

S.P.E.C.T.O.R 652

Chapter 652: Astarte's one hundred percent success rate

"Everything ok?" Aphrodite asked as she saw the three walk into the mess hall to find them all sitting together except for Emma, who sat apart from the rest as she appeared to be on a holocall.

"Fine, Lorelie's still tired, so we're letting her rest some more," Adam replied before asking, "Is Emma talking with Erkath?"

"No, Koki," Aphrodite replied before adding, "I think they're discussing how they can acquire Alpha Entertainment now that Leiko has been arrested."

"Speaking of business, you should probably check up on Susan and see what's happening with regard to the VR porn," Adam suggested to Stacey.

"I spoke to her a few days ago," Stacey replied before adding, "Apparently, she and Jessie are en route to what was Royal Entertainments' headquarters on Terrana Seven so that they can resume production."

"Hmm, it might be an idea to bring Astarte in on this venture," Aphrodite suggested.

"Why would we do that?" Stacey asked with a frown before adding, "We're already concerned about her wanting to meet Adam personally; do we really want to give her even more reasons to meet with him?"

"Are you that worried she might do something to me?" Adam asked in confusion.

"The only one who comes away happy from a business meeting with the Avaricious is the Avaricious herself," Rowena remarked.

"That's because she uses the information she has on them to get the best deal possible," Aphrodite replied before adding, "But she has little to no information on Adam; she said that herself."

“Can we really believe that?” Stacey asked with a frown.

“Oh, come on, how could she have possibly got information she can use to blackmail and bribe him?” Aphrodite asked.

“You say that, but she knows about Adams' ability to time-travel, remember,” Stacey retorted.

“And time-travel could be a very powerful tool in business, if used right,” Emma suddenly said as she walked over to join them after finishing the holocall she had been on before asking.

“How's Lorelie?”

“She's fine, she's sleeping right now,” Rowena replied.

“The medical tech you all have is incredible, I was shocked when I saw that you don't even have a scar,” Emma said in amazement before adding, “If I could market that on Earth, I could make a fortune, not to mention revolutionise the medical industry.”

“Are you really bothered about doing that now that you have basically left Earth, or do you plan to return there someday?” Stacey asked.

“I don't plan to live there again, if that's what you mean,” Emma replied before continuing. “But I do still have businesses back there, so I will need to return there every now and then, just like I told you back on earth.”

“Well, that shouldn't be a problem if we don't time-travel to get there, or if we can find a way to protect ourselves from temporal displacement syndrome,” Adam stated.

“Enhancing Earth's medical knowledge along with other areas might be something worth considering in the future,” Rowena stated.

“Perhaps, but we would need to consider carefully what advanced knowledge to give Earth,” Adam replied before adding, “For example, not anything they can turn into weapons.”

“That's not really plausible,” Aphrodite replied before explaining. “Advanced medical knowledge, for example, they could learn how to create advanced biochemical weapons from that.”

“Well, it's not something we need to consider at this moment,” Rowena stated before looking at Aphrodite and saying, “I know she's your friend, but we can't let anyone get their hands on time-travel tech, who knows what they would do with it.”

“Whoa, whoa,” Aphrodite said while raising her hands before she said, “No one said anything about time-travel tech. I was talking about teaming up with her for the VR porn.”

Think about it, Astarte has countless actors and actresses available through Universal Pleasure that we can use; also, we can pitch the idea of setting up a new attraction around the VR porn where customers can experience it and even act in it themselves.”

“That could work,” Rowena said after thinking about it for a moment before she continued. “Astarte is the right hand of the mysterious King of Universal Pleasure. If we can get her on board, then there is a good opportunity that the king will agree and we can use Universal Pleasure as a distribution network, universe-wide.”

“Right,” Aphrodite said proudly.

“So I've been meaning to ask you something regarding Astarte,” Adam said to Aphrodite.

“What would that be?” Aphrodite asked with a smile.

“The others told me that Astarte, as the Avericious, is the opposite of Andromeda the Oracle. However, I don't understand how Astarte could be born as the Avericious, while Andromeda only became the Oracle after the previous oracle lost her powers.”

“No idea,” Aphrodite replied while shrugging.

"Excuse me?" Adam replied.

"I have no idea why the Avericious is born while the Oracle is chosen, and I'm not sure anyone else does," Aphrodite replied before adding, "If anyone were to know, it would be Astarte or Andromeda themselves."

Aphrodite rolled her eyes as she saw Adam frowning after hearing her response before she added, "Look, I may be on friendly terms with Astarte, but that doesn't mean she tells me everything. Knowledge and information are the business that Astarte deals in and she never gives away valuable information unless it's beneficial to her."

Adam sighed before asking, "Then what advice can you give me for when I meet with her in the future?"

"Be honest and don't lie," Aphrodite replied.

"Pardon?" Adam asked in surprise.

"You want him to enter a business negotiation and not lie?" Emma asked with a frown before adding, "While I agree that outright lying in business negotiations is unethical and in some cases illegal, deception, such as omitting information or misrepresenting facts to gain the advantage, is a common practice."

"Agreed," Aphrodite replied before asking with a smirk, "But have you ever negotiated with someone who knows if you're telling the truth or not?"

"You're telling me that this Astarte can tell if someone is lying to her?" Emma asked in disbelief.

"So the rumours are true?" Rowena asked with interest.

"What rumours?" Tephe asked curiously.

“One of the reasons Astarte is known as the greatest information broker is that all information she sells is guaranteed to be one hundred percent accurate and without any falsehood,” Rowena replied.

“How is something like that possible?” Emma asked in shock before adding, “No information broker can guarantee with one hundred percent accuracy, and those who do are obvious swindlers.”

“Then how do we explain Astarte’s one hundred percent success rate in information dealings?” Rowena asked.

“It has never been confirmed, nor has Astarte ever admitted it, but it is believed that the Avericious has the ability to see through lies, just as the Oracle has the ability to peer through time and space,” Aphrodite stated.

“That’s so cool,” Tephe remarked.

“That’s broken as fuck,” Emma cursed.

“Yes and yes,” Aphrodite replied while chuckling before adding, “It’s another reason why people don’t like dealing with Astarte unless they absolutely have to.”

“Why would they when they know all they can do is be honest with her,” Adam said with a sigh.

“Exactly,” Aphrodite replied.

“So you’re saying I have to go in there and be completely honest with her?” Adam asked.

“Not completely honest,” Aphrodite replied before explaining, “If she asks you a question you don’t want to answer honestly, just stay silent or refuse to answer.”

“I’ll keep that in mind,” Adam said with a sigh before looking at Emma and asking, “How did your call with Koki go?”

“Not good,” Emma said with a sigh before adding. “It’s going to be almost impossible for us to acquire Alpha Entertainment.”

“Why?” Adam asked.

“First is our lack of funds,” Emma began to explain. “Even though Spector Entertainment has two diva-level celebrities signed to it, it currently has little to no money coming in.

Koki is still going over all the data she received from Spector, but her analysis so far is, and I quote, like a dragon went for a shit and forgot to clean up after itself.”

“Hey!” Tephe complained.

“Her words, not mine,” Emma said defensively to Tephe before continuing. “Needless to say, what you purchased amounts to a giant pile of shit that needs cleaning up.

Honestly, I seriously doubt the former owner even put any real effort into operating it as a successful business.”

“It was rumoured he only started the company so that he could sleep with the celebrities they signed,” Aphrodite stated.

“Can’t say I’m surprised,” Emma remarked before adding, “Even if the idiot hadn’t been killed, the company would have collapsed within six to nine months at most.”

“So the company is broke!” Adam asked as he rubbed his forehead.

“Afraid so, but even if it wasn’t, we wouldn’t be able to outbid the other companies aiming to acquire Alpha Entertainment,” Emma remarked.

“Other companies?” Adam asked, to which Rowena answered this time.

“Alpha Entertainment isn’t like Royal Entertainment. It’s not on the verge of collapse and is a mid-tier entertainment company that our rival companies will see benefit in acquiring.”