

NUKE PUNK



Chapter 1- The Freckled Planet

Maybe if I get my first shower early I'll get a private one. It wasn't that being naked in a gang shower was embarrassing (well a little); it was that this poorly lit, dull white tiled shower looked like a slippery, German torture chamber for a puny, skinny guy like me. Better make it quick.

Believing that the coast was clear I walked in...but...suddenly I felt a chilling presence. Out of the corner of my left eye I discovered a new planet, the Red Speckled Planet. What a sight! The biggest naked guy I ever saw was just heading into the shower. It was Saganowski, the three hundred pound plus heavy weight wrestler from Michigan. Huge freckles popped from his humongous head through his boot camp style, short red hair. The whole company changed after our speedy buzz cuts. Scars, weird bumps, sheared off moles, and cowlicks showed through. With all the long hair gone, many looked like they fell on their heads one too many times.

Saganowski's huge round white body was also covered in a galaxy of freckles. I think he even had his own gravitational field. He made a couple baritone grunts, grabbed his soap and towel, then orbited into a dark corner of the vast shower room. I stripped down, grabbed my stuff, and took the furthest shower from Saganowski. As I turned the faucet I felt a sharp pain on my left thigh. Twisting around I saw a shit-eating grin on Saganowski's face and his towel held out like a prize.

"There's more where that came from skivvy man, I mean skivvy boy." That hurt. 'Skivvy man' was my new company pet name ever since *the* jockey shorts incident.

Unfortunately for Saganowski, he picked on the wrong puny nerd. Intense distain described my feelings toward bullies. Although I was the smallest guy in high school I was always taunting the bullies and the jocks. They bullied me so I sought vengeance anyway I could. Seemed fair.

The non-jock bullies were easy to piss off because their intelligence was inversely proportional to their size. I didn't have to dig too deep for my wiseass comments to crush them in front of their peers. The jock bullies were a little tougher because I had to beat them at a physical challenge to piss them off. But the jocks got even when I was forced to play their sports. I was their tackle dummy in football and their charging dummy in soccer. I was a vegan out on the field, I ate so much grass. Since I never stopped annoying them, they never stopped abusing me, and I never stopped retaliating. It was an endless cycle, but I didn't care. Is there a psychological term for an obsessed bully basher?

My future health and welfare in boot camp would be determined in the next five seconds. I stayed quiet. Surprise was my weapon.

In many previous shower battles against bullies I had learned to quickly roll my towel into a flexible blade. Its intensity and accuracy was a quick deterrent and saved me much naked, shower pain. I flashed it through the shower spray for maximum impact. The sting of his towel stoked my temper but I maintained my concentration long enough to flick my towel, a laser route to his freckled balls.

A horrifying and satisfying snap was followed by an exhilarating scream. Then blood started running down Saganowski's right thigh. His left nut sack blew; my most accurate shot ever.

Vengeance was mine but I quickly realized that my counterattack just pissed him off. He was now the Angry Red Speckled Planet. I secretly think he was pissed off because I was able to hit such a small target. Regardless, friendly negotiations were off the table.

"YOU'RE FUCKIN' DEAD," he screamed, saliva spraying out with each word.

With Vietnam raging, I joined the Navy thinking it was the safest choice. Now I may not make it through my second day of boot camp. I looked at my limp towel thinking, he's right. What would they tell my mom was the cause of death? Friendly fire.

With no plan B, I panicked and ran. In the wrong direction. I ended up trapped in the head (bathroom for you landlubbers). No place to hide. Just long rows of white porcelain sinks on the left and toilets on the right. With no windows and no doors for the toilets I was a dead man. He didn't need to run after me. I was cornered. Naked and terrified, I jumped up on the last sink, backed into the cold tiled corner, and covered my privates with my hands. I was shivering with fear waiting to die, but at least my balls were safe. I figured if I survived, my sperm might come in handy someday.

This was all because of that damned draft letter. "Drafted" happened to other guys, not me. Before I even opened the letter I thought, time to go to Viet Nam and die! Yeah, I was scared shitless. The letter set a date of July 21, 1965 to report for duty. That feeling of independence in my senior year was just starting to take hold when the letter stomped it lifeless. Only half my summer was left to enjoy before my personal D day. Today was July 22nd and I was already doomed, dead, deceased, demised. Choose a "D", any "D."

Peering over my glasses I watched him walk in with one evil purpose.

"You better pray 'cause you're a dead man." He was right. Shit!

He was a *Flaming* Angry Red Speckled Planet now, red, and purple with rage, blood dripping down his thigh, slowly trickling to his ankle.

"YOU'RE FUCKIN' DEAD," he bellowed. For a guy with such a big head, his vocabulary was quite limited and everyone in the barracks had to hear his screams.

He was a mere ten feet away and I was shivering with fear, when a few guys from the company came in to check out the commotion. Saganowski ignored them, still screaming and walking toward me; blown out nut and all.

At five feet away I was so white I probably blended in with the tiles and I think I stopped breathing and blinking. Bladder and bowel control became key issues. In slow motion I saw guys uselessly grabbing at him.

"GET OUT OF MY FUCKIN' WAY. HE'S DEAD." I was praying to all the gods now and may have lost bladder control.

He fought off my defenders, tossing them like rag dolls, left and right, while keeping his gaze on me. More guys joined in and grabbed him, finally taking him down to his back. It took at least two guys on each limb to hold him.

“Get the fuck outta here!” someone shouted. I ran out and dressed without a shower. I can still see that bloody crotched, freckled, fucker squirming on the floor in my mind.

Joe Gribcheck, a friend from Ohio drafted with me, stopped me as I rushed from the shower. He was a typical short Italian greaser until our haircuts where he went from handsome gigolo to bald troll. Since his father was kicking him out of the house, he had no plans for college and seemed content in boot camp, unlike me.

“What the fuck happened in there?” Joe asked with at least ten other guys huddled near him.

“Saganowski snapped me with a towel,” I said. I tried to act relaxed even though I was still pale with fear.

“And you survived? You look a little pale.” Bodine said. He was one those oversized, boasting Texans that annoyed the shit out of me. Everyone around him had curious faces.

“I’m O.K. and I’m out here while he’s sprawled on the deck bleeding,” I said starting to breathe again.

“What’d you do to him?” Bodine asked.

“Snapped him in the balls,” I said proudly, holding my towel, bloody tip exposed.

“Why’d you do that?” Now everyone was gawking.

It was at that precise moment that my survival plan came together. I realized that it would be completely crazy for a puny naked guy to pick a fight with a three-hundred pound heavy weight wrestler in an area where escape was impossible. I looked at all the guys while trying to appear a little crazy and simply said “Cause he fucked with me.”

“Schlueter, you’re a crazy little fuck,” Bodine said.

I kept the crazy eye look going as I walked away in silence. I was safe.

For now.