to keep your relationship?” Aia asks with a smile.

“Ye—yeah...” I stutter. I haven’t thought she would bring it up. “At least, the three of us talk it through...”

“That would be nice. We should meet these days, she owes us a beer, after all,” Aia giggles. I sigh relieved. “Don’t worry, Kira. From now on, we’ll talk everything that matters through. I prefer to know that you have a certain relationship with Enya rather than being left in the dark.”

“But... Yeah, you’re right. We wanted to have it cleared.”

“That means, that both of you care for me.”

“Of course we do. Enya said that she would give us a time alone together, and then she wants to talk it over, the three, together.”

Aia sighs happily. “Thank you, Kira, for being frank with me.”

“I don’t want to hide anything from you, Aia. You are too dear to me.”

“Oh, Kira, darling~” she giggles. “Right... my part...”

“Your part?” I ask her.

“Sure, you’ve told me, now’s my turn,” she giggles again. “Obviously, I didn’t date anyone, let alone sleep with another guy.” She smirks. “As I began to regain my confidence—Right...” she interrupts herself, “I haven’t told you that part yet...”

“This goes back to the things I didn’t like about what the guys did to me. Mostly to those who saw me only as the sexy trophy girl... My walk to become the Queen of the space-highways wasn’t a rosy one... I was always exposed to male chauvinism and racism. Even in the open-minded space-trucking community. Actually, not so much by truckers, but by dispatchers, cargo managers, and those I’ve met in the entrainment joints and hotels.

“These guys still saw it strange that women would be truckers. That happens to all women working in this industry. Although there aren’t many thinking that way, in my case, it was worse because of my unknown origins...” Aia sighs. “Those guys are the worst...”

“Slowly, yet steadily, I began to crumble under the pressure of being famous and the exposure to such behavior. Obviously, my own strange reactions towards guys’ advances and intimacy only worsened it...” she sighs again. “Plus, there was the gossip press always discussing my possible love-life.

“I needed a break. A long one...” Aia says looking over at the beach, then back at me. “I was diagnosed with depression and got a health-related leave from the ISTM. I broke all communications down with the exception of some really good friends like Enya, Jim, Kim, and Kite, and, obviously, my family.

“But I couldn’t stay put... I needed to do something... different. Or I would fall deeper into depression. I found a job opportunity ad for a nurse at the cryogenics lab in the New Angeles Scientific Complex. I took it at once as my doctor’s diploma was enough, even if I never had practiced medicine. It was a quiet job, without too many people, and I only had to care for the awakened and keep track of the health of those inside the cryogenic capsules.

“Thanks to the kind staff working there, I slowly come out of my depression. After roughly a month, I was advised that a cryogenic capsule was about to open in the coming days. A really old one which had no emergency opening system.

“Curious about that special capsule, I looked it up. But there was no detailed report as usual. Just some initials and many years of maintenance records. But even these records became spotty after going a few scores of years back.

“Intrigued, I went to the capsule to have a look at the cryogenic patient. I looked at him for a long time... He looked strangely familiar...” Aia smiles heartily. “If... If I didn’t know better... I could swear I fell in love with that dark-skinned Asian guy sleeping there...” she giggles gently stroking my hand.

“Aia... dear...” I say moved.

“Yeah...” she giggles. “It was you, darling. When you awoke, I was torn between my feelings and the bad experiences I had with guys. I acted rashly, without thinking when Ralph told me to take you home. I already developed a huge crush on you by the time...”

“You did? I haven’t noticed it then.”

“Because I tried to hide it. It was about professionalism. At that time, I was your nurse; you, my patient.”

“Right.”

“But the way you acted around me began to give me hope. Perhaps, there was a chance that I could develop a relationship with that mysterious awakened American-Japanese I took home...” she giggles and blushes. “But the greatest impact came...”

“When I admitted that I was the Phoenix...” I say.

“Exactly,” she giggles again. “But what moved me the most was not actually that you were a living legend... But that you were as lost as I was, even if you didn’t show it openly.”

“Yeah, I was,” I admit.

“I held on you hoping it would change myself too...” she sighs. “And then...”

“You started going topless at home, and later told me that you have feelings for me, but you weren’t ready for any kind of romantic relationship...”

“Exactly...” she giggles. “Now, as my confidence rose, thanks to you,” she smiles heartily, “I’ve begun to evaluate the male offering again,” she giggles lusciously. “But in no time, I began to compare them with you. Too tall, too skinny, too ugly, too lazy, too... anything but you,” she giggles yet again.

“I never went further than flirting with guys only to shatter all their hopes in the last moment by turning them down.” She smirks impishly. “Actually, I did it with you too...”

“But you never shattered my hopes completely,” I say imitating her smirk.

“Of course not,” Aia giggles. “I never intended to push you away from me. As you always kept your promise to not hurt me, I kept on flirting with you.”

“You can always keep flirting,” I say wearing a smirk.

“Huh?” Aia blinks unsure.

“Now you have the perfect weapon to shatter other guys’ dreams...” I say brushing over her engagement ring.

“Oh, you~” Aia giggles coyly. “Perhaps, I will. It was fun, after all.”

She giggles again and leans over the table, puckering her lips. I reciprocate, and we peck.

“Disgusting!”

We jerk and look around at the sudden shout.

An elderly human woman looks over at us from the promenade.

“A human and an alien! Kissing! In public! That’s sickening!” she goes on shouting at us. “Such nauseating behavior should be forbidden at once!”

“Shut up!” I shout while the rest of the patrons enjoying their drinks on the terrace look at the old woman with disgust.

“Whaaat?” she screams. “How do you dare? This revoltin—”

“Lady, I said, shut up!” I interrupt her shouting quite angrily. “What we do is not of your concern!”

“Such repulsive, unnatural behavior should be outlawed!”

“We don’t care!” Aia shouts back. “We are in love, and don’t care what you say.”

“You should be incarcerated for this! Even for refuting it!”

“We! Don’t! Care!” I shout again. “In love, there’s no place for bigotry, racism, sexism, nor any other phobia. Go home! And leave us in peace, or we call the police!”

“How dare you?” she screams.

Just as Aia and I jolt up to tell her once and for all to leave, several couples and polys appear at our sides.

“The lad is right!” shouts a huge Knoreliaz while he firmly holds the hand of a human woman.

“Yeah!” the woman shouts at the lady. “We’re married for nine years now and have a wonderful boy.”

Even the young Human-Knoreliaz mestizo shouts at the old woman, “Yeah! My daddy is an alien! And the best daddy of the universe!”

“You wouldn’t dare to say our mestizo baby is *not* cute, wouldn’t you?” a Felii woman asks the lady while showing her the adorable Felii-Human mestizo she carries in her arms.

“Cute?” the old woman shrieks. “It’s an aberration!”

“Enough!” I shout again.

“Yeah! Enough!” a woman behind me shouts.

“Leave them in peace!” a man shouts.

“I’m calling the police!” another shouts.

The whole café is in an uproar and shouts any possible slur at her. Everything from “No xenophobia,” and “Yes to mixin,” to “Such bitches should be in a nuthouse,” and “Better dead as a racist,” can be heard throughout the premise.

“This will end badly!” she shouts at us as she leaves under the pressure of the patrons. “Mark my words! Badly!”

The five interspecies couples and poly families defending us turn sighing.

“Damn old bitch!” the Human-Knoreliaz boy grumbles. “Just wait till I’m a lawyer, I’ll throw you into the deepest cell possible.”

“A lawyer?” Aia giggles, messing his hair up. “Great to have your future so clear. Already know your specialization?”

“Sure!” The boy laughs, straightening his hair again. “Interspecies relations. Wanna defend interspecies couples and polys against such bigots. Wanna see happy people, just like my parents,” he laughs.

“Wow, so mature...” a male Reaf says, and everyone nods.

“Truly...” I laugh.

“What species are you, lady?” the boy asks Aia intrigued.

Aia kneels down to him and lies her hand on his shoulder.

“I don’t know...” Aia sighs while I lay my hand on her shoulder. “But it doesn’t matter. I cross the universe together with my beloved boyfriend, that’s all that matters.” She looks up at me and holds my hand with her free one. I can only smile at her.

“Oh! So happy! You’re as happy as mommy and daddy,” the boy giggles.

“Why don’t we sit a bit together and chat?” an Īiha woman suggests.

“Good idea.” “Yeah.” “Wanna ice cream!”

.

After pushing several tables together, we sit with the five families and ask for another beer.

“What? You’ve just got engaged? Congratulations!” the boy’s mother euphorically exclaims.

“Congratulations~” everyone sings.

“I’m pregnant by two months...” one of the Īiha women happily says.

Another round of congratulations follows.

“Are you thinking of having children too?” asks us the boy’s mother.

Aia nods slowly while our new friends try to interpret her gesture.

“We don’t know if we can...” Aia finally whispers.

“Oh...” everyone looks at us with a hint of sorrow.

“Then why don’t you come and visit us?” the other Īiha woman asks and hands us a business card.

“IGC Interspecies Clinic, specialized in interspecies maternity, all mammal species,” Aia reads.

“That’s us,” giggles the woman. “I am Dr. Igüeni, and own, together with my partners here,” she points at two guys, a Reaf and an Īiha-Human mestizo, “the IGC Clinic.”

“Indeed,” nods the Reaf, “my name is Grhiedak and a gynecologist, nice to meet you.

“And I am Cehreh, urologist and andrologist. Also nice to meet you,” the Īiha mestizo says.

“If you want to have a full compatibility test, you can call this contact,” Dr. Igüeni says pointing at the business card, “and ask for an appointment to my assistant.”

“That would be me,” giggles the Felii woman holding the mestizo baby. “I am Ehhnah, head nurse at the same clinic. Carlos is my partner, and our little girl is Reki.”

“Nice to meet you,” Aia and I say at the same time.

“We are having a double date,” Dr. Igüeni says giggling. “You can call us tomorrow if you want. We offer assistance to anything related to interspecies reproduction, and couples’ and polys’ health.”

“We surely will,” I say taking Aia’s hand.

“*Hm~*” she hums and nods. “I want to know...”

“Me too, darling.”

“Even if it’s not—” she bites her lips.

“Don’t worry, darling. If not, we’ll find a way.”

“*Hm...*”

Every one of the adults sitting with us smiles and wishes us good luck.

We keep on chatting for a while until some of them have to leave. We decide it's time for us too.

We say goodbye to everyone after swapping our contacts.

.

"Are they nice..." Aia sighs as we leave the café behind.

"Yeah. Oh... It's kind of strange that they haven't recognized us..." I observe.

"Perhaps they did, but understood that we are just a normal couple..." Aia says.

"Could be..." I shrug. "Ah, yeah... Didn't you mention a nice place to eat? I've gotten hungry with the many beers we had..."

"True~" Aia giggles. "Yeah, it's just a bit further down the promenade."

"Perfect."

.

We find a small, charming fish restaurant at the side of the promenade. Sadly, the few outdoor tables are occupied.

Inside, we easily find a free table as the four of them are empty.

Just as we have a seat, the waitress arrives...

"Aia? Aia Asdiekx, is that you?" the waitress suddenly asks.

"Eva? Eva Enderto?"

"The very same! I haven't seen you since we graduated. How do you do? I've read that you've become one of the most famous space-truckers."

"Yeah..." Aia nods blushing. "And you? Do you work here?"

"Only on some weekends. It's my grandparents' place. I help them out when my cousin isn't able to. I usually work as the head nurse at the North Hospital. And your companion?" Eva looks over at me with interest.

"He's Kira, one of the best space-truckers, and my boyfriend."

"Really? Finally!" Eva giggles. "Nice to meet you, Kira." She offers me her hand.

"Nice to meet you, Eva," I say and shake her hand.

“Since when?” Eva asks.

“Yesterday,” Aia giggles. “We were homies till yesterday. And now we’re engaged...”

“No way~ So cute~ Two homies falling in love...” Eva charms.

“Yeah,” Aia giggles. “Not only that, listen...”

Aia goes on telling her old friend about our first date...

“No way... So romantic~” Eva charms again. “I’d wish my boyfriend would propose to me in such a perfect way...” A brief call from the kitchen makes Eva jolt up. “Oh! Sorry! Here, our menu. Today, we also have outside of the menu...” Eva goes on reciting several dishes.

Aia chooses a fish to share, to which I agree.

Eva swiftly comes with the ordered drinks.

“By the way, Aia, cutie, do your parents know the news?” Eva asks Aia.

“Oh, no! I forgot!” Aia almost jumps up.

“You haven’t changed much, girl,” Eva laughs. “When too happy, you forget to inform your parents. Remember? It always happened to you when you’ve got top marks...”

“Oh, no... Don’t remind me...” Aia sighs and blushes deeply.

Eva leaves us giggling while Aia searches for her terminal in her purse.

Just as she’s about to call her parents, I lay my hand on hers.

“Tell them we’re coming, if it’s okay,” I say smiling gently.

“Huh? You want to meet my parents, Kira?” Aia asks flabbergasted.

“Yeah... It may sound old-fashioned, even too patriarchal... but I want to meet your parents and ask them for your hand.”

“Oh~ Darling~” Aia sighs deeply and cleans a tear rolling down her cheek. “I will.” She takes the terminal again and says, “Call Mom.” A moment later... “Mom? It’s Aia. Yeah. How do you do? Yeah, I’m fine. Actually, more than fine...” she giggles. “Ah, yeah... I was wondering... Are you home today? I wanna come over and visit you. Yeah, in about three hours. And Dad? Will he be home

by then? Cool. Ah, yeah, I'll bring a guest. Yeah. Thanks. Well... We will be there in about three hours. Thank you. Kisses. Love you too."

Aia smiles radiantly while taking my hand lying on the table.

"We've got enough time to enjoy the meal and reach my parents' home," Aia informs me happily.

Eva serves us a considerable fish accompanied by a lot of vegetables to share and bids us a bon appétit.

We enjoy the delicious meal and, once finished, we decide to go home to fetch Aia's Ferrari.

Aia insists on paying... "You've already paid for last night's date, dear. Let me pay for this."

I accept the gesture, and after complimenting Eva's grandfather for the delicious dish and saying goodbye to them, we walk towards our home.

Entering the garage directly, we reach her car. Aia suddenly throws me a small, sleek stick with a visible chip embedded inside. Don't say...

"Aia..." I'm overwhelmed by her trust.

"Sure," she smiles broadly, "now we share it."

I sit into the pilot's seat and regulate it to my size while Aia takes the passenger seat.

"Feels nice..." I stay still moved after I started the engine, and the AR comes on.

"Should be," Aia giggles. "Destination: Mars..." she laughs.

"As you wish, milady," I chuckle.

SI

To be continued in:

SpaceHighway: *The Queen and the King* ~ B03 ~ The Parents of the Bride

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all the Aces of the ISTM

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and all the Instructors

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