Chapter 4 Naval Academy: Term 3 & 4

Well,I didn’t get a break from my marine training during break. But my friends did surprise me with a field trip to the planet during the break on a marine transport. We spent the first day sparing against other drill sergeants and I even won three matches out of the thirty or so I had. We then drank and partied. The next day I was introduced to firearms. I wasn’t sure why until I learned from Adam that if I got certified I could check out weapons from a ship’s armory during boarding actions. If I got a sidearm certification, I could carry it on planets in the Union while I was in uniform as well. Both these reasons seemed good enough for me to follow through.

So, I started with the basic rifle and officers sidearm training. On station I could just follow the VR training programs but for now I could use the real thing. The marine group was down to earth and a fun group. They were all drafted and did their 20 required years and then redrafted for an additional 10 years, fortunately their 10 additional years were just as sergeants training the next generation. It was a good gig for them. I also heard a lot of war stories at night. They had fought rebels, pirates, aliens and the Sapphire Empire. The aliens were silicon based and as with all such life forms high frequency weapons stunned or killed them. The rebels were people trying to break away from the Union. That was always hard as the Union took a hard line. Pirates happened when some idiot got themselves a few spaceships. The Sapphire Empire, well we had been having border skirmishes with them for the last 200 years. Those were usually the costliest though in terms of ships and men.

The planet side trip was just five days, but the fresh air and camaraderie was great. We also were celebrating one of the planet-based sergeants retirement party. 33 years of service. Oh yes, they didn’t tell you your time in the academy didn’t count toward your twenty year enlistment. Fuck them!

Well, I didn’t get ahead on my coursework this break but I did get a valuable mental reset. It had probably been the happiest I had been in my life to date.

The 3rd term passed in a blur as you could say I was almost happy. I got through my classes early in the semester again and got two sensor certifications completed and two propulsion certs done as well, the easiest two.

I had just needed a change in my studies so I diversified into the propulsion courses. As the end of the term was approaching I looked at my debt, 22,003 credits. I had made some extra credits by advertising my skills to citizens on the station and doing some non-corporate maintenance jobs Camila got me. I had also saved just over a thousand credits. My body was also well muscled, and I was the envy of the male engineers and the object of desire of the female engineers. I kept my distance though as I didn’t want a repeat of the Asher incident.

My meeting with my advisor never happened. She was on a ship that was damaged in sub space and would take a few weeks to get back. That meant I was free to select my own courses. My time with the marines made me interested in combat armor. There were three certifications for maintenance and repair of combat armor. The standard set, the heavy set and the stealth set. There was a fair amount of overlap with the robotics certs so I figured I could complete all three over the term. My second class was progress with my next sensor certifications and my third class was focused on propulsion.

This term only Abby was on station so she was my training partner. Abby was a heavy infantry marine so she could check out heavy combat armor to train in. It would also give me the opportunity to work on the armor in prep for my certification. The armor was fitted so I wouldn’t have the opportunity to try it.

Well Abby was 39 and it wasn’t like she was ugly, more of an Amazon. After two days of sparring together on the mats we started sparring in private. It wasn’t love, just sex and she taught me what women liked in the bedroom. It was also a great stress relief for me. I didn’t realize how sexually frustrated I had been. The brief relationship with Abby was the best sixteen days I had so far on the station. That was when she ended it, 16 nights and two half days of education in the bedroom, shower and two mechanical closets. Abby didn’t want to form an emotional attachment to me and felt that was starting to happen, so we stopped.

I was a little depressed during the eight break. I didn’t get much done and moped around in the darker corners of the stations to avoid people. I ended up watching some vid series with a tragic hero, imagining myself in their fate. It took the entire break to come out of my funk…and a rather direct yelling at by Abby.

When the fourth term started I was fully engaged in my engineering classes and earning credits. I cut my conditioning in the morning down to 90 minutes and my evening sparring to just 90 minutes. My marine friends understood my change. We still did one emergency drill but also one combat drill in the VR, usually with ranged weapons. I wasn’t sure why Abby, Adam and Buckie wanted me competent with weapons. Well, all I needed to do was ask and they explained how many ship crew had died on their tours. They were giving me a fighting chance if I encountered a boarding action. Well at least the combat scenarios were kind of fun.

The term passed and I ran into Nila in the hallway once. She just said she forgave me for cancelling on her. I felt good about the interaction. Maybe after we graduated I could see her. One thing I found was after having sex with Abby I wanted more. Abby and Adam were a sort of couple, so it wasn’t going to happen again with her. Adam had also teased me about my tryst with Abby when we sparred so I couldn’t gauge their relationship accurately and never asked.

Eventually I found a young woman in her 14th term as a sensor engineer. I was repairing a bot in the station and she had initiated a conversation. It wasn’t the first time a woman had started a drawn-out conversation with me but the first time I interacted back. She was pretty plain looking from the neck up but had an athletic build. Her name was Hailey and there was a tiny bit of romance in the relationship. The relationship was definitely focused on physical intimacy though. I usually paid for a hotel room and dinner twice a week for us.

When the term ended and I earned my three certs in combat armor and got the Grade 1 for combat armor repair and diagnostics. I also got three certs in propulsion and two certs in sensors. A very productive term.