

Personal Journal of Orville DeNoah, Entry 103

Sombrisian Year 70, Day 25

Salutations Journal,

I am grateful to be back in my room again as my second day here on Sombris hasn't been as positive of an experience as I had expected it to be. Allow me to explain before my roommate gets back and interrupts my writing (His name is Toledo by the way for some reason).

We collectively got up early in the morning for a briefing session about what we would each be doing individually. I hadn't gotten nearly as much sleep as I hoped as I neglected to remember how much shorter the day night cycle is for Sombris compared to Sirca. The Sombrisian day is only 12 hours long. To help keep us newbies awake the room we met in had these awful, outdated ceiling lights with this high-pitched buzzing noise and bright light.

I tried to let them know that I knew Dr. ██████████ in hopes that they would let me catch up with him, but they told me that he didn't have time for me. They ended up having me work under a Dr. Render today, he's this huge adustus (I think) who wears a red suit which isn't flattering at. He wouldn't ever take off his psycho looking respirator mask even inside and I could hardly understand half of what he told me. Apparently, he's researching something out on the open surface of the planet, and I was to accompany him today to collect samples.

So anyway, I suited back up in my orange suit and he took me outside. I had walked on the surface yesterday, but it was still cool to be looking around on the surface of a round world.

“Gbf onf robver” Render told me, and oddly enough when I responded “Sure thing” my voice came out clear even though I was now wearing the same mask as him. I got on the rover, and I swear I could smell him somehow. I looked around before he started driving. The wind sounds sort of like the sea of vossler here, although obviously there are no bodies of water that big anywhere near here.

We drove for about an hour over mostly featureless hills. I tried to talk with him about our task but nothing he said made sense... it was kind of hot in a weird way. He'd make this grunting noise everything we went over a bump and at one point we got stuck in this soggy depression which I guess was one of the microbial mats that makes up what little of an ecosystem this planet has.

I pleaded him to let me feel the mat. He needed to manually push the rover out of the mat anyway, so he nodded yes after a bit of stern sighing. I stared at him as I took off my glove. He didn't react in a horrified manner so it must have been a safe thing to do. This mat was a vibrant hot pink color and it felt like jelly on my claws. It was a little sticky, so I went over to some nearby sand to brush it off before putting my glove back on.

After that we eventually made it to the site. As we descended into another crater, this was where I started feeling uncomfortable again. The ground started getting dark and strangely warm. At the bottom of the crater, which was shrouded in shadow and about 100 feet deep, there was a set of six holes forming a ring around the center. Each was no more than a foot across, and they all exuded a strange black plume.

Dr. Render drove over one of them and nearly suffocated me. At the center of the ring of holes, he got out and pulled a set of collection tubes from Omega knows where. He handed the tubes to me and uttered “Keeb to rebby” which I think actually meant “keep to ready” so I put down the other tubes gently and held two in my hands. He took this strange ugly brush out of his pocket and walked up to one of the plumes.

He spent two minutes or so the first time with his mask totally engulfed by the plume before coming back and swabbing the insides of the tubes in my hands with plume dust. He had me get two more tubes so he could repeat the process but returning the second time I noticed him walking heavier and breathing as if he was out of breath. The third time, as soon as he gave me the samples... he passed out.

I screamed naturally, I thought he was poisoned or something. Was the mask not working? I rushed to compress his chest without even considering to even check if his breathing or heart rate stopped. His heart rate and breathing were still there but he was unconscious.

I decided I had to get him back to the station myself, but I’m weak, so I tried using his tail as leverage... and halfway to the rover I heard a disgusting snap. I tore his tail off! That’s when it got worse.

A robotic trickle could be heard. Another rover appeared at the lip of the crater. “Dr. Render! You got the wrong filters!” A voice yelled. It was someone from the research station who had followed us somehow. They paused as soon as they saw me standing there after dismembering an unconscious coworker. I proceeded to faint.

I woke up in a med bay back at the station, I was no longer in my suit, and neither was Dr. Render who I saw next to me. I could see he had charcoal fur too. He was much cuter without his gear. His tail was back too, they had reattached it. He was giving me an evil eye though.

Then, Dr. ██████████ walked in. I recognized him instantly and he could recognize me as well, but he wasn't happy to see me. I had made a terrible impression on him. He told me that if I ever maimed one of his workers again, I'd be fired for sure and that we were no longer friends. Also, he made it clear that *Dentavermicide* was all him and that I was a parasite. "I can't even remember why I decided to bring you here" he said.

Toledo is coming back to the room, so I better end the journal here. I hope I made it clear how destroyed and ruined my mental state of being is now. If not, then I must suck at journaling. Goodnight.