

Physical Contact Testing, Trial One

By C. Jade Wyton

Nyin is an ektvah staying in Weltaron, Earth, to research the local's customs and the affects that certain Terran behaviour may have on their own people's bodies. Scandalously erotic things such as hand-holding is considered completely platonic, here, and Nyin is determined to see exactly what benefits arise from this strange behaviour that has long-since been abandoned by her people.

Contains non-explicit mentions of sex.

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'Okay, okay! Sit right there!'

'Right here?'

'Right there! Perfect! You're centre-camera!'

It was a dull little setup in a dull little room. Undecorated cold stone brick walls combined with an unrugged wood-panel floor to create a very, *very* hostile environment— Exactly what Nyin was used to growing up on Space Station 35.

If it had been left up to her she would have had no blanket and simply toughed out the chill mountain nights. But the littlest of the children were determined to make sure their guest had bedding; so she had accepted everything she was given, excitedly documenting this show of Earthen etiquette— Sorry! Terran! Terrans. They had agreed to be called *Terrans*.

The blankets she had been given lay spread over the bed that Darj now sat on; an uncomfortable expression coming over him at the texture of the fabric.

'Is all Earth furniture this soft?' he asked, his beak-like snout wrinkling in dislike. 'No wonder they get so many joint issues!'

'I'm getting used to it,' Nyin admitted. She then leant in towards Darj as if telling him a secret. 'It's actually been easier to sleep since coming here. If I ever return I think the hard beds might be difficult to adjust to again!'

'That's... hm,' Darj gave a shrug, and Nyin was reminded that he had a much smaller interest in Earth culture than she did.

Which only made her all the more grateful that he was taking part in this experiment. And she made sure to blink her second lids at him twice to show it.

He smiled, then, and gave a nervous breath. 'Ready.'

Nyin gave a nod, and leant over to hit record on the camera.

'This is Physical Contact Testing, Trial One,' Nyin said to the lens.

'Researcher: Nyin B, identifier 10744328. Voluntary subject: Darj H, identifier 10741647,' she turned back to Darj and, for a moment, stood awkwardly looking at him. Then she cleared her throat and held out her hand. 'Experiment One: Handshakes. Darj, would you please take my hand within your own?'

'On camera?' Darj blushed. 'Nyin, I've held your hand before, but I'm not a *porn star*!'

'No! No, it's a Terran greeting,' Nyin explained. 'Completely safe for work, for

them! Bare palm on bare palm, to show we have no hidden weapons and are meeting with good intentions.'

'Nyin!' Darj's blush grew. 'Bare palm?! We've never touched *bare palm*, before!'

'Oh, uh... well, if you're uncomfortable we can stop the study,' Nyin suggested, pulling her hand back. 'But it's not actually that uncomfortable! I've been shaking hands with several people in Weltaron, already! And it's completely platonic.'

For a moment Darj looked hurt... but then his gaze softened. 'So a hand touch is... platonic here?'

'Yes, *most* touch is platonic here.'

'That's... weird,' Darj didn't seem convinced. Though, still, slowly and awkwardly, he reached out and let Nyin take his hand.

He visibly shivered as their skin made contact, though he squeezed her fingers back as she squeezed his.

'Some people do a two handed shake,' Nyin said, softly; clearly drawing from Darj's energy and growing just that littlest bit embarrassed, herself. 'If I may demonstrate?'

'Uh... sure,' Darj swallowed, his purple cheeks growing darker as his ears twitched. 'I consent.'

And Nyin moved her other hand into the shake, firmly clasping Darj's hand between two of her own and giving it a pat that made his breath hitch.

'Sorry—' Nyin released him, and quickly reached for her pad to write on. She pulled the magnetic pen from its side and began to scribble into her notes program. 'The pat is a sign of affection. It's platonic, and may be used between, say, a father who's proud of his son?'

'Right,' Darj acknowledged, rubbing his fingers together. 'Right....'

'How... did it make you feel?' Nyin asked. 'Did it make you feel welcomed? Respected? Like I'd acknowledged some sort of great effort you've made?'

'Tingly,' Darj answered.

'Tingly?' Nyin repeated, pausing her scribbles. 'How-so?'

He looked down to his hand again, flexing his fingers curiously. 'Almost like you're still touching it, even though you're not.'

'Ooh... fascinating!' Nyin's ears flicked up and she leant over to examine his hand. She gently took his pointer finger between two of his own to manoeuvre him around, and after a good look she went back to her note-taking.

Darj just stared at his hand until she put her pad back down and addressed him again.

'Alright. Experiment Two: Kissing.'

'*What*-ing?' Darj's brow furrowed. 'What's a *kiss*?'

'Mouth contact,' Nyin explained. 'There are several kinds, both platonic and non-platonic. The one I want to try is used to show affection from parent to child. At least from what I understand of it— I've seen Pauline do it to the children.'

'R.... Right,' Darj looked uneasy at the thought of *mouth contact*. 'That sounds... unhygienic.'

'It is! But the healers say it contributes to immune system growth,' Nyin explained. 'They transfer microorganisms between each other. *Without* needles and medication!'

‘Without medication?’ Darj scoffed a short laugh like he didn’t believe it. ‘Be serious, Nyin.’

‘I am serious!’ Nyin shot back. ‘Terran parents transfer beneficial microorganisms to their young via mouth-to-cheek contact!’

‘That sounds fake, Nyin,’ Darj gave a shrug. ‘But... alright. I guess.... Go ahead.’

‘It’s not fake,’ Nyin defended, motioning for Darj to turn his head slightly aside for her so she could reach his cheek. She laid a kiss on it, just like she had seen the childcare workers do to the children; a short, two-second action. Then she pulled away and picked up her pad and pen again. ‘Okay. How do you feel?’ she asked.

‘Fluttery,’ he answered with a breathless laugh, motioning to his chest as he did. ‘In here.’

‘In your chest?’

‘I’m not having a heart attack, am I?’

‘Uh— Let me check!’ she pulled her emergency med pack close and retrieved a squat little device with a stethoscope-like attachment from it. She placed it onto his chest and waited a minute as it beeped, then checked its screen and let out a relieved breath. ‘Increased heart-rate, but nothing concerning,’ she commented. Then, she grinned. ‘Elevated levels of dopamine.’

‘Dopamine!’ Darj echoed with a laugh; clearly embarrassed. ‘That’s weird.’

‘And— Wow, your oxytocin levels are *really* high!’ Nyin commented. ‘But nothing dangerous.’

‘Is that... from the touching...?’ Darj asked.

Nyin nodded. ‘I believe so! It’s congruent with the rest of my studies so far!’

‘Right, that’s.... Huh—’ Darj’s eyes trailed down from Nyin’s lips to his own lap, where he noticed something... different. ‘Uh....’

‘Oh!’ Nyin gave a little exclamation, and leant down to examine Darj’s crotch. ‘Look at that!’

‘Hasn’t done that in a while.’

Nyin sat up straight again, scribbling on her pad furiously; the electronic pen clacked against the glass until she paused. ‘How long has it been?’

‘A few years,’ Darj said, simply. ‘Hasn’t happened since I finished developing and my hormones stabilised.’

‘Ooh yeah, yeah!’ Nyin wrote it down. ‘That makes sense.’

And Darj paused, saying nothing for a short while before.... ‘Now what?’

‘Hm?’ Nyin looked up from her notes.

‘What do I do about it?’ he repeated. ‘It’s kind of just... like that now.’

‘Oh! Well...’ quickly, Nyin pulled up some of her older notes and flicked through them. ‘Okay! There’s a few things you can do! Depending on who in Weltaron you ask.’

‘Right...?’

‘First, you can leave it alone and it will go down on its own. I’ve been told this is the easiest, but most boring option.’

Darj cocked his head. ‘Boring? It just sounds *normal* to leave it?’

‘Right?! Hm... or you can continue to stimulate it until you reach over-stimulation and... “release.”’

‘Release?’ Darj echoed, his snout crinkling in disgust.

‘It’s an old reproductive method, from what I can tell! Our ancestors used to do it. You know, before we got the cloning and gene-splicing technology,’ Nyin explained. ‘According to the healers, it involves a lot of touching, and...’ she squinted at the photo of the diagram she had taken from Ashdown’s office. ‘Penetration.’

‘Penetration?!’ Darj gawked. ‘What do you mean *penetration*?! What’s penetrating what?!’

‘Uhhhh—’ Nyin flicked through the notes. ‘Male genitals, penetrating... female genitals.’

‘That sounds absolutely *barbaric*!’ Darj scoffed, his scales now almost a completely different hue as his blood ran hot and sheepish through him. ‘Scrape me for a skin sample any day!’

‘So I take it you wouldn’t be willing to try it?’

‘I’m not going to *stab* you, Nyin?!’

‘Oh, no, no— It’s not traumatic insemination!’ Nyin corrected. ‘Have you seen the tapes of Eulogy— Uhh... the Disagreement Beast? And his partner?’

Darj shook his head. ‘I don’t have the *stomach* for it. They... touch! For like an hour without stopping?! I’ve heard it’s intense!’

‘It is!’ Nyin confirmed, scrolling down through her notes. ‘They overstimulate each other an *incredible* amount! But, when they’ve let me take blood samples, it seems like it’s improved their overall physical health!’ she turned the pad to motion to a diagram of numbers and letters. ‘Their hormones stabilise, and their serotonin production increases higher than we’ve ever achieved with any sort of medication!’

‘So what you’re saying is...?’

‘One hour of intense physical contact appears to have the same positive effect on the body as an entire week of medication and the most exciting entertainment channels combined. If not *more* effective,’ said Nyin. ‘And it doesn’t have to be reproductive contact! You’ve heard of “hugging”?’

Looking faint, Darj nodded.

‘From my research, it appears that ten minutes of embracing with skin-to-skin contact can improve hormone levels and mood for an entire day!’

Darj had to avert his eyes he was so surprised by the idea. It was such an indecent suggestion!

‘Which...’ Nyin laid down her pad. ‘A hug was going to be experiment three. Just for ten seconds.’

‘Ten *entire* seconds of contact?!’ Darj blurted. ‘Nyin!’

‘I know— I know!’ Nyin held up her hands submissively. ‘You don’t have to! We can end the experiment there, if you need to. Do you need to?’

The answer wasn’t immediate. Darj took a moment, looking awkward as he clicked his tongue with nerves.

Nyin sighed, leaning over to turn off the camera... though before she could she felt Darj’s arms awkwardly placed around her, and turned to embrace him back.

‘Like... this?’ he asked.

‘Yeah, this is how I’ve seen them do it,’ Nyin confirmed. ‘Just ten seconds.... Nine.... Eight.... Seven....’

Darj gave a stiff sigh as Nyin counted down. And when she was done she made to pull away... but Darj's grip on her tightened as she shifted back and she paused, letting him hold her several seconds longer before she felt him release her.

'How... do you feel?' she asked. She fumbled for her pad, not breaking eye contact as she searched the bed for it with a hand and pulled it close. 'Any changes?'

He stared at her, quietly, for a minute before regaining his senses and clearing his throat. 'Uh— Yeah. Yes, I feel.... Positive. Like I've just come out of the UV room.'

Nyin scribbled it down. Then she felt Darj shift closer, and blushed.

'You said... ten minutes of skin-to-skin contact can... boost mood...?' he asked. 'And that was just... ten seconds...?'

Cautiously, Nyin nodded.

And slowly, Darj undid the clasp on his cloak; removing his arms from the sleeves and placing it aside.

Nudity in of itself, of course, meant very little to an ektvah.... But the implication that he was preparing for prolonged bare-skinned contact would have been enough to make even the raunchiest of their kind baulk in surprise.

So it wasn't a surprise when Nyin gasped, her eyes widening.... Though it was a surprise when she hurriedly made to remove her own cloak.

The pair sat together in their leotards, staring at their now-exposed arms and legs.

Then, carefully... Nyin reached over and took Darj's arm in her own; her palm resting against his elbow and her elbow in his own palm.

He shivered at the touch, his ears quivering.

'Is this too much?' she asked.

Darj shook his head.

With her free hand, Nyin pulled over her pad and made several quick notes.... Though she was soon distracted as she felt Darj leaning closer. His approach was slow and cautious, taking over a full minute before he was back in Nyin's embrace.

She held him close, her entire body tingling as his arms slipped around her again. The unfamiliar sensation made her skin twitch, and though she wanted to note it down, she couldn't bring herself to release Darj to retrieve her pad.

He pushed tighter against her, desperate for this contact he had never had before, until he was using all of his strength to squeeze her tight and she found herself lying on her back with Darj's face buried in her shoulder.

Every nerve in her body was firing off in joy, and she had to fight the urge to retrieve her medical supplies and check her own dopamine levels. She knew they must have been higher than they had *ever* been before! But instead of releasing Darj and rolling over, she wrapped herself tighter around him; lifting her legs around him as well as her arms so she could be as close to him as possible.

He did nothing to hold himself up and all of his weight lay on top of her as he embraced her. It was new and wonderful, and neither wanted to be the first to let go.

It was the most intense rush they had ever felt before. And so easily found!

Not through danger or magic or medication— But through something as simple as holding each other....

Ten minutes passed them by quickly. As did an hour. As did the next three.

Still they held, long into the night, until their breathing evened out and their grips loosened and their minds grew weary and dull.

Nyin pressed her cheek into Darj's as he drifted off, and she dared to give him another little kiss before her eyes drooped closed and she joined him in rest.

—END—

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