

In this chapter, the protagonist, who is identified as Seven, faces the daunting prospect of using the cyclor, an unsettling device that disassembles organic matter. Seven is apprehensive about being shoved face-first into the hole, which he feels is significantly worse than facing danger in the past. His companion, Eight, expresses concern and actively prevents him from making a hasty decision. Despite this, the fear of their situation—being multiple identities with limited resources—looms large. They contemplate their predicament, emphasizing their single registered identity and the risk of exposure threatening both of their lives.

As tensions rise, they discuss their meager rations, hoping to stretch their food supply. Eight suggests creatively managing their food by consuming cheaper paste, though Seven is unwilling to settle for such a drastic measure. They also consider Berto, a mutual acquaintance, as a potential ally for more resources but quickly realize he may not be trustworthy. Both friends recognize their lack of options and the possibility of facing severe consequences from Commander Marshall for their unconventional existence as multiples.

The conversation reveals insights into their relationships with others in the colony, with additional mention of the gravity of their situation laid bare when news comes of a missing colonist, Gabe Torricelli. Seven recalls seeing Gabe prior and considers whether the creatures they encountered are now a threat to their safety. This stark reality heightens the urgency of their need for a solid plan to survive—not just the impending hardships, but the scrutiny of the Commander, who is likely to be enraged that his colony is losing members.

As the chapter concludes, Seven is summoned to speak with Commander Marshall, indicating escalating tensions within their community. The interactions shed light on the characters' dynamics, fear, and resourcefulness amidst desperation and uncertainty in a harsh environment, exploring themes of trust, identity, and survival.