Becoming Super

S. Cinders

STORYPDF

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Chapter PROLOGUE - Sarah

PART ONE

Beep.

Beep.

Beep.

As if the pounding in my head wasn't bad enough, my roommate must have left her alarm clock on again. I tried to open my eyes, but they felt as if they weighed a thousand pounds. Shit, just how much did I have to drink last night?

Vague recollections of meeting my friends over at O'Shea's drifted through my mind. That new bartender, Tad, Toby, no Tim—maybe? Whoever he was, the man had been plying me with rum and coke all night. I knew that he just wanted in my pants, but I wanted the free booze so in the end, I figured we would both be happy.

I don't remember if Toby got his fondest wish, or maybe it had been Tad. Honestly, it didn't matter the only thing that mattered now was that fucking alarm that refused to stop going off.

Beep.

Beep.

Beep.

I opened my mouth to scream at Annie and choked on the tube that was running down my throat.

"Healer! One of the transports is awakening!"

What the actual fuck?

I pried my eyes open to see that I was hooked up to a bunch of strange looking machines. The beeping that I had so lovingly attributed to Annie was some type of heart monitor. A tall handsome man hurried into the room.

His eyes are the color of grass, and he was taller than any man I had ever seen before. His lips were moving but the language coming from his lips wasn't anything I had ever heard before.

An older man walked up to the massive one and gestured to the gadget that was hanging around his neck. The big man rolled his eyes but took one of his massive paws and adjusted the dial and spoke again.

"Human," it was one word, and yet in that one word, there was enough to tell me that we weren't in Kansas anymore.

And just to be clear, I am from Minnesota, not Kansas.

I yanked at the tube in my throat and immediately regretted it when I ripped it out and felt raw fire taking its place.

“Fucking hell,” I rasped.

The older man took a step back in surprise, but the handsome beast just scowled at me.

“Your language is not that of a lady.”

Seriously.

“Where in the fucking hell am I?” I squawked, desperately needing a drink or something to soothe my throat.

The older man stepped forward, “I am Von, one of the Elders and you are on the planet Zeron.”

I blinked at the older man before glancing at the big one.

“Is he for real?”

The handsome fucker smirked, “She thinks you are not corporeal, Von.”

I had a feeling that the big guy and I weren’t meant to be bosom buddies.

“Look, Thor, what is going on?”

It would have sounded more impressive if I wasn’t as weak as a three-day-old kitten. But my eyes were fierce, at least that’s what I told myself.

“Our Elder was trying to tell you, Human. Perhaps you should listen to him.”

I looked back at the older man and he was holding a glass of what I hoped to be water. He suddenly looked a whole lot less crazy. Tipping the cup to my lips I drank down the sweetest most refreshing water I had ever tasted. Of course, I choked by trying to take too much and ended up coughing like a maniac, but it had been worth it.

The large man was looking at me like I was something the cat dragged in—something dead.

“You are certain that this, Human, has the gene?”

I frowned, “What gene? My blood is O-positive, and my pointer finger is shorter than my middle one?”

The Elder’s snort sounded suspiciously like a laugh.

He-man glared at me, “Are you making jokes? You aren’t funny.”

I was damn funny, not that it was any of his business or that I had cracked any jokes. But I sure as shit was hilarious when I wanted to be.

"Just tell me what is going on," I gritted out.

Von stepped forward, "The things that I am about to discuss with you are highly sensitive, and of great importance to the Intergalactic Council."

I smirked, "Are you for real? Is Captain Kirk flying the ship or are you going to beam me up?"

"The human is clearly delusional, put it back. I will wait for another partner."

Another partner? "Are you talking about me? Because I am not the one that is talking crazy and acting like he has a giant stick up his ass. By all means, put me back! Whatever the hell that means!"

Von sighed, "We couldn't put you back if we wanted to. Sarah how are you feeling?"

For the first time, I realized that I had never given these men my name. Fear raced through my body outweighing the headache and stiffness.

"Where am I?" I repeated, but the badass that usually resided in me was hiding somewhere. And in her place was a scared young woman that was in deep, deep shit.

Von turned to the moose of a man and sighed, "She needs you."

He visibly flinched and it made me feel about as awesome as a piece of shit.

"I don't need him," I spat.

I wasn't sure what I needed, but it wasn't the handsome man that continued to glare at me. I needed to go home. I wanted to know where I was. But most of all, I was terrified that maybe, just maybe, they might be right.

The monitor attached to my heart rate began to escalate as the pounding in my head increased.

"The last thing we need is for you to waste this opportunity," Von sighed, "You need to imprint on the girl."

I didn't like the sound of that.

The Hulk stalked over to where I was lying on the bed and snatched my arm. The moment his fingers touched mine I felt a jolt of electricity race through my veins. My body sizzled with awareness as everything became sharper, richer.

Suddenly I could hear the woosh of their breathing combined with the faint hum of electricity that was hooked up to the machines. I could see every line of Von's weathered face. My mind automatically memorized every freckle and facial expression.

It was unlike any drug I had ever known. Whatever that man had done to me, threw me into another realm of existence. One I hadn't known existed, and yet felt comfortable with.

I yanked my arm out of his grasp and was surprised when I easily broke away.

Von was grinning and the beast stumbled back from me, blinking in surprise.

“What was that?”

It was Von who answered me, “You have imprinted with your partner, Axel, and activated the recessive gene that you weren’t aware you carried.”

“What gene?”

Von shrugged, “We call it Z13, but we have no idea what your super power will be. Only that you possess the ability to develop one.”

“It isn’t possible,” Axel rasped, “How can this tiny human fight by my side?”

I shrank back, “Fight? Nobody said anything about fighting. I am more of a pacifist, really.”

Von looked worried, “When two halves are apart they are unable to tap into their highest potential. Sarah, Axel is your other half. Now that you have imprinted you will be trained as a warrior for the Intergalactic Council.”

“Are you shitting me?” Something was caught in my throat, I think it might have been my heart.

Axel scoffed, “Nothing as weak as this Human could possibly be my other half.”

I turned hate-filled eyes on him, wanting to shut the idiot up for once. He had been on my ass since I had opened my eyes. I didn’t ask to come here, and I sure as hell didn’t ask to be paired up with Satan.

Axel jerked back. I lost my focus and smelled something foul in the air.

He moved his hand and at the base of his throat was an angry red mark, “You fucking burned me?”

His eyes were wild and accusatory as the smell of his burning flesh twisted my stomach.

Had I done that?

Von beamed, “It would seem, Sarah, that your superpowers are manifesting already!”

Chapter 1 - Sarah

“Again,” Axel barked out as he threw me against the mat.

I slammed into the surface and could swear all of my bones were breaking. Fucking asshole was going to kill me, and it looked like he was enjoying every minute of it.

“Get up, Human,” Axel smirked at me and I tried not to look at his rocking body that was on display. He had taken his shirt off a half an hour ago when we were sparring because I had finally caused the neanderthal to break a sweat.

And from that moment forward I had gotten my ass handed to me.

Don’t judge, you have no idea what it is like to have someone so sinfully delicious with those rippling muscles that look like they belong on a stripper named Hammer.

And his hammer, yeah you could see the massive outline underneath his close-fitting pants. It was indecent, and I was damn thankful for it.

Rising unsteadily to my feet I tried to get back into position. We had been training like this for two weeks and I had successfully risen from dismal failure to horrible liability.

Axel had been less than impressed with my skills and spent every waking moment berating them. To make matters worse, now that we were imprinted I was expected to live with the man. Sure, I could try breaking the rules, but the longer we were apart the more my body would start to break down and then here is the kicker.

Wait for it…

Yeah, I could fucking die without him. DIE, what kind of idiot would put themselves in a situation where you had to be linked to a jackass or death?

According to Von, Axel knew about this before I came to Zeron. What he didn’t mention was that nobody gave me a choice. One day I was drinking it up and hoping to get lucky with the lads and the next I was fighting Hercules.

Have I mentioned I am a pacifist?

“Come at me,” he motioned with his hands and I just stared at him.

He growled as if that would scare me into doing what he wanted. Stupid prick, I wasn’t about to run at him. I had the bruises and t-shirt to prove that was a suicide mission.

“Now, Human!”

“So, my name is Sarah,” I began to circle when he stepped toward me. Counteracting his every move so that we were in some kind of bizarre dance.

“Human! You will never learn unless you do as I say!”

I could see anger tinging his features and I felt a tiny fraction of glee in my gut.

“Yeah, Sarah Carmichael, how do you do? I sell dental supply products in Shakopee, Minnesota. And for some reason, you all have ripped me out of my world and expect me to follow every fucking rule that you give me.”

His eyes narrowed, “Cursing is beneath you.”

I rolled my eyes and in that second he had me pinned up by the neck against the wall. He was so freakishly fast. I kicked with my legs as I felt my airway collapse. Axel wouldn’t kill me, that would harm himself. But he wasn’t above a little torture.

Oh, and the kicker? Since we were imprinted partners, he could put up mind shield that deflected my powers. It was almost like he could channel mine and I should have been able to channel his.

But I was shit at channeling anything besides Food Network and maybe a little HGTV.

Finally, he released me and I fell to the ground gasping as black spots dotted my vision. On my knees, I tried to drag air into my lungs.

“Again,” he barked out.

My arms gave out and I slumped onto the mat face first.

Glamorous I was not at that moment. Okay, in most moments I wasn’t underwear model material. I come in more of a fun size package. Short, quirky, super blonde hair that was actually natural, and dark blue eyes almost black.

I was the girl next door meets the Adam’s Family. A warrior I was not, no matter how many times Axel kicked my ass, choked, slammed and pummeled me I wasn’t cut out for this.

I felt a toe nudge me.

Great, this was his version of sympathy.

“Human, this isn’t the time to rest.”

“Is it time to die, because that sounds great about now.”

Axel had never liked my sense of humor, not even from the start. He picked me up by the back of my body suit and I was hanging in the air like a dead animal.

“You are weak, Human.”

I wanted to say something really snarky back to him, but I was just too damn tired.

You know that moment when the hero picks up the damsel in distress wrapping his chiseled arms around her and holding her close?

Yeah, so Axel totally has the looks and chiseled everything down, but instead of cradling me close he carried me by the back of my suit until he got to our rooms and he could throw me on my bed.

We had to live together, wasn't that just perfect? I mean who wouldn't want to live with sex god that hated the very air you breathed.

His bedroom was across the hall and he slammed the door behind him not even checking to see if I was going to be okay.

My hero, jackass.

I laid there for a good twenty minutes until my stench from working out was too overwhelming and I stumbled into the bathing chamber. I ripped the suit off and winced as I looked down at my pale skin. I looked like a banana that had been left on the counter too long.

The bruises would heal and be gone in the morning. Just another perk of becoming SUPER. What they had failed to mention was that even though I could heal myself it still hurt like a bitch when I was injured.

For the millionth time since being zapped here, I wished that I hadn't been the one carrying that stupid bit of DNA. I almost missed talking to dentists about tooth whitening and that alone told me that I had literally landed in hell.

Because let's face it. Nobody likes to talk to dentists, not even their wives. Most of them are scurvy bastards that try to take you back to their hotel rooms during conventions. Stupid fuckers. I wasn't about to break up any unhappy homes, not for someone that looked like Mr. Rogers.

I sank into the heated water and immediately began to feel better. They had minerals in the water that helped to regenerate the body. In truth, there was a lot of cool things that they had here in Zeron. I just didn't care.

I wanted to go back to the hour and half morning traffic and listening to satellite radio as they disparaged Mondays and often played Nichole vs. The Streets. I wanted to sing along to the Beebs and deny knowing the words to every song. I wanted to be normal again.

But fuck me, I wasn't normal. I just had to be SUPER.

There was a pounding on the bathroom door, "Human, are you about done?"

I considered not answering him, but I had done that once before, and there was already a new door installed where the old one, that he ripped out, had been.

"Keep your pants on, Grandma!" I yelled as I reached for the soap and lathered up—everything.

He growled but walked away, and I couldn't be more thankful. The day he barged in and found me in the bath had been one of the worst experiences of my life. He didn't even pretend to be embarrassed or look away. He just shouted at me.

"You are too thin! Why would they give me such a scrawny partner? You have no boobs, little hips, this is a disgrace."

You see the thing was that on earth it was all sexy to be waif-like and so my petite body hadn't be abhorred.

But in those few short sentences, Axel made it perfectly clear that he was not into me whatsoever. I won't pretend that it didn't sting a little or a fucking lot. It wasn't that I wanted him pawing all over me. But he didn't have to act like he had walked in on his great Aunt Phyllis who was suffering from an outbreak of oozing boils.

I tried to shake it off as I rinsed the soap from my hair and body and let the water go down the drain. Standing I waited for the dryer to begin. It had scared the shit out of me the first time. What kind of heathens didn't use towels?

Zeronian's that is who. They do have these wicked cool dryers that had you completely dry including your hair in less than three minutes. And whatever their soap was made out of had been a godsend for my tresses.

I have a lot of hair, but it is fine and thin, so it often tangled. Here my hair would dry perfectly natural as if I had used a large round brush on it. And it stayed that way all day until I washed it again. Or got blood in it from training, which happened more often than I would like to admit.

Once dry I stepped out and realized I hadn't brought anything to slip on. I eyed the laundry shoot where I had already sent my dirty clothes. They weren't retrievable and here I was stark naked without a towel in sight.

Chapter 2 – Axel

I needed to use the bathing chamber in the worst way. The human's scent was all over my skin, drowning my senses and making me crazy. I had to wash every trace of whatever voodoo magic that exuded from her pores and stuck to me like glue down the drain.

She wasn't my type. There was no reason for my cock wanting to be balls deep inside of her. Shit, I would probably break her in half. The women on my planet, Zeron, were much larger. It was rare to find one below six feet in height.

The human was four inches above five foot. I knew ten-year-olds that were bigger than she was. If it wasn't for her smart mouth I could almost believe she was a child. With that innocent face and long white blond hair, she has amazingly dark lashes that fan across her cheeks.

Her breasts are small and firm, with rosy tips.

Don't think about her tits.

Don't think about her tits.

It was her fault I even knew what they looked like. The Human had locked herself in the bathing chamber for over an hour. And then she had the audacity to be angry at me for barging in to save her. I half expected her to be face down in the water, having drowned herself.

It was the panic of that alone that made me storm in.

But no, she was lying back, her whole naked self on display. I could count the ribs on her side, the delicate nip to her small waist. And the gently rounded curve of her hips. And between those pale silky thighs, well, she is a natural blonde.

A crunching sound brought me back to the present and I realized that the communication device I had in my hand was now a bunch of shattered polymer and wires.

Fucking Human.

I wanted to fuck the Human.

Shit!

These thoughts had to stop crowding my mind. It wasn't necessary that imprinted pairs becoming physically involved. In a matter of an hour, I had been called into the sick bay and informed that my DNA had been matched with a girl from earth for a new project called paired imprinting.

I wasn't asked if I wanted to participate, I was told that this would be happening., They were awaiting her arrival and I would do my duty as a warrior for The Intergalactic Council. As a

warrior, I had sworn my allegiance to the council, but it didn't mean that I liked the shit they were pulling.

And then the Human shows up looking like a waif with all of the tubes going every which way into her body. How could they expect me to tie my soul with that? She speaks mainly in jibberish even though we both have the lingual chip implanted in our brains I still don't know what she's talking about.

She can't remember my name for anything, half the time she calls me Thor or the Hulk. Who could possibly name their baby the Hulk? Human's were straight up barbarians.

Training with her was a nightmare of epic proportions. Every time my fingers brush her skin I want to latch on and experience the rush that comes with our connection. That stupid fucking connection that could eventually be my downfall.

According to Von, our souls are now linked. If we are apart for too long or too far we could die. That is just fucking fantastic.

Supposedly, I am okay to go about my normal life. Explain to me how I am supposed to bring a woman back to our pod when I have the Human just across the hall? What kind of animal does that?

It's no wonder that my cock is so confused. He needs pussy. He craves it, has been deprived of it, and is now desperate for it. I need to man up and just go about my business as I normally would. The Human is nothing more than a roommate.

And soul thief.

I couldn't forget that one. It seemed that more and more of her thoughts were creeping into my mind. I knew she found me attractive and also repulsive. Which was actually a point in her favor because it showed a spark of intelligence that I hadn't thought humans could possess.

I needed that bathing chamber, what was taking so long? Standing I went over to pound on the door just as she whipped it open standing in nothing but a horrified expression.

"Fuck!"

That mouth of hers!

"Where are your clothes?" I barked out, looking everywhere but at her perfect tits.

I liked big tits.

BIG TITS.

She scoffed and I accidentally looked her way just in time to see that platinum blonde hair brush the side of her breast as she put her hands on her hips.

Those totally fuckable hips.

The darker yet still blonde curls between her thighs.

Fuck.

I whipped around and covered my eyes. I knew I looked like a complete idiot but the woman was an exhibitionist.

A nudist—and I was losing my fucking mind.

I felt a woosh of air go past and knew that her skinny little ass was most likely running by. I wouldn't be a man if I didn't take a peek.

Damn… shouldn't have looked.

Sweet little pale ass cheeks with her shiny hair dancing along the dimples in her back.

Fuck me.

"Stop looking!" she squeaked.

My eyes slammed shut again just about the time the door to her room closed with a resounding thud.

The moment I was naked and in the bathing chamber my hand wrapped around my cock. Here I was a grown ass man tossing his cookies off like a youth. It was beyond humiliating. I tried to think about a woman with massive tits and wide hips that I could sink my fingers into.

My cock began to soften.

What the actual fuck? Had this soul stealer actually robbed me of my mojo? There were only so many losses a man could take!

The vision of my imprinted partner sprang into my mind and my dick jumped up like it was begging for a treat. Traitor.

My mind fixated on those small breasts and plump lips and no matter what I did to try and change it I couldn't.

That ass, I wanted to squeeze it. How could this Human have messed me up so badly?

The pressure was getting harder to control as image after image of her naked body flashed before my eyes. I was cumming. I could feel it at the base of my spine as my balls tightened and I pictured coating her perfect tits with my seed.

Black dots appeared in front of my vision as I came harder than I ever had before in my life. I had to grasp the side of the basin to keep from going under.

It felt like a metaphor for my life. Ever since the Human showed up I had been slowly slipping under her spell.

Well, she wasn't going to win. I wouldn't let her. I was a fucking warrior for The Intergalactic Council. There was no way that I would let a tiny Human take me down.

I grabbed the soap and began to lather my body. Thankful that her scent was washing away and that I could finally get some peace of mind.

I tried to not think about the fact that the soap now reminded me of her hair as it bounced playfully against the top of her ass.

Damn it.

I like big tits and ass.

BIG TITS AND ASS.

Chapter 3 – Sarah

I had burst out laughing, an unladylike snort coming from my nose. From Axel's scowl, I can tell that he isn't amused, but that only causes me to laugh harder and snort louder.

"You are a pain in the ass, Human."

"Are you seriously trying to tell me that we are going to be some secret weapon? You and me? Us? As in the two of us together?"

"Why do you think you are here?" he ground out.

I blinked, "Well, I know about the imprinting and how we are supposed to bring out special powers or some shit in each other. But Axel, I am not a fighter."

He grumbled something like, *you don't have to tell me that.*

But I ignored him, "I believe in talking things out, maybe we just need to have a good open dialog with—who are we fighting again?"

I could tell that he was making a real effort to contain his ire. Axel's nose flared gently as he took a deep breath.

"The Stavainians main purpose in life is to destroy all other living organisms. They do not do," he made air quotes, "open dialogs. They would just as soon melt your face off than talk to it."

I wrinkled my nose, "They don't sound very pleasant. Why are they angry?"

He scoffed, "Because we exist. The Stavainians don't reason, they are programmed to conquer and leave nothing behind."

"Are they machines or people?"

He rolled his eyes, "They are evil, that is all that matters."

"But if we go and kill all of them, and I mean that hypothetically because you know I am a pacifist."

He groaned.

"If," I began again, "We try to wipe all of them out, doesn't that make us just as terrible as they are?"

He stared at me, "You're right."

I beamed.

"We should just invite everyone over for tea and cakes. I don't know why we have been fighting for decades against the Stavainians. I had better go grab a coms device and contact The Intergalactic Council immediately."

"You are a smart ass," I made a face, "Did you know that?"

"And your intelligence is subpar, I hesitate to even ask what your job was on earth."

"Oh," I brightened, "I was a pharmaceutical dental supply representative."

"What?"

"You know, the products that you dentists use to help fix your teeth? The real money, of course, is in tooth whitening, but…" I trailed off when I saw the confusion on his face.

"Why would you need to whiten your teeth? What color are they originally?"

I smirked, "White, duh."

"Human's are so stupid."

"Hey!" my tone was indignant and I saw a quirk of a smile pass his handsome face.

"You pay for someone to change your teeth to be the same color you were born with. That is stupid, I am sorry, Human, there is no other way to say it."

I frowned at him, "As you get older your teeth darken with age."

"No they don't," he refuted.

I knew that it was pointless to argue with the man, but this was something I had spent hundreds of hours researching and literally, thousands of hours educating on. I knew my stuff.

"Yes, there are things that you eat and drink that cause the darkening of the dentin…"

"Let me stop you right there," he drawled. "First off, I really don't give a shit. And second, the teeth don't darken unless there has been inadequate dental care. The products that we use here on Zeron kill all of the bacteria and keep the mouth and teeth in perfect condition. Now that I know you had something to do with this dental business on your home planet it makes perfect sense why earthlings are subpar."

"You are a fucking ass-hat," I bit off.

How like him to say that I was responsible for the entire evolution of dentistry on earth. Why did I even try?

"You have a dirty mouth," this time he did smile, "But that would make sense, being from the earth and all, wouldn't it?"

I wish that I could say I felt bad about what happened next, but the truth was that my pacifist ways were slowly deteriorating the more time I spent with Axel.

He must not have had his guard up, poor soul. I stared intently at his forehead the words 'ass-hat' began to form.

Axel screamed and the smell of burning flesh filled the air. He grabbed the water that he had been drinking earlier and threw it in his face.

I should have felt horrible. I definitely should have acted contrite. But no, where is the fun in that? He caught sight of my grin and dove for me. It had to be a fight or flight moment because for the first time I was able to move my ass at superhuman speeds. I darted to the other side of the room and almost fell over when I came to a stop.

My heart was pounding and my skin felt tingly. I glanced over at Axel to see that he was seconds from grabbing me and I darted away once again. His face was pure rage mixed with disbelief.

"All of those fucking weeks in training and now you choose to get your act together?" he roared.

I playfully raised a brow, "Who has the dirty mouth now?"

I went to zap away again and found myself frozen to the spot. Axel blinked as if he was shocked that it had actually worked.

"What did you do to me?" I couldn't move my body even one inch and the evil grin on his face was scaring the hell out of me. "Umm, I'm sorry?"

Not my best apology, but I was desperate and he kept advancing until he was right in front of me. He grabbed my arms and lifted me up like I weighed nothing. Our noses were almost touching but I could not move a muscle.

My heart hammered in my chest and I was sure that he could not only see how terrified I was but also smell it coming off me in waves. He took a deep breath and almost looked pained. I knew I didn't stink, but he seemed to be offended by my scent all the same.

His gorgeous green eyes glared into mine and my traitorous lady parts began to clench. Axel was way too handsome for his own good. His hair was a mixture of honey and gold strands that he kept in a queue away from his face.

But something must have happened to the small piece of leather because his hair fanned out almost touching his shoulders. I had the strongest desire to touch the strands. No man, especially no warrior, had the right to look so completely fuckable.

Particularly on one that looked intent on killing me.

"You are the worst thing to ever happen to me, Human," he bit off and I couldn't help the pang of hurt that resonated inside of me.

I knew I wasn't easy to get along with. And he wasn't wrong that I hadn't been trying very hard since I came here. But I hadn't asked for any of this to happen.

“Looks like we finally found something in common then.”

His eyes narrowed and I tried not to look at how dark they had become.

“Are you going to kill me then?” I tried to sound nonchalant, but the tremor in my voice gave me away.

He shook his head, our noses accidentally brushing and I felt the frisson of awareness to the tips of my toes.

“Well, what are you going to do?” I knew I needed to shut up, but there was something about him that made me want to get under his skin. If I was being honest, I liked his reactions. His forehead still looked rather sore where the words ass-hat still resided. His own body would be able to heal itself by morning but I was beginning to feel bad.

Stupid conscience.

“Does it hurt?” I blurted out.

He looked up as if he could see his own forehead and my body choked on a laugh.

“Do you think this is funny?” his tone was low and dangerous.

I have a little problem of laughing at the most inopportune times. I don’t know if it is nerves or just sheer oddity, but obviously, this was a moment when sobriety would be beneficial.

I giggled, “No sir, definitely not funny.”

Snort.

His jaw tightened as I tried to control myself.

“I really am sorry, Axel,” laughter, “It’s just you insulted me, and my planet.”

I was finally able to control myself by bitting my bottom lip, hard.

He hadn’t said much and I wondered if his arms were getting tired from holding me up.

“You will not burn me again.”

He wasn’t asking, he was telling.

“Absolutely,” I parroted, “No burning.”

“You are going to learn everything that I teach you and stop being a thorn in my ass.”

I gulped picturing his naked ass full of thorns and barely suppressing a giggle.

“Right, whatever you say.”

He growled low in his throat before slowly lowering me down, our bodies brushing against each other.

Did I feel something long and hard? My eyes flew to his tight uniform. Holy fuck, whatever this man was packing was massive. I could have sworn I saw it twitch as I continued to stare.

Maybe I needed to get along with Vlad the Impaler after all?

Chapter 4 – Sarah

“Well, well, well, look what the cat dragged in.”

I turned around to see a woman that looked like she should have been trying out for roller derby or professional wrestling. Her hair was a bright orange, unlike any color I had ever seen before. I wondered if it was natural, but wasn’t brave enough to ask.

“Hello,” I tucked a strand of my hair behind my ear, “I am Sarah.”

You know those mean girls in high school? The ones that knew their shit didn’t stink? I had the strongest impression that I was meeting Zeronian’s version of that.

“I know who you are, Human.”

I narrowed my gaze, “What is it with you people and your prejudices against Humans? Isn’t it your creed to fight for all living things in the galaxy?”

Her eyes blazed and I wondered for the briefest moment if I had a death wish. What in the hell was I thinking talking like that to Zena Warrior princess? Fuck one punch and I would be shitting teeth for a week.

“Lay off, Loraine,” Axel came up behind me and wrapped a beefy arm around me.

I tried not to concentrate on how I immediately felt safe, or how right his arm felt. He most likely had tried to reach my waist but because of the height difference, he caught me just above my breasts.

Her face immediately changed to peaches and cream.

What a bitch!

“Nothing to worry about Axel, just getting to know your new friend. Sarah, wasn’t it?”

Seriously?

“Yeah, we are going to be besties now and tell each other all of our secrets.”

She laughed like I had said the funniest thing, and I really started to hate her.

“Not everything, Sarah,” she shot a heated look at Axel. The one that said I know what you look like when you are fucking the shit out of someone.

I didn’t like it, not even a little bit.

My eyes narrowed and the next thing I knew Axel was throwing me over his shoulder while Loraine was screeching. The familiar scent of burning flesh in the air.

A large hand came up and smacked me sharply on the ass. Stupid prick through he could spank me? Oh, hell no. I leaned down and bit the top of his ass as hard as I could. Granted I couldn't have done too much damage through the leathers. But the next thing I knew I was being dropped on my head.

"Human!" he thundered and I knew it was time to get the hell out of Dodge.

I jumped to my feet and ran.

I still wasn't super familiar with the training center. I could get to the common area and from the gym to our pod. But as I zigzagged through the unfamiliar corridors I found that it was much larger than I had even anticipated.

Axel's yelling from behind let me know that it wasn't the time to sightsee. I raced through one unit to another until I finally saw a door to the outside. Suddenly, I was desperate to see the sun. I ran up to the door and right before I touched it Axel screamed.

"Sarah, no!"

My body was hit with an electric shock so powerful that I flew back and smacked my head on the wall behind me. Before I passed out I had the fleeting thought that he had finally gotten my name right.

**

When I opened my eyes, my head was throbbing and I felt horribly thirsty.

"Axel?" I croaked.

He was beside me in seconds. His face was pale beneath his tan almost the same shade as mine. It wasn't a good look for him.

"Are you okay? Goddess, Human, I thought you were dead."

And we were back to Human.

"Water?" I managed to get out and he nodded grabbing a cup beside the bed. My arms felt like they weighed a million pounds and I couldn't lift them.

Thankfully, Axel lifted my head and brought the sweet goodness to my lips. It tasted better than any wine or drink that I had ever tasted.

"Thank you," I managed and turned my head away.

His concerned face came back into view, "You need to rest, Human. The elders are working on healing you, but they need time."

Axel went to stand and I whimpered in pain. Immediately he was back at my side.

"Stay," the word wasn't more than a whisper, but I knew he heard me.

Regardless of the pain, I forced myself to try and reach for him.

He blew out a slow breath, “Okay.”

The moment he sat beside me and placed his hand on mine I felt better. But I knew that if he would just hold me I would find rest.

“More, please.”

Axel looked ready to pull his hair out. I was in too much pain to register that I was begging the man to lay beside me. I didn’t give a fuck about our little personality battle at the moment. All I knew was that he had what I needed.

Gently, Axel picked me up and laid down beside me cradling my head against his chest. The same frisson of awareness that always sparked through the connection we had was there. But this time I also felt warmth and peace.

My eyelids began to droop, but I was terrified he would leave me there. Somehow I worried that if he did I wouldn’t be waking up again.

“Stay,” I rasped, “Please, Axel, stay.”

He didn’t say anything for a long while, and as I slipped away I thought I heard him murmur my name once again.

I wasn’t sure how long I slept in his arms but when I awakened again I felt immeasurably better.

“Are you going to live, Human?”

His voice was rumbly and I could tell he had been sleeping. It was oddly endearing.

“I couldn’t leave you, big guy. Who would you throw around during practice?”

He muttered something about the intelligence of humans but I didn’t care. His arms were still wrapped around me and our legs were tangled together.

“What happened?” I asked tucking my face into his neck.

He shuddered, “You tried to leave through the force field. You are lucky to be alive.”

“Forcefield, shit, Axel, that should be marked!”

His chin rested on my head and I could feel his hand gently stroking my back.

“Something like, DO NOT EXIT, HIGH POWER?”

I made a face that I was grateful he couldn’t see.

“I thought that was like the doors at the mall that say an alarm will sound, it never does.”

“Human,” he seemed to be considering his words, “We don’t place signs about for no reason. It is safe to say that whatever we label will do precisely what it says.”

I thought about that and enjoyed the feeling of his hand on my back and our legs tangled together. The blanket was wedged between us somewhat so I didn't know if Vlad the Impaler had woken up or not. But the longer he rubbed my back the warmer I felt in my lady bits.

"What now?" I managed, trying to change the subject.

"Von will come back in a few minutes to ensure that you are alright, then we can go back to our pod. If all goes well we can resume training tomorrow."

Training, ugh.

"Why were you angry at Loraine?"

His question startled me.

"She's a bitch," I said without thinking.

Axel was quiet for a minute, "How can you tell that when you only spent a few seconds talking to her?"

"She's a total mean girl. She pretended she didn't know my name and then when you showed up she was all kissy nice face. And the way she rubbed it in that you had slept with her, that was too much!"

Axel pulled back so I could see his face, "What are you talking about?"

I rolled my eyes, "It was obvious she was staking her claim."

He was quiet for a moment just looking at me. I started to fidget. Thankfully, Von came in and Axel disentangled himself from me.

"How does she look?" Axel was impatient as Von went over my vitals.

The elderly man smiled at me, "Right as rain, you might be tired the rest of the day but your body will continue to heal especially if your imprinted pair is touching you. By tomorrow you will be up and go about your usual business."

I nodded my appreciation and sat up, the room spun a little and Axel frowned. The next thing I knew I was in his arms and he was carrying me out of the health unit. I buried my face in his broad chest, not wanting to see the curious eyes staring at us, as he trods toward our sleeping chambers.

The moment we were inside I begged him for a chance to take a bath.

He frowned, "Not without me you aren't."

Chapter 5 – Axel

"Sarah?"

The human had convinced me that she would be able to bath on her own. I knew I shouldn't have listened.

"Sarah?" I said more firmly this time as I listened intently at the door.

Nothing, there was still no answer and I was going in. Thankfully it wasn't locked, I slid the door open and there she was asleep in the warm water. All perfectly perky tits and rocking body with her hair floating out around her in waves.

Obviously, the woman was intent on being naked in front of me. I don't know if she was deliberately trying to seduce me or if she just had trouble with keeping her clothes on.

Either way? It was working like a charm.

Swallowing hard I moved forward and scooped her body out of the water. She barely stirred.

"Axel?"

"It's not Thor," I said gruffly as I lifted her for the dryers to commence their work.

Instead of lying flat she curled into my chest needing that connection of our skin. I decided that the dryer was pointless and carried her out of the bathroom.

Ignoring my dick, I took her into my sleeping chambers. I had a bigger bed and since I needed to be in contact with her I might as well be comfortable. As comfortable as one can get with a raging hard-on. I couldn't even rub one out because I wasn't supposed to be out of her sight.

The moment I set her on the bed, I quickly turned around the looked for a tunic I could slip over her head. Thankfully my shirts looked like a dress on her so I could finally look at her face. Dark circles still lined her eyes and her cheekbones looked more pronounced. I knew she was a huge fan of the food here. Sarah was small enough though and didn't have room to lose weight.

I stripped off my wet shirt and pants, leaving my undergarment in place, and climbed into the bed beside her. Again she cuddled up right against my chest her hands seeking my neck and pulling me in tight.

I tried not to let the connection overtake me. This little human was occupying all of my thoughts. Instead of irritation that I had felt when she first arrived, I had been terrified that she wouldn't pull through. One could argue that if she died I would too, and that was my incentive to wish her well.

However, I knew in my heart of hearts, that if I could have taken the pain for her I would have. I would die for this small Human, and that isn't something I ever thought I would contemplate.

"Axel," she murmured.

I fought the urge not to kiss her forehead. We weren't mates, only imprinted pairs.

"Yes," I answered in a rumbly tone.

"You're all stiff."

If possible I hardened further. Was she referring to my cock?

"Pardon me?"

Her small fingers kneaded the tight muscles in my neck, "I can't rest when I know you are so keyed up. Want to talk about it?"

Did I want to talk about the fact that I desperately needed to jerk off? Because her slim athletic body had become the most appealing thing I had ever beheld in my life. And I had beheld it more times than any sane man should have to.

"It's nothing," I grumbled.

Her massage continued and she moved to the tops of my shoulders. I couldn't help the tiny groan that escaped.

"What is the real issue? We are adults here, you can talk to me."

They say on earth that the truth will set you free. I am here to tell you it will set you on fire, literally.

"I am so sorry, Axel! You just surprised me."

I winced as the burn in my forehead stung like a bitch, "What did you write?"

She blushed, "Nothing."

I cocked my head to the side, "What?"

"Ass-hat," she muttered, "I am sorry, I need to control my powers."

I grunted, in truth, it was already starting to heal because I had grabbed her sorry ass when she tried to escape after she fried me again.

"Are you," she cleared her throat, "really uncomfortable?"

My eyes closed and I prayed to every deity I had ever heard of to give me strength.

"Sarah, you asked me to be honest and I told you. I have a raging hard-on that I can't do anything about because I need to stay connected to you so that you can heal. It's a simple bodily function that I have little to no control over."

Sarah nodded, "I could help you with that."

It was a damn good thing I hadn't been drinking anything because as it was I choked on plain air.

"Fuck, Sarah! What? I mean, fuck!"

She looked at me with all seriousness in her face, "I don't think I am up for fucking, that will need to wait a day or two."

I literally couldn't breathe as images of Sarah's lithe body under mine, over mine, shit I didn't care where she was as long as I could picture slamming into her.

"Have I shocked you?" She smiled that ultra feminine look that women get right before they decide to eat you alive. "On earth, we have sex without being in a relationship, it's called a hookup."

My vision went red, "You do this? Hookup with random men for sex?"

I would kill them all. As soon as Sarah felt better I would be on the next…

"No," she blushed wildly, "I have done a few things, but not sex. That is why I think it would be best to wait. But I have done a handjob before. I mean if you want."

It sounded so clinical, of course, I wanted it. I am a man with a penis, we never turn down invitations unless it is absolutely necessary. Sadly, there was something about her that made this situation absolutely necessary.

"Sarah," I said gruffly.

"I like it when you use my name," she slipped in with a shy smile.

I blew out a breath and was about to tell her that we couldn't do this. Our working relationship was too important. And then her hands brushed against the thin cloth of my undergarment and I hissed.

Taking that as a good sign she cupped my length, eyes growing wide as she got the true understanding of what I was packing. I expected her to turn back and roll away.

However, Sarah never did what I expected and I was starting to learn that. Her small hand slipped under the waistband and brushed the tip of my cock.

"It's wet," she said in wonder.

"I didn't pee," I wanted to sound indignant but it came out more of a moan.

She laughed, "I didn't think you did. Most guys take longer for precum to appear."

"Most guys don't have to haul your naked ass around as you grope them."

She laughed again and I felt something swell inside my chest. Before I could analyze it too closely she slid her hand down and took my length with a firm grip. Her hand couldn't reach all the way around and I noticed the frown on her face.

Sarah being the problem solver that she was stuck her other hand down the front of my pants to help out. My eyes were rolling to the back of my head. She wasn't a professional by any means, but what she lacked in knowledge she had up for in enthusiasm.

I placed my hand over hers' to show the right pressure and rhythm. I could see her eyes dilate and her mouth pop open and I couldn't help myself. I had to taste those plump lips. The moment our mouths fused a rush of adrenaline so strong raced through my veins that I could have moved mountains at that moment.

She tasted of sex and need, and so damn delicious that I couldn't get enough of her. My hands were everywhere feeling her perky tits through my tunic and the sweet pink nipples that had beaded up to fine points. She squeezed me harder when I sucked her tongue into my mouth and I almost blew my load.

Fuck the girl was so naturally sensuous that I hadn't a chance of surviving. One of my hands slipped between her legs and the wetness I felt there made me growl with satisfaction into our kiss. She moaned and her legs parted for me so I could stroke those damp folds.

Pleasure coated my fingers and I desperately wanted to see her pink pussy. But I didn't want to stop kissing her. I didn't want her to stop touching me. I knew I was growing closer and suddenly the thought of coming without Sarah was unfathomable.

I stroked her harder slipping a finger inside and rubbing her clit with my thumb. I delved into the hot cavern of her mouth and claimed every last inch of it. She was mine, there was no one who made me feel this way. I didn't care about the repercussions of it all.

Sarah broke away to scream as her orgasm took her. Body shaking and head tilting back I had never seen anything so erotically beautiful in my life. My cock spurted thick cum all over the inside of my undergarment. I didn't care I had shot off in my pants nor did I care that this woman had turned me inside out.

She was mine.

Sarah sighed, "I think I will sleep well now."

And to my complete shock, she did.

Chapter 6 – Sarah

"Baby, harder! Oh, you are so amazing! Yeah, fuck, yeah!"

My eyes snapped open to see Axel completely zonked out and what looked to be alien porn on the broadcasting device—otherwise known to us earthlings as TV.

The guy was just as tall as Axel with a long thin dick. Which he was using to pound into what looked like the babysitter. To be honest I was a little disappointed. One would think that porn writers on another planet could do a little better than that.

I sat up a bit and decided to watch. It wasn't like I was doing anything better and Axel was out. The girl had massive boobs, I am talking Pamela had nothing on her. She looked a bit like Loraine in size and shape. I wasn't sure what it was about these alien girls and their killer bodies. It made my small slender one look underdeveloped.

At least Axel didn't seem to mind when his fingers were in my pussy earlier. Suddenly I felt a stirring in my core. The girl was deep throating long dick and her breasts bounced with every pass. I could see the way that his ass tightened when she sucked particularly well.

I knew a little about blow jobs.

Okay, I have given one blow job in high school and it went well up until my braces got tangled in his pubic hair. I had to admit that after such a fiasco I never wanted to go down on a guy again. But Axel didn't seem to have any hair on his dick, nor on his balls. There weren't any of razor burn bumps either.

The man had to wax.

I snorted with laughter thinking about Axel with his legs in the air as his balls had hot wax applied to them. Somehow, I couldn't see it happening. But if he didn't wax, there had to be something else he was doing to stay so smooth.

Suddenly I felt like a complete Neanderthal with my tuft of blonde curls. They were trimmed, I wasn't a complete gorilla. But I liked the idea of smooth skin rubbing up against smooth skin.

Long dick had begun to lick the girl's pussy and I felt the urge to touch myself. Looking over at Axel still sleeping I figured why not? He was the one who left it on in the first place.

I lifted his tunic and my hand slipped between my thighs. The moment I touched my wet folds my legs fell open and I moaned softly. No longer watching what was on the TV I looked at Axel instead. His massive shoulders that were packed with strength rose and fell rhythmically with his breathing. I wanted to lick every inch of his body. I wanted to know what his skin tasted like, and his dick, I really wanted to know what his dick tasted like.

I arched my back and slid two fingers inside. The pressure mounting as I fucked my pussy with abandon. I was just about to come when Axel's eyes snapped open.

"Baby, I'm going to cum, harder, now!"

It looked like someone was reaching their climax, but it wasn't me.

I scowled, "Really? You couldn't stay asleep for like two more minutes?"

He blinked taking in the TV and my hand between my legs. In seconds he was on top of me pushing my hands away and buried his face between my thighs. I groaned as he licked me from end to end.

"Fuck, Axel, do that again!" I demanded.

Thankful he was in an accommodating mood because his tongue made broad passes against my tender folds. This was nothing like the times I had messed around. Axel wasn't a boy trying to find the clit in a haystack. He was a man showing me just how fucking amazing my lady bits could be.

I sank my fingers into his hair and shoved my hips against his face.

I loved the way his whiskers burned my thighs and his rough tongue pushed me higher and higher toward release. I was moments away from nirvana when he slid a finger to caress my puckered back hole and I lost it.

Screaming I slammed my pussy into his face and rode off the most amazing orgasm of my life. This was nothing like my vibrator at home. Stupid lying manufacturers, the toy had promised otherworldly experiences, but there was nothing quite like this.

When my body finally calmed Axel moved up, pushing his tunic out of the way so that he could lick and suck on my nipples. The TV had gone to static and I was thankful that I didn't have anything to distract me from what was quickly turning out to be the most erotically charged nap of my life.

"I need you, Axel," I cried out, desperate to have his length inside of me, stretching me, and claiming me.

He grunted and left my breasts before shoving his undergarment down. A cock way more magnificent than Long Dick came into view. Holy shit, did he plan on just going for it?

"Ahhhhh!!!" the pleasure-pain of his first thrust almost did me in. I was wet and ready for a man, not the Hulk and Thor tied up together in one massive cock. Otherwise known as Vlad the Impaler.

"Are you okay?" he rasped against my neck never once stopping the steady thrusts of his dick. It was a good thing that this felt like heaven on Zeron. Because with every thrust he shoved me higher and higher until my head was wedged against Axel's headboard.

I pinched his ass, hard.

“Damn it, Sarah, what is the problem?”

“Nothing too bad, just that you are about to behead me. Let me get on top.”

He froze, “What do you know about getting on top?”

I rolled my eyes, “We have porn on earth too you know.”

Axel scowled, “That is not appropriate for a lady.”

“Fuck that,” I shoved at his body, “Move!”

Axel moved back sadly breaking our connection and lying on his back. I moved over his thighs and felt his wet length pulse against my core.

“Fuck, Sarah, I need to be inside of you.”

When he spoke like that I felt my pleasure mounting and leaking down my thighs. I needed him inside of me, behind, and underneath me. I wanted Axel more than life, more than air, and more than getting the hell off this shitty space station.

I lowered myself down on his massive length and rubbed my pussy back and forth. Axel grabbed my hair and fucked me hard from underneath. His body bowing as time after time Axel pumped inside of me. I didn’t think it was possible, but I had started to feel dizzy from the incredible sensations.

Axel pushed me up so that I was no longer leaning over him. They had placed my small hands on my breasts and commanded, “Touch!”

I squeezed and pinched my hardened nipples, my pussy clenching in anticipation. His look of appreciation along with increased speed led to me be a little nasty and lick my palms before rubbing circles on the tight nubs.

I didn’t want to be lonely at this moment and knew that when he came I wanted to be riding the wave of ecstasy right along with him.

He growled, and a surge of power rushed through me. Our connection, while usually incredible when we were touching was now so strong that I could feel things he was experiencing. It redoubled itself and raced through my body as it met with my own intense desire.

My hands fell back to his chest as I began to really ride him. My nails digging into his skin as I ground my pussy against his cock.

It was exhilarating and so fucking fantastic that my orgasm blew us both away. I was flipped onto my back and Axel grabbed my hips pounding into me with a punishing pace. This wasn’t just sex. I felt another orgasm begin to build and whimpered as his fingers dug into the skin at my hips.

“More, please, more!” I didn’t for once even stop to consider that I was sounding more and more like the alien babysitter getting her brains fucked out.

“Again, Sarah, come again on my cock.”

It wasn’t a suggestion or even a plea. Axel didn’t work that way. He demanded and for some reason, my body was more than happy to comply. I shattered again and this time he grunted his own release swiftly following mine. I could feel the elation pouring off him along with the sweet taste of wonder at what had just happened between us.

His body stopped pumping and he collapsed on top of me. I would have let him stay loving the way his large body felt against mine. However, the need for expansion of my lungs won out. I poked him in the side until he finally grunted and flopped over onto his back.

The tunic I had been wearing of his was tangled up in the sheets. I briefly considered yanking it back on when he spoke.

“Do you always pleasure yourself when watching erotic movies?”

It wasn’t declarations of love, but then that would have been too soon and highly out of place.

I countered, “Do you always watch alien porn with someone sleeping beside you?”

He grunted, and I liked to think it was his way of saying touché.

Until he countered, "Who in the hell is Vlad?"

Chapter 7 – Sarah

“Hey there, when did you get in?”

I turned to see a handsome man with dirty blonde hair leaning against the training room wall that Axel and I used.

“Where’s Axel?” I asked tossing my bag into the corner and plopping down on the mat to begin warming up.

Captain America’s eyes followed my every movement, but he didn’t feel creepy, just interested.

When he didn’t answer I made a face, “Are you here to just gawk at the human or did you have something you needed?”

A broad smile broke across his handsome face. On earth, he would have reminded me of the all American football star from next door. He obviously was a warrior like Axel, I could tell by the uniform.

“You're sassy,” he winked at me, “My name is Zack.”

I continued to stretch and didn’t fail to nice how his eyes fell on my ass as I bent over and touched my toes.

“Quit perving, Zack, and I might like you better.”

His grin turned into a laugh, “I can’t believe that Axel’s imprinted pair is not only hot as fuck but you have spirit too. He must be loving life.”

Axel chose that minute to walk around the corner. The moment he saw Zack his eye lit up and they did that weird man hug that looked more painful than pleasant.

“What are you doing out here, Zack?” Axel asked when they broke apart.

“Came to give you and Sassy your orders.”

Axel looked over at me with a questioning look in his eye, “Sassy? Her name is Sarah.”

Zack smirked, “And yet I think that Sassy suits her better.”

“Whatever floats your boat, Captain America. What orders are you talking about?”

Zack pulled some papers out of a bag he had set to the side of the room. He handed them to Axel and waited.

“What kind of fucking bullshit is this?” Axel exploded.

I couldn’t resist, “Ladies, let’s watch our language.”

Axel's irritated gaze snapped to me, and I gave him a placating smile.

Zack was laughing his ass off, "Looks like this imprinting program really works. I can't imagine anyone more perfect for you, Axel."

He grunted at Zack, "Shut up, ass hole."

"What is the mission?" I asked again.

"There is unrest in the Omega Quadrant. You and Axel have been assigned to travel with the Zeronian fleet to settle any disagreements that might be happening." Zack explained.

"What ship?" Axel bit off.

Zack grinned, "The Lexar, a personal guest of yours truly."

I barked out a laugh, "You really are a captain?"

Axel's lips twitched a little, "Sarah, meet Captain Zackary Cole, commander of the Zeronian fleet and personal captain of The Lexar, our finest ship."

I raised a brow, "Does one curtsey or salute?"

Zack laughed again, "Sassy you are one funny little thing."

I whipped around on Axel, "Ha! I told you I was funny!"

He looked at me like I had a third arm that just started sprouting out of the top of my head. Zack continued to eye us with amusement.

"When do we leave?" Axel grumbled.

"Yesterday, if you both hadn't been out of commission. This afternoon will have to do instead."

I had flashbacks of everything that we had been doing yesterday. Axel's thick cock stretching me far better than any toy on earth. I knew that my cheeks had turned pink and prayed that the guys would think it was because of embarrassment over being sick.

"Can you really burn people with your eyes?" Zack asked in wonder.

I looked at Axel who scowled at me.

"Not a chance, Sarah, you aren't going to write obscenities on either of our foreheads!"

"That sounds like a story that I don't want to miss," Zack rubbed his hands together gleefully.

"Get used to disappointment. If we are leaving in a few hours, Sarah and I need to pack. By the way, where is your imprinted partner?"

Zack shrugged, "I only saw her for a few moments. She hasn't woken up yet so there hasn't been any imprinting yet."

I felt a shiver of dread wash over me, “When did she arrive?”

“Same time you did, Sassy,” Zack said with a wink.

“You don’t seem very worried about her,” I responded with more than a little heat.

He lifted a shoulder in that carefree, what are you going to do about it, sort of way and said, “No reason to become attached if she is just going to die out like the rest.”

“The rest?” my voice was rising and hysteria building in my gut. “How many of us are there?”

Axel tried to motion to Zack to shut the hell up but he either was oblivious or just flat out ignored it.

“Hundreds that I know of.”

“You have stolen hundreds of women from earth just to let them die if your stupid experiment doesn’t work.”

Axel moved back, clearly leaving Zack on his own.

Zack frowned, “Do you even know how this program works?”

My temper flashed, “Sure as fuck do! You arrogant bastards think you can steal humans from their homes and lives all on the chance that they might carry some stupid gene that will allow them to be a superhero. That’s fucked up my friend.”

“No,” Zack’s chin clenched, “That is not how it works, and besides the fate of the galaxy rests on this working. I would say that is far more important than any mundane human life.”

“Really should not have said that,” Axel broke in, almost amused.

My eyes flashed and Captain America’s pretty blonde locks took fire.

“Holy shit, she’s fucking crazy!” Zack screamed. Axel who expected something like this to happen threw a bottle of water at Zack.

With which he promptly poured to over his head. It now looked like Zack was sporting a crispy skullet.

“That might blister,” Axel said conversationally as he scooped me up under one of his beefy arms.

I flailed and kicked trying to break free, but Axel was using his mind blocker against my powers. Zack was glaring at me, but I didn’t care I was too busy screaming out every obscenity I knew at the both of them.

Axel smiled at Zack, “I am going to take Sassy back to our room. I would seriously get that looked at. What time are we flying?”

“I won’t let that she-devil on my ship!”

“Like I would go anywhere will human stealing alien bastards!”

“Shit, Axel, is she always like this?”

He laughed, the big idiot that somehow had managed to contain me with one arm and still carry on a conversation laughed.

“Nah, she’s just tired, you should see her when she gets mad.”

“I am mad you, ass hat! Put me down this minute.”

It didn’t matter what I said or did, Axel just continued to carry me back to our sleeping pod. Once we were there he went directly to his bed and thew me on it. Before I could scramble off he plastered his massive weight on me.

It felt pretty damn good and that only made me angrier.

“How could you be a part of something so evil?” I raged at him.

“Sarah,” he said calmly, “I think you misunderstood what Zack was telling you.”

“Oh no, I heard him loud and clear!”

“Sarah,” he said firmly, “Would you just listen?”

“Fine!” I bit off, “What wonderful words of wisdom could you possibly impart that would make this any better?”

“We don’t take humans at random. The only time they are pulled is when death is not only eminent but confirmed as the only possibility. We zap them out seconds before the human’s heart stops. Not every human makes the transition through space and sometimes we aren’t fast enough.”

“That doesn’t make any sense?” I shook my head in confusion. “I wasn’t going to die. I was at a bar having a good night and then the next thing I knew I was waking up here.”

He kissed my forehead, “Do you remember the bartender?”

I gulped, “Yeah, it was Tim or Toby.”

He sighed, “His name was Rob, and he did end up going home with you, Sarah.”

I was in shock, “Are you trying to tell me that the bartender intended to kill me?”

“He almost did.”

Chapter 8 – Axel

“Your chick is fucking crazy, man!”

Zack rubbed at his still healing forehead and scowled at me. It didn’t help that I couldn’t wipe the smirk off of my face. There was something about Sarah taking on a brute like Zack and coming out on top that had me hella proud to be her imprinted pair.

“She didn’t understand,” I smirked, “She thought we were stealing people out of their everyday lives. She didn’t know we are giving these humans a second chance at life.”

Zack motioned for me to have a seat on his right. We were traveling at warp speed through the galaxy toward the Omega Quadrant.

“She’s got a wicked temper,” Zack grumbled.

My smile found its legs and grew, “She’s a pacifist.”

His eyes widened and he shook his head, “No fucking way that chick is a pacifist. Who is she trying to kid?”

I shrugged, “I like her.”

He snorts and turns back to the wide expanse of space in front of us. There were other members of his crew on the deck. Heath Jobs, First Mate, and Executive Officer looked up from the control panel he was working on.

“She’s something to look at,” his eyes sparkled and I felt the strongest urge to wipe the shit eating grin off his face. I knew that the women in Zeron found him attractive. Normally Heath was a good friend and a great wingman. But I didn’t want him to even think about Sarah much less look at her.

“Hands off, Heath,” I barked the command just as the woman herself walked onto the ship’s bridge.

“Who are you snapping at?” Sarah wrinkled her pert little nose and I wanted to kiss the space between her eyes.

“No one,” I grumbled.

Her eyes went around the room taking in the different crew members doing their jobs before landing on Heath. And then she smiled and I felt a wave of possessiveness flash through me. Her smiles, they should only be for me.

I stood up without thinking and went to her. The moment I touched her skin I began to feel better. I was still jealous of the way Heath was looking at her, but I could sense that she wasn’t interested in him like that.

And then it dawned on me. I was beginning to sense her feelings more and more. It was eerie and amazing at the same time.

Sarah looked up and me and without saying anything took my hand in hers.

Zack was still glaring at her, and to my girl's credit, she laughed when she caught his gaze.

"Why are you being such a baby? Seriously, you are like seven times my size. Do you want to hit me, will that make you feel better?"

Several members of Zack's crew burst into laughter but stifled it when they caught his expression. He was not amused.

"I don't hit women," he said stiffly.

"What if they have a gun?" she asked.

Zack looked confused, "What are you talking about?"

Sarah moved to the chair I had just been sitting in pulling me behind her. She motioned for me to sit and then plopped down onto my lap.

"Well, you said that you didn't hit women. But it would be strange if someone was, say trying to kill you, would you only retaliate if they were male?"

He clenched his jaw, "No, if someone was trying to kill me I would protect myself."

She nodded as if considering, "So you hit girls, just not the ones you think are inferior."

He blinked, "That's not what I said."

"You said that you would hit a girl that was trying to kill you. Obviously, if the female in question wasn't up to par and couldn't kill you she shouldn't be hit even if she gets in a punch or two. I like your theory. I won't hit men that are inferior to me either. The gun issue we can debate later."

Zack looked from Sarah to me in confusion, "What?"

I shrugged, "I think she is trying to make friends."

Sarah rolled her eyes, "I am trying to understand how this all works. If there are people we are fighting that are the opposite gender do we automatically just give them a pass?"

Zack looked ready to blow his stack, so I quickly stood and removed Sarah from the bridge.

"Where are we going?" she was curious and not at all contrite for nearly causing Zack an aneurysm.

"Why don't I show you the ship?"

Sarah nodded, "Sounds good, but I don't think you need to carry me the whole time."

I looked down realizing that I had her tucked tightly against my chest. It just felt better that way.

“Sorry,” I grumbled.

Sarah kissed the underside of my chin and I felt it to the tips of my toes.

“I like being close to you. But sometimes I like walking too. If you are good maybe I will give you a blow job after our tour.”

I nearly choked on my tongue.

I would like to say that it was a thorough and well-guided tour. In actuality, I showed her the hallway that led back to our assigned sleeping pod. There were two beds in the space but I was hoping that one would be merely for decoration.

The moment the panel closed behind us I grabbed her face and kissed the ever-loving shit out of the woman. Of course, it wasn’t in Sarah’s nature to take such things laying down and she met my kisses with a confident stroke of her tongue as we battled for dominance.

I would never have expected to get so turned on by the way she fought me at every turn. There was something so arousing about the way she bit my lower lip and sucked on the heated flesh. My hands moved from that perfect ass up to her gorgeous breasts.

Our uniforms thankfully zipped up the front and I was able to unzip her without breaking the kiss. There was no bra necessary in the Zeronian uniform, it was built in. So creamy breasts spilled into my hands and I felt a surge of victory when she moaned low and deep into the kiss.

Breaking away I picked her up and carried her to one of the beds. It was seconds before I was able to take one of those cotton candy pink nipples into my mouth and suck. I felt her bud tighten against my tongue and knew that I was driving her crazy.

I could feel her need and want, which only spurred me on. I flicked the tip back and forth, loving her gasps and pleas for more. Transferring to the other breast I continued to tease the one with my fingers as I laved the other.

“Fuck, Axel,” her fingers dug into my scalp.

I grinned against her breast, that naughty mouth of hers was more than growing on me.

As if she followed my thoughts, she shoved my chest until I flipped our positions and she could unzip my suit.

Slowly, Sarah licked my brown flat nipples before bitting them gently with her teeth. Who knew that guy’s nipples could make their dick jump? I certainly didn’t. She liked to bite and I hadn’t thought that would turn me on either but with every suck and nip to my abs, I felt myself growing harder.

Finally, she unzipped me far enough to release my length. She rubbed the tip gathering some pre-cum onto her finger and licking it off.

“Yum,” her eyes sparkled.

“If you are trying to drive me insane you are not far away,” I grunted as her cheek brushed my dick. She turned and licked it like a lollipop.

Fucking hell, I was going to die.

“Do you want me to suck this?” she took the very top into her mouth and pulled.

My back arched and I could feel it all the way to my toes.

“Or these?” She cupped my balls and rolled them gently.

Another drop of pre-cum slid from the slit on my cock.

Sarah smiled, it was so sensuous and sexy that I knew I would never forget how she looked in that moment, “Or perhaps some of both?”

“Yes!” I shouted, “Fuck, Sarah take my dick, my balls, take anything you want just suck me!”

She laughed and then swallowed as much of my dick as she could, holding the rest in her small hands.

This wasn’t my first blow job, but the way I felt, one would have thought it was.

I was on the edge fighting to not grab her face and fucking her wildly until my cum coated her throat and oozed from her lips. It was a vision that I couldn’t seem to get past and I knew that I wasn’t going to last long.

She hollowed her cheeks taking me deep until the tip hit the back of her throat and she moaned. The vibration had me seeing stars and the next thing I knew my hands were fisted in her hair and I thrust twice before shooting my load.

Sarah gagged but still managed to take a fair amount. And just like my fantasy, she had cum on her cheek and chin. I grabbed the sheet and helped her wipe her face.

“Fuck, Sarah, that was indescribable.”

She smiled, “I thought it might help you the next time someone looked my way.”

I raised a brow, “Someone like who?”

“I felt your jealousy on the bridge. There is no one else that I want to do that with, not Zack and not Heath.”

My heart ached for a moment so badly that I wanted to rub the ache away. What was this woman doing to me?

Chapter 9 – Sarah

Space travel is dreadfully dull.

You know when your parents made you go on those road trips clear across the country and you go through places where there are miles and miles of nothing. Where you actually are excited to see a tumbleweed because it's the first sign of anything on the horizon?

Yeah, that's space travel, but without Yahtzee.

"So do you have any board games?"

Axel eyed me, "Look if you want to go back to the sleeping pod or get something to eat that's okay."

We were sitting in the ship's bridge staring at another wave of endless stars. Who knew that could wear on a person? I wasn't the only one affected either. There was a woman with a slightly bluish tint and massive boobs that feel asleep right at her command station.

Zack and I had made a relatively peaceful arrangement. I said whatever I wanted and he pretended I didn't exist. We were supposed to land in the Omega Quadrant later in the day, but I was bored to death and needed a distraction.

"I'm not hungry or tired, Thor, I am bored."

He grinned, "Is that why you want to play a 'bored' game?"

'Really," I sighed, "Not even funny. Is that your idea of a joke? We have a lot to work on."

Heath snickered, "What do you do when you are bored, Sarah?"

I shrugged, "I like the outdoors. I enjoy reading, and sometimes even making things if I am feeling crafty."

Axel raised a brow, "What kind of things?"

"Like a wreath or something for the table?"

He grunted clearly not interested.

"What kind of books do you read?" Maria, the fifth officer asked.

"I like lots of different genres as long as romance is involved. The naughtier the better."

Axel choked.

Maria's smile grew, "We don't have many of those kinds of books. Is it like porn?"

I scoffed, “No! I like my stories to have a plot and theme to them, but good sex doesn’t hurt anything.”

The men in the room laughed and Axel scowled at me.

I turned back to Maria, “What kind of books do you have on Zeron?”

She wrinkled her nose, “Self-help, Autobiographies, mostly non-fiction types of books. I heard that on earth there are libraries with literally thousands of books to choose from.”

I nodded, “And with the internet, you literally have the stories right at your fingertips. Are you not able to access those here?”

Maria shook her head, “No, they don’t like us getting distracted so there isn’t a lot of recreational things in Zeron.”

This was literally the saddest thing I had ever heard.

“Then what do you do for fun?”

She brightened, “We train, and we go on missions!”

I glanced over at Axel who was giving me the ‘don’t you dare go there’ look.

“That’s called work, Maria.”

She laughed, “I suppose it is.”

“We should do something fun,” visions of a picnic and volleyball game bounced into my head.

Axel shook his head, “We are here for a reason, Sarah. Zeronians don’t need fun, they have discipline and courage. That is better than fun.”

I was about to argue with him when an alarm started sounding. I knew that meant we needed to get into our seats and connect the seatbelts.

“There is a rogue ship coming out of Neman’s asteroid belt that isn’t responding to our communications, Captain.”

Heath was suddenly all business as he gave the coordinates and statistics of the unknown vessel traveling toward us.”

Zack instructed one of the crew to zoom in on the belt, for a while all that we could see were large rocks. And then toward the center, the shape of a foreign ship came into view. I gulped realizing perhaps a moment too late that this was real and these aliens probably wouldn’t like us.

“Fuck,” Zack ran a hand through his dirty blonde hair. “We are going to need to outrun them. If we engage in battle now we are breaking the Intergalactic Space rules, but I have a feeling that this Seran ship isn’t the only one.”

I looked at Axel who was punching in a bunch of things into the mainframe computer.

Maria called out, “Ready when you are, Captain!”

“Engage.”

If it wasn’t so entirely scary I would have been sure to make a Star Wars comment or ask if they knew any Clingons. But somehow I didn’t suppose these people would be up to date on their Star Trek humor.

The one ship multiplied into three and then seven.

“Fuck!” Axel yelled as the first blast shook the force field of our vessel. “Can we go any faster, Maria?”

She was typing away at a furious pace into some kind of smart tablet and referring back to the lines of code in the monitor in front of her.

“We can’t outrun them, but there is a chance that we could lose them.”

Zack threw her an incredulous look, “You can’t be suggesting.”

For a blue woman, Maria was mighty fierce, “It is my job to come up with solutions, sir. It is one viable option.”

Another blast hit the ship. My stomach lurched as we shook, lights blinking.

“Just do it,” Axel yelled at Zack. “You know what you have aboard this ship. It’s better that we go down fighting then get caught.”

That seemed to decide things for Zack. He nodded briskly at Maria and then instructed Heath to take power from the forcefield and allocate that to the boosters.

I wanted to ask where we were going and why Scotty couldn’t just beam us up. But the terror and panic that was clawing at my throat prevented me from doing a damn thing.

If they shot us again with the force fields down. Could we withstand such a blow? Was I willing to find out?

“Ready,” Heath called out and a split second later Zack commanded Maria to alter our course.

Suddenly I was upside down and falling fast. We were headed to a swirling ring of nothingness.

Please don’t be a black hole.

Please don’t be a black hole.

Darkness encroached on the ship and I forgot about puking and started worrying about living.

There was screaming and things flying everywhere, but we continued to fly upsidedown into the greatest gravitational force known to man. Did they not watch cartoons as children? Nobody willingly goes into a black hole.

I had a fleeting thought that we were essentially attempting Niagra Falls with a canoe, only a million times worse.

“The Seran have stopped pursuit, Captain.”

But there was nothing that could be done. The gravitational pull had sucked us into the Supernova and we were on our way to Wonderland or wherever black holes took you to.

A part of me wondered how this was the better end of the stick? Another wished to hell that we weren’t hanging upside down. My head was starting to pound like it might blow up. Visions of popping heads filled my mind not giving me any comfort.

And then we flipped, a bright light filled every crevice of the ship to the point where I had to close my eyes. It felt worse than staring at the sun.

“Navigate inland,” Zack muttered.

Heath’s voice sounded resolved, “We are no longer in control of the spaceship, Captain.”

“Fuck!” Zack growled.

A woman’s voice came over the sound system and I opened my eyes to see a hologram of what appeared to be a princess or queen. She had red fiery locks that flashed around her head and skin as black as night. Honestly, she was one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen.

She smiled, “Back again, Zeron? You just don’t know when to quit.”

“Who is that?” I whispered to Axel.

He shook his head but the woman had heard me.

“What is this? A human?” her face took an intrigued look. “This I have got to hear.”

Chapter 10 – Sarah

"Well, Zeron, to what do I owe this great pleasure?"

It still weirded me out that the queen, of wherever the fuck we had landed, called everyone a Zeron. It was the name of their planet after all.

Axel had given me strict instructions that I wasn't to talk to anyone about anything at any time. I was supposed to stand next to him and look dumb.

Yeah, I didn't care for the instructions either.

Apparently, this woman's name was Neopia and she was the queen of what looked to me like the dump of the cosmos. Axel said that she wanted to keep anything that was of value so I needed to become worthless—fast.

"Queen Neopia, we have missed spending time in your presence." Zack gave her a winning smile that did look rather convincing.

"Enough of your flattery, pretty man," she winked at him as she uttered the admonishment.

I had to admit that I was liking the lifesized Magpie. She glittered with jewels of every shape and size. The diamonds in her ears had to be four Karots and looked to be wearing the skin down a bit.

Her fingers each had rings, and I do mean more than one. But my favorite item she was wearing, besides the metallic lipstick, was a shiny golden trophy as a hat. I could just make out the words *World's Best* but I hadn't the slightest idea how the sentence ended.

I lost track of the conversation, they spoke of places and things that I knew nothing about. But the feeling of unease was clear even through my revelry. Axel didn't trust this woman. His hand never once left mine and whenever possible his body flanked mine. It was a clearly masculine gesture of authority and possession but I found myself not really bothered by it. My inner feminist knew that I could knock him on his ass if necessary so I wasn't worried.

I had just begun to daydream about hitting up my favorite nail salon on 45th street when Axel nudged me hard in the side.

"What the fuck?" I grumbled.

There was silence in the room and I noticed a moment too late that Queen Neopia was looking at me as if awaiting my response.

"Huh?" Not my most eloquent, but again, I was supposed to be dumb.

"Doesn't comprehend much," Zack said with a rather pained look, "These earth sex slaves are hardly worth what you pay to have them transferred in."

My mouth opened to retort something nasty and most likely incriminating for all of us when Axel planted his lips right on mine. I fought him for a minute. As much as I liked making out with the beast it wasn't the time or place. But then he yanked me onto his lap and I felt the growling bulge between my thighs.

I sighed into the kiss and began to respond when he abruptly pulled away.

"Don't move," he hissed.

This was all so I wouldn't talk. It wasn't because he couldn't wait to plant one on me.

Stupid prick.

"It's a shame," Queen Neopia said with an air of detachment. "A human sex slave would be interesting. But I would at least require that they be able to converse."

Zack snickered, "This is the lower model."

That fucking prick was asking for trouble and I didn't forget grudges.

"Steady, Sarah," Axel whispered, clearly terrified that I would go off the deep end.

He wasn't wrong. I wanted to put Zack in his place, but I didn't want to be captured by the beautiful queen that wore trophies as her headpiece.

I sank into Axel's arms so it looked like I was snuggling up to go to sleep. My mouth met with the skin of his chest and I couldn't help sinking my teeth in just a little bit. I wanted him to know how much I liked their new role for me—not even a little bit.

His hands on my ass tightened almost painfully, but he didn't make an outward response. I knew that he would hold it together. He was a badass warrior after all.

"You will stay for a long visit." Queen Neopia commanded, it wasn't a question.

"As much as we would like to," Zack began, "We are needed in the Omega Quadrant. But we couldn't pass by without stopping in to see you, your majesty."

He was laying it on thick. If I was the queen I would have tossed him out on his ass.

"Hmmm, we shall talk about it more at the feast tonight. And your earth sex slave, she can dance for us."

I almost fell off of Axel's lap. If he hadn't had hold of me, I would have after jerking so hard at the queen's statement. I was not a dancer. In fact, if the truth be told I had something of two left feet and not in the cool Ripley's Believe It Or Not sort of way. It was more in the sad, ugly neighbor girl who was perma-braces with broccoli stuck between them kind of way.

Axel inclined his head toward the queen, "Your majesty if I might let my slave rest and prepare?"

"Of course, the Serai will attend to her." She clapped her hands and I felt myself being lifted from Axel. I cried out in dismay but he shot me a look and I quickly closed my mouth. The large men looked like an underwear model shoot gone wild. They carried me out of the room and down a series of stairs until I entered another space that clearly was for servants.

They spoke in a language that I didn't understand. I was torn between wanting to speak and keeping my promise to Axel to shut the hell up.

Another man came forward and eyed me. He picked up my hair and then frowned.

Motioning with his hands he spoke in rapid-fire alien something. The next thing I knew my space suit was being ripped from my body. I was naked underneath and had no qualms about voicing my concern.

But my cries fell on deaf ears. I tried to cover myself but then I noticed that they weren't looking at me like they wanted to ravish me. They were rather checking out my legs and the stubble under my arms. The bathing accommodations weren't as luxurious on the spaceship. And sometimes it was hard to get a good shave.

With a flick of his wrist, the head underwear guy sent me off to another room where I was laid out on a table. It was eerily similar to a gyno's visit. Another drop-dead handsome man entered and this time he carried what looked like a jar of goo.

Without speaking to me he began to rub the cold sticky substance into my skin. It tingled and smelled a bit like eggs and pastrami.

The man didn't let an inch of me go without this shit and soon the mixture began to burn a little. I screamed but he didn't give a flying fuck, the man just turned his back and punched something into a computer.

Moments later there was a ding, from heaven knew where, and I was yanked up and placed into a shower. Blasts from every angle proved successful in removing the goo and to my surprise all of the hair, dead skin cells, and even blemishes were gone from my skin. I looked fucking amazing.

Whatever they had I wanted it and in bulk. My pussy was so smooth I don't think I had ever had such a great feeling even after waxing.

When they started on my hair I was already convinced that they were miracle workers. So I didn't say a thing as they lathered this and that into my long platinum tresses. After several steps, they used one of those magic dryers and my hair fell about me in soft waves.

I had thought the soap in Zeron was the shit, but it had nothing on whatever these people were peddling. They pulled out what looked to be henna next and traced all kinds of elaborate designs on my skin. It tickled and felt incredible as I lay there getting pampered and primped by these hot men.

In the back of my mind, I was a little worried about the dancing coming up. But at least I would look good and like my mama used to say, that is half the battle.

When at last every toenail had been buffed, every inch had been kissed with this golden powder, I was finally ready.

When Axel walked in and saw me I knew everything had been worth it.

Chapter 11 – Axel

Landing in Queen Neopia's domain was just one more example of our rotten bad luck. The woman was incredibly shrewd and knew a thing or two about keeping what she wanted. The only way out was by her command, another little trick that served her well.

She was one who enjoyed the finer things in life. Queen Neopia liked the company and had a hard time with the fact that they didn't like to come. You couldn't blame them when a visit to her domain would leave you poorer and often lighter on crew. She kept whatever she liked.

So the moment I walked in to see Sarah looking like an exotic bird, completely naked with her long blonde hair floating around her. I knew that we were in trouble. Not only did I want to fuck her against the nearest wall, floor, table—anything. I wanted to spend hours going over the intricate tattoos that were placed on her body. She was truly a work of art.

When Sarah turned and smiled at me I felt my dick jump and my heart drop.

"Leave us," I commanded Neopia's servants.

The pretty men disbursed quickly as I advanced on Sarah.

"What's up, cowboy?" she grinned at me.

"I am not a cowboy, and my cock is what is up."

Her eyes widened and the minx licked her lips. It was then that I noticed there wasn't a hair on her body. They had done something to make her skin glow.

I needed to be inside her—Immediately.

I picked her up and loved how she automatically wrapped her legs around my waist. Our lips met and she locked her ankles at my back. I growled in appreciation and kissed her perfect lips. Tasting of spices and fruit, I couldn't get enough of her. Her naked breasts pushed against my chest and I could feel the heat from her pussy through my uniform. She was as hot for me as I was for her.

Sarah nipped at my lip causing me to moan.

"Axel," she panted my name, "I can't dance."

My lust filled brain couldn't compute, "Who the fuck cares?"

She laughed but I swallowed it up with my mouth. It was while before she broke away to speak again, "Axel, I really can't dance."

Neopia.

I wrenched my lips away, but her skin was calling to me so they latched onto her neck.

Sarah was babbling about something, “I took clogging as a little girl, but one of my shoes flew off and knocked the instructor's tooth out. Needless to say, I was asked not to return. I tried to do the exercising pole dancing and gave myself a concussion.”

I paused, the thought of Sarah pole dancing was one that I liked taking up residence in my mind.

She yanked on my hair. “Are you listening to me?”

“Terrible dancer, concussion,” I repeated like a good boy.

She sighed in my arms, “They are going to know I am not a sex slave.”

I raised a brow, “How do you figure?”

“I don’t know the first thing about dancing sexy, Axel!”

The panic in her voice was calming on my libido.

“Sarah, you don’t have to do a good job. In fact, the worse you do the better it is, because we don’t want her to like you.”

“So, you are saying I am supposed to go out there naked and dance like an idiot?”

I frowned, “They aren’t giving you anything to wear?”

She motioned to the painted tattoos.

“Hell, no, fuck this.”

I wasn’t about to let the rest of the crew get an eyeful of Sarah naked. It was something that still brought me to my knees and I didn’t need Zack or Heath beating off to it.

“What are we going to do?” She was panicking and I knew that I needed to come up with something.

“What if you got hurt?” I suggested, “You can’t dance with a twisted ankle.”

She nodded slowly, “Yeah, that could work, but will we get away with it?”

I shrugged, “We can try. Hold your ankle.”

I called out the servants that my slave had been hurt. The pretty men raced in and apologized over and over again. I cradled Sarah against my chest making sure that they couldn’t see anything. As we passed a sheer curtain I yanked it down and covered her as best I could. The sparkling material leaving glitter all over her already shimmering skin.

By the time I made it down to where Neopia and the rest were waiting Sarah looked like a little flame. I approached the queen, “My slave has been hurt by your men and cannot dance.”

She raised a brow and then turned to speak to her servants in another language one that my transmitter didn't translate. Turning back to me she said, "The slave was fine when they left her."

I growled, "Are you challenging my word?"

There was a great hush in the room. To challenge a warriors word was to discredit and dishonor him.

The Queen, however, was not cowed. She eyed me curiously, "If the slave cannot dance, as you say, someone will need to take her place."

Sarah stiffened in my arms. I knew that she was about to volunteer herself, but we couldn't go back on the lie that was already told.

"I will dance."

The words were out of my mouth before I even contemplated the repercussions. There was a sharp inhalation from the queen followed by a round of raucous laughter from the crew. They were a bunch of pricks, not one of them had ever seen me dance before.

Neopia smiled, "The substitution is granted, you may proceed."

I placed Sara into my seat at the royal table and then moved to the center of the floor.

"Is there music?" I barked.

More laughter followed my question, but a few minutes later a rather raunchy tune filled the space. I could tell she was taunting me. Obviously, she didn't believe our lie that Sarah was hurt. What she didn't know was that I could move my body.

Just because I didn't choose to do so all of the time didn't mean I was without skills. I unzipped my uniform slowly until I hit mid waist. I could see Sarah's eyes nearly popping out of her head. And I couldn't help the smirk that crossed my face.

They wanted to see me dance, well, they were in for a treat.

My body began to shake along with the beat of the music. I let the notes take me away as I let my body bump and grind, making love to the imaginary woman in my arms.

Sarah.

I pictured that it was her soft pussy I was thrusting myself into. With athleticness that was second nature to me, I lost myself in the movements. It was as if I had channeled my inner stripper and porn star all in one.

There was silence in the room when the music came to a stop. My uniform was resting low on my hips, the deep vee clearly visible.

Neopia was fanning herself, "Well, erm. Well, then."

Most of the guys in the crew could barely look at me. Zack and Heath, in particular, were glaring in any direction but mine. Most of the female members of the staff looked ready to pounce but there was only one person that caught my attention and held it.

A certain fiery platinum blonde earthling that was standing up on her supposed hurt ankle, licking her lips.

Fucking hell, she was going to get us killed.

And I wanted to sink my dick into her, anywhere, I wasn't fussy as to the location. Thankfully there was enough commotion with everyone else that nobody had noticed her yet. I bowed to Neopia and then turned to Zack.

"I will be taking my slave back aboard the spaceship. She is in need of medical care."

Immediately Sarah plopped back down and looked contrite. She was so fucking cute, I wanted to spank that pert little ass.

Maybe I would, just as soon as I got my hands on her.

"We are not finished with you," Neopia interrupted me as I stalked toward Sarah.

I turned back to her, "Yes, I am afraid you are."

She bristled immediately, "You are to be brought to my chambers after you have pleased me I will allow you and your ship's passage."

I could see Zack pleading with me to just go along with it.

There was no way in hell that I ever would have said yes. But it didn't seem to matter because the next thing I knew Sarah's hair was whipping around her head and her eyes were glowing white.

"Shit!" Zack screamed, "Get down!"

Chapter 12 – Sarah

I wasn't going to hurt anyone. Good grief, I get a little heated and the next thing I know there are rumors going around that I created an intergalactic incident and that there might be charges pending including possible arrest.

Fuck… I mean, really?

I didn't even kill anyone. I wouldn't! I am a pacifist or maybe just a part-time pacifist.

"Sarah, you can't lose your cool like that!"

I fought rolling my eyes, "She was going to fuck you, Axel! What the actual hell were you doing dancing around like Magic Mike? Who taught you that? And just so we are perfectly clear, she wanted to fuck you!"

"Sarah, I wasn't going to go with her."

"Axel, she wasn't going to give you a choice!"

"So you nuke her entire kingdom?"

That was below the belt. "I started a small fire, Axel. I didn't cut anyone's head off, and I wanted to, I really did. And if she wasn't such a hoarder it wouldn't have spread so quickly!"

Axel marched forward and grabbed me by the shoulders. "You are insane!"

I couldn't really argue with that one. So, I went with plan B and tried to kick him in the nuts. I have to hand it to Axel, he was learning my tricks. Rather than beat me, which I do think crossed his mind, he kissed the living shit out of me.

Crashing his mouth against mine so hard that our teeth clashed he molded his body to mine. My legs wrapped around his waist and my hands sank into his hair. I should have been getting sick of him by now. Heaven knew that I wasn't one to stay in a relationship. But there was something about him so addictive.

He was my own personal heroin and the more I was around him the more desperate I was to have him inside of me.

Axel walked us over to the bed not even once breaking the kiss. His hands came to the top of my uniform and with a rip, he tore the material in two. My breasts bounced out and I broke the kiss to get the stupid thing off of me. I needed to be naked. I needed him to be naked.

"Get your clothes off," I commanded.

His nostrils flared, "Don't tell me what to do!"

But he started yanking at his clothes, so I chose not to point out that he was doing what I wanted him to. As those chiseled abs were revealed I was yanking one of my pant legs off and somehow managed to lose my footing. As I fell into his crotch, Axel groaned. But it wasn't—*you are so damn sexy I am going to fuck your brains out*—groan. It was more of an—*I may never be able to have children*—groan.

"Sarah!" Axel had curled into the fetal position on the bed as he cupped his jewels.

"I am so sorry!" It might have been more believable if I wasn't laughing so hard. "Move your hands, you big baby."

"It's not even hard anymore," he bit back, clearly still mad about the headbutting.

Another giggle escaped me.

"Come on, Axel, it's not that bad."

Moving his hands away I took his massive dick in my hands and kissed the tip.

Axel drew in a sharp breath, "I don't know if I should trust you. Ahhh…"

His eyes rolled back as my lips closed around him. I had always been told that kisses could make a boo-boo better. It was time to put my money where my mouth was. Or…

I suppose—leave my mouth where it was and give Axel the ride of his life.

His length was hard and hot in my mouth. My lips were stretched wide as I sucked him into the back of my throat. My tongue tasted his essence, traced the vein in his length, and curled around the mushroomed head.

I took his balls in my hands and rolled them, sucking him hard and deep. Loving the way that he came completely unglued and it was all because of me.

"Fuck Sarah, you are so damn sexy with my cock between your pretty lips."

I had never really thought I was into dirty talk, but from Axel it was hot.

I continued to cup his balls as I sucked him, not even caring that I was gagging half the time.

His thighs were shaking and I figured that I might as well go big or go home. The hand cupping his balls slipped back and I slid a finger deep into his ass just as he came deep into my mouth.

"Fuuuuuck!"

My head stung where he was yanking on my hair and I choked on his release, laughing at the look of shock and horror on his face.

"That is exit only!"

"Oh, come on, Axel. You can't tell me that you didn't love that."

"I, I," he just stared at me.

I got up and went over to our kitchenette of bathrooms and washed my face. I rinsed my mouth out and turned back to see him eyeing the droplets that had fallen on my naked breasts.

"Are you mad at me?"

He scowled, "Always, but I am afraid that I will need more information as to which situation you are referring to."

My eyes narrowed, "You loved it."

"I did not!"

He was a two-faced liar and we both knew it. I walked up to Axel and pinched his flat brown nipples, hard.

"Ow, she-devil!"

He yanked me up and tossed me over his lap. The broad part of his hand caressing the globes of my ass.

"Hey! I am not into that fifty shades shit."

Even though I couldn't see his face, I knew he was grinning. The best part was that he didn't even know what that was until I introduced the books to him. He had managed to hack into some of the books from earth on my e-reader.

Axel was a bit of dirty bird. He liked my stories, the raunchier the better. But I had no idea in doing so that I had been feeding him full of ideas.

The first smack stung like a bitch and I squirmed in his arms.

"You had better let me go!"

He laughed, the stupid mother fucker laughed, and then swatted me again. I wasn't melting or even feeling the slightest bit turned on. My ass hurt and my temper was rising. But then he slipped a hand between my thighs and gently stroked my folds.

"Shit, that feels good!"

Smack!

I bucked in his arms, "Stop doing that, Ass Hole!"

"Listen to you and your love talk," he rubbed the reddened skin with a gentle touch.

And then I felt this tongue as he kissed my sore ass. Okay, that actually felt good. The next smack didn't hurt so much as it sent jolts of awareness between my thighs. He was a damn fast learner, I would be remiss if I didn't admit it, even if it was only for myself.

Axel moved me so that I was lying face down on the bed and he pulled my hips up widening my thighs.

His mouth sank into my pussy with my red ass in the air and I conceded. Maybe we had both learned something about our asses and sexuality today. I couldn't ruminate on it too long because the man had a gift with his tongue. Lapping and sucking he kissed my pussy deeply needing to take every drop of desire that I was freely giving him.

My clit needed more, but he was careful to leave to untouched. My body was throbbing and my need greater than I could ever remember it being.

"Please, Axel," I almost didn't recognize my voice.

"Please, what?" he growled, "You are so fucking beautiful. Your pink pussy is swollen and tastes like heaven."

"Fuck me, please!"

He sucked my clit into his mouth finally sending me over the edge. My body shook as the passion threatened to take over until there was nothing of me left. Just emotion, need and want for this man. This incredibly frustrating man that was turning into my entire world.

Chapter 13 – Sarah

He gave me another smack on the ass as I was coming down from my release. Then he flipped me over and captured my yelp with another bone-melting kiss until I didn't know where he ended and I began.

I want to state now that I am normally a very even-tempered person. So, the woman digging her nails into Axel's chest and begging to be fucked—yeah, she's new to me too.

I would like to blame it on the imprinting, but he's just so damn delicious. Everything about him, even his horrible attitude turned me on. And the fact that he went out and danced for me, that meant a lot. Even though I had gotten a little pissy about the result I knew he was trying to save me. Deep down, probably like the center of the earth deep, he cared, and I knew it.

Axel was kissing my neck with open-mouthed kisses that had my hips thrusting into him.

"Stop, teasing me!" I growled and tried to ignore the way my body loved his sexy chuckle in response.

Axel moved back and parted my legs. It was erotic and indecent for him to just stare at me like that. But since my eyes were glued to his massive dick, that was leaking a pearly substance, I didn't feel like it was the time to throw stones.

He moved one of my legs over the other and I felt a little pretzel-ish.

"What are you doing?"

The last word was more of a scream as he buried himself inside of me. The whole term fuck me sideways was starting to make sense. I swear I could feel him everywhere. He was deep and thrusting hard and fast. His grip on my hips had to be leaving marks and I loved every minute of it.

The sounds that I was making were far from ladylike, but it was just so incredible I couldn't help what came out of my mouth. He was like a machine, harder and faster, slick with my desire, his balls smacking my sore bottom.

I couldn't hold on like this, not for long. But I didn't want to go alone. Squeezing my core, I gave him everything I had. His muffled grunt was followed by a harsh growl as he released inside of me. My orgasm blooming at the same time, it was an explosion of the senses, one that I wouldn't soon forget.

Axel slumped down on top of me nearly taking me out. Sensing my distress he flipped our positions so that I was no laying on top of him.

"What is going to happen?"

He didn't answer and I knew I wouldn't like the answer.

"We had to exchange a life for a life. She demanded that you stay in payment, but we convinced her to keep someone else."

Buring shame filled me as I tried to take it in. "Who? Who did you make stay behind? Was it one of the crew? Why didn't you tell me?"

I pushed up to a sitting position trying to will the vomit from climbing up my throat to go back down.

"Not one of the crew," he said.

It was something about his tone, half defiant, half ashamed that made something inside of me click and I knew who had been left.

"You didn't, you couldn't," I stammered.

"It wasn't my choice, it was Zack's. But he did it to save you."

"She isn't even awake yet. Do you even know her name? Axel, we have to go back. That poor girl has no idea that she has been taken from the earth. She is going to wake up enslaved by that woman! How will she ever imprint with Zack? Did he touch her?"

Axel rose from the bed, running a hand through his amazing hair. I tried not to stare at his muscles, but he was naked and I had a pulse.

"We have to get to the Omega Quadrant, Sarah. Zack knew that if you stayed I would have to as well. That's the curse of this imprinting. We can't be that far apart. He also knew that I would never have allowed you to stay, to hell with anything else. And he needs me."

I opened my mouth to argue but Axel continued, "And no, Sarah, he didn't touch the woman or he would have been forced to stay. It's not forever we are talking about, she will remain with Neopia for 100 cycles which are approximately three years in earth time. And yes, she got a raw deal, and it sucks. But my priority is you, Sarah. I keep you safe and the galaxy."

To my absolute horror, big fat tears clogged my throat and escaped my eyes.

"I did this," I choked, "It's my fault."

"No, Baby, no," he gathered me into his arms and I didn't argue. He held me close and let me cry. I knew what it was like to wake up in a different world but I had him. This woman from earth, I didn't even know her name. She would be waking up in slavery because I couldn't control my temper.

Suddenly all of the training and lessons that I had half-assed my way through became vitally important. I had never been more cognizant of my actions having consequences than I was at this moment.

“I want to train.”

I was able to get the request out in a somewhat audible fashion.

Axel stilled, “Are you sure?”

“How much time do we have before arriving in the Omega Quadrant?”

“A few days,” Axel replied. “You don’t have to, Sarah. Some people just aren’t fighters.”

But that was the very thing about myself that I had been ignoring. Anyone with my sassy mouth, edgy personality and badass attitude should be a kick-ass fighter. I had laser vision for fuck’s sake. I remember being taught in Sunday School as a child, where much is given, much is required.

I had been given an incredible gift, and it was up to me what I did with it.

“We train,” I pulled out of his arms and starting yanking my uniform on.

“Now?” Axel wrinkled his brow, “It’s the middle of the night.”

I zipped the front and turned to him, “I am training. Are you coming or not? I am sure I can ask someone else if you are too tired.”

That had him moving.

We went into the training pod accessing the lights and got to work.

Axel had been expecting the old me. But I felt like I had left her behind with the un-named earth woman. I was no longer training and fighting for me, but for both of us. Because like it or not, when we were done with this mission, I was going after her.

I can’t say that I wasn’t thrown against the mat, wall, and sometimes the ceiling. But I got up every damn time.

We training like that every moment of the day that I could. I got more adept at sensing where the danger was coming from. Soon I could jump out of the way.

Brute force was something I didn’t have, but I was fast and small. I used that to sneak around Axel, to dodge and to evade attacks. It wasn’t until he came at me and I wasn’t expecting it that I shoved my hands forward and bright red light erupted from them holding Axel back.

“What in the fuck are you doing?”

I dropped my hands and he fell to the mat with a loud thunk.

“Are you alright?” I raced over to him trying to ignore the pulsing of heat in my hands.

He groaned and turned to look at me.

“I think you are ready,” he gasped.

I grinned at him, “You do?”

His arm swept around and I jumped over it easily. Axel frowned, “You are getting too good at this.”

I leaned down and kissed his sweaty mouth, “Now you are just trying to make me feel good.”

“I feel like shit,” Axel grumbled.

I laughed, “You have a dirty mouth, not very gentlemanly at all.”

He growled and yanked me on top of him.

“I am proud of you, Sarah. You have learned more in the past few days than you did all the weeks at the training center.”

My cheeks flushed and I felt terribly embarrassed for a moment which was highly unlike me.

An alarm started sounding and Axel frowned pushing me up.

“What is it?” I asked breathlessly.

“We are supposed to be arriving, but the alarm is signaling we are under attack. We need to get to the bridge, immediately.”

Chapter 14 – Axel

You don't become one of the best space warriors in the galaxy without fighting a battle or two. But fighting a battle on your own and fighting a battle with Sarah are two very different things. The woman is a force of nature. I am constantly in awe and utter disbelief at what she chooses to say and do next. Most people storming into their first space battle would perhaps approach the matter with some trepidation.

The bat out of hell, warrior princess thing she had going for her, was fucking sexy. I wish I could say that I was confident in her abilities. While she had come a long way, I still wasn't sure if Sarah would be able to harness the power inside of her. She had 50/50 chance of saving the galaxy and destroying us all, and this was when the girl was sleeping.

As the blasts continued to shake the spaceship I grabbed Sarah and lifted her so that we were face to face.

"No hero antics, are we clear?"

She smirked at me, "I wouldn't dream of it."

"You would," I replied, "But you aren't going to do anything stupid that might get yourself killed."

Her face softened infinitesimally, "Aw, Axel, you complete me too. Now, enough of this emotional bull-shit, we have some alien asses to kick."

And they say that romance is dead.

I kissed her hard and then held on for dear life as a particularly loud blast caused me to almost lose my footing. As soon as the lights flickered back on I set Sarah down and we took off at a run.

"This would look so much cooler if we had theme music," Sarah panted as we rounded the last corner.

"If we survive we can talk about it," I grumbled and then shoved her down when I saw that the ship was being invaded. "Stay here and don't get up!"

I ran toward the bridge with my firearm in one hand and my armor phasing over my body. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Sarah flash past me with her hands raised and red glowy fire shit coming out of them. I had to admit that she looked sexy as hell. I also should admit that I almost shit myself when I saw one of the Quokiots take aim at her head. The Quoki come from the realm past the Galactic Quadrant and they were usually non-threatening creatures.

Nearly eight feet tall and willowy thin the Quoki lived in peace. This didn't make any sense? They were vegetarian's for fuck's sake.

I aimed my firearm at the Quokiot that was threatening Sarah, but she was faster and lasered the solider straight in half. Before moving to the next one that had Heath by the head and was bashing it into the monitor on the control panel.

“Where is the breach?” I called out to Zack who I could see was wrapped up, literally, by a Quokiot of his own.

He motioned with his head toward the sky deck and I raced over to see three more attempting entry into our ship. They had somehow sealed their ship with ours, that loud crash must have been when they landed on top of us. We needed to seal the gap and breakaway. Aiming toward the intruders I fired twice bringing two of them down, but the third escaped the blasts.

With a horrible shriek, it flew toward me at a speed that I had no idea the Quoki were capable of. Turning I tucked and rolled out of the way. When I stood, I was facing back into the bridge and saw that Sarah had managed to free Zack. They both took on the one that had just attacked me.

Zack firing his blaster just as Sarah stopped him from advancing.

“We need to seal the gap,” I yelled to Sarah.

She nodded and ran toward me. I cupped my hands together and as she jumped helped to boost her into the air. Sarah flew up toward the breech and grabbed a low hanging piece of metal. Her eyes began to glow and her hair started whipping around her head.

Another Quoki appeared at the gap and I immediately shot him. He fell through the passageway nearly knocking Sarah from where she was hanging.

“Hurry,” I called out impatiently.

I had the strongest impression that had she been able to flip me off she would have.

Again her eyes lit, the power within her radiating out of every pore. The metal began to glow orange and red as it melted sealing the hole the Quoki had used.

“How do we dislodge their vessel?” Heath called out, as both he and Zack appeared on either side of me.

“How far are we from landing in Omega?” I asked.

Zack frowned, “We are circling now. I can’t believe that they attacked so close to an intergalactic space station.”

“Can we reach anyone with firepower in the space station?” I opened my arms, “Sarah, jump.”

She immediately let go and fell into my arms. I could feel her exhaustion and my heart rate spiked in my chest. Had she given too much of herself?

“Omega Space Station, this is Captain Zack from spacecraft Lexar, can anyone hear me?”

There was a crackling on the radio and Zack tried again. This time we heard a response, “This is Sergeant Brooms from the Omega Space Station. What in the hell are you doing out there?”

“We are under attack from a Quokoit space vessel. They have sealed themselves to the top of our ship. We would like you to fire when ready.”

Zack’s head whipped up to see mine, “What?”

“Turn the ship upside down,” I barked, “Do it!”

They began to rotate the ship so that we were now the ones on top and the Quoki were the ones closest to the space station.

As the Omega began to open fire, our ship began to shake and thrash about as the Quoki tried to escape. But we held our course, until finally, we got word from Sargent Brooms that there wasn’t movement from the other vessel. At this point, all of our landing gear had been damaged and we hadn’t the power to bring the craft In safely.

Thankfully we were at a fully equipped space station that was able to capture our ship in its gamma force field and slow our descent to some degree. Sarah didn’t even flinch when we smashed into the landing gate ripping off the left wing completely from the aircraft.

Her eyes opened as I struggled to stand. She was still tucked safely in my arms.

“Are you alright?” I gasped, holding her far tighter than I probably should have.

Her eyes were heavy and I knew that she was thoroughly exhausted.

“I was thinking something by ACDC,” she whispered and then fell back to sleep.

Of course, her theme song.

**

We were greeted like heroes, this was always my least favorite part of being a warrior. The only consolation was the tiny blonde creature that was still tucked away in my arms. One of the medics offered to cheek her over but when I tried to set her down, Sarah’s arms tightened around me like a vice.

I shook my head, “She will be fine.”

We would need to have a debriefing on what was going on out here. It was highly unusual for the Quoki to be so aggressive and to attack not only an intergalactic spaceship but a Zeronian one. It was unfathomable. Our planet could take theirs out with the snap of our fingers. Something wasn’t adding up.

Zack and Heath both passed medical clearance with minimal damages. Some of the rest of our crew wasn’t as lucky. It was with solemn hearts we honored those that had fallen in battle. About halfway through that ceremony, I was wavering on my feet.

“Are you going to put her down?” Zack asked placing a steadying hand on my shoulder.

“Fuck you,” I answered amiably.

He smirked, “Somehow I knew that would be the answer. Take Sarah back to your pod, she was the real hero today.”

I thought that Sarah was dead to the world. She had been lying still in my arms for nearly three hours since our landing. But upon hearing these words from Zack she lifted her head.

“Damn straight I was,” and then she laughed. It was rusty and slightly painful, and I knew that it cost her. But fuck if it wasn’t the most badass thing I had seen her do yet.

This woman wasn’t just weaseling her way into my heart. She was devouring my soul lock stock and barrel.

Chapter 15 – Sarah

"Stop! In the name of love. Before…"

"Stop, in the name of all that is holy! Shit, Sarah, you're breaking my eardrums!"

I whipped around to see Axel standing in the doorway of the bathing chamber deliciously naked and wearing a rather bemused expression.

"I don't know who sang that song, but clearly you weren't meant to."

I scowled at him, "For your information, Diana Ross and I would be like, twins."

He looked at me skeptically, "Are you the twin that can't sing?"

Flipping him off I turned around and went back to my bathing.

Just as I knew he would, I felt one of his massive arms wrap around my waist and I was yanked back against his hard muscled body. If it hadn't felt so fucking amazing I really would have given him a piece of my mind.

But I'm not stupid. You might call it selling out, but I call it amazing shower sex.

I wriggled my bottom against Vlad the Impaler, grateful that the king of cocks was hard and ready. He was good like that, and I was partial to him.

I went to turn around, but Axel stopped me. He placed my hands on the wall in front of us so the water cascaded down my body keeping me warm.

I felt his hands on my shoulders, slipping down to the nip of my waist, and curving out to trace my hips. He cupped the globes of my ass and gently rubbed his dick back and forth through the wetness. It felt amazing and I moaned low in my throat.

His fingers continued to play, dancing along my skin and slipping between my legs. I had to physically remind myself to keep standing because my legs wanted to turn into gelatin. He found my slick folds and traced them with the tip of his finger, achingly, maddeningly, slow until I wanted to hit him.

His teeth gently sank into my shoulder as his finger slipped inside of me. I groaned long and loud thrusting my hips back and wanting more.

Axel continued to kiss my shoulder, across my back and neck. I felt his cock rubbing against me and I wanted him inside of me.

"Axel!" I demanded in a harsh tone, "Fuck me!"

The next thing I knew he was slamming into my core, balls deep and I could barely catch my breath.

"Yessss!" I cried out and shoved back so that he was in as far as he could go.

Axel bent me over a little further and grabbed my hips. He rammed his length inside of me again and again. Relentless in his pace, the water splashed everywhere and I held on for dear life. His massive length touching parts of me that I hadn't thought possible.

There was something so primal and raw about the way Axel took me. It was like he couldn't help himself and I loved that more than anything. I wanted him to lose control. I wanted Axel to do whatever he wanted to me.

Yanking me back, I turned my head and his lips captured mine. One of his hands left my hips so that he could tease and pinch my breasts as he fucked me. The strokes were shorter in this position. I felt the hand remaining on my hip slip down and part my folds.

The next thing I knew he was rubbing circles on my clit and I was screaming into his kiss as my world imploded. Lights flashed before my eyes and I knew I was clamping down hard on him.

He swore, still pounding me, trying to ride out the orgasm. As I began to come down he pulled out and I whined at the loss. He was still hard and was only turning me so that I could wrap my legs around his waist.

Axel shoved back inside as he began to kiss me like our lives depended on it. The power of this man always astounded me. He was lifting me like I weighed nothing. His hands were on my hips lifting me and shoving my body up and down his length.

His tongue fucked my mouth. Nobody could kiss like Axel did. I was constantly in a state of near ecstasy when his lips were on mine. I was sore and tired but my body knew what to do. The familiar tightening in my pussy started rising once again. I kissed him harder and began to help by lifting myself up and down, up and down.

He nipped at my lips, the movements of his hips becoming wild. I felt his legs shake and knew he was close. I clamped my vaginal muscles down as hard as I could and loved when his eyes popped open in surprise. Our release came seconds later as he could no longer hold it back and neither could I. The orgasm lasting even longer than the one before.

Axel held me in his arms gently kissing my face.

"Why does the hot water never run out?"

It was something that I had been wondering about for quite some time. But apparently, it wasn't what Axel had been expecting me to say.

"You want to talk about plumbing?"

I shrugged, "I just wondered. At home, you can't stand under the shower for hours at a time."

Axel sighed and began to put me down. I locked my ankles around his waist.

"I'm not ready to let you go," I grumbled.

He stilled at my words and then his hands tightened on my hips.

"I will never let you go, Sarah."

The heat and sincerity behind his statement were overwhelming. I was a pain in the ass to him. I had it on high authority, his, that I had literally ruined his life. Did he really mean it? Or was this just fake I love you sex talk?

I didn't know how to ask him without sounding like a pussy.

But I tightened my grip on Axel and whispered again his neck, "You will never be rid of me."

He held me for a moment more and then set me down and began to lather my skin and hair. It was beautiful the way that he cared for me. Almost as if I was precious to him. The dryers came on and after we were dry he carried me back into our sleeping pod and began to lick and kiss my body.

We were still in the Omega Quadrant, the sleeping quarters were assigned to us much like they had been on the spaceship. But these were larger than the cramped beds on the spaceship.

I screamed as his tongue traced every inch of my pussy and then teased my clit while his fingers sank deep inside of me.

"I can't come again, I am too sore," I moaned trying to push him away. But he only gentled his touch until I was panting and wreathing once again.

"Come on baby," he murmured against my inner thigh. I was thrashing, chasing my orgasm that was right around the corner.

His finger slipped deep, curling up and flicking against my G-spot. I started to feel intense pressure, more than I ever had before. And then I was gushing, my orgasm shooting out and he was grinning like a fucking idiot.

"What the fuck?" I panted.

"You are a squirter," he smirked.

I reached out and grabbed his massive dick. Sliding it in my mouth I ran my tongue along the rim and moaned, the vibrations making him thread his fingers into my hair. I licked and sucked, bringing him deep and then letting him go. I wanted to tease him the way that he had teased me.

Axel used his hips to start thrusting, careful not to choke me. I dug my nails into his ass and swallowed hard taking as much of him inside as I could. He gasped ripping his length out of my mouth.

I frowned, "Did I hurt you?"

His eyes were wild, “No, but I want to be inside you.”

What kind of a girl argues with that?

Not this kind, just in case you were wondering.

Axel laid back on the bed and I climbed on top of him straddling his hips. I sank down onto his length and began to rock. We had fucked fast and furious and we had driven each other to the edge and back again. But we never really made love, not very often.

I ground my body against his loving the moans and sighs that came from his lips. I took advantage of our position and kissed him with deep endless kisses. Finally, I couldn’t hold back any longer. My body was spent and my need was too strong. I bounce faster and ground harder, his eyes turning almost black as he pushed me closer and closer until we both sailed off together.

Chapter 16 – Sarah

“You should make t-shirts that say ‘Seron’s Suck!’ I am telling you, there is a fortune to be made here, Axel.”

He squinted at me, “That doesn’t even make sense, they don’t have any mouths.”

I rolled my eyes, “Not the point, it means they are crappy, stupid, and you know, not cool.”

“They are cool, actually their planet is quite cold,” he tried to explain but I cut him off.

“Not the point, they are stupid cock suckers that pretended to be Quokiot and intended on starting an intergalactic war.”

“While I hate to point out that they still don’t have mouths and therefore can’t be cock suckers. I will admit that they are lacking in intelligence if they truly believed that we couldn't figure out their plan. All of the Quokiot that were killed transitioned back into their Seron formed within twenty-four hours. Sergeant Brooms has been in contact with the authorities and the Quoki are horrified that someone tried to intimidate them and attack a Zeronian spacecraft.”

“Has anyone been able to reach the Seron’s?”

I slouched further down in my chair that was located next to Axel’s. We were in one of the largest Omega conference rooms having just sat through a war meeting. One in which I fell asleep about ten minutes in, and now I needed Axel to fill me in on what I missed.

He shook his head, “There is no communication in or out of the planet, Seron.”

“So, we blast over there and what blow them up like the death star?”

Axel raised a brow, “No, Hans Solo, we do nothing of the sort. We were sent to help keep the peace in the Omega Quadrant.”

I made snoring noises, “This is the snooze felt Axel, we should get in where the action is.”

“You are insane, you know that, right?” But I noticed that as he said it, there wasn’t any heat behind the words.

I laughed, “I have it on high authority that all the best people are.”

“Oh yeah? Who said that?” He scoffed.

“Lewis Carroll.”

Axel frowned, “Who in the hell is that?”

“Famous author, don’t worry your pretty head about it.”

“I still don’t get your attraction to books, except the porn ones. Those are alright,” he winked at me and I laughed out loud.

“They aren’t porn books! They are erotic romances, it’s totally different!”

“Cocks and pussies, that equals porn, Sarah. I hate to break it to you.”

“This isn’t the point,” I insisted, not able to wipe the smile off my face.

“Hey, what are you two arguing about?” Maria came into the conference room. Her arm was still bandaged from where she had been injured during the battle. Honestly, I had worried that she might not make it. I am still blown away by the medical units they have out here in space.

“Porn,” Axel replied just as I smacked him up the side of the head.

“We were talking about going to the Seron’s and kicking ass.”

“No,” Axel corrected, “You were talking about that. I was reminding you that our responsibility was to stay here and help keep the peace.”

Maria made a face, “It seems strange that they are having us stay here. There hasn’t been any of the unrest that I had imagined. Was it SergeantBroom that called it in or someone else?”

Axel looked a little uneasy, “I am not sure, you should ask Zack.”

And suddenly I wondered if there was more to this mission than he was letting on. They had mentioned something when we were making the emergency landing in Queen Neopia’s fucked up world. But I couldn’t quite remember what they had said.

“How long will we be here?” I asked watching his face closely.

Axel shrugged, “Until we get reassigned.”

“That doesn’t work for me. We need to get back and rescue that human from Queen Neopia.”

Maria’s eyes widened and she got up, “I had best go look for the Captain. Good to see you two.”

I scowled at Axel, “You scared her away.”

He scoffed at me, “Hardly, she was worried the insanity might rub off. The last thing Maria or I want is to go back into Neopia’s clutches.”

“But you can’t just leave that girl there, Axel. That isn’t okay.”

He sighed and then leaned in close, “If I tell you someone is working on it will you let the matter go?”

“Depends on who,” I said stubbornly, “If you say that Zack is working on it then I won’t believe you. He’s the one who ditched her in the first place.”

“We were saving your life!” Axel demanded.

"Yeah, but not at the expense of someone else. I can't live with that, Axel."

His eyes softened and he sighed, "It worries me that you are beginning to make sense."

A small smile broke through, "Yeah, well, we can work on our friendship bracelets later. I need to know what the plan is to save the human girl."

Axel glanced around and then put a finger to his lips indicating that I needed to shut the fuck up.

"We are staying in the Omega Quadrant to help settle the unrest. No more questions."

I blinked, "You are an ass-hat."

To my surprise, he grinned but didn't retaliate. Instead, Axel picked me up and started stalking for the door. My brows knit together but I allowed him to take me. Mostly because he smelled so stinking incredible that I liked being close to him. And there was also the fact that when we were touching all of my senses were in overdrive.

It was like a warm fuzzy feeling, times a thousand.

When we got back to our pod he set me down and I went to open my mouth, but once again Axel put his finger against my lips. He went into his bag and pulled out something that looked like a television remote. He pressed a few buttons and a purple light came shooting out of the end coating every surface in our sleeping pod.

"We can now speak without being overheard."

I gaped, "Who is listening in?"

Axel shrugged, "Most likely Sergeant Broom, perhaps the Seron, can't be too sure."

"Were they always listening in?" my voice was rising.

"Most likely, something has been wrong since we arrived. We had to make sure that they didn't suspect we were on to them."

"Axel, what about when we were fucking? Were they listening then?"

He grinned, "I would have been."

"Yeah, but you are a nasty pervert," I retorted.

He smiled blandly, "With your sex books I should think you would like a little exhibitionism."

I smacked him, "They aren't sex books!"

Axel just laughed and I seriously considered writing something nasty in his skin with my laser eyes. He saw that my hands had started to glow and immediately sobered.

“Anyhow,” he went on, “We have to act like everything is normal. There were just too many coincidences that the Seron knew right where we were and then when we were returning. It makes one wonder if we have a mole in the crew or if this was a set-up from the beginning. And no, we aren’t just leaving the human there. What kind of monsters do you take us for?”

I launched myself into Axel's arms peppering his face with kisses, “And then we can go blow up the death star?”

“And then we can go assess the situation and make intelligent and informed decisions that will benefit all living kind,” he amended.

“That’s just what I said,” I kissed him again and then raced over to where he had the remote. I handed it to him and began to strip out of my uniform.

“Why do I need this?” his face was a mask of confusion.

“I am about to blow your world. I don’t want anyone to miss it!”

Axel threw his head back and laughed before grabbing me and blowing my world instead.

Chapter 17 – Axel

"The Seron's planet is comprised of poor villages and farms with one main city as the hub of their industry. They are primarily known for their shapeshifting abilities, but it is also common knowledge that they produce a high quantity of alcoholic beverages that are sold throughout the galaxy."

Sarah snorted, "Shapeshifters who make moonshine?"

Zack's lips pursed, "Yes. However, for the most part, it has been legal transactions. In recent months there have been rumors of a poorer quality product. Zeron is just one of the planets that have pulled Seron's rights to sell on their planet. Subsequently, five other planets have followed suit and Seron is retaliating."

"How many have pulled out in total?" I asked.

"Eleven," Zack responded.

Sarah sucked in a breath, "How many were they selling in, to begin with?"

"Twenty-five," Zack looked back down at his reports, "But Zeron is by far the largest distributor to pull out."

"Is there any way to tell that you are dealing with a shapeshifter?"

It was a good question, one that I wished I had a better answer to.

"No, Sarah, they take on every aspect and nuance of whomever they have chosen. It isn't permanent they can shift into something else immediately. But as we saw with the attack on our ship if they are killed in the shifted form it takes about twenty-four hours before their body will revert back to its original form."

"Do we know anyone who comes from that planet? You said that we could have a mole on the crew. Do you think that someone is impersonating someone else or that they empathize with their home planet?"

Zack looked at Sarah with respect, "All good theories. We are not aware of anyone in our crew that is originally from Seron. But the truth is that our planets were once sister stars. Zeron and Seron hovered very near each other for centuries. Seron was knocked from its orbit by a massive band of asteroids and floated until it came to rest in its current location. The nearest planet is still Zeron, but we have lived in peace from the beginning."

"What is the official word from the Seron's?" I rubbed the scruff on my chin absentmindedly. "Surely they have made a statement?"

Zack nodded, “They have, supposedly it was a band of rogues that stole the aircraft and attacked us.”

“You can’t believe that,” my tone was incredulous.

Zack shook his head, “Not a chance.”

“We need evidence, their plans or someone who can testify of their wrongdoing.” Sarah stood for a moment to walk around the room, “What if we went to Seron, undercover, and found that evidence?”

“How could you fool a planet of shapeshifters that you were anything other than what you are?” Zack’s eyes were intent on Sarah.

“We don’t try to fool them,” she said simply. “We go in as who we are, saying that we are emissaries of The Intergalactic Council that want to help get their trade up and going again. Is that too far off from something that you would do?”

I considered this, “No, we are here to keep the peace, it wouldn’t be unusual to send guards and warriors with others if they were going in to help the Seron. We would need their permission, of course. What do you think, Zack?”

He bit his lip staring hard at the plans and then back at Sarah and I. “I think it just might work. We need to take a smaller ship, while mine is still being fixed. We could leave the majority of the crew to stay here to appease Sergeant Brooms. If the Head Commander decrees we go, there is nothing that anyone can say about it.”

Sarah frowned, “Who is the Head Commander?”

Zack grinned, “My dad.”

**

“Hey, Maria! What’s up Heath? Are you guys ready to blow up the death star?” Sarah had been bouncing off the walls all morning.

I picked her up and threw her over my shoulder, “Ignore her, she’s not used to our coffee yet.”

“Axel!” Sarah pounded on my back so I swatted her ass, “Damn it, Ass-hole Axel, I want more coffee!”

“Are we about ready?” I asked, ignoring the bundle over my shoulder.

Maria and Heath nodded with wide eyes.

“I’m going to bite your ass, Thor!”

I smacked her butt again grinning at Maria and Heath.

“Will she really bite you?” Heath asked, with a hint of trepidation.

I felt her teeth sink in and I swatted her ass harder, “We call it foreplay.”

I walked over to the seat where she would be buckled in for takeoff and gently set her in it. Sarah’s face was red and her eyes were blazing. Without another thought, I leaned forward and kissed her. It was just as I suspected, she was aroused as hell. Sarah grabbed my uniform and yanked me closer to her mouth.

I heard Heath mumble something like, “Lucky man.”

I damn well knew it too.

When she broke the kiss Sarah bit my bottom lip with a growl, “I let you get away with that.”

A wide smile broke across my face, “I know.”

Zack came in next and ordered us all to prepare for takeoff. It wasn’t long before the countdown had begun and we were blasting off once again, only this time we would be going directly into the lion’s mouth.

With the smaller ship came the capacity to travel at higher speeds. This was necessary because there weren’t sleeping pods or a dining unit on this craft. We would be in flight for a little over forty-eight hours, during which time your seat did recline a little but not much.

There were two things that I learned during this trip. One, that Heath snored fucking loud and I was worried Sarah might kill him. My girl needs her rest. And two, that Zack talks in his sleep. He talked about all kinds of stupid shit like yelling about his place in line or asking for more meatballs.

Yeah, we are never going to let him live that one down.

Once we entered the orbit of Seron we were addressed by the landing crew who treated us with the utmost respect. The landing was fairly uneventful and soon we were back on land again. Sarah looked around with wonder as she took in Seron for the first time. The planet was a warm one with little vegetation. The sands were a dusky pink to deep red, and it held it’s own kind of beauty. In the sky, one could still see the twin moons that hadn’t quite faded with the sun’s rays.

“What do you think?” I whispered in her ear wrapping an arm around her waist.

“It’s beautiful, but how do they grow things here?”

I pointed to the glass buildings in the distance, “Greenhouses, there are thousands of them on the planet. The people live in abject poverty and work in the greenhouses.”

“Where is their water supply?” she asked taking my hand without realizing it.

My heart squeezed at the way she trusted me. “They do have rainfall, it isn’t much but they are able to harness it quite well and keep it under the surface.”

She nodded, but I could tell her mind was still working on the how's and why's.

"We welcome you," a woman of middle age approached us. "I am Sabine, and I am the Commander of Seron."

We greeted her with affability and followed Sabine into one of the buildings near their landing space. The feeling that Sabine was giving off seemed tainted almost. I wasn't sure if she was trying to intimidate us or if that was my senses giving me a clue.

It was immediately cooler inside of the building. The rooms were well appointed and lavishly dressed. The Serons that saw their leader all bowed their heads in respect for Sabine. She led us into a conference room and then clicked on a remote much like the one I had used in the Omega Quadrant.

I watched as the light coated the room causing complete silence as we were sealed in.

"Now," Sabine leaned forward, "I can be frank with you."

She shimmered and in her place stood a girl on the cusp of womanhood.

"My name is Kat, my mother Sabine has taken ill. I think someone is trying to kill her."

Chapter 18 – Sarah

"That was fucking awesome! Do it again!"

Kat grinned and then shifted into a creature that looked something like a monkey and swings across the room. Once she shifted back she laughed at the look on my face, "You are funny, Human Girl."

I beamed at her, "Ha!" And then louder I yelled out so that Axel could hear me from the other room, "I told you I was funny!"

Axel's voice rang back loud and clear, "Don't encourage her, Kat."

Kat laughed, "Your life mate is funny, too."

I had been about to say something witty when her words stopped me.

"Lifemate, what is that?" I asked her.

"The person you choose to live with, grow a family with." She gave me a curious look, "he is your life mate, isn't he?"

"Umm," I didn't know how to answer that. I liked him, maybe even loved him a little, sometimes.

Kat placed a hand on my arm, "Is this what they would call, complicated?"

I smiled at her, "You are smart, you know that?"

She nodded, "Of course, I am. Listen, Sarah, do you think that they will be able to find who is poisoning my mother?"

It was hard to remember that she was only a child, barely fifteen years old. I could hardly imagine what she was going through.

"I know that the only person in this whole galaxy I would trust is Axel. He might be a pain in the ass."

Kat giggled and I rolled my eyes playfully.

"But he is a good man and a kick-ass warrior."

"He said the same about you," she said before moving to the banquet table to get a drink.

I sat up straight, "He said I was a kick-ass warrior?"

She turned and smirked, "Well, he didn't say you were a good man."

I snorted, "I think I am rubbing off on you."

She looked slightly horrified and I laughed.

“No, it’s an expression that means you are picking up some of my bad habits.”

Kat broke out into a wide grin, and then in my exact voice she called out, “Fucking hell, Axel, get your hands off my ass.”

“I’m not even touching your ass, Woman!”

Axel walked into the room scowling and Kat and I dissolved into laughter.

“What?” he asked in confusion.

I shook my head and made my way over to him. When I was close enough I placed my hands on his firm chest and saw the flare of desire light in his eyes.

“What if I want your hands on my ass?” I said the words so softly that he had to lean forward to hear them.

With a jerk of his head, he turned to Kat, “We need to have a special conference.”

Heath moved to the door, “What special conference?”

But it was too late, Axel had already scooped me up and was carrying me out of the room and towards the space that had been reserved for us in Seron.

My arms snaked around his neck and I leaned up to kiss the underside of his chin. His scruff gently abraiding my lips.

My core filled with liquid desire and I bit his skin. Axel took off in a dead run, while I laughed the entire way.

Once inside we were ripping at each other’s uniforms, desperate to get them off. Axel rammed his elbow against the wall and I nearly landed on my ass trying to yank my pants off. But once he grabbed my hips and shoved his massive cock inside of me I didn’t care that I still had my socks on, it felt too fucking good. I just wanted it harder and faster.

My hands were clutching the wall and he was thrusting into me with a force that nearly had my teeth chattering. I was just about to come when he pulled out.

“Damn it, Axel!”

But he wasn’t finished, I found myself picked up and tossed onto the bed. Axel shoved my thighs wide and began to lick.

“Fucking hell, fucking hell!” I screamed as he ate me out, his eyes staring into mine as he did filthy wonderful things to my pussy.

“Axel, ah, Axel!” my legs were shaking and I knew I was soaking his face. Suddenly the orgasm was upon me and there was nothing I could do but shake and moan as he drove me over the edge.

I looked up to see him wiping his face and growled, “You are mine.”

He looked surprised for a second, “Well, yeah?”

I sat up and grabbed his massive dick, stroking it with my hands and then guiding it into my mouth. I knew just how he liked it and I was more than willing to bring this giant of a man to his knees. Axel tried to hold back, but I sucked him hard and deep. I felt a surge of victory when his hands sank into my hair and he began to use me, fuck my mouth the way he wanted.

I was already feeling the achy throb between my thighs again. I attempted to slip a hand down between them when I found myself pulled off his dick and then he was inside of me.

Lifting my legs so that they rested on his shoulders, he plowed into me so hard that I saw stars.

“More, Axel, harder!”

He grunted and pushed into me with everything that he had. I felt the power within me begin to swirl. This had never happened before, but suddenly the feelings and emotions that we had for each other intensified to a point where I knew that when I shattered I would never be the same.

Red light enveloped us and I saw Axel’s eyes narrow with intent as he fucked me with everything he was worth. This felt different than before, I felt a connection to Axel that scared me as much as I craved it.

“What is happening?” I rasped trying to stay in the moment. But my body was riding on a high that I didn’t understand.

“You, Sarah, you are mine,” the moment he said the words I flew over the edge, my body spasming, as wave after wave of pleasure washed over me and black began to creep into the edges of my vision.

I heard him yell as he reached his release and then I shuttered and blackness took over.

**

I didn’t know how long I was out or even why I was resting at that point of the day. I groaned rolling over in Axel’s arms. He grunted and held me close to his chest.

“Are you alright?” he murmured against my neck.

I frowned, “I’m fine.”

But then I felt the ache in my body.

“Sarah, I didn’t mean to do it. I’m not sorry, shit I know I should be, but I’m not.”

“What in the fuck are you talking about?” I grumbled turning in his arms to look into his face.

The lines around his eyes told me that he had been worried.

“What happened?”

He swallowed, “I heard you earlier with Kat.”

“I know,” my brows knit together, “We heard you as well.”

Axel sighed, “No, I heard her ask if you were my life mate. Sarah, I know that we are imprinted and that should be good enough for me, but the thought that you might choose another to be your life mate, it fucking rips me to shreds. I hadn’t meant to claim you this way. But you said I was yours and then suddenly I had to make you mine.”

I pushed away from him and sat up, “What does that mean, Life Mate? Kat was saying it earlier.”

He moved to sit up beside me.

“It is similar to marriage on earth.”

“We got married?” I smirked a little bit, “No white dress?”

Axel continued as if I hadn’t spoken, “Only a little more permanent.”

My smile faded, “How permanent?”

“Does forever sound okay to you?”

Chapter 19 – Axel

“Holy shit! You mother fucker!”

Well, it looked like Sarah found her new lifemate markings.

“Fucking hell, Axel, you should have just pissed on me and made it official!”

“That is hurtful,” I tried keeping a straight face. But it’s hard when she was looking at me like an angry kitten. And yes, if I am being honest, I made me feel like a king to see the markings on her body.

For most couples, the markings come upon their shoulder, underneath their ear, or perhaps the inside of their wrist.

Not Sarah’s—no, nothing so tame for my girl.

Her markings started about mid-thigh and wrap around covering part of her flat stomach and the majority of her lower back. There were even some tendrils that curved around her breast.

It was sexy as fuck and I wanted to lick every line that had been placed on her body. She looked like a goddess, so beautiful, and terribly angry.

I got up and walked over to the full-length mirror that she was standing in front of with a horrified expression.

“What did you do to me?”

I slipped my arms around her and brought her naked body against my chest. I loved the feel of her soft ass against my cock and rubbed it against her.

“You look gorgeous,” I growled, licking her shoulder.

“I look weird.”

It was the uncertainty in her voice that made my gut clench.

“Sarah, you look beautiful, can’t you see that?”

She met my gaze in the mirror, “Is this what everyone’s lifemate markings look like?”

“Yeah, absolutely,” I assured her knowing that at some point it would come back and bite me in the ass.

“Where is yours?” she asked shyly.

I shrugged, “I haven’t found it yet, but we can look for it.”

She turned and with her hands ran her fingers over every inch of my chest. I knew that she could see as well as feel, but I like the method she had chosen. She cupped my dick and gave it a few pulls before continuing down my legs and even checked the bottoms of my feet.

Sarah bit her lip, "Why can't we find it?"

I leaned down and kissed her taking that gorgeous plump lip and sucking on it.

"It's there, I promise."

I turned around and she looked over my shoulder's and back. Sarah traced every muscle with her magic fingers and then stopped right above my ass.

I heard her sharply inhalation and I feared the worst.

"What is it?"

I tried to wrench my head around when she started laughing like a hyena. There was snorting and pointing and I knew it had to be something fucking embarrassing like a fairy princess or something.

"Just tell me," I ground the words out.

But Sarah just kept on laughing, now wiping at the tears in her eyes. I grabbed a hand-held mirror and turned around to see what the fuck was so damn hilarious.

It wasn't so much a mark as it was a brand. On my left ass cheek in bold calligraphy sat one single word.

SARAH'S.

Fucking hell.

I grabbed her off the floor and carried her over to our bed. The only way to calm this woman when she was like this was a good fucking. And after seeing her name imprinted on my ass I knew that I needed to fuck her good.

I captured her lips again and Sarah came willingly into my arms. It was like I could still feel the laughter bubbling up inside of her and shit if it wasn't making me happy too. She was everything I never thought I would ever want, and absolutely the most amazing part of my life.

How had I survived before Sarah? It was like I was living in gray nothingness and she arrived with color and light transforming every aspect of my life.

I have no idea why the lifemate mark was so elaborate on her, but a part of me wondered if it was because I wanted everyone to know she was mine.

My fingers dug into her hips and she spread her legs wide allowing me to slip between them. Her pussy was wet and hot as my cock slipped along her folds. I used the tip to rub her clit and knew I was giving it to her right when she began to make those noises that I loved so much.

I thrust against her clit again and again as I licked and kissed her neck moving down to her perfect breasts.

When I took her nipple into my mouth she arched her back crying out as her orgasm swept through her.

Once she started to come down I flipped her so that she was on her stomach and I grabbed her hips pulling that perfect ass into the air. I grabbed some lube and applied it liberally to my fingers and cock before pouring it onto that tight ring that squeezed me so good.

Sarah whimpered when I traced the ring of her asshole with one finger and pinched her nipple with the other hand.

"Just relax for me, Baby. I will make you feel good."

I slid a finger into her ass and she moaned pushing back against me. My other hand came up to play with her clit again as I added another finger stroking her tight channel. My dick was harder than a rock and I desperately wanted to be inside of her. Once that pretty ass hole opened enough for me I placed my dick at the entrance and pressed.

She leaned her hips back against me and suddenly I was inside. It was so tight that my eyes couldn't focus. I wanted to pound into her, but I had to make sure that she was okay. Slowly I began to push the rest of my length inside of her. Short strokes that teased and tempted both of us.

"Axel, more!"

I pushed all the way until I was balls deep inside.

"You are so tight, Sarah! Fuck!"

"It feels sooooo good, Axel. Fuck me, fuck my ass."

Something snapped inside of me and I started to move, really move. She met my thrusts shoving back as hard as I was pushing forward. The slapping of skin on skin filled the air as Sarah's legs began to shake with need. Her pussy was so wet, every swipe and flick with my fingers driving her closer and closer to her release.

My dick was shoving into her ass hard and fast. It was primal and animalistic and I loved every minute of it.

She cried out the moment her orgasm broke, her ass clenching me even tighter as her pussy convulsed and waves of pleasure washed over her. I came hard no longer able to hold on. My dick felt like it came forever and I pumped into her with every spurt of cum.

I gently pulled out of her and looked at her ass that hadn't closed up again. She was so fucking beautiful, every inch of her.

And my marks on her, fuck, I can't even describe how it made me feel. I was proud and humbled that this incredible woman was actually mine.

I grabbed something to clean us both off and then carried her into the bathing chambers so that we could shower. She slid down my body languidly, completely boneless from her release. I took the soap and washed her hair and then every inch of her body.

After I was finished washing, I turned on the dryers and in a few moments, we were clean, dry, and ready to get dressed.

I turned to go toward the closet and felt a sharp slap on my left ass cheek. Whipping around I stared at her, "What the fuck was that?"

She smirked, "It's mine, it says so."

And then she started laughing again.

Somehow, I knew that this was one she would enjoy for the rest of our lives.

Chapter 20 – Sarah

Sabine met with us the next morning. She resembled her daughter a fair amount, but she was darker in complexion and incredibly formal where Kat was more free-spirited.

Sabine also looked like shit. Now, I realize that I am not medically equipt to hand out a diagnosis to the woman, but she looked bad. I was inclined to agree with Kat that her mom was being poisoned and after speaking with her I wondered if the whole damn planet was being poisoned.

“Our crops are failing and there is no reason why,” she explained. “I have scientists from around the galaxy doing research and they come up empty handed every time. We are losing contract after contract for our product and I fear that soon our people will starve.”

“What Intel do you have on the spacecraft that attacked us? Have they been identified?” Axel questioned.

Sabine nodded, “Yes, they are part of a radical group that wants to overthrow the current government.”

“So, we are dealing with a revolution?” Zack frowned, “I don’t see how a group of radicals would have the funding to access one of the Seron’s spacecraft? And why disguise themselves as the Quoki?”

“They wouldn’t have the funding,” Sabine sighed.

Axel tapped his chin, “Unless…”

I grinned, “It all depends who they are in bed with.”

Axel nodded, “Precisely.”

Zack rolled his eyes, “So now that you are lifemates everything is going to revolve around your happy union?”

I turned to him, “I could have said it depends on who their fuck buddies are.”

He made a face and I returned the gesture.

“Sarah is right, whoever is providing the funding for them has to have a good reason to want to hurt Seron. We need to discover what that is in order to figure out who they are. I am assuming this radical group is underground?”

Sabine nodded, “Yes, but we do have three other names besides the ones that were killed attacking your ship. It is like they have disappeared off our planet, but I know that can’t be true because our crops continue to be attacked.”

"Who are these people?" I asked.

"Rafe Malone, Akara Malone, and Sean Granthum. The first two are not married, they are siblings. Their father was a celebrated member of our Imperial Guard, but was killed in battle when they were younger."

"Which battle?" Zack asked.

Sabine frowned, "It was when the Terrat attacked in the Omega Quadrant, our planet was asked to provide forces by The Intergalactic Council."

My hands came up of their own accord, "The same place we just came from? The place that said there was trouble but there wasn't and then we got attacked, that same Omega Quadrant?"

Sabine nodded, "I don't know of any other."

"It's got to all connect somehow. I swear that Sergeant Brooms has to be at the bottom of it." I stood up to pace and Zack rolled his eyes in my direction.

"What do you have against Brooms?" Zack huffed.

Um, like a million things, but most importantly, "Did you see his eyebrows? They were evil. I could never trust a man with those caterpillar brows crawling around on his face. It's weird. He's got to be the bad guy, no question."

Zack turned to Axel, "Are you seriously going to allow her to malign a member of The Intergalactic Council because of a facial feature?"

Axel looked over at me with that rugged panty-melting smile, before winking and blowing me a kiss. Hot damn, I was ready to scale the table just to get at him.

"Oh, I don't know," Axel drawled, "They are a bit creepy."

I fucking love him, it's official.

Heath nodded, "Yeah, I agree."

For the first time since meeting Sabine, she actually cracked a smile. It made her face seem so much younger and I saw more of Kat in her at that moment.

"Eyebrows aside," her smile widened, "There is something unsavory about Brooms. I would have to agree with Sarah."

I didn't run around the room and yell, 'I told you so!' to Zack, but I may have smirked, a lot.

Sabine rose to her feet as did all the others, "We are adjourned until you have had a chance to visit the farms?"

Axel nodded, “If you can find out any other information about the Malone siblings and Grantham please let us know. We will leave Heath here to help guard you and your daughter. I am afraid that it is best not to trust anyone until we can get to the bottom of this.”

Sabine nodded, “I agree.”

We turned to walk out and that magnificent ass was right within striking distance. However, I had decided to make a small attempt at maturity. So, I waited until Sabine had retired to her chambers before leaning over and smacking his left ass cheek.

Axel grunted, “How long are we going to play this game?”

I grinned, “I can’t see it getting old anytime soon.”

Zack growled from behind us, “Can we just focus on the mission?”

“What did your dad say?” I asked, playing nice for once.

Zack’s eyes brightened and I noticed that he really was rather handsome when he wasn’t being a dick.

“The Head Commander will be sending out another ship and crew immediately. He is gathering information about Brooms, but said that at present it doesn’t look like there is anything untoward.”

“What did he say about you leaving your paired imprint behind in a black hole?”

Okay, so I wasn’t able to be nice for very long.

“I didn’t tell him,” Zack snarled. “We are going after her as soon as we get this taken care of.”

I shrugged, “Let’s hope she still wants you.”

**

We spent the next several days traveling through various farms. It was interesting to me how the land could be so barren but the moment you walked into the massive greenhouses it was like another place altogether.

There were several things that really bothered me. First, they had young children working the fields. I knew that this was something that happened on earth in poverty-stricken areas, but the long days combined with their skinny bodies didn’t bode well for how I felt about Seron. I asked why they didn’t transform their bodies into something stronger. If I was a shapeshifter that is what I would have done. But I learned that a child doesn’t have the ability until they are ten or eleven.

It was nothing against Sabine and Kat, they were perfectly lovely, but this wasn’t right. The children should have been in school, and when I mentioned this to the supervisors they mocked

me. Saying that why should they learn when this is what they would be doing until the day they died.

Axel had a hard time holding me back from frying the lot of them.

Second, the plants were dying. You could see brown streaks along the stocks that shouldn't be there. Some of the wheat drooped and even some of the plants that I had never seen before just didn't look right. I asked about the water supply and made a note to research more on how their reserves were tended to under the earth. It seemed to be the best way to ruin crops would be through their water supply.

And last, the general air of discontent. You could feel the tension everywhere we went. It made me wonder if the radicals didn't have a justifiable cause. I wanted to know if The Intergalactic Council had any idea that the circumstances here on Seron were so bad.

If they did, I was going to have a problem being one of their SUPER pairings.

When we got back to the tent we were sleeping in I unloaded my thoughts on Axel.

"I can't support this," I felt my gut clench, "I am falling in love with you. And I am learning to tolerate your massive tattoo. But I can't sit back and watch these conditions and not do something."

Axel pulled me into his arms holding me close, "I am so fucking glad. Because this shit has to stop."

Surprise filled me, "You agree with me?"

He bent down to kiss me and I fought not to be swept away by it.

"You and I are on the same page. We just need to talk to Zack."

Chapter 21 – Axel

It turns out that Zack was in agreeance with Sarah and me. Back at the command center in the main city, the three of us met for a private conference.

“Something is definitely wrong here,” Zack sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. “This isn’t going to be as clean cut as I wanted it to be.”

I grimaced, “Nothing ever is. But I can’t help but wonder how much of our tour is factual and how much is an illusion.”

“What do you mean?” Sarah asked, leaning forward and I was momentarily transfixed by the sweet shape of her lips.

Shaking my head I continued with my earlier thought, “We know that Seron children cannot transform their shapes, but Seron adults can. Who is to say that what we saw wasn’t what they wanted us to perceive?”

Sarah nodded her head, “Actually that would be an excellent way for the rebels to get their point across to The Intergalactic Council.”

“The strange part,” Zack added, “Is that for the most part, there haven’t been any labor complaints sent to headquarters. My father made sure to look into every one. I would think if what we witnessed was accurate there would be news about it.”

“We need to speak with Sabine and see if we can get an honest assessment,” I suggested.

“May I speak with Kat?” Sarah asked.

I didn’t see why not, but was interested in knowing why.

“Kat seems to be more of an open book whereas Sabine tends to be rigid and closed off. I do not know how much the girl knows of the affairs in the land, but she does know her mother is in danger. I can’t help but wonder if she might have more clues or information for us.”

Zack nodded, “It’s a good idea.”

Sarah’s jaw dropped and Zack laughed.

“I am not a complete ass all of the time.”

A slow smile spread across her face, “No, not all of the time.”

**

I went with Sarah to speak with Kat. We found the girl in the libraries, reading in one of the window seats. She beamed the moment she spotted Sarah. With the exuberance of youth, Kat hopped up and ran over to us throwing her arms around Sarah.

“I have missed you! It gets so dreadfully boring here.”

Sarah grinned, “Surely someone as clever as yourself can find something to do.”

Kat nodded reluctantly, “Sometimes.”

“Are there others that are your age?” Sarah asked pulling Kat to a comfortable seating area and plopping down like she wanted to shoot the breeze.

Kat pulled a face, “We don’t have many young people on Seron.”

“Why?” I asked and then realized that I might have blurted it out too quickly when Sarah sent me a ‘shut the fuck up’ look.

Kat shrugged noncommittally.

Sarah went on blithely, “When I was growing up we lived in an area that had twelve boys and no girls except me. I had to learn to hang out with the guys or be left behind.”

Kat’s cheeks colored, “That doesn't sound so bad.”

Sarah laughed, “Yes, when I was your age it was amazing, but as a little girl it was really lonely.”

Kat bit her lip, “I know how you felt. Sometimes I get one of the servants to pretend to be a kid, but you can always tell that they are not even when they have shifted.

I was on high alert but knew to let Sarah take the lead.

“You must be wicked smart to tell the difference! I never could,” Sarah said with a grin.

Kat waived her hand, “Oh, it’s easy, all you have to do it look at the eyes, children’s eyes are fun and playful and the adults here have sad, old eyes. But it wouldn’t matter anyway because if someone is in a shift their iris is green.”

Sarah’s brows knit together, “Every time? There are no exclusions?”

Kat shook her head, “Nope.” And then she looked pensive, “That is a Seronian secret, you won’t tell anyone, will you?”

Sarah shook her head, “Of course I would never betray your trust. Now, as for Axel…”

She trailed off playfully and I pretended to be the wounded party.

“I cannot believe my lifemate would sell me out like that!”

Kat giggled, “I knew you were lifemates, you are too perfect together.”

I could tell Sarah was thinking about the massive brand I had put on her body by the way her cheeks were flushing. In our uniforms, it wasn’t visible to others.

Sarah cleared her throat, “Like I said before you are wicked smart. Have you seen your mother today? How is she feeling?”

Kat's face slid into a frown, "She doesn't feel well again. I am very worried about her. Did you find anything out about the water supply?"

Sarah looked at me before answering, "We are to go there this afternoon. Would you like to come? Perhaps we can make a game out of seeing who can reveal the most shifted Seron."

Kat bounced up, "I would love to! Let me ask my mother if it is alright!"

Sarah smiled, "Go ahead, we will wait here for you."

The moment she walked out of the room I pulled out the device to seal the area so we could speak freely.

"How many of them had green eyes?" I grumbled.

"How in the fuck should I know?" she answered happily. "But it doesn't matter, we know that younger children are not prevalent on the planet and that is mostly what we saw. Now that we know what to look for we can gauge better how many people are in on this deception. Also, when we test the water we need to make sure and use systems that were not made on Seron. I don't know if Sabine can be trusted or not."

There was a knock on the door and I lifted the silencer just a Zack entered.

"You invited a kid along?" he ranted at Sarah.

Don't get me wrong, Zack and I have been friends for as long as I can remember but it seems like ever since his imprinted pair showed up and didn't awaken, he's been a dick. And the person who tends to get the most crap from him is Sarah.

That had to stop.

In a whirl of motion, I had him pinned against the wall by the scruff of his neck.

"What the fuck, man?"

"You will not disrespect my lifemate ever again. Don't question her, don't talk down to her, or I will fucking rip your lungs out."

I let his toes touch the floor before growling at him and then backing away.

He gasped for air, "I'm sorry, man. I didn't mean…" he trailed off. "You are right, Axel."

Zack turned to Sarah, "I apologize for my behavior."

Sarah's eyes were wide and I prayed that for once in this beautiful girl's life she could just take an apology and let things go.

Sarah smirked, "Well, you should be. But that is okay, I forgive you."

"Why?" Zack asked.

"You are under a lot of stress and I feel bad about what happened with your imprinted pair. I am sorry she had to be left behind."

I can't remember of another time Sarah had apologized to Zack. I almost wanted to pinch myself to see if I was awake.

I pinched her ass instead.

Sarah's eyes glowed and she shot a red light at me before I could put up my mental shield. I felt the burning in my forehead and grabbed her. I could tell that she was suppressing a smile and it only infuriated me more.

"You can smack my ass, but I can't pinch yours?"

Zack was of no help seeing that it was much funnier to him when she got me.

Sarah bit her lip, "I'm sorry," she squeaked.

"Not fucking good enough," I growled and then pulled her in for a punishing kiss that quickly turned into a ravishing kiss that might lead to something fun.

That was until Zack cleared his throat a few—eight—times.

Kat had come back into the room and was staring with wide-eyes. Great, now I felt like some kind of an exhibitionist.

Sarah brushed it off like it was no big deal, but Zack was staring at me. He motioned for me to come closer and then reached up to feel my forehead where I knew ass-hat had been written. Only there was nothing there.

"Dude," Zack's tone was incredulous, "She healed you."

Chapter 22 – Sarah

"I am fucking awesome!" I raised my hand for a high five and Axel looked at before grabbing my wrist and dragging it back down to my side.

"That is impossible," Zack was still talking, "I have never seen anything like that before."

I turned to Zack, "Where did you hear the word 'dude'?"

He flushed, "I have been brushing up on my earth knowledge. So, I know all the hip things to say to my bae."

"Wow," Axel snorted with laughter, "I don't think I have ever seen Sarah speechless before. This is a momentous occasion."

I opened my mouth but nothing came out.

"Cat got your tongue?" Zack continued, "Don't be bugg'n on me, Sarah."

There are few moments in your life when you need someone to do a reality check just to make sure that you are still in your right mind. I mean this easily could be a dream if Maroon 5 walked in wearing bikini's or maybe if we all joined in to perform a crosswalk musical. I honestly think these two scenarios would have been easier to swallow than Zack's new *lingo.*

"Where did you get your information?" I choked out.

Zack shrugged, "Here and there, do you want to know what my favorite one is?"

I shook my head, "Absolutely not."

"Pick up your face!" he beamed, "Or Fart-Knocker, that is a good one too."

Axel snorted, "That's not half bad."

"No," I said emphatically, "It's all bad. One hundred million billion percent bad. That slang is dreadfully out of date."

"As if," Zack rolled his eyes and for a moment I wondered if he had been watching Clueless for research.

"Zack, you won't impress her with this shit."

He frowned, "I wasn't trying to impress, Her."

"If not, Her, then who? Surely not me?"

He scoffed, "I don't give a witches tit about you."

Axel's lips quirked, so I elbowed him hard in the stomach.

"Do whatever you want Zack, but just remember, I warned you against it."

He grumbled something about know-it-all's but thankfully he didn't say anything worse like he needed to *bounce.*

"You love to bust his balls," Axel grumbled against my neck as he pulled me against him.

"I am doing him a favor. He sounds like a bad 90's movie."

Axel bit down on the soft part of my ear and then started kissing my neck. My head lulled to the side to give him better access. I loved it when Axel touched me, kissed me, fucked me. I could feel his length hardening and I had to admit that I was just as turned on as he was.

Unfortunately, that was when Kat chose to come back into the room. I went to move away from Axel and he hauled me back against his chest. I turned to yell at him but in the process, he pushed his erection against my ass and it became clear why I needed to stand in this very particular spot.

"Are you able to come with us?" I asked in a cheerful tone.

Kat nodded, "Mother didn't like it, but after I complained about being stuck inside for days at a time with nobody to keep me company she finally relented."

I smiled, "Well I, for one, am glad. Why don't you put on something that you don't mind getting dirty in, we are going into the caverns to check water supply this afternoon."

Kat grinned, "I will be back in a few minutes."

The second she was out the door, Axel had me whipped around and was kissing the ever-loving shit out of my mouth. I groaned and opened my mouth never wanting him to stop.

There was the sound of someone clearing their throat that finally tore us apart. The moment Axel raised his eyes, he paled and then stood at attention and saluted the older gentleman. He looked vaguely familiar, but I couldn't place where I knew him from.

"You must be the lovely Sarah," he said extending his hand, "I am the Head Commander Bryce Cole."

"Your Zack's dad?" I asked taking his hand and shaking it. I heard Axel's groan and figured I should have gone with something fancier than Zack's dad.

Commander Cole smiled, his grin very reminiscent of his son, "Yes, I am Zackarys' father."

"Cool," I nodded and then when Axel pinched me I let out a slightly breathless, "It's nice to meet you."

"And Axel, it's great to see you as always. Zack was telling me about a little trouble you had along with the trip through the black hole. I must say I am surprised Queen Neopia let you go so easily."

I turned wide-eyes on Axel, was he going to lie to the Head Commander? We both knew that the human girl was the only reason we were let go. The same human girl that was supposed to have been imprinted with his son.

Axel tugged on the neck of his uniform, "Highly unusual, Sir."

I waited for him to elaborate and in truth, it looked like Axel might, but at the last moment, he offered the Commander some refreshment. It was a good way to try and throw the conversation in another direction. But I had a feeling that the Commander wouldn't be as chipper about letting it all go.

Zack came running in, "Dad! When did you arrive?"

The two men embraced and Axel visibly relaxed.

When Zack and his father broke apart the Commander smiled at his son. "I was just discussing with Axel and Sarah how odd it was that Queen Neopia allowed your entire ship to leave without any type of controversy. It's odd, don't you think, son?"

Zack turned and glared at me.

"I didn't say anything," it was out of my lips before I could even think.

Zack's eyes bugged out and he looked ready to throttle me.

"Son, is there something you want to talk about?"

Zack slowly turned to his father.

The men, so much alike in appearance, seemed to be taking in the other's body language. It was something like an old wild west shootout. I literally felt like I should have been snacking on popcorn watching the events unfold.

Finally, Zack cursed, "Fuck it, you know, don't you?"

The Commander's heavy brow rose, "That you traded your imprinted pair to the Queen of Junk?"

"Damn it to hell, who told you?"

The Commander pulled out a missive, "I received an offer to buy back something that I was told would be crucial for my son."

Zack opened the note and read the words. A moment later he crushed the paper in his hand.

"Do you have her?"

"Chloe? As a matter of fact, I do," the Commander answered calmly as if they were talking about the morning paper and not a person.

"Where is she?" Zack glanced about.

"Back on Zeron with your mother and sister," the Commander's tone hardened, "Were you going to tell me?"

I will give it to Zack, at least he owned up when he fucked up.

"No way," his hands flew into the air. "I was going to go there next and get her. The last thing I wanted was for you all to get involved. Besides she hadn't even woken up."

The Commander raised a hand to stop his son, "She is awake now."

The stopped all of us in our tracks.

"If you do not imprint with her, she will die," the Commander stood. "I am sorry, but I must pull you from this mission, Zack. Heath can take your place, you are to report back to Zeron immediately."

"You can't seriously be taking me off this mission?" Zack's tone was incredulous. "Dad, I am the leader, the fucking captain. I can't abandon it for some human girl."

In hindsight, I shouldn't have let my temper get the best of me. But just the way he was acting like Chloe didn't matter just because she was human, I saw red.

In the next moment, Zack was clutching his head, the smell of burnt flesh in the air.

"What was that?" the Commander blinked and removed the hand that Zack had been holding.

A great boom of laughter filled the air when the Commander read what was on Zack's forehead.

Fucking ass-hat.

Chapter 23 – Sarah

Heath turned from the third cavern lake that we had visited and shook his head. He was indicating that nothing was wrong with the water. It didn't make sense. If the water supply was fine, why were the crops dying?

Interestingly enough, we didn't meet one green-eyed person on this trip. Kat had a great time chatting with several of the people and they all seemed happy to see her. We asked about the Grantham and the Malones but nobody knew them either.

When darkness started to fall we saw that a storm was brewing. Because of the sand here on Seron, the storms could be horrendous. Waves of sand can literally bury a person or aircraft. We got into the airship and Axel started flying it toward the capital. But the closer we got the worse the storm was.

"We need to find shelter," Heath yelled out over the sound of the storm.

Axel nodded and turned to Kat, "Where is the safest place we can go from here?"

Her brows knitted together in thought before she brightened, "Castalia, the city is just over the next dune to your left. I have an uncle there, Uncle Stanos."

Heath followed Kat's directions and we indeed did come to a small city tucked away between some smaller mountains. The storm wasn't as bad here, but I had a feeling that it was coming. We radioed ahead and they were expecting us and made space for the aircraft. Once the large metal doors closed we were able to get out.

The first man we came too had bright green eyes.

Kat smiled at him as if nothing was wrong, "We are here to seek refuge with Uncle Stanos."

The man nodded and turned to lead us through the hanger into what looked to be a maze of stairs and hallways. None of this was visible from the outside and I realized that we were going inside one of the mountains. Their city was primarily underground.

The next person we met also had bright green eyes, "Stanos cannot see you now child, he requests that you eat some supper and he will attend you as soon as he can."

Kat nodded, "We should like to wash up if that is alright?"

The man nodded, "Of course."

It was strange to know that the person you were looking at could literally be anyone but the one face they are showing you.

"If the ladies would like to use this chamber, there is another one across the hall for the gentlemen."

We walked into the bathing chamber and Kat grabbed my hand, pulling me inside to the furthest spot away from the entrance.

“Something is wrong here, I don’t know those people.”

I nodded, my voice in a quiet whisper, “I saw they were in a disguise.”

“They will know that I am aware they are not who they say they are,” she said, fear lacing her tones.

“But they don’t know that Axel, Heath, and I will also know they are not who they say they are. Play along, Kat, pretend that nothing is wrong. They may see that as a sense of solidarity from you. Do not let anyone know that we are aware of the secret. The element of surprise will be what we need to figure this out.”

She nodded shakily, “I am scared.”

I pulled her into me for a quick hug, “You are brave, fierce, and loyal. It’s okay to be scared. I would be worried if you weren’t. Just remember to stay close to me or Axel, we won’t let anything happen to you.”

She nodded again.

I went to the basin and began to wash up and indicated that she needed to do the same. Moments later we were walking back out into the hallway.

“Was everything okay in there?” Axel frowned, “It seemed to take forever.”

Kat froze and I scowled at him.

Grabbing her hand I gave it an encouraging squeeze.

“You don’t ask a lady about what she does in the bathroom, Axel. Trust me, there are some things that are better off if we don’t talk about them.”

Axel looked ready to argue, but Heath made a disgusted face. “Yuck, I don’t want to know.”

I smiled benignly at Heath, “Smart man.”

The green-eyed man cleared his throat, “If you are ready?”

Again we followed him down another corridor that opened up into a large eating area. It reminded me of a high school cafeteria. There were tables from one end of the room to the other. The people were grabbing a tray and filling it with food before going and sitting in groups of three or four.

“Please enjoy some supper and I will come and get you when Stanos is ready.”

We turned to thank the green-eyed man and then got in line behind several others who were already waiting.

"I don't like this," Axel whispered into my ear.

I didn't either. There were far too many people with green eyes in the cafeteria. Kat was glued to my arm and Heath stood on the other side of her. There wasn't as much animosity as we felt out in the fields but something was off here.

When our turn came to grab a tray we did and then picked up some food. Almost everything was vegetarian with a side of gravy that didn't look appetizing. However, it wasn't bad for taste and I found that by the time my meal was finished I was feeling much better. Maybe I had just been hungry after all?

I had begun to relax a little when I started listening in on the conversations around us.

"The rich bitch sits there like she owns the place."

Another said, "They think we are stupid, plowing the fields and tending the crops while they sit in the capital in their comfortable homes."

The first voice sneered, "They will get what is coming to them."

I felt Axel stiffen beside me.

Kat and Heath were talking and laughing with each other so I looked over at Axel.

His jaw was set and his eyes bore into mine. I could sense his urgency and felt the same as well but I had no idea what to do.

Again, I looked around the room. Bright green eyes stared back at me from every person in the room. We were in enemy territory. They knew it and we knew it.

Kat and Heath's conversation came to a halt when they realized that the room had gone quiet. I reached out and took Axel's hand in mine. We stood and picked up our trays, without saying a word we walked toward the kitchen window where the garbages were and the trays went back to be washed.

I felt like their eyes were burning holes in our backs and wondered fleetingly if this is something like how it felt when I burned Axel and Zack. It wasn't a nice feeling. I suppose I should have expected the first strike to come. It wasn't like we hadn't had ample warning, but when Axel crumpled beside me almost dragging me down with him I stumbled. It was unexpected and I needed a minute to get my bearings.

Power radiated through my body and I whipped around to face the angry crowd.

They were yelling things at me, but it was oddly still because I couldn't hear what they were saying. All I heard was the gentle rasp of Axel's breathing letting me know that he was still alive. Whoever did this was going to pay, I would make sure of it.

When the first wave of enemies approached us I picked up a table and threw it into them sending them sprawling like bowling pins that had been knocked to the ground. The second wave raised some kind of gun, but I shot them down with my eyes, not caring about their screams of pain.

They had hurt Axel, I would not tolerate that.

Some of the enemies began to flee, running and screaming for their lives. Others tried to attack, and each person that lifted a hand against me fell. I didn't need to lay a finger on any of them. But when I saw the man that had called Kat a rich bitch. I punched the mother fucker right in the nose. My hand burned from the pain, but it was worth it. I had never tolerated shit said about my friends, and I wasn't going to start now.

The doors opened and a man of fifty years or so entered, "Stop!"

I turned to take him out, but Kat ran and threw herself into the man's arms.

"Uncle Stanos! They attacked us!"

The man she called Uncle Stanos was dark with, eyes that bordered on black and a swarthy complexion. He motioned for his men to pick up Axel and then ordered others to arrest those that were still alive and were part of the revolt.

With a wave of his hand, he ushered us to another part of their mountain home.

Chapter 24 – Axel

Anger was rolling off of Stanos in waves. It was obvious that he hadn't expected us nor the chaos that we brought with us. I could feel Sarah crackling next to me, the energy from her outburst hadn't worn off. Honestly, a good fucking was what she needed, but it didn't look like that was in the near future.

I had a fleeting thought about Zack, wondering how he was getting on with Chloe.

"Why would you bring these outsiders into my city?" Stanos hissed at Kat.

"We were in trouble, there was a sandstorm. It wasn't expected, or we wouldn't have traveled at all, Uncle."

He only grunted.

"I don't understand why our weather has been so off lately. The storms seem to be getting worse and worse," Kat continued babbling.

Stanos raised a hand, "Enough, I have contacted your mother and she did not authorize a visit."

Sarah bristled, "Kat is your niece and was in danger. Are you saying that she should have risked her life in the storm because she didn't call first? What kind of fucked up shit is this?"

Stanos turned dark eyes on Sarah, "You do not understand our ways, human."

The way he said it made me regret ever calling Sarah by that name. It was derogatory in the extreme. I went to leave my seat but Sarah placed a hand on my arm.

"I should be very careful who you choose to insult," Sarah said icily.

The man didn't even flinch, "Or you will murder me like you did my people at supper?"

Sarah's grip on my arm tightened and I let her have the floor.

"Your people, as you call them, are all subjects of Seron and therefore abide by the policies and codes set forth by the Intergalactic Alliance. The people who raised their arms to hurt us today were in direct violation of those policies and codes and will be treated like traitors. Shall we add your name to the list?"

Sarah had balls, I almost wanted to stand and cheer, but at the risk of losing any manly credit, I still possessed. I kept my ass in the seat and merely watched as she ripped Stanos a new asshole.

"Word has already been sent to the Head Commander about what has happened here," Sarah went on. "I should think that you would be scrambling to try and figure out how to save face with the council and not threaten it's warriors."

Stanos looked like he was being forced to eat shit.

And he didn't like it.

"And you owe your niece and apology for being a straight up dickhead."

His face turned an ugly shade of purple. "I do beg your pardon."

Kat looked at her uncle with wide eyes. Never before had she heard him apologize to anyone—ever.

"You caught us unaware, but the storm has settled and it would be best if you left for the capital."

I felt good about that and was ready to get back on the aircraft. But with Sarah, nothing is ever that simple.

"We need answers first."

His eyes narrowed, "You have no warrant."

She smiled, it was dangerously deceptive. For instance, with her small stature and white blonde hair, one might assume that she was being amiable.

Obviously, that would be the farthest thing away from Sarah's true personality.

"The warrant will be here shortly. We have been tasked to stay and observe that nothing changes until they arrive."

Stanos shot to his feet, "Are you implying that my people would try and cover something up? How dare you speak to me that way?"

I raised a brow, "Everyone down at supper was in a different form. I would say there is a major cover-up. You know it and I know it. Soon the council will know it as well."

Stanos jerked up and stormed from the room. We heard the distinct clicking of a lock bolting us in.

Sarah grinned, "That's so cute that he thinks we can't get through a locked door."

Kat bit her lip, "It's almost two feet thick of reinforced steel. It won't be easy getting out of here."

Sarah rolled her eyes, "Lazer vision, hello…"

Kat smirked, "Oh yeah!"

"How did you get word to the Head Commander?" Heath asked.

Sarah looked over at him, "Hm? Oh, I didn't. That was a bluff."

My grin widened as Heath's frown grew.

"Then what was that all about?" confusion on his face.

“Something is going on here, I feel it in my gut. Stanos didn’t even bat an eye when we backed him into a corner. But he did flinch when Kat mentioned that the weather has gotten decidedly worse. I think they are doing something here that is causing it and Stanos is scared we will uncover it.”

“So, you think he meant for his people to attack us?” Heath asked.

“Absolutely,” Sarah responded. “If it’s something large enough to risk his niece's life as well as three warriors for The Intergalactic Council, it’s got to be bad. I think we are on the cusp of figuring out the problem with the plants. Kat, how far do these storms go?”

She blinked, “They are fast reaching sometimes sweeping over half or more of the crops in Seron.”

Sarah nodded, “That makes sense. If they are able to release something into the air with the storms it could get into the soil and even the people could carry it into the greenhouses. Has there been anyone else that has gotten sick like your mother, Kat?”

She shook her head, “I don’t know.”

“You are brilliant,” I said standing and pulling Sarah against me.

Heath grunted, “Get a room.”

While Kat averted her eyes.

I grinned down at Sarah who was eyeing me rather saucily in return, “You are fucking hot when you take down the bad guy.”

She laughed, “Why thank you. You are fucking hot all the time.”

I grinned, “Yes, I really am.”

“Look, we need to devise a plan and get the hell out of here,” Heath grumbled.

Reluctantly I let Sarah go, but because the younger man was right.

Annoying as fuck, but right.

It was decided that Kat would shift into something that would allow her to creep under the door from there when she let us out Kat and Sarah would go straight to the ship and radio the Head Commander while Heath and I did a little reconnaissance mission.

Kat shifted into a beetle and was scuttling across the floor and under the door in seconds.

We heard the click of the lock indicating that she was back in her normal form. Racing to the door, I stopped before exiting and kissed Sarah hard on the mouth.

“In case I die, I love you.” As far as life and death declarations it wasn’t half bad.

Sarah kissed me back and bit my lip, “Don’t fucking die, I will never forgive you.”

Hers was better.

Then she smiled, “I love you too.”

We flew out of the room and out into the corridor. There weren’t any guards in the first hallway, but they began to swarm the moment the alarm was sounded. I could only hope that Sarah and Kat were able to make it back to the aircraft and signal the Head Commander.

Without him, I was positive we weren’t coming out of this alive.

Chapter 25 - Sarah

“Sarah, The Commander isn’t responding!” Kat was panicking and for good reason. She had been on the radio trying to reach someone for over twenty minutes.

“Try your mom again,” I shouted back as I took out another one of Stanos’ guard. There were several along the route that I immobilized and we had at least seven more try and board the aircraft after we had arrived.

I certainly have come a long way, from the pacifist scardy cat that I was, when I first arrived on Zeron. I still don’t love the violence, but I was more than happy to protect the ones I loved. And nobody was going to come near Kat, Axel, or Heath.

Speaking of which, I wondered what in the hell was taking Axel and Heath so long. It was gnawing at my gut making me feel anxious.

“Kat?” static, “Kat? Is that you?”

Finally.

“Mom, we are at Uncle Stanos’ he is firing on us!”

“Kat, slow down,” static, “What is going on?”

“Uncle Stanos is trying to kill us!” I heard the tears in her voice and hated that Kat had been subjected to this.

It pissed me off even further that her uncle had considered her life so invaluable. I was going to kill that mother fucker if it was the last thing I did.

Two more soldiers came into the hanger and I quick disposed of them.

“We have units coming out now, Kat. Stay with Sarah and Axel!”

I felt another pang. Where in the hell was Axel?

And then as if I had conjured him the door to the hanger was flung open. Axel and Heath were running for their lives with some kind of contraption in their hands. It wasn’t lost on me that both had blood running from various wounds.

“Stay here!” I shouted to Kat and then moved down the boarding plank and began to take out the soldiers that were nearest. “Hurry the fuck up!” I shouted to Axel and Keith and I swear I saw the big guy smile a little.

It was game time.

I threw a fireball at the remaining soldiers and we boarded the craft. Heath went directly to the control panel and started our engines. The only problem was that the hanger wasn't open. However, I wasn't about to let that stop us.

"I am going to blow this place up," I said determinedly.

Axel's eyes grew wide, "No you aren't we are still inside!"

"I will place a force field over the plane, we will be inside of the explosion but protected."

"Do you know how to do that?" Kat asked in wonder.

"Absolutely," I lied and Axel glared at me.

I shrugged, "Go big or go home?"

"I just want to be able to go home," Heath muttered.

Stanos' men were starting to fire on the aircraft, we didn't have time to argue and so I did what I had to do.

Gathering all of the energy around into my body I began to glow and my hands were fire red. My hair whipped around my head and my heart thudded in my chest. When I felt I had gathered enough energy I turned to where Axel was at the ready to put the door down once again.

I nodded and as soon as I had a clear shot I sent it all flying out of me. It was like we were in the middle of a forest fire. The second after I created a shield with my mind and held firm no matter how hot it got. And it was hot, just to be clear, fucking hot. My eyes were sealed shut and I concentrated on that shield.

I felt when the aircraft began to move but I kept the shield in place until the heat began to subside. And then the darkness that had been crowding into my consciousness took over and I dropped to the floor barely hanging on.

"Sarah," Axel picked me up and held me tight against his chest, "I can't believe you just did that."

"Blew up the hanger?" I mumbled incoherently.

"Blew up the mountain," Heath replied.

I wanted to be all badass and say something killer as well as mention that my theme music which we discussed earlier should be playing on loud at this point. But I was too wasted to do more than lift an eyelid.

"Cool," I muttered and then I was out.

**

I felt soft lips on my forehead and I turned toward them.

“You are certain she is going to be alright?” I head Axel ask someone.

“Your mate will be fine. She has responded well to all of the tests and just needed to replenish her energy. She nearly blasted it all out.”

That was Von’s voice. But how could that be? I was in Seron, not Zeron.

“It’s been almost four days,” Axel’s voice sounded tortured.

I fought to open my eyes just to show him that I was fine. Sure, I felt like a truck had mowed me down, but that was normal after destroying a city with your mind—wasn’t it?

“Did you see that? Her eyelids flickered and she has turned toward your voice several times in the past two days. She is in there, when her body is ready, she will come back to you.”

Von’s voice trailed off as I allowed the comfort of darkness to take me away once again. The next time I awakened I was able to open my eyes. Axel was in the chair next to me, his head in his hands.

I loved this man so much. His kickass no-nonsense, the playful naughty giant, and the way he made me feel like I was his reason for living. Axel was every bit my lover, my equal, my matched pair, and my mate.

“Did you fall asleep on me?” my voice was husky from not being used.

He raised his head, eyes were redrimmed and dark circles rested beneath them.

“Sarah,” the way he said my name, I wished that I could record it. The emotion and love behind that one word had me choking up.

In an instant he was beside me, his massive arms pulling me against him and I melted into him.

“Take me to our room,” I asked.

He pulled back a little, “I think you are supposed to stay in the sickbay.”

I shook my head, “I will heal much faster if I am next to you.”

His eyes took a determined glint and then he swooped me up in his arms. For the next forty-eight hours we both slept wrapped in each other's arms. When I awakened again I felt much like my old self only stinky as hell.

I extracted myself from Axel’s arms, thankful that we were back in our sleeping chambers with our bathing unit. I stepped into that magical shower and let the spray wash away the grime from my recovering and the fight. I washed everything and was in the process of doing my hair when the door opened and a very worried Axel stepped into the room.

With a saucy wink, I cupped my breasts and pinched the nipples.

Axel’s nostrils flared as his eyes darkened.

He was naked and in the shower with me in less than two minutes. His mouth crashed into mine and he kissed me so hard and deep that I had no illusions as to how the man felt about me. This was love, not the butterflies and rainbows type of love, no, this was the gut-wrenching, bloody, life and death kind of love that only comes along once in a lifetime and somehow we ended finding it.

His fingers slipped between my legs and I groaned when he pushed them inside of me. I could feel his cock against my slick skin and wrapped my hand around it jerking him a few times until he lost control.

Picking me up, Axel pushed my back against the wall and my legs wrapped around his waist and then he was inside of me. His massive length stretching me wide and filling me just how I needed. My cries must have been heard halfway around the galaxy because I couldn't stop crying out. It felt so fucking incredible.

His length plowed into me again and again while his mouth took one of my breasts and sucked hard enough for me to feel it all the way in my pussy. Then he captured my mouth again and I was near to losing it.

Axel adjusted his thrust so that his pelvis put pressure on my clit and I was done for. My body tightened around him and my legs shook, as my climax grew to epic proportions, before shattering and causing my world to explode.

His grunt indicated that Axel had followed right behind me.

Chapter 26 – Axel

"The Intergalactic Council would like to award you with the highest honor, The Medal of Valor."

Sarah beamed at Commander Cole as he pinned the small medallion on her dress uniform. He went down the row pinning the medal on me next and then Heath. A special place had been reserved for Kat and Sabine so that she too could be recognized for her courage during the battle.

There was a notable absence where Sergeant Brooms normally stood. The Commander had been surprisingly tight lipped when they had inquired about him before the ceremony.

"Sarah and Axel, if you would please step forward."

The others went and sat in their seats while Sarah and I were given another medal this one hung on a ribbon around our necks. I hated this part of being a warrior. The reward itself was saving the people, but I wouldn't have traded this moment for all the space crafts in the milky way.

I couldn't tear my gaze from Sarah's upturned face. I loved the way her cheeks held that rosy glow and the sense of wonder in everything around her. She didn't know it, but I had a surprise for her.

All of those sappy porn stories that she loved from earth, well, all of them ended with this great big wedding. It was old and antiquated but I knew it meant something to her.

Zack's dad winked at me indicating that he was ready to lay out the surprise.

"When the Imprinted Pair project was first introduced I voted it down. Humans have been known for their frailties. And the chances of finding one with the correct chromosome that could activate their super abilities was astronomical."

Sarah looked over at me and it was like I could hear her saying, *"What in the fuck is he going on about?"*

I bit my lip to stop the smile that was trying to escape.

"I was wrong about the project being a mistake. Sarah you have proven yourself to be not only loyal to The Intergalactic Council, but your influence has made Axel into a better man."

She grinned, "Thank you."

"He has something he wishes to say to you," Commander Cole gestured for me to begin.

I had done some reading up on this, so I knew the basics. But now in front of hundreds of people, I felt my heart racing and I would rather have faced down an enemy squadron than open my mouth.

Sarah's smile dimmed and she looked at me with concern.

I was sweating and felt like shit, but I wanted to do this. I was determined for her to get the happily ever after that she deserved. I sank down to one knee.

Her mouth dropped open and there was a rumble of mummers that went out among the crowd.

"Sarah," my voice was low and slightly rough. "I once told you that you were the worst thing that had ever happened to me."

She laughed.

Of course, my girl laughed.

"You were wrong," she shook her head, "Are you begging for my forgiveness? Because, Axel, you know it's going to take more than this."

I reached into my pocket and pulled out the diamond ring that was waiting there.

Her eyes grew double in size and she gasped, "What the fuck is that?"

I had a shit eating grin that could not be tamed no matter how much I tried.

"You have a filthy mouth, worse than any other person that I have ever met," I stated plainly. "You are hot-tempered, and often wrong."

Her eyes glittered with unshed tears, "Oh, Axel," her lips trembled, "I love you, too!"

"Sarah, you have changed so many aspects of my life. I am sorry that I was stupid enough not to see it at first. You are by and large the best thing that has ever happened to me, to the program, and to the galaxy. I love you, so fucking much that it scares the shit out of me."

The audience laughs, but I wasn't paying attention to them.

I was watching the way her lips were curled up on the end even though a few tears had managed to fall down her beautiful face.

"I am not very good at romance," I could feel my cheeks heating at the admission but I plowed on. "However, I know that on earth people tend to get married. Seeing as how we are Life Mates, it isn't something that we do, but I know what it means to you, that you always wanted to…"

"Yes," Sarah interrupted my proposal, "Yes, yes, yes!"

I reached for her shaking hand and slipped the diamond on her finger. It was a little loose and I cursed those damn books that always insisted it was a perfect fit.

“Get up here,” Sarah tugged on my arms and I rose to my feet taking her with me.

She squealed as I spun us around with her in my arms.

“You are my everything,” I whispered and in my heart, I knew that it was true.

She cupped my face, “You are so much better than Thor.”

Commander Cole cleared his throat, “If you two would like to continue?’

Sarah blinked as if she had forgotten where we were. She shoved out of my arms and tried to look official again.

“Axel, do you take this woman…”

**

We ended up having a small dinner afterward. During dessert, I leaned over to kiss her for what had to be the hundredth time.

“Are you mad that I sprang that on you?”

She turned, that perfect nose tilted into the air. “Am I mad that you sprang an entire wedding on me in front of the everyone that is anyone? Or am I mad that you cheated me out of wearing a huge expensive wedding dress that would likely cost more than our first airship?”

I swallowed, shit, I hadn’t thought about that.

“Look, we can have another wedding, Fuck, we can have as many as you want. Let me go talk to the commander.” I went to rise, but her hand stopped me.

“Axel, I don’t need a fancy dress, or a certain venue to have the perfect wedding. I just needed you. I can’t believe you went to all that trouble. Honestly, that is what means the most to me. I know you don’t care about any of this. But you did it for me. Axel, I will never forget this.”

“So,” I waggled my eyebrows, “Are you saying I might get one of those honeymoons?”

Her mouth dropped for the second time, “No way!”

“Baby, like I would skimp on our wedding! I have every single guidebook racing around my mind and all of them have kickass honeymoons.”

Her brows knit together, “What are you talking about? What guidebooks?”

“You know,” I leaned close and whispered, “Your sex books?”

“For the last time they are just romance, maybe erotic romance, but they are not porn!”

The conversations around us halted.

“I said that really loud, didn’t I?” Sarah hissed.

“I want to read the sex books!” Kat called out from down the table.

Sabine sent us a death glare, “When you are a little older dear.”

Commander Cole grinned at us, “Perhaps you could loan some of those to Zack.”

Sarah groaned and dropped her head to the table with a thunk.

To cover the breach I asked, “How are Zack and Chloe doing?”

Commander Cole winced, “I have faith that something good will come of it. When I see the two of you, I am as determined as ever to let them find their way. We have another mission that needs to be attended to. Before the two of you volunteer, I am grounding you both for the next month. You will have that honeymoon Axel planned out. Zack and Chloe can take this on. And if they can’t, I have heard word that there has been another human discovered.”

That brought Sarah’s head up, “Where is she?”

Commander Cole shrugged, “Somewhere in the UK, I believe. They are doing an expansive search now to see who we can pair her with. But from what I understand the girl has survived transport from earth.”

“What was she supposed to die of?” Sarah asked in a hushed tone.

“An aneurysm, the med staff fixed it first thing. Her body is going through the changes now and she should awaken in the next week or two.”

“What is the problem with Zack and Chloe?”

I was glad that Sarah had asked the question because I too had wondered.

Commander Cole smiled, “He should never have left her behind. She will lead him on a merry chase.”

I looked over at Sarah knowing that she would get some amusement out of being right. She had been the one from the start that said we shouldn’t have left her. But Sarah’s gaze was on me.

“What?” I smoothed a strand of her white blonde hair away from her mouth.

“You never would have left me.”

She wasn’t asking a question. It was a statement and the way she said it so determined and strong had me filling with pride.

“No,” I said shortly.

Her smile never failed to make my heart race and my dick twitch.

“Why?”

I couldn’t help but wonder what was going through that beautiful mind.

Sarah shook her head, “I know that our imprinting made me SUPER, but you… Your heart has always been super. I love you, Axel.”

I didn’t care that the dinner wasn’t quite over or that she hadn’t touched her dessert. I stood causing my chair to crash to the ground and picked Sarah up, throwing her over my shoulder. The noise coupled with her laughter had everyone stopping to stare.

“What are they doing?” Kat asked Sabine.

I turned to Kat, “Chasing our happily ever after.”

Chapter 1 – Chloe

PART TWO

I remember Dr. Stokes sitting down in his office, having just closed the door behind him. I had been in for more testing, something just wasn't right. On my last appointment, he had asked me if I have a history of any bowel diseases.

I always hated being asked questions like that. I was adopted, it was a closed adoption. I was told that my mother was of Asian descent and she wasn't sure who the father was. My adoptive parents were the typical upper-class American household. Mom was a nurse practitioner and dad was a medical professor at the university.

They had wanted children desperately, but God had another plan for them. At least that is what mom used to tell me when she would tuck me in at night. I can still hear that funny raspy voice of hers whispering that I was a precious angel that was meant to be in their family.

I had every opportunity as a child. I danced, sang, swam, played tennis, whatever my heart desired.

And then it all disappeared.

My parents were on a medical relief mission when I was in high school. I had gone with them the summer before. It was amazing to see the poverty and complete devastation that plagued a lot of our world. It opened my eyes in a way, that truly changed the person that I was becoming.

The orphanages affected me the most. There were literally hundreds of children in need of medical care. We worked long hours in the heat, with sweat, bugs, and disease all around us.

I don't know why, but I still felt for some reason that we were invincible. Our little family unit, Janice, Ray, and Chloe, nothing could touch us.

Until it did.

The next summer I was seventeen and I had convinced mom and dad to let me stay behind so that I could go to tennis camp. It was imperative that I do well so that I could get first singles my senior year. I had worked long hours with my tennis coach, and I was good, really good.

Mom and dad had kissed me on the forehead and promised that they would see me in a week. Mrs. Lewis was just next door if there were any emergencies.

I felt guilty for the small party I had thrown the first night. It was only three friends, but my parents had trusted me. It ate at me until I was resigned that I would just tell them the truth when they got back.

Only, they didn't come back. There was a flood, the dam near the village they were working on failed and half the city was washed away. News reporters called my parents heroes. A tragedy, they reported, and then something new came along and my parents were forgotten.

Mrs. Lewis kept me until I turned eighteen. I knew that she really hadn't wanted to. But the paycheck the state gave her helped buy her cigarettes, so she conceded.

From there I went into what she liked to say was my rebellious phase. I painted my nails, lips, and eyes charcoal black. My nose and belly button were decorated with jewelry and my heart, well, it stopped.

Not literally, metaphorically.

I no longer cared, about anything. I started getting into fights when I was eighteen and Mrs. Lewis kicked me out. I didn't care.

I slept in my parents four door sedan and when that was stolen I slept on the streets. I didn't care.

Got caught lifting a cheap bottle of wine at the grocery, I didn't care.

Nothing anyone ever said or did mattered, to me.

Until I got sick, really sick and Razor hauled my sorry ass to the emergency room and left me there. He wasn't being nice, he was fucking scared to have a dead body at his place. And according to him, I was three steps away from the grave.

In the emergency room, they took bloodwork and began running tests. I was numb through most of it. I didn't fear death. That crazy bitch had taken the two things that had been the most important to me.

I welcomed it.

Three days later they had me see a surgeon, Dr. Stokes. I had been admitted to the hospital and they continued to monitor my situation. I can still see his eyes in my mind. They helded compassion and sympathy.

And then the words, I don't remember the specific ones, only snippets of the conversation.

"Stage four colon cancer…"

"Sometimes as long as a year…"

"Maybe six months in your case."

"Is there anyone I can call?"

"You are so young."

"Dying…"

“Chloe…”

“Chloe?”

The funny thing was that even then, I didn’t care. I refused most forms of treatment and his best guess was shot out of the water when my body was ravaged by cancer. I went back for a few appointments, mainly for pain meds when things got too bad. Three months from my diagnosis, I found myself being hauled back into the emergency room.

Only this time someone had stumbled over me in the park. I don’t know how long I had been there or even how I got there. I only remember the flashing lights of the ambulance and the screeching of tires.

“We’re losing her!”

It was a man’s voice, I recognized that much. But as I slowly faded away I finally felt my heart lurch.

If that was fucking irony for you. Now, in my final breaths, my heart finally decided to give a damn.

And then nothing.

**

I gasped, my eyes opening and my heart racing in my chest. Was I dead? Had I gone to heaven?

I looked around the foreign room and felt a feeling of unease wash over me. The bed that I was laying in looked nothing like the hospital bed I was in before.

My clothing was strange, and my hair had grown really long. I attempted to sit up and alarms went off, scaring the living shit out of me. I screamed when the door opened and a small woman entered. I blinked twice, was she really—blue?

“Human, you are awake.”

I had to give her points for observation.

“Is this heaven?”

Her eyes narrowed and she looked at me like a bug under a microscope. I twitched uneasily under her gaze but I held her stare. I had faced worse things than a blue woman in heaven.

And then it hit me.

I wasn’t in heaven. My parents were there. I had landed in hell.

What the actual fuck was I going to do?

Chapter 2 – Chloe

Apparently, in hell, they accumulate garbage, and the best part is that Satan is a chick! Who would have thought? They call her Queen Neopia and she is like a sparrow with shiny things. She likes my black hair and sometimes pets my head like I am a cat.

I am starting to wonder if there is acid in water?

There are more blue people in hell than I ever could have imagined. Nobody talks to me, and there are times when I wonder if I am invisible.

But when I tried to walk through a wall—bad things happened. So, I am not a ghost.

At dinner, I decided to scream and yell like a two-year-old. I threw myself on the floor and kicked my legs, but halfway through I lost steam and cracked up laughing. It was so strange to find something funny. I couldn't remember the last time I had laughed.

I knew it wasn't when I was living on the streets and it certainly wasn't when I lived with Mrs. Lewis. It had to be when my parents were still alive. Suddenly tears pricked in my eyes. I hadn't allowed myself to think about my parents for a long time.

Now that I was in hell, would I ever see them again?

I curled into a ball on the floor, which consequently smelled like the inside of a dumpster. Trust me when I say this because I honestly would know.

Gut-wrenching sobs shook my body and the tears that hadn't fallen all those years ago were suddenly set free. The dam had broken and I couldn't hold anything back.

"Take the human away, it's broken. No wonder they were so willing to leave it behind," Satan scoffed in her gravelly tone.

I flipped her off, or at least I tried to.

"Fuck you, Satan, and fuck hell too!"

No matter what I shouted or how I raged the blue people held fast and tossed me back into the room with the strange bed.

There had been a time when I would have laid there day in and day out. I had spent so much time waiting to die.

I was a fucking idiot.

The short time I had left on earth I spent in limbo and now I had eternity to deal with Satan and the blue people. The worst part was that I was in the best shape of my life, somehow in death, my body had filled out again.

I was no longer the emaciated cancer victim. My hair was thick, black and shiny. My skin was clear and my hips and breasts were nice and round. The sores that plagued my mouth and nose were completely gone.

I felt…

And then it dawned on me for the first time since my parents died I could feel everything. The emotions were almost overwhelming. My body was alive and vibrant. I wanted to retake the past few years. I would have been kinder to Mrs. Lewis. I would have gone to college, made something of myself. I had always wanted to go into medicine like my mom.

How could I have thrown away my life? Each precious moment lost to me, and now this was my reality.

I cried for my parents.

I cried for who I could have been.

I cried because I didn't want to turn into a blue person.

Last, I cried because when I was alive all I wanted to do was die, and now that I was dead I just wanted one more chance to live.

Two days later the door to my room opened. I thought that it was the food lady coming in and didn't turn around.

Imagine my surprise when the woman called me by name, "Are you, Chloe?"

I turned to look at her. I can't imagine how it looked, I was lying on the floor underneath the bed.

"Who are you?" I said shortly.

"Betty, I am Zackary's mother," she moved into the room and I noticed the strange suit she was wearing.

She was taller than most women, but at least she wasn't blue.

"Who is Zackary?" I was defensive. If Satan sent her I didn't want anything to do with her.

"He is your imprinted pair," she said carefully, "I have come to take you off this planet. It's time for you to go home."

I moved out from under the bed, "You can take me back to earth? I thought I was dead, this isn't hell?"

Betty shook her head the corner of her lips tilting up, "I am inclined to believe that it feels like hell, but dear, you are in space. Earth is a planet in a solar system near ours. You aren't dead."

She moved forward and I took a defensive stance.

"I won't hurt you. I came to save you actually."

"Are you drugging me?" Chloe asked warily, "Is that why everything is so fucking weird?"

Betty's eyes widened at the curse word.

"What did they do to you?"

I recited what had happened from the moment I woke up. Betty was so kind and understanding that I found myself telling her about the cancer, my parents and waking up in hell.

She blew out a long breath.

"What are you thinking?" I asked.

"That my son is an idiot. He should never have left you here."

That got my attention, "What do you mean *left me here*?"

Her lips pursed together, "My husband is the head commander of the intergalactic alliance. Queen Neopia contacted us and said that my son came with his ship and you were left as a gift. She was actually quite angry about it. She seemed to think that you were broken."

"Broken?" I shrugged, "That's probably accurate. I am sure they think I have been acting like a lunatic. I thought I had died or entered an alternate reality. Some of them wouldn't speak to me, it was like I was invisible."

A tall handsome man with silvery blonde hair came into the room, he smiled so lovingly at Betty that it made my heart hurt. I remember my mom and dad used to look at each other that way.

"Well, Chloe, everything has been arranged you are coming home with us."

"Where is home?" I asked hesitantly.

"Zeron," Betty replied. "It's a lovely place. I am told that it is very similar to your home planet. I am sure you have many questions. Let's board our airship and see if I can answer them."

She stretched out her hand and I looked at it for a long moment.

I didn't take help from others.

I was used to being alone.

But that was the old me. Hadn't I wished for another chance? Was this it?

I took her outstretched hand and saw relief flood her features.

"Thank you, Chloe, let's go aboard the Grant and you can meet Rylee, our daughter."

I let her lead me out of the little room with the strange bed. We passed several blue people who looked away the moment our eyes met. I continued to walk until we were in a large hanger and

there in front of my eyes was a massive airship. It looked like something you would see in a sci-fi movie.

“Are you sure I’m not dead?”

Betty laughed, “No, you are very much alive. However, I wouldn’t want to be my son when I get a hold of him.”

My brows knit together, “Why?”

A girl in her late teens walked down the ramp from the spacecraft.

“Hi, Chloe!”

“How does everyone know my name?” I asked Betty.

“We know a lot about you dear. Let’s go aboard and I will explain everything. You should have had my son and a medic that went through all of this when you first awakened.”

“Why would your son leave me here?” I knew that I had been a pain the ass during my life. But according to these people, the man had abandoned me while I was unconscious.

Betty’s jaw clenched, “I don’t know, but trust me. I will find out.”

Chapter 3 – Chloe

I sat there trying to take in everything that Betty and Rylee were trying to tell me. There were a few times when the Commander tried to intervene, but the two girls railroaded over him. Eventually, he went to the bridge and the ship prepared for taking off.

I am still not one hundred percent sure that I haven't landed in hell. Despite being rescued I felt a sort of longing for something I don't understand. It reminded me of when I lost my parents. The deep ache, knowing that you aren't whole anymore. That is how I feel. Only now my emotions seem to be all over the place.

"Where are we going?" I asked woodenly.

Betty looked at Rylee before answering, "I think we are headed back to Zeron."

"What about my soul mate? Where is he?"

Another furtive look, and that spiked my ire, "Look, if you are going to lie to me or fed me some bullshit story, I don't want to hear it."

Betty looked around the inside of the spacecraft, her eyes settled on a portrait and she went to retrieve it. When she handed it to me I wasn't sure what I expected, but nothing happened. The man in the portrait was ridiculously good looking in a Captain America, blonde hair, blue-eyed way. But I didn't feel a jolt of awareness nor did I fall into helpless lust.

Would I bang him? Hell yeah, but I haven't had sex in a year. At this point, even Betty is starting to look good.

I handed the portrait back, "That is him?"

She nodded, "From what we can gather there was an issue with another human girl and you were left in trade of the first. He had every intention of coming for you, Chloe."

I raised a hand, "No bull-shit."

Betty blew out a breath, "I don't know if he planned on coming back for you. In my heart, I like to think he would. But you have to know that we get thousands of human girls and as of today we have two that survived the transformation and only one that has imprinted with one of our own.

"And this is the girl they saved when they left me behind?" I shook my head not knowing if I should be pissed as hell or to laugh at the irony of it all. Even in space, I get left behind. What a fucking joke!

"We are traveling to Zeron now, it won't be more than two or three days. Then my husband, the Commander, will go to the war front and find Zack. We only hope that nothing has happened to him. This isn't like him."

I controlled the eye roll, but it was difficult. "Are you trying to tell me that you have the technology to steal human girls seconds before death. Then reverse stage four cancer, and change our molecular structure so that we are able to breathe in space. But you can't call long distance? Yeah, I wasn't hit with the stupid stick this morning."

Rylee snorted with laughter, "You are funny!"

I looked over at the petite blonde that reminded me of Barbie's little sister. What was her name again, Rugby, Rally?

"I don't mean to be disrespectful," and I honestly didn't. "Everything is just so crazy to fast, and I feel really strange. My gut is hurting… like I am missing something? It is growing stronger and stronger."

Betty's big brown eyes grew larger, "That is not good. I am going to talk to Bryce. Stay here with Rylee and I will figure something out. It's okay Chloe, we have you now. I won't let anything else bad happen to you."

It was so strange that anyone could have my back. How long had it been since someone truly cared? I was a throwaway, once the cancer had taken over I was written off. But if I am being honest I was written off long before that.

"I don't know what you are going through," Rylee said softly, "but I am glad that Queen Neopia contacted father."

The girl looked more like her dad and the picture of my imprinted pair. Her hair was honey blonde and her eyes, large and blue. They reminded me of summer, the way the sky looks when there isn't a cloud in the sky.

She was a beautiful girl, no doubt about it. If I was a betting woman I would say she was a year or two younger than I was.

"How old are you?" I blurted out.

Rylee blinked, "Sixty-eight."

This time I laughed, "Girl, didn't they ever tell you, 'if you are going to lie, at least make it believable'?"

Rylee's stood putting her hands on her hips. She was a few inches taller than me and slender where I now had my curves again. I stood as well and copied her stance.

"Time isn't the same here in space," Rylee's face flushed, "And lying is for the weak."

That caught me off guard.

“Sometimes lying is the only thing that stands between you and death,” I said flatly. “It’s easy to be the princess when your daddy is the commander and your mother dotes on you.”

Rylee took a step back, “You are a real bitch. I was excited to get to know you, but now I am starting to see why Zack left you behind.”

“Rylee!” Betty’s voice was horrified, “Apologize—at once!”

Rylee looked ready to argue, but I stopped her.

“No, I was rude and provoked her.”

I would have said more but that aching in my gut had me doubled over in pain.

“Fuck! That hurts like a mother fucker!”

“Rylee go get the medic!” Betty raced across the room and caught me before I hit the ground. She was surprisingly strong.

Rylee didn’t hesitate to listen to her mother. She raced out of the room and about twenty minutes later a woman ran back in. She had a device that she pressed a button and suddenly I felt weightless, much like if I was in a pool. She carried me in this invisible force field down the hallway of the spacecraft and into the health unit. I was then placed on a bed.

The pain was starting to fade, but I felt exhausted and could barely keep my eyes open. I saw Rylee in the doorway looking terrified.

“I am sorry,” I croaked.

Her eyes widened, “No, you don’t need…”

I smiled brokenly, “Nah, I am a bitch. You got that part right. But you didn’t deserve it.”

She opened her mouth and then closed it. I think that I truly stunned her. Closing my eyes again I decided to let everything go. Maybe when I wake up I will be in the real heaven and I will be able to see my parents again.

As things faded to black, I heard the medic say, “If he doesn’t imprint soon she will die.”

I had wanted so badly to have that second chance at life. But what was the point of it if I couldn’t go back to earth. Did I really want to spend the rest of my days zipping around space like the Jetsons? Somethings were just too weird to consider.

I felt cool compresses being placed against my forehead. Time passed in a strangely abstract way. I didn’t open my eyes, but I was aware that it was passing. I suppose that this was different than it had been when I awakened the first time.

I heard Betty say something about moving me to the Commander's pod but then things were fuzzy again after that. My body was finally at peace and I wanted to just let it get the rest that it so desperately wanted.

I felt him first before ever seeing him. My heart started to race and my eyes wanted to open for the first time in what had to be a week.

There was a low murmur which could only have been his voice. What was he doing there? I was going to die, that was my destiny. The last thing I wanted was some stupid man to tell me what I could and couldn't do.

"she moved her fingers!" I heard Rylee exclaim.

"Take her hand!" Betty instructed from somewhere beyond my rusty exterior.

Chapter 4 – Chloe

I felt a large rough palm grasp my own, and then a jolt of electricity raced through me. My eyes snapped open and I sat straight up. My hand was still locked with someone else but I hadn't the wherewithal to even worry about it.

Before my eyes, I could see a violent windstorm. It was in a barren place unlike any other that I had ever been. The image flashed and I saw a girl with pale blonde hair floating in the air. Her hands were glowing and seemed to be holding a red flame or fireball.

Again the image flashed, this time I could see my body naked and sprawled out in a room that I wasn't familiar with. A blonde man whose face I couldn't see was pumping his hips furiously as he fucked me into oblivion.

My body shuddered as if this were happening right now. I was on the cusp of release and then the image faded and I was back in the med unit breathing heavily and trying to figure out what happened.

"Your head, Zack," I heard Betty call out and turned toward the man she was speaking too.

He looked remarkably like his father only his body was more defined and he was younger. The boy hadn't seen an ugly day in his life. My eyes raked over his surprised expression, whatever he had been expecting, it wasn't me—that was obvious.

I tried to yank my hand out of his grasp but he held it tighter.

"Chloe," he said my name as if trying it out on his tongue.

Suddenly I remembered that this dickhead had left me in that black hold with Queen Collects-a-lot. Not only that, but I nearly died because he went off fighting some war instead of staying and imprinting with me.

This time when I yanked my hand away I succeeded. I tried to ignore the way my nipples were pressed against the thin cotton of the sleeping gown that I was wearing. I also ignored the wet heat between my thighs. There was no point lusting over the man. He left me, there were few things that would make me angrier.

"Your head, Zack, it's completely healed."

Betty stepped forward and shoved a mirror in the man's hand. He looked into it and blinked in surprise.

"I have seen Sarah heal Axel, but it only happened after they had become Mated Pairs."

There was no way in hell I would be a Mated Pair with this man. He had already proven to be unstable. Granted I needed him to live so I wouldn't kill him. But I would be damned if I

married the idiot. And Betty had already told me that finding and claiming your Mated Pair was for life.

“A fluke, probably,” I pushed the covers off of my legs and swung them over the side of the bed. “Thanks for coming out. You probably need to get back to your war.”

I moved to stand.

“Chloe, you need to stay in bed,” Betty rushed forward taking my arm.

“I am tired of being in bed. And I feel good, really good actually. Now that your son has decided to allow me to live I feel amazing.

Zack frowned, “Allow you to live? What are you talking about?”

Betty’s lips drew into a tight line. I knew that she would be giving him a piece of her mind. I wasn’t mad at him, hell, I didn’t know the man, but I would never trust him. I had learned that you can’t rely on anyone, and my first few months in space, while I was recovering from cancer, only confirmed that.

“Go back to where you need to be,” I said with what I hoped was a smile, “And thank you for coming back. I had given up hope.”

I moved around the man and started toward the door.

I could only imagine the conversation that Betty was having with her son via dramatic eye rolls and hand gestures. A small smile crossed my face, this one more natural.

“What’s going on?” Rylee met me in the hallway.

“Going to my sleeping pod, can you remind me where it is?”

Rylee nodded and began to take the pathway to the left. In no time we were in familiar space and I thankfully went inside. But there I stopped. On the floor was some luggage that certainly didn’t belong to me.

“Whose things are here and how do I get them moved?”

“Listen, Princess,” a deep voice rang out from the doorway. “This is my room and I am not going anywhere.”

I looked up to see the Prodigal Son glaring at Rylee and me.

“Sorry,” I lifted my hands, “I had no idea, this was where they placed me. I will gather up my things and move immediately.”

Rylee frowned, “Imprinted Pairs need to stay together, you will need to learn to train and develop your SUPER abilities.”

I shook my head, “No thank you, but I do appreciate the offer, I really do.”

I went to the drawer and pulled out the two outfits that I owned.

“What are you doing?” the man stepped into my space.

The second his hands clasp over my own the vision from before came back as if a second hadn’t passed. Desire ripped through me and I could see his taunt ass pounding back and forth as he took me as hard and as deep as I needed.

My breath caught and I began to sag in his arms. The pleasure was causing me to lose my balance.

“Please,” I whimpered.

I was so close, so fucking close.

“Get out!” I heard him yell at his sister but that wasn’t what was happening. He was there in front of me not yelling at anyone.

He reached between us and rubbed tight circles on my clit and then I was coming, shattering and sinking into him. The vision disappeared and I saw that Zack was holding me against his chest. His massive cock was throbbing hotly against my belly.

Had I just cum from a dream?

My face flushed fire red and my pussy felt wet.

“What was that?” his voice was octaves lower than it had been when he spoke to me in the med unit.

What could I say? Your face inspires realistic erotic visions? I just came and my pussy is still throbbing, aching for your touch?

I took a deep breath and tried to move out of his arms.

“I don’t think so, Princess,” his lips moved to the shell of my ear. “I just watched you lose your ever-loving mind. I am seconds away from trying to see if it’s the same when my cock is buried inside of you. I need answers Chloe, and you are going to give them to me.

It was mildly amusing that he thought he was in charge. I almost hated to disabuse him of the notion. But you should always start things the way you mean for them to go on. I didn’t live on the streets for all of those years without learning a thing or two.

This large man might be a warrior, but I doubt he knows how to fight dirty.

I went limp in his arms, “Okay,” I lied, “I just need a moment.”

His expression softened and his legs spread apart like he was going to lift me up. I kneed him hard in the balls causing the man to double over in pain. Then grabbing the closest thing to me I brandished what looked like a taser in Zack’s face.

“Look, Space Cowboy, this might be your rodeo. But I am not playing. I don’t care about the fate of the universe. All I know is that you left me and that is the one thing I don’t want any part of. So do me a favor and get the fuck out of my life.”

I grabbed the two outfits that had fallen to the floor and pressed the button for the door to slide open. In the hallway stood Betty and Rylee. Beside them was a very surprised Commander.

“Did you knock out my son?” his voice was part impressed and part confused.

“He’s fine, Sir. He was just under the impression that I gave a damn what he thought.”

The commander stared at me for a while before his lips tilted up, “It looked like you took care of that.”

I nodded, “I can take care of myself. There seems to be a mistake, I need sleeping quarters for one.”

Chapter 5 – Zack

What the actual fuck? As I laid on the floor of my sleeping chambers, wondering if I would ever father children after the blow to my balls. I had to consider that maybe I didn't have as good a handle on the human situation as I had thought.

Gingerly I opened my eyes only to see my father's black shiny boots inches away from my face. It was as if the universe was having a *let's shit on Zack day*.

"That didn't go very well."

And there you have it, my father, Captain Obvious. And yeah, I stole that from earth, but who in the hell is going to know that here?

Besides her.

"She just needs some time to get to know me," I grumbled, getting to my feet. My balls still ached but I would be damned if I held them like a pussy in front of my father.

His brows came together, "Did you read the dossier on the girl?"

I felt color rise in my cheeks. Of course I hadn't taken the time to read up on her. We have had a lot of girls pass through, just because she didn't die when she first arrived didn't mean that she would eventually make it. I figured that it didn't make any sense to waste my time unless she survived.

Only she kept lingering on, not alive but not dead, either.

"I will read the dossier," I said with only a hint of defiance.

My father crossed his hands over his chest.

This is what I like to call the lecture pose. My dad had a dozen of them. Often you knew what he was going to say by his body language. He would never admit it, but the man was super predictable.

Right now he was going to berate me for not following protocol. I would then be instructed to read the human's file, hell he probably wanted me to memorize it. After I would be instructed to make things right with the girl.

So, to circumvent a conversation that I really didn't want to have, I beat him to the punch.

"Look, Dad, I am really sorry. I should have followed protocol and read the dossier. She is an important part of the team and I fucked up. I will make things right."

His mouth snapped shut and he frowned.

"Get her training started, as well." He ordered and then left the room.

I slumped back onto my bed. The ache in my testicles was almost unbearable. Hell, and I thought that Axel had it bad with Sarah. This chick was a million times worse!

“Dad looked pissed.”

I groaned and rolled on my side to see my little sister Rylee.

“What do you want, Slug?”

She made a face at me, “Did you really not read her file?”

I grimaced, “I may have lost it.”

“What the hell, Zack?”

She was right, totally right. I should have read the information and I really shouldn’t have lost it. But what my dear family was failing to remember was that I had been in the middle of a mission. My whole damn ship is gone, and the dossier was somewhere in there.

“You wouldn’t understand,” I said to her.

Rylee popped her hip out and gave me a look that reminded me a lot of our mom. “Zack, there is something different about Chloe. She is…” Rylee trailed off, “it’s hard to explain. But she seems broken in a way.”

I made a face, “She’s a human, how bad could her life be?”

Rylee didn’t look convinced, “I think there is a lot more to the humans than what we understand from their internet.”

“What do you know, Slug?”

I shouldn’t have been so argumentative with Rylee, but a part of me was irritated that I was even being put through all of this. I never asked for an imprinted pair. I am a pilot and a warrior. As far as I was concerned everything went straight to hell the moment that the humans woke up.

“You are being a dick, Zack,” Rylee tossed her blonde hair over her shoulder. “You think that you know everything. But I am telling you, I would be careful with Chloe, or this could all blow up in your face.”

“It’s easy to point fingers and have opinions when you don’t have to be in the situation.”

I could feel my temper rising again.

Rylee also carried the gene to imprint with a human. But The Intergalactic ouncil decided to only try the program with earth females. So that meant for now Rylee was safe.

Rylee’s jaw clenched together, “You know what? I hope that she gives you hell. You deserve it. All you can think about is how this affects you. I am telling you, Zack. That girl needs someone

to care about her. You should have seen her when we picked her up from Queen Neopia. She was hiding under the bed, thinking that she was in hell. Maybe if you can pull your head out of your ass for five minutes you will figure it out."

Rylee stomped out. I briefly considered getting up to go and talk with her. I really needed to know more about Chloe and it seemed that Rylee had a better idea of who this girl was. But another part of me, the sensitive testicles that were mentioned earlier, it was still pissed.

"Well, that was interesting."

I sighed seeing my mom at my door.

"Did you come to yell at me?"

She smiled, "No, but I suppose that I could if you wanted me too."

I groaned, "I didn't even want her in the first place."

My mom nodded, "I understand that."

"I'm a warrior. I know about fighting, and piloting ships. I don't know how to do this woman stuff."

Mom nodded again, "It has to be frustrating, I am sure."

"Are you just going to agree with me?" I moved over and my mom sat on the bed beside me. She placed a hand on my arm.

"Everything that you are feeling, she is likely feeling the same. Chloe never asked to be a part of this program. She certainly didn't ask to be a part of a secret space experiment involving superpowers. All I am saying, Zack, is that you may find you have more in common than you think. Can I give you some advice?"

There was something about talking to my mom that always made me feel better. She was the voice of reason in my life. I tended to be more like my dad, which wasn't a bad thing, but I didn't have the calming nature that my mom did.

I nodded, "Sure."

"Why don't you just try to get to know each other as friends? I think that if you got to know one another you might be able to see each other's perspectives a little more clearly."

I nodded slowly, "Yeah, I can do that."

Mom patted my leg, "We will be back on Zeron by tomorrow morning. The chambers have already been arranged for all of the pairs. You will have separate bedrooms but share the communal areas. Maybe living in close quarters will help to build a bond?"

I wasn't so sure. But I nodded anyway.

The rest of the trip to Zeron was uneventful. Chloe came out of her room once and didn't speak to me at all. But she did talk to Rylee for a little while about something called gaming. I had no idea what game they were talking about.

Chloe had become animated speaking about streaming games online, doing speed runs, and competitions where the best of the best would compete.

I wanted to ask what games she was talking about. I liked to run. I hadn't really taken Chloe for a runner, but she said she liked speed runs. An idea sprang into my mind, maybe I could wake her up early to come on a run with me?

A grin split my face. I ignored the pointed look from Rylee and the hesitant one from my mom. Alright, so I may have been a grouch since they came and got me, but that was before I had a plan. Chloe and I were going to be the best of friends, running friends, everything would fall into place and I would be right back in the battle where I was meant to be.

With a spring in my step, I gathered my things to take off the ship. It was good to be home again. Sometimes I forgot how amazing Zeron really was. Now that Chloe was here I could discover it all over again.

Chapter 6 – Chloe

I was laying on the sandy beach soaking up every drop of the summer sun. My skin felt toasty and my body lazy. I have always loved the ocean. Something about the vast openness, the inherent beauty, and the hint of danger seemed to call to me.

I could feel the summer breeze tickling my skin and I knew that I needed to turn over or risk looking like a lobster. But I felt so damn lazy. A small part of my mind told me that I felt better than I had in a long time, years even.

I brushed away any negative thoughts about why I might not have been happy in the past. It didn't matter. All that mattered was the sound of the waves crashing on the shore and the breeze keeping me cool.

I felt something nudge my toe. I shuddered praying that it wasn't a seagull, stupid rats with wings. I kicked it away and heard an oomph which didn't really go along with my seagull theory. However, it had stopped bothering me, so I considered that a win.

This time the damn seagull grabbed my ankle. When did seagulls grow hands? I kicked again and heard, "Damn it, Chloe, that hurts!"

I smirked, "Take that seagull!"

"What?" the seagull replied.

But seagulls don't speak. My brain started waking and suddenly the sand melted away into the sheets of my bed. The warmth of the sun was my light overhead and the crashing of waves was a noise machine that Rylee had given me.

"Fucking hell!" I groaned because at the foot of my bed was a very un-seagull like creature.

"Good morning," Zack smiled at me, that million-watt smile of a kid that had top-notch braces. For a moment I wondered if they had orthodontia in space. But then I remembered that this twat had woken me up.

"Is someone dying," I said pointedly.

His brows knit with confusion. Shit, even first thing in the morning Zack was pretty to look at. How on earth he managed the All American superstar look twenty-four-seven I couldn't fathom. I probably looked like a troll.

"Not that I am aware of," he said slowly, "I mean, I am sure someone is dying somewhere. Probably a lot of someone's I really haven't ever considered calculating the odds…"

"Stop," I raised a hand and he abruptly cut off. "Is there a fire or plague nearby that is threatening to wipe us out?"

"No," his lips flattened out into a line, "Are you expecting something like that?"

I nodded, "Absolutely, there has to be some sort of extreme emergency that would bring you into my chambers and wake me up this early in the morning. I am just trying to figure out what it is."

His face brightened and his blue eyes actually sparkled. I was waiting for the blinding flash from his teeth like you see in the movies. That is just what Zack looked like, a Hollywood actor. One that no matter what happened always managed to look sexy and adorable.

Well, I didn't do sexy and adorable anymore.

He pushed my legs to the side and sat down on my bed. I felt the mattress give and I rolled into him a little.

"Well, by all means, make yourself at home," I grumbled but Zack wasn't paying attention.

"I overheard you with Rylee saying how much you liked to run and I thought I would show you some of the paths here on Zeron. It's most beautiful when the sun is rising. You can still see the two moons in the sky. It's been said that we have some of the most beautiful sites in the galaxy."

I groaned, "I don't know what you thought you heard, but I don't run. Not even when someone is chasing me with a gun. I would just have to tell them to do their worst. I refuse to exercise voluntarily, that is for gym rats and pansies."

Zack shook his head, "No, you are just saying that! I know you like to run, you told Rylle all about it. You even were in running competitions!"

He was clearly delusional.

"Did you hit your head? How many fingers am I holding up?"

He looked at my hand and rolled his eyes before grabbing it in his larger one. I chose to ignore the jolt of awareness when our palms touched.

"I heard you say you loved speed runs," he said defensively.

Suddenly it all made sense, and I started to laugh.

"You are totally ridiculous!" I wiped at my eyes, "I don't like running, cowboy, I like video games. Speed runs are when you play the game as fast as you can and you try and beat other people's score. It has nothing to do with real running."

Zack looked crestfallen, "Oh, so it's a no on the morning run?"

I snorted, "It's a hell no with cherries on top."

"That doesn't make any sense," he blew out a loud breath.

I smiled at his look of disgust, even irritated the man was something to behold.

"Cheer up, John Boy, I am sure that things on the farm will all straighten out somehow."

"My name is Zack," he snapped.

I laughed again, "I remember your name, it's just that you remind me of a certain type of person."

He bit his lip and I just knew that he was dying to ask me more. My body was now fully awake and I needed to go to the bathroom. Shoving him out of the way I scrambled off the bed and made a mad dash to the bathing chambers.

The moment I sat down I groaned with relief.

"What are you doing in there?" his voice was back to being horrified.

"I am not tickling the ivories, John Boy, I just had to pee."

"That is disgusting."

I heard him loud and clear through the door. When I was finished I pushed it open and went to wash my hands. I loved the way their dryers could have my wet hands dry in seconds. And the showers, dear merciful heaven, the showers were to die for.

After I had cleaned up, I noticed that Zack was watching me with a frown on his face.

"What?" I looked down to see if I had forgotten my pants or something.

"Where did you get that scar?" he pointed to the back of my calf where there was a jagged scar that hadn't healed well.

I shrugged, "It doesn't really matter."

I went to move around him but Zack stepped into my path, "Where?"

Obviously, he wasn't going to let up until I told him. And honestly, what did I care if he knew? It wasn't like Zack meant anything to me. Sure, he helped save my life by imprinting with me, but then again he left me with the Queen of Trash as well.

I went over to my bed and climbed back in, "A man thought he needed my bed more than I did."

Zack gaped, "A man climbed into your room and attacked you?"

I could feel my body start to relax again. "No, I wasn't in a room."

"Where were you?"

I opened an eye, "Does it really matter?"

Zack gritted his teeth, "It does to me."

I yawned, "I had a good spot out of the wind and it was warm, there had to be heating duct or something on the inside of the building. It was one of the few alleys that didn't have a garbage

dumpster, which wasn't a selling point believe it or not. Those things can be the difference between life and death in the winter. Anyhow, he sliced my leg with a broken bottle. I couldn't tell if he was crazy, high, or just desperate. But honestly, it didn't really matter. I wasn't about to give up my spot. I was close enough where I could still get the hospital for my appointmentss. They didn't know I was homeless, or maybe they did and just didn't say anything?"

"What appointments?" Zack said hoarsely, but I didn't want to talk about that anymore.

"Go away and let me sleep," I grumbled burying myself in the covers.

"Chloe, what appointments?"

"For the cancer, it's what killed me, or at least it was supposed to. Night Zack."

He wasn't leaving, I felt him sit down again on my bed. But I was tired and needed more sleep so I drifted off, hoping to find that sunny beach once again.

Chapter 7 – Chloe

I was really starting to like this training that Zack insisted I go through. First, we worked on shooting. When I hit the bulls-eye—wait for it— twenty-seven times in a row to his fourteen. Zack looked like he had sucked on something sour.

Then they turned on a simulator, much like the virtual gaming that they had on earth. I totally smoked him. My team took out Zack's three times before he pussied out.

Next, we talked about survival skills, I can't remember when I have laughed so hard. First off, it was clear that whoever taught this course to Zack had never had to rely on their own survival skills. And second, the poor boy wouldn't have lasted a day in the streets. There is one basic rule to survival, and that is to survive.

I am not stupid, I know that having shelter, water, and food are important. But basic survival is about self-preservation. You might not be able to eat or to find shelter on a given night. The driving force is that you survive. If someone attacks, you have to make the choice, is it you or them? There are no second chances when your life is on the line.

It seemed like the more stories I told about my life the more pensive Zack became. I wasn't sure what kind of life my pretty boy had led, but I knew it was a far cry from the one I had.

Hand to hand combat was one area that I could have improved upon. Granted I won most of the fights, but he said that was only because I employed dirty tricks. I knew how to fight, go for the weak points, eyes, neck, groin.

Use whatever necessary to distract, cry, scream, fake a seizure if necessary—that saved my life once. I didn't stand correctly or use my body the way that he wanted me to, but I'd be damned if I didn't walk away and he wasn't curled up in pain on the mat.

I conceded that perhaps there might be more to this hand to hand combat than I realized.

We were sparring and I snapped my head up, knowing that he would likely have the underside of his chin vulnerable. Sure enough, he let out a horrible scream and blood coated his mouth.

My hands automatically went to his face. Zack tried to shake me off, but it was as if my body knew something that I didn't. I felt a warmth rush from the pit of my belly up my arms and into Zack.

He jerked back, "What was that?"

I shrugged, "I don't know, did you bite your tongue off?"

He moved his tongue around and then stuck it out, "Can you see anything?"

It was hard to tell with the blood that was in there. I handed him a water and told him to rinse his mouth. He stuck his tongue out again and there wasn't a mark on it.

"Chloe, I think you healed me. You did it once before. I had something burned into my forehead and when we first touched it was healed. I wonder if that is your power?"

I looked down at my hands, they looked like the same ones that I always had. It seemed impossible that I could heal someone.

We went on training, but I sensed Zack's eyes on me.

Two days later Rylee came in screaming, there had been an accident and Betty was badly burned. I dropped what was in my hands and ran behind Zack and Rylee to where Betty was in the kitchens.

Her arm was already blistering and the smell of burnt flesh filled the air.

Just as before with Zack, my hands went to Betty. I took her arm carefully and felt the warmth pool in my stomach. It grew until it raced up my arms and into her. Before our eyes, we watched the blisters fade and her arm heal.

The med unit arrived moments later, "Unhand the Commander's wife!"

I looked at the large man with a scowl on my face. But before I needed to defend myself, Zack was in the giant's face. They were nearly eye to eye, and it surprised me again how fucking big these aliens were.

"You will not speak to her that way. She is a healer!"

The medic stumbled over his words, "That can't be! We haven't had a true healer in generations."

Betty turned a cold eye on the older man. She lifted her arm and everyone in the kitchen gasped. It looked no different than it had before the accident.

Then she turned to me, "I can't thank you enough."

The commander came in just then, sweat beading on his forehead. "I ran the entire way. Are you alright, darling?"

Betty showed him her arm.

"I don't understand, I was told that you could lose the arm."

Betty smiled, "I could have if Chloe hadn't been here. She is a healer."

The Commander turned to me and I felt awkward suddenly. I didn't know why I could do the things that I had done, nor did I know if it would last.

"How can I repay you?" he said as he wrapped Betty in his arms and yanked her close.

I shook my head, “It was nothing, probably a mistake or even a side effect or something. I don’t even know if it is here to stay or what.”

“It’s her SUPER power,” Zack said proudly.

I wanted him to shut up, what if it was just an effect from my transfer from earth into space. I didn’t want the attention and I certainly didn’t want the responsibility.

“Indeed,” the Commander gave me a nod, “We are most thankful to you, Chloe. How is the training going?”

I had learned that this was the Commanders question every time he met with Zack and I. It was strange to me that they didn’t talk about father-son type things. Not that I knew much about that, but my relationship with my parents was always filled with laughter, stories, and spending time together.

It seemed that Zack and his dad were more co-workers than family members.

“Excellent, Sir. Chloe is a fast learner.”

It was the same answer that he gave every time no matter if I refused to train, which happened on occasion. Or if I spent the entire morning outsmarting his ass. Zack always answered the same way. He would say excellent like I had won the spelling bee, and then would grin and say I was a fast learner.

Often this high praise was accompanied by a side-hug from Zack.

I have come to fucking hate the side hug. It’s just a damn tease. Everyone knew in high school that you were allowed to hug teachers, after some boys turned in the science teacher for being too friendly, it was instated then, that side-hugs were the only kind of hugs allowed on school grounds.

Have you ever side-hugged anyone? It’s like a handshake but with your body. You can’t decide how close and half the time we smack hips or asses in the process. There is always the a little boobage and that caught in the side hug. Then you felt twisted and tangled.

I hate to be a Debbie Downer, but I hated the side hug and Zack used it like it was going out of style. “She’s doing great!”

His hip dug into my side and I would have sworn he copped a feel. My nipples were on high alert.

‘Warning, nipple alert, warning. There is a red-blooded beefcake within twenty yards of me.’

I wanted to tell them to calm the fuck down, but I wasn’t sure that Zack could take it if I started to talking to myself.

There was only so much a man like him could take.

“We always have need of good healers,” the Commander was saying.

The older man from the med unit frowned at the Commander but was wise enough to keep his mouth shut.

“Savi,” the Commander stopped the med unit officer from leaving, “You will began training Chloe on the last Sunday of the month. I expect impressive things from her.”

My stomach churned but it wasn't from anything I had eaten. The med unit officer scowled at me and so I returned his look with a blank expression.

“Savi,” the Commander continued, “You will make sure that Lady Chloe has everything that she needs, am I clear?”

Chapter 8 – Zack

You know when you are a kid and you find out that your parents aren't perfect or that the plastic thing in your nana's nightstand really isn't a sword but a well-used vibrator?

I want you to picture that moment in your mind. Do you feel all of the goodness that has been trapped in your heart slowly start to ooze, out until all that is left is an older and wiser shell of a body?

You get what I am talking about, right?

Let me put this in perspective. I remember seeing something about how much the humans loved that fat voyeur in the red suit that comes around and spies on all the kids, drinks the milk, and eats their cookies. He is supposed to bring you gifts and joy.

Well, remember how you felt when you found out that the fat guy was really your parents and that all the magic was just a load of shit?

Everything I had ever been told about humans was a lie.

I am not joking. It is commonly believed that humans are a spoiled, weaker race that will die out sooner rather than later.

Now, before I lose you, let me preface with, that was how I used to feel.

I hadn't met a real human until Sarah, and she was the very devil. However, I was starting to rethink the whole notion that they were weaker. Sarah is fierce. Weak is not an adjective that I would use to describe her.

Chloe wasn't feisty like Sarah. But she was every bit as strong.

The things that have happened in her life. They are just unfathomable.

Rylee said that her parents died unexpectedly and she ended up homeless on the streets. I pictured camping out under the stars, not drug addicts chasing her with broken bottles.

And that word… CANCER. Yeah, I looked it up, it's horrible. The cells just keep growing and growing and take over your entire body. She lived like that homeless? What in the fuck was wrong with these humans.

Compared to Zeron women, Chloe is small. But compared to Sarah she is a bit curvier. I try not to notice, I really do, but she has this ass that has my dick on alert. I think about it day and night. And before you say that I am being pervy, because yeah, I know it's pervy, but you haven't seen it, holy hell the woman is sex on a stick.

I would be all over her if she didn't seem so, fragile. It's weird because she is tough as nails, but in the same breath, she is withdrawn and almost hollow.

I want to help her.

Okay, stop laughing, I am not that big of a douche bag.

Oh, you are still laughing? That's fucking mean.

And possibly deserved. Look, I know that I didn't treat her right. I was a total idiot and I fucked up everything from the moment she arrived. But a man deserves a second chance, doesn't he?

Shit, I hated the sadness that seemed to always be there, just below the surface. It was like her body healed, but her insides were still the girl living on the streets and dying of cancer.

She hardly ever laughs, and when she does it's usually at me, because I have made some dick move or another. I don't even try to be macho or cool around her because I love the sound of her laughter. It's fleeting and rare, but beautiful.

Not that I tell her that. Any positive attention that you shower on her is quickly turned away. Chloe doesn't want connections, she doesn't want entanglements, and she sure as shit doesn't want an imprinted mate.

So where does that leave me?

I can't just let her go, she could die, hell I could die. If everything wasn't such a fucking mess all of the time. I groaned and rolled over on my bed. The light was just starting to appear under my window shades indicating that morning was coming.

I don't think I slept a wink all night.

My dad has been breathing down my neck at every turn. He keeps asking how she is doing and what am I supposed to say?

Her fighting skills and self-preservation is top notch. But she is broken inside and it actually hurts me to see her like this. Hell, what kind of pussy have I turned into? Shit, soon I will be following her around and licking her shoes just like Axel does with Sarah.

No, it wouldn't be like Axel and Sarah, because Chloe does want that kind of attention.

And then it dawned on me. I was going about all of this wrong. I had a resource in my best friend's lifemate. I needed to talk to Sarah or better yet I needed Sarah to come and tell me how to fix Chloe.

The irony wasn't lost on me that Chloe could make others whole, her healing was astounding and yet she remained with the scars of her past holding her back. The emotional wounds as fresh as they had been from the start.

I swung my legs over the side of the mattress and stretched. I didn't bother to sleep in clothing. It felt too restrictive and my dick liked to breathe.

Before I could grab one of the comms devices I heard a scream. It sounded like the hounds of hell were ripping into someone's flesh. I tore across the sleeping chambers and smashed the door into Chloe's room open not bothering to wait for it to slide free.

There was no one in the room. My heart was still racing and my breathing irregular when her face twisted up and another heart-stopping scream filled the air.

I was beside her in an instant gathering her into my arms. I figured that would be the best way to calm her. But she fought me, her nails digging into my skin, and her fists pounding on my flesh. It was until I spoke that she stopped.

"Chloe, you are safe, stop fighting," I made the commands easy and short. But it was as if she had been drugged. Her body fell limp into my arms and I stumbled halfway laying down and halfway kneeling to the side of the bed.

Thank heavens for this and that I was on the opposite side of the room from the outside door because my family came racing in moments later.

One look at my naked chest and Chloe's limp body and my mother started screaming nonsensical things while Rylee avoided everyone's eyes.

My father took charge by thundering directions to my mother to remove Rylee.

I was getting ready to defend myself when I met my dad's eyes.

They weren't angry, they were concerned, "What happened?"

I shrugged, "I don't know. She was having a nightmare, screaming and I tried to comfort her but she was attacking me like I was in the dream. I told her firmly to stop and she fell limp in my arms."

My father nodded, "Okay, well, let's try and get some sleep."

I slowly eased away but the moment my finger left her skin she started screaming again.

My father covered his ears, "Whatever you do don't let go of her!"

I wasn't about to. If I never heard that sound ever again I would be one happy man.

"You are going to have to try and sleep here."

I looked at my father, "This bed is half the size that mine is."

He seemed to agree, "Well you can try and move her, but if she begins that racked again you will sleep here."

Thankfully when I lifted her into my arms she simply cuddled into my chest. My father raised his brows when he saw that I was completely naked but thankfully didn't say anything to me.

I nodded goodnight and then moved to carry her back to my bed through the now broken door. My father sighed when he saw the damage I had done. I steeled myself for the rebuke but none came.

“Watch over her, son.”

I was confused that he was being so calm about everything. My father was a brilliant commander, fierce and strong, He tended to kick ass and ask questions later, so this new side to him, was something I wasn’t familiar with.

However, I had no desire to look closely at it, I was tired, naked and holding the most perfectly broken woman in the universe. The moment I laid down with her beside me, Chloe curled up to me and thew a leg over mine.

It was as if we had done this a million times. And yet the butterflies and anticipation were still there. We only had a few more hours until the sun was up and we would start a new day.

The thought of sleep never crossed my mind. I was going to savor every moment I had with Chloe in my arms.

Yeah, I really was turning soft.

Chapter 9 – Chloe

It was one of those amazing dreams where I was lounging on the beach, warmth from the sun coating my skin and forcing all of the darkness at bay.

I had learned to live in the shadows. Where some find them spooky, I had learned to use them as shelter and sometimes protection. But it didn't mean that I had forgotten the light. I suppose that the shadows that still remained inside of me were not ones that the Zeronians could magically fix with their med units and fancy technology.

It was only in these rare moments, when I was sleeping, that I would feel like myself again. The self that was lost when my parents died. I rolled into the warmth and snuggled down. This was what heaven must feel like.

I smiled to myself, and tried to ignore the faint rumbling noise, that belongs to a person, that managed to enter my dream.

Warm lips touched the shell of my ear and slowly the dream began to fade. But the feeling of living in the light still remained. It was dimmer, but not diminished.

The rumbling sounded again and I snapped to my senses. Heaven doesn't snore, but a big Zeronian alien who just happened to be my imprinted pair did.

"Why are you in my bed?" I demanded.

The snoring stopped and I felt his body tense for the briefest of moments. But instead of letting me go, the idiot wrapped me tighter in his arms and shushed me.

I was distinctly aware of the large hairy thigh that was residing between my legs and the vice-like grip two overly muscled arms had on my torso. One hand was dangerously close to touching my breast.

And then it dawned on me, I couldn't feel clothing on any of Zack's skin. My fingers ran over his chest, yeah, naked. My sleep shirt had ridden up and I could feel his skin against mine, again, naked. And then there was that impressively hard thing against my hip that I was trying to ignore.

It was hot and burned me like a brand. I didn't look and hadn't the guts to touch it, but I had a feeling that it too was gloriously naked.

When my parents were alive, my Dad would often say, "Our Chloe is a magnet for trouble."

Mom would laugh and agree that if there was trouble within a three-mile radius I would stumble into it.

I didn't know how right they were until one bad situation led to another and another until I had to start blocking it all out. The less you cared the easier it was to survive. There are unwritten rules to living on the street.

Look out for number one comprises about the top five. But another one that is often learned the hard way, would be, don't trust anyone. The moment you start trusting others you are a goner. There isn't a person alive that won't turn on you at some point or another.

I knew this. I had lived this. Shit, Zack had already screwed me over. But there was something about the way he had been with me the past few weeks that was wearing me down. I knew that he cared. And honestly, it scared the shit out of me.

I am not talking love, take off the rose-colored glasses.

But I could see in his eyes, the way they often held questions, that he kept silent on. Or the way he tried to protect me from his Dad. That was honestly adorable. The Commander was a good man, and not a threat to me. But it was almost as if Zack was bound and determined that I would impress the Commander.

I didn't give a fuck if I impressed anyone. That ship sailed long ago. However, I could help the way my traitorous heart would thump erratically when he tried to go all He-man protective on me. It was sweet, endearing even. The best part was that if we were ever caught in a fight, I would lay odds that it would be me to end it, not Zack.

He goes on and on about being a badass warrior. But here is what I have observed, and they say that action speak louder than words.

Zack loved his family first off. He spends time with his younger sister and although they argue I can see the affection in both of their eyes and in the easy smile they have for one another. Zack also adores his mother. He will pick up strange flowers when we are outside and hand them to her. He doesn't say anything, but I can always see the glow of pleasure on Betty's face and the smirk on Zack's when he knows she's happy.

And then there is his dad. Zack wants so much for his father's approval and can't seem to wrap it around his thick head that his dad is already proud of him. Maybe it's easier to see when you are the stranger looking in? But it's obvious that the Commander loves that his son is the top pilot for the entire intergalactic fleet.

What is the strangest to me is that nobody speaks their feelings? They don't speak of love. I grew up with parents that would tell me about a hundred times a day. I hadn't realized how much I missed it until I came here and saw them all interacting with each other.

I wanted my Dad to interrupt my reading with a story about what happened at the office. I wanted my mom to ruffle my hair and sing while she made her spaghetti.

Those memories that I had tried so hard to get rid of? They were slowly creeping back inside.

There was also this completely inappropriate and all-encompassing attraction to Zack. I wasn't the type of girl that signed up for fuck buddies. I have had sex before, but it wasn't often and I didn't get the hype.

That being said I get more of a thrill in my lady bits when Zack smiles at me than I ever did having sex on earth. Again I worried about the things that I was starting to care about.

I wasn't supposed to feel, was I?

"What's going on in that head of yours, Chloe?"

Zack's deep voice shook me out of my thoughts.

"Are you naked?" I blurted out not wanting to talk about shit like feelings.

A low chuckled invaded my body and caused the light inside of me to surge for a moment.

"I don't know how to answer this without a knee to my balls."

I groaned, "No, no, no… no. First off, you climb in my bed and second you let your man sword touch me?"

A great burst of laughter escaped his lips, "Man sword?"

"Do you prefer Johnson?"

He laughed again, "Why would I call my dick by another man's name?"

"I don't know, Dude's are weird."

His eyes sparkled, "Ha! I knew that Dude was still cool to say! Take that, Sarah."

I looked around and saw that we weren't in my room after all, but we were in his. They were next to each other separated by a sliding…

"What in the fuck happened to the door?" I wailed.

"You were screaming, I had to get to you."

He answered simply as if it were the most logical thing in the world.

"Shit, Zack, how strong are you?"

He grumbled something, but when my eyes focused on the bare skin of his chest that tapered down into the most cut set of abs I had ever seen up close, all sense of hearing went out the window. That large man sword/Johnson was still digging into my hip.

This was a really bad idea.

"How long have you had nightmares, Chloe?" he repeated the question again.

“Huh?” I repeated, “Oh, I had night terrors as a little girl. I don’t think I’ve had them since but then I wouldn’t know since I was usually asleep.”

“What about boyfriends or a husband, did they say anything about it?”

“I didn't have boyfriends or a husband,” I shook my head in disbelief, “Don’t they tell you everything about us before we come?”

He bushed, “Your file was on the spacecraft that crashed in the Omega Space Station. We will be getting it back, but it takes time to reconstruct. Until then, I am going blind.”

I leaned forward so that the tips of my breasts brushed his naked chest through the thin fabric of my sleeping shirt.

His breathing became more shallow and his hands cupped my ass.

“Careful Princess,” he rasped rocking that erection against me. It was now or never. And mom always said that there is no time like the present. So, I steeled my resolve and cupped his cheeks with my hands.

Chapter 9 – Zack

Her hands went to my face and then she was pulling my lips down to hers. And the little resolve that I had to keep my hands off of her, because she was vulnerable and that would make me a perve, yeah, that completely flew out the window.

Her lips were surprisingly soft and she didn't slam her mouth down against mine like I expected. Everything about Chloe surprised me and way she was tasting my lips with the tip of her tongue, that was driving me wild.

My cock jerked against her stomach, her brows rose in delight.

She definitely felt it. A smug, womanly look overtook her face, and the sleepy creature from moments ago was long gone. and replaced with a siren.

She rolled her hips against my dick and I grunted trying to keep myself sane. I could feel the heat from her pussy, the only thing separating us was a thin sheet and her panties.

"Kiss me," I had meant to ask, but it came out more of a command.

Chloe raised a brow but decided to indulge me. However, she kissed everywhere but my lips. My eyes, brows, cheeks, neck—I really liked when she kissed my neck.

But shit, I wanted her mouth on mine, no I needed it. Taking charge, I flipped our positions so that I was on top. She laughed but I swallowed that up when my mouth did crash down on hers. My tongue invaded her, tasting, sparring, I needed her heated response, and she didn't disappoint.

Chloe's hands moved down my arms and across my chest. I could hardly keep up with them my mind was so blown away by her kiss. She poured her heart into it, body and soul. It was so different from the hollow girl that she could sometimes be towards me.

This version of Chloe was hot and demanding. She kicked her legs free of the sheet and wrapped her legs around me. The feel of her legs of my bare flesh kicked it up and I found myself grinding my hard-on against her panties.

I hadn't dry fucked a woman since I was a teenager, and yet here I was, out of my mind with lust for this gorgeous girl. I kissed her face her jawline and the tender spot beneath her ear. And then groaning I moved away a little to throw the sheet out from between us.

Chloe looked down and she gasp when she saw my body.

"Holy fuck, Batman, you are incredible!"

I knew it was some kind of movie reference. However, I didn't know if she was making fun of me or not. The appreciative look in her eyes made me think that perhaps not. She licked her lips and I felt my knees go weak.

Grabbing the hem of her shirt I yanked it over her head and then moments later her panties are in my grasp. I really should have pulled them off, but I was desperate, and the next thing I knew I had ripped them off of her.

Chloe's eyes were round, "I always thought that was impossible."

"What?" I growled against her neck kissing my way down to her full round breasts.

"They talk about men ripping panties off in those bodice rippers and I figured it was a load of shit. But look at that, you did it easily. Hey! Could you rip a dress right down the middle?"

Where we really going to talk about this?

"Um, Yeah?"

Her eyes lit, "We are trying that next time."

I felt a surge of warmth in my chest at her use of the words, *next time.* I wanted to have a dozen next times and maybe even more than that.

I ran a finger over the swells of her perfect breasts, everything about this woman appealed to me. She squirmed and laughed when I ticked her side and I loved hearing the way her voice lilted when she laughed.

"You are beyond beautiful," I whispered and took a nipple into my mouth.

Her back arched and her fingers sank into my hair. Her dark hair tumbled down her back and she moaned as I laved her nipple licking and sucking in random order so she wouldn't know what to expect.

When she began thrusting her hips into the air in a silent plea for more I moved to the other breast but continued to play with the one I had just left with my fingertips.

After a while, I moved my hand to feel between her thighs. The silky wetness there told me everything that I needed to know. Not only did Chloe want me, but her body was more than ready for me.

I moved the head of my cock to her entrance and began to push inside. Rather than slide right in it was very tight. I didn't feel a Maidenhead but she was far tighter than any Zeronian girl that I had been with.

I cursed trying to slow down and make things easier on her.

"Just do it!" She grounded out. "Slow is worse than fast!"

I took her word for it and rammed inside, by her gasp I figured a little too late that maybe full force wasn't the way to go.

But she wrapped her legs around my waist again and started thrusting her hips, "Please, Zack, make me feel good."

"I will Baby, just you wait."

I began to move in and out, her body adjusting to my size. I was holding on by a thread. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined being with Chloe would change things. Not just between us, but I felt myself changing, as if she was imprinting on me all over again.

I cupped her ass in my hands and moved inside of her tilting my hips until I heard the mewling and sounds of pleasure indicating that I was on the right path.

"Please," she gasped and clenched her vaginal walls.

That was all it took for the beast inside of me to take control. Suddenly I was ramming into her as hard and fast as I could go. She arched her back again, digging her heels into my back ,as if begging me not to leave her.

I would have promised her the universe at that moment. Never had I cared so much about another human being. I wanted to know everything about her. But most especially I wanted to know what it was between us that caused the crazy feelings inside of me.

Her whimpering, became panting, and her hips were thrusting up just as frantically as I was pumping into her. Chloe's nails dug into my skin and I could feel the tiny vestige of control snap. Two hard pumps and I was coming hard. My cock jerked inside of her and sent her flying. Her pussy clamped down and her eyes closed as she screamed out her own release.

It was literally the most amazing experience of my life. Suddenly the depth of feeling that I was starting to have for this girl scared the shit out of me. I wanted to pull out and run, which I know is an asshat thing to do. Gently I pushed her hair back from her face.

"Are you alright?"

Her eyes popped open and she smiled, "I've had better, but you will learn."

Then not waiting for me to pull out, she pushed me off of her and rolled away.

"I'm hitting the shower, thanks for that."

I flopped down wondering if I was in a dream. Surely she didn't just thank me for our morning fuck like I had handed her a cup of that disgusting coffee she insists on drinking.

How was it possible that I was in a free fall faster than a comet, and she wasn't affected at all?

Were earth men that good?

And then an even worse thought occurred to me, could I be that bad?

I covered my eyes with my forearm and cursed the council for coming up with this ridiculous program. And then I cursed my DNA for being compatible. But I couldn't regret that Chloe had been chosen. Nobody deserved a second chance more than she did.

Time, that was all she needed. She would warm up to me. At least I really hoped she would. We were bound together for the rest of our lives, and at the present moment, that seemed like forever.

But not in the unicorns and rainbows kind of way. I needed to fix this.

Chapter 10 – Chloe

"Zack!"

A blonde woman followed by a giant hulk of a man exited the spacecraft. She reminded me of a mythical creature, her hair was long and white blonde and her eyes were startlingly blue. The warrior was huge like Zack maybe even bigger.

I thought the blonde woman was going to jump into Zack's arms and somewhere deep inside of me I felt a stab of jealousy. I shoved it away not having any idea where it could have come from. What did I care if one of his former lovers had returned?

That thought pissed me off and I started the glare at the newcomers.

The woman didn't jump into his arms though she ran right up to him and punched him in the stomach.

"How the fuck are you, Asshat?" her eyes sparkled and when she turned to me I felt the energy bouncing off of her. "Hey, Chloe! Good to see you again, and awake this time."

Immediately I knew who they were. This was the human that Zack had traded me for to Queen Neopia.

I nodded at her words but felt no need to respond.

Her giant bodyguard grunted at Zack, "How are things here?"

Zack went into a long boring explanation about troops training and then he and the other man started talking war strategies.

"My name is Sarah, and this is my husband, Axel. How do you like Zeron?"

My brow furrowed, "As compared to what?"

Sarah shrugged, "Earth life I guess. I was supposed to be murdered, what about you?"

It was strange discussing our almost deaths as if it wasn't a big deal.

"Stage four Colon Cancer," I said briefly.

Her face fell, "Shit Chloe, I am sorry that is terrible."

Again I nodded.

"How did your family take it?"

Things inside of me began to churn, things that I thought I had long since buried. What was it with all the questions?

"No family," I said shortly.

"Oh," I could see by the questions in her eyes that she wanted to ask more but Zack seemed to overhear the conversation and cut in.

"What are you two doing back here?"

"We had orders from your father, the new ship is ready, they call her the Andromeda. What do you think?"

We all gazed back to the ship that they had arrived in. It was beautiful if one called ships beautiful. It seemed very massive to me, like a floating city. Although according to Zack they aren't nearly as spacious inside as one would suppose.

"I don't understand," Zack said quietly. "Why come here?"

"You are to pilot the ship, didn't your father tell you that?" Sarah tilted her head to the side, "That's weird."

Zack's jaw tightened and his lips went flat. I could not only see that he was upset but somehow I could feel it. I rubbed my chest to try and make it go away.

"Are you alright?" Sarah asked me, watching the movement.

"Fine," I dropped my hand. "What does this mean? Why is Zack upset?"

Zack turned on his heel and strode off.

Axel sighed. In a rumbly voice, he said, "I will go talk to him."

That left me alone with the Energizer Bunny, yay, fucking me.

"You are mad at me," Sarah said it like a statement, not a question so I didn't respond. "I didn't know that they were going to leave you. And I made them promise that at the first opportunity they would go back."

I shrugged, "It doesn't matter."

Sarah bit her lip as if thinking about something, "What is your SUPER power?"

The question surprised me and I answered, "Healing. What about you?"

"Lazer vision, although I can heal Axel, I can't anyone else and if I am sick I get better faster around him. The medics said that it had something to do with the imprinting bond. I guess one party uses some of the energy of the other party. It's complicated."

Actually, that made sense to me. When I healed someone I felt a heat or energy move up my arms and into whomever I was working with.

"It was nice meeting you," I turned to leave but she placed a hand on my arm.

“Look, Chloe, I hate to do this because you are mad at me. But, I need you to heal me.”

**

Two hours later we were laughing over the drink she had accidentally sprayed out of her nose.

“How did you manage to lose your bathing suit top?”

Chloe shrugged, “I don’t know? But my tits are one of the few things that I am proud of. I came out of the waterslide and realized it was gone, so I walked back to the towels. How was I to know that they gave tickets out for nudity.”

I couldn’t help the laughter that sputtered out, “Have you ever heard of indecent exposure?”

She rolled her eyes, “Yes, because I had to pee so bad once while we were in gridlock on the freeway. It was pee in my pants or pee on the side of the road. Well, you can guess which one I chose. The officer wasn’t very sympathetic at all.”

I laughed again realizing that my stomach hurt from all of the laughter. I had wanted to not like this girl. But she was oddly endearing and she was determined to like me.

“All right,” I said raising my hand, “I’ll bite, you look to be in perfect health so what needs healing?”

Sarah blushed, “It’s kind of embarrassing.”

I cocked a brow, “The nudist is now embarrassed?”

She grinned at me, “Ha! No, it’s just that bodily functions are not always cool. Look, I have been struggling with a stomach bug, I either feel like vomiting or have diarrhea all the time. I don’t want to see Von, he works with Axel. He would just make me stay in bed and I hate that.

“So you want me to heal you?”

She nodded, “That’s the gist of it. Can you do that?”

“I haven’t had anyone that hasn’t responded yet. Come closer and let me put my hands on your stomach.”

She moved closer and I touched her abdomen.

The moment I did, I heard her heartbeat steady and strong but also that of another it was rapid, but also steady.

I sensed around her body trying to find what wasn’t whole. I hadn’t had many chances to learn yet with the med unit but knew this much. I couldn’t find anything besides some fatigue. I pressed energy into her and hoped that it helped.

When I removed my hands she smiled, “Thank you, I think I feel better already.”

I nodded, “How long have you been feeling ill?”

Sarah thought for a moment, “A few weeks maybe?”

“And when did you find out that you were pregnant?”

She paled and then I was terrified she was going to pass out. I helped her to lower her head between her knees and take deep breaths.

“You must be mistaken,” she said shakily, “I am not ready to be a mother.”

“Well, you either have an alien living inside of you or you’re pregnant.” And then it dawned on me, “Hey both of those are right!”

Sarah looked at me in dismay, “What?”

I grinned, “Well, considering Axel is an alien, the baby would be half of him. He is the father right?”

“Of course he is the father! Oh shit, Axel is going to be a father. I have to tell him.”

I looked over to see who had come in the door, there was Axel and Zack in a deep conversation.

“Well,” I motioned to them, “Here is your chance.”

Chapter 11 – Chloe

The large warrior is growing on me. Not only did he celebrate when he found out that Sarah was having a baby, but when bigass man tears appeared in his eyes I figured he couldn't be half bad.

Zack seemed more surprised than anyone, "How is this possible?"

Sarah grinned at him, "Did you never learn about the birds and bees?"

I sputtered back a laugh when he frowned and asked what in the hell that had to do with anything.

"She is talking about sex," I added helpfully.

Zack's cheeks turned red, "I am well aware of the act of intimacy. I just wasn't aware that we could procreate together."

And then it dawned on me, we hadn't used protection. He must be worried that I might get pregnant. Suddenly things weren't as funny as they were before. Was the thought of having a child with me so abhorrent?

Not that I wanted a baby! Don't get me wrong, I wasn't ready to become a mother. But the way he was acting made it perfectly clear that not only did he not want a baby. He sure as fuck didn't want it with me.

I stood abruptly, "Please excuse me, I have something I need to attend to."

I turned and fled. Childish? Perhaps, but stupid me, I had allowed the smallest bit of trust to start to form towards Zack. Hadn't I learned my lesson? I was such an idiot. It was better to be alone.

I took a deep breath and moved to the outside door, pressing the lever I walked out on the path and felt the gentle breeze tickle my skin.

"How are you, Chloe?"

I looked around and saw that Zack's mother was working in the earth. I forced a smile before answering.

"I am well, the more important question is how are you?"

Betty motioned for me to come closer. She stood and walked over to a stone bench that was large enough for us both to share.

"I am perfectly healthy, thanks to you."

I smiled despite the sadness that was tearing at my heart.

"It was nothing, I am just glad you are okay."

She smiled and patted my arm, "How are you adjusting to your new life?"

I took a deep breath and tried to formulate an answer. I was good at telling people what they wanted to hear. I had been an expert on that on earth. Was I living on the streets? No. Did I have someone who cared for me? Yes. It didn't really matter if they were lies, people liked to hear certain things.

"I am really enjoying your hospitality," I said with all honesty.

Her brow furrowed, "You are certainly welcome. But that doesn't answer my question."

I wasn't sure how to respond and so I didn't.

"You know I am not from this planet," she began.

I looked at her in surprise and Betty laughed.

"I came from a smaller galaxy that was dying off. We had the choice to go into a program where the council would find a place for us or we could stay and die with the planet."

"You chose to leave?"

She shook her head, "No, I chose to stay. They were only taking those that were young and of marriageable age. My parents were older and I was an only child. I had no desire to leave them."

I didn't understand, "Then why are you here?"

Betty sighed and her eyes grew distant as if she was remembering, "There was a certain young pilot that didn't agree with my choice. Unbeknownst to me, my parents had begged him to save me."

"The Commander?"

She nodded, "He captured me and brought me here."

I could hardly believe it. "What did you do?"

Betty laughed, "Aside from trying to kill him? I did everything in my power to get back to my home and my parents."

"But it was too late?" I finished for her.

She nodded, her eyes glistening.

"How did you ever forgive him?" I gasped, not thinking that I could in the same circumstance.

"Oh, he did a lot of groveling and I did a lot of hating, but the difference between love and hate it very small. And when he gave me the letter my parents had given him I had a hard time

holding a grudge. They wanted a better life for me. Being a mother, I can completely understand."

I nodded as if I too understood but I really didn't.

"Your parents, they would have wanted the same for you."

I stiffened, "My parents died a long time ago."

She placed a hand on my arm and I felt the sympathy roll from her into me. Suddenly my defenses weren't as high and I felt the wall that I had erected around my heart shake a little.

"You are a good person, Chloe. Terrible things have happened to you, but I can see the goodness in you. From what you have said your parents loved you very much. Maybe they couldn't give you another life like mine did, but isn't this a second chance just the same? What are the odds that you of all people have the gene that could imprint with my son?"

I didn't know.

Betty continued, "It is beyond reckoning and yet you are here."

I felt a tear escape, "Sometimes I don't want to be."

Her arm crept around my shoulders, "I of all people understand the feeling. I felt disloyal to my parents. How could I live when they died? How could I be happy when they were gone?"

I brushed the tears off my cheeks, "How did you get past it?"

"Sometimes I am not. It's okay to be sad, Chloe. It's okay to be angry at God, fate, or the universe. But you need to remember one very important thing, they would have wanted you to have this chance. What you do with it is completely up to you."

I leaned against her frame and for the first time in a long while allowed myself to mourn for my parents, for the girl I had been, and for the woman that was dying of cancer. I allowed myself to care. And slowly some of the blackness that seemed to encompass my soul, drifted away.

I hadn't felt a mother's love for a very long time, and it felt damn good.

Rylee found us about an hour later. Betty was trying to teach me gardening and I had pulled up several plants instead of weeds. Obviously, I don't have a green thumb, but Betty never once lost patience with me.

"I am headed into the city, would you like to come?" Rylee asked.

I lowered my head thinking that she was speaking to her mother when she called my name.

"Chloe?"

My head popped up, "Me?"

Rylee grinned, "You are the only Chloe I know."

Betty nudged my shoulder, “Go on, you girls have a good time. Be careful with the spending Rylee.”

Rylee rolled her eyes, “We promise only to buy what is absolutely necessary.”

I stiffened again, “I won’t spend your money.”

Betty turned and took my face in her dirty palms, “You are one of mine now, do you hear me, Chloe? I won’t hear any different. If my girls need something I will provide it.”

I felt my lips tremble again, I hadn’t cried so much in years.

“Do you understand?” she asked again.

I nodded, “Yes, Betty, I understand.”

She smiled and kissed my cheek, “Alright then, you girls have fun, and stay away from the soldiers!”

Rylee glowered at her mother, “As if we would go into the city to flirt with boys!”

I got into step with Rylee and whispered, "We are going to the city to flirt with boys, aren't we?"

She laughed and linked our arms, "Of course we are!"

Chapter 12 – Chloe

"Why are Sarah and Axel here?" I bent down to pet what looked like a dog, but as soon as the thing growled at me I yanked my hand away.

Rylee looked over at me in surprise, "Axel is one of Zeron's best warriors if not the best, don't tell Zack I said that. He has been helping to fight the Stavainians. Well recently, they were fighting the Seronians."

"Seronians?" I was totally confused. "Don't we live on Zeron?"

Rylee rolled her eyes, "Yeah, obviously a man named them."

I really was starting the like Rylee. She had a wicked sense of humor and was really bright. I also liked the way that she didn't take any shit from Zack. We had spent about an hour wandering through the city and she bought a few things. I saw some clips I liked for my hair and she bought them as well.

I tried to tell Rylee that I really didn't need them but she threatened to set her mother on me and I wasn't sure I could take any more mothering at the moment.

Betty was one incredible lady, but I needed a little space to think about things.

"Who are the Stavainians?" I asked holding up some fabric that was indeed as soft as it looked.

"They are a race that feels they are superior to all others. Their main goal is to destroy all living things. That is why earth agreed to the SUPER program that you and Zack are a part of."

"What do you mean that earth agreed? There are billions of people who live there. What country or entity?"

Rylee shrugged, "I dunno whoever they sent to the Intergalactic Council. They wanted to imprint the strongest warriors, which is Zeron's army, with those that would enhance and hopefully gain powers of their own. Earth wasn't the first planet that they tried, but it was the only one that the subjects were taken before their demise. Earth is really one of the last places that think they are the only ones out there. A bit self-absorbed if you ask me."

I chucked, "There are many people are on earth that fit that description but there are good people too."

It actually felt strange to say that. I had been in such a funk that I hadn't thought about the kindnesses that had been shown to me.

"If you say so," Rylee clearly didn't believe me.

"Alright, well for example, when I was in school my parents both worked in the medical field."

She nodded, “Well, that makes sense that they were healers if you are one as well.”

I shook my head, “No, they didn’t heal people the same way I do. They went to school and learned medicines and procedures. I just stick my hands on people and let the voodoo power inside of me do the work.”

She shrugged, “Either way people get better, right?”

A smirk settled on my face, “I suppose so, but you are making me lose sight of what I was saying. So, when I was in school sometimes my Dad or Mom would be late picking me up, and I would be sent down to the office to wait. Mrs. Nelson worked in the office as the school secretary. Every time I went it she would get the biggest grin on her face and ask if I would please come and visit with her a few moments because she had been dying to talk to me. She always made me feel special and often had a snack in her purse for me to eat.”

It’s funny I hadn’t thought of Mrs. Nelson in a long time. But the kind older woman had been a major influence in my life and it’s strange because it didn’t take a whole lot from her to make a huge impact on me. That was something I needed to think about.

Rylee grinned, “She sounds amazing. What happened to her?”

“I don’t know?” I answered honestly. “But when I was sick and it was really cold I would try to find a spot at the shelter. They were very overcrowded and often you were sent away. But there was one night that I was barely holding on, and a man saw them turning me away, he stopped the lady and gave me his bed.”

Rylee’s face softened, “That is very kind. And he had to go back into the cold?”

“I don’t remember, as soon as my head hit the pillow on the cot I was out. I hope that they found him something or at least let him sleep inside. The point that I am trying to make is that there are good people everywhere, even earth.”

She linked her arm in mine, “Look at you being so positive!”

I grumbled at her and she laughed.

“No, Chloe, I am serious. You are so much more approachable than those first few weeks.”

I grimaced, “Yeah, I am sorry about that. This was all so strange and I thought…”

I broke off embarrassed by my thoughts. I had awakened and thought I was in hell.

“Well, hello there ladies,” a handsome soldier with a crooked smile stopped us on the street.

“Heath!” Rylee grinned at the large man, “We haven’t seen you around lately. How are you?”

His cheeks pinked, “After the last mission, your dad had me helping get things straightened out on Seron. I heard that Axel and Sarah are staying with your family.”

Rylee nodded, “Yes, you should come to dinner and see them! Mom would love it.”

Heath shook his head, “I don’t want to impose.”

“Nonsense! Oh! I am such an idiot! Heath, this is Chloe. She is Zack’s imprinted pair.”

Heath flashed her a sexy smile, “I didn’t have the pleasure to meet you the last time we flew together Miss Chloe.”

My eyes widened, “You were one of the ones that left me?”

He took a step back, “I didn’t know, I swear it. And seeing you now I don’t know how they could have ever considered it.”

A flush touched my cheeks, and it was my turn to be embarrassed.

“It shouldn’t matter if I was ugly as a mud fence,” I grumbled.

They both laughed and Heath nodded, “How right you are, Miss Chloe.”

I gave him a tentative smile, “Just Chloe is fine, it sounds like we have known each other a while.”

A loud noise indicated that someone was clearing their throat behind us.

Heath snapped to attention, “Captain.”

I turned to see Zack striding toward us, he didn’t stop until his arm was around my waist and he had moved me slightly behind him. How rude!

“Excuse me,” I shoved at his massive chest and managed to hurt my wrists in the process. It was like shoving a brick wall.

“We invited Heath to dinner tonight,” Rylee was talking as if Zack wasn’t acting completely bizarre. “Won’t it be nice for him to see Axel and Sarah?”

Zack’s eyes narrowed, “Very nice.”

Heath smiled at Rylee, “I was great seeing you.”

And then he surprised me and moved around Zack to take my hand, “And it was wonderful meeting you, Chloe.”

Zack snarled and yanked my hand back. To my surprise, Heath only grinned wider, “What time would you like me to stop by?”

Before Zack could say anything else rude I blurted out, “We would be happy to have you any time.”

Rylee looked like she was choking on something, most likely laughter and Heath was smirking like a little boy who just stole the last cookie from the cookie jar.

Zack grunted something that might have been goodbye and then started walking. And I use the term walking but it was more like dragging me back to their home.

“I wasn’t finished shopping,” I yanked on my arm, but it was no use, he was much stronger and larger than I was.

“You are now,” he grunted, “What do you need? I will give you whatever you need.”

That made the back of my hair stand up. “No, you will not.”

Granted his mother had offered the same thing to me earlier and I hadn’t taken offense. But the feminist in me didn’t like the way he was trying to control the situation. Zack got sick of dragging me along and picked me up in his arms.

“I can bloody well walk! What is the matter with you?”

He didn’t answer for a moment and I didn’t think he was going to, but eventually, he said, “I didn’t like that you were gone and I didn’t know where you went.”

“I’m not your pet,” I returned peevishly. Although I was starting to feel awfully warm cradled against his chest. Somehow my arms had slipped around his neck.

He stiffened at my words, “Are you always going to hate me?”

Damn, that was a good question.

Chapter 13 – Zack

I can't begin to describe how I felt when my mother told me that Chloe had gone into town on her own. Okay, so she wasn't by herself. But like my sister was any protection against some of the thugs out there. Panic raced through my veins, it was the blind leading the blind.

I also knew full well that Rylee loved flirting with the warriors. I tried to tell her to stay away from them but she just rolls her eyes at me and says I am being overprotective. I know I should have been grateful that the only person they were speaking with was Heath. But my heart was already in a state and the next thing I knew I had Chloe in my hands and I had the strongest desire to head to the nearest cave.

It wasn't that I didn't trust Heath. I trust him with my life.

I'm just not sure I trust him with hers.

When we got back home, my father smirked when he saw Chloe in my arms. I didn't want to talk or explain to him for the millionth time how she was doing. I walked straight to our sleeping quarters and activated the lock as soon as we were inside.

Chloe gave me a dry look, "Well, you have me where you want me. Care to explain what happened back there?"

But the thing was, I couldn't explain it. All I knew was that I was going to rip Heath's arms and legs off. The thought of anyone being near Chloe or worse touching Chloe sent me into such a state. Honestly, I blame that on what I did next, because one moment I was setting her down and the next I had her against the wall and I was kissing the shit out of her.

My mouth was hard and demanding against hers. A part of me was urging caution, but I just told it to shut the fuck up. I needed her and she seemed on board. Her perfect mouth tasted of grape frizzles, they must have picked up the candy while they were out.

My hands shot to her hips and I yanked her into the air so that I didn't have to lean down so far. Her legs wrapped around my waist and I grinned into the kiss.

This.

We were fucking amazing at this.

Okay, so I was smart enough to know that entire relationship can't be based on fucking. But they can sure start that way. Her hands buried themselves in my hair and she tugged on the strands wanting more. I was more than happy to oblige her.

One of my hands went into her hair and I pulled back, not enough to hurt but enough that she would feel the tension. Her hands went to my shoulders and I felt her nails dig in.

I moved us to the bed and continued to kiss her. I couldn't get enough of her taste, of the way that she kissed me like it was the last thing she would ever do. I was addicted to this girl. She was better than any drug.

Out of nowhere, she wrenched her lips away, "You think that you can kiss me and I won't be mad at you?"

Well, yeah. But I didn't say that because she had that look that clearly would make using those words a suicide note. So, I went on the defense.

"Just because you kiss me that way doesn't mean that I am not upset with you."

Her eyes flashed, "Me? What did I ever do to you?"

I had a list, seriously.

"You are never going to forgive me. Do you know what it's like knowing that someone you care about hates your guts? And for another thing, I don't think you are taking training very seriously."

She snorted. I am not shitting you.

"Zack, training is a waste of time. I am a healer, not a warrior."

I could feel the anger and fear bubbling inside of me. "We have orders to go to the front. You don't have a choice, Chloe. This isn't something you can screw around with. I am terrified that you just don't give a damn. Do you realize that I can't sleep because I am so worried about you?"

She bit her lip and I could feel heat flooding my cheeks. I hadn't meant to share that much. But it was the truth. I was extremely worried about her.

"Maybe I don't want to go to the front," she said, but the usual snark wasn't there behind it.

My eyes closed for the briefest of moments and I felt her try to dart away.

Hell no.

I grabbed her and yanked her back but this time she fell over my lap. Her perfect ass in the air. Maybe it was frustration, or maybe I really am a freak, but the next thing I knew I was smacking those pert ass cheeks.

She squealed and tried to get away, but I wasn't having it. I yanked her leggings down and saw that her bottom was turning a nice rosy pink. I smacked her again and watched as the flesh trembled under my touch.

And then it struck me, she hadn't said anything in complaint. Maybe she liked this as much as I was. My hand went between her thighs and I traced her folds. She was soaking wet!

I yanked her leggings all the way down and then resumed spanking her glorious ass. She squirmed and every time her hip bumped into my erection I felt that much more inspired to continue.

I cupped the rosy red globes and then again my hand went between her thighs. She was so wet that I could feel the moisture on the front of my uniform.

I picked her up and saw that her face was red but she wasn't crying. Her eyes were dilated and she seemed—aroused.

I laid her back on the bed, careful not to hurt her sore bottom. And then I removed her shoes and took the rest of her clothes off. Once she was naked I pulled her legs apart and settled between them. She squealed again and tried to move away.

"Stay still or I will spank you again," I warned.

Her eyes were rebellious but her body didn't move just as I had asked.

Again I opened her thighs and then with her eyes locked on mine I leaned down and licked her sweet honey. Chloe gasped and her little pink tongue came out to lick her bottom lip. Her breasts were rising and falling at a rapid rate, and as much as I wanted to suck on them. I had another treat I wanted to eat first.

I licked her again and this time stayed between her thighs. Little whimpering noises escaped her lips and her hands sank into my hair.

"Zack!" she cried out when I sucked her clit into my mouth. I played with it a little but not enough to make her cum. I wasn't ready for this to end. I moved to her heat and kissed her like I had her mouth. Her hips thrust against my face and she started crying out all kinds of nonsense that make me feel like a fucking king.

Her hands were in my hair and her hips rubbing against my face. I had her juices all over and I loved it. I slipped a finger into her tight pussy and moved up to suck on her clit again. Another finger joined the first and suddenly she was coming unglued. Her body undulating as her desire swept over her and her passion coated my hands and face.

Before she could come down all the way I slid those two fingers deeper and began to curl them up in a come hither motion. She screamed as I reached that special spot and then she was coming again, a rush of liquid that coated my sheets and chest.

"What in the fuck was that?" Chloe gasped trying to catch her breath.

But I didn't have time to explain. I was yanking my uniform off and then burying myself deep inside of her heat. My cock slid in, it was tight but she was so wet that I was able to go balls deep.

I yanked her hips all the way to the edge of the bed and then put her legs over my shoulders. From there I pounded into her hard and fast. Her eyes rolled back and she screamed as she came for the third time. My cock was being squeezed within an inch of its life. I tried to hold on, but three more pumps and I was filling her to the brim with my cum.

I couldn't believe what had just happened between us. One moment we were talking and then I had my hands on her ass and she was coating my bed.

Was I too rough? Did I need to apologize?

"Fuck, Zack, that was incredible."

I turned to see Chloe giving me a shy smile. There was so much warmth behind it that I nearly broke down like a fucking girl.

"Yeah," my voice was huskier than usual, hopefully, she would blame the sex and not my emotions. "It was unbelievable."

Chapter 14 – Chloe

"That bastard Brooms finally cracked. We learned that the Stavainians were funding the rebels on Seron, and he was feeding them information on where to attack. After the treason he has committed I can't see the council ever letting him go. At best he can make some kind of a plea bargin for his life. Brooms confirmed that the Stavainians are now going into the planets that are less stable and trying to cause chaos."

I sat there trying to understand the debriefing that The Commander was giving us on the mission that I was supposed to be going on. He said that since Heath was already there they might as well get the ball rolling.

I hadn't realized that Heath would even be going but he and Rylee would be taking Axel and Sarah's place. Because pregnancies of this nature have never been reported they wanted to keep her for further observation.

She didn't want any part of it but Axel insisted. I didn't know who was more surprised about that, Sarah or Zack. I got the impression that Zack lived and breathed for The Intergalactic Council. A part of me was impressed with his dedication to what he believed in. My parents were very dedicated to their work as well, but another part of me longed for the type of relationship that Axel and Sarah had, where he would do anything to protect her.

The moment the thought crossed my mind I was horrified. I didn't need anyone, least of all a man that would eventually let me down. Hell, Zack already abandoned me once when I was in a comma, why would he put his career on hold?

And I didn't want that, did I?

Rylee was pumped at the chance to be going on this mission, this would be her first one. From that, the Commander explained it should be rather simple. Volton, a planet in the Nebula system, had been experiencing a rash of random violence.

"What is the government like in Volton?" Rylee asked.

I noticed that Heath hadn't taken his eyes off her for more than ten seconds since he arrived. He had to be five or six years older, not much younger than I was. I didn't know how the Commander and his family would feel if Heath was to pursue Rylee.

The Commander pressed a button in his coms unit and a rather young man appeared as a hologram above his wrist.

"He's just a kid," Zack scowled, "That could be half the problem."

The Commander shrugged, "Tantar is the last of his line to take the throne in Volton. Not only do they still have a feudal system, but they are strict with royal bloodlines. It is my opinion that

whoever is behind the violence wants to dethrone Tantar. He just came into his majority at the age of nineteen."

"Does he have a girlfriend?" Rylee asked taking a closer look at the young king.

I tried to stifle a laugh as both Zack and Heath took on murderous expressions. Obviously, it was for different reasons but I found it humorous just the same. The Commander winked at me and I had the feeling that he too was amused.

"No," the Commander waited until Rylee was able to gloat a moment over her brother before he finished. "However I am told he and his boyfriend are very serious."

Rylee's face fell and Zack laughed.

Heath still looked tense. I don't think that he liked the fact that Rylee was interested in other guys. I hated to break it to him, but I didn't think that Rylee even knew of his interest. I had seen her watching him and knew that she liked what she saw.

But he never did more than lightly flirt with her, at least since I had met him.

"How is the culture there?" I asked trying to diffuse the situation.

"What do you mean?" the Commander asked.

'Well, you said that the king had a boyfriend, but that he was also the last of his line. If royal bloodlines are so important there how is he supposed to father a child?"

The Commander looked at me with a stunned expression, "I hadn't thought of that."

To me it seemed clear, "I would think that people wouldn't be happy with the situation. Who is next to rule after him?"

"There is a second cousin, Mart, or something like that," the Commander fiddled with his coms unit and then another figure appeared above his wrist.

The man was maybe mid-thirties, kind of weasely if you asked me. There was something shifty about his eyes that I didn't like.

"He looks normal," Zack added just as I was thinking the opposite.

"You are crazy, it's totally him," I hadn't meant to say anything but the words just slipped out.

The Commander turned again to me, "What makes you say that?"

I cleared my throat and pointed out the things that bothered me. "Look at his eyes, they are downcast and furtive. The weak chin, paunchy belly, and greedy gaze, yeah he's not the good guy."

I had always been able to tell if someone wasn't right, but it seemed magnified for some reason.

Heath laughed nervously, "I hate to think of what you thought when you first met me."

I scooted closer to Zack. It might have been silly but I wasn't used to sharing things and this idea of sharing my thoughts and ideas with others felt foreign to me.

"I believe her," Zack said shortly. "She spent time in some pretty harsh circumstances. I would be willing to bet that her assessment of people was accurate."

Rylee nodded, "Yeah, I think Mart is a suspect."

"We still feel that the Stavainians are ultimately behind these acts. Now whether they are supplying the ideas or even behind the violence, we don't know."

"What is the excuse we are going there under?" Zack flipped through the brief to read more on the mission. "It says here that their Unification Day is next week. So we are going under the guise of celebration?"

The Commander nodded, "You are to be the representatives of Zeron for their first Unification Day with Tantar ruling as the king."

"How long was Tantar the king before he reached his majority?" Rylee asked.

"Seven years, give or take a few months according to the brief," Zack answered. "It also says here that the planet was being run by his nearest relative while he was a minor. What do you want to bet that was Mart?"

"It looks like you have your work cut out for you," the Commander smiled. "It's time I got back to my wife, she has been entertaining Axel and Sarah long enough on her own. There will be two more soldiers coming along with you. I have sent for Drake from the Gamma unit and Rafe from the Zion unit, they should be here I the morning. Until then, I know that you will keep everything we have talked about confidential?"

We nodded and then he walked out. When the door closed Heath let out a low whistle, "Rafe and Drake? They are pulling out the big guns for this one."

"Who are Rafe and Drake?"

I was glad that Rylee asked, because I was also dying to know.

"Rafe is arguably the richest man in the galaxy. He has his own armies and is known for his ruthlessness. Drake is brilliant there isn't a lock he can't figure out or an equation that he can't solve. He usually works in administration because of his intelligence. But he is something of a ladies man, always making interstellar news with his playboy ways. I think he is invited to the celebration aspect. He likely would have gone anyway."

I turned to Rylee, "It looks like you will have a few more soldiers to flirt with."

Heath stood up so quickly that the chair he was sitting in tipped over.

He grunted out something when he left, likely 'excuse me.'

Rylee turned surprised eyes onto Zack and me, “What was that all about?”

Zack shrugged, “How should I know?”

I almost said something. But then it seemed that it would be wrong to stir things up when we were leaving on a mission in forty-eight hours together. Maybe it was best that I just let things play out naturally?

And of course, there was always the chance that I was wrong.

Rylee left shortly after and Zack turned and took my hand, “Heath has something for my sister doesn’t he?”

I noted the way that his teethare clenched and his eyes tense.

“Will you interfere?” I asked.

Zack blew out a breath, “I am not going to lie, the thought of anyone near my sister makes me want to tear him apart. But Rylee is growing up and Heath really is a good guy. Honestly, I don’t know.”

It was insightful and honest, I felt it with every word that he said. Was this part of the SUPER powers that they said would continue to develop?

I took a chance and told the truth, “He likes her, maybe even loves her.”

“Fuck,” Zack breathed through his nose. But instead of getting up and chasing after Heath he stood and pulled me to my feet. “Let’s go take my mind off this, okay?”

I was more than happy to oblige.

Chapter 15 – Zack

We made it as far as the hallway before I had to have a taste of her lips. I loved the way she clutched at my hair and the sharp inhalation of her breath just before she devoured my lips. Her pupils dilated almost as fast as her nipples puckered, and I couldn't help the desire the grab her and rub her stomach against my aching cock.

We slammed into my room and then she was yanking at my clothes and I was tugging on her zipper. I moaned and nearly fell over when she fell to her knees and her hot mouth sucked my dick all the way to the back of her throat.

Zeus, it was more than I could take, my fingers cradled her face and I used the other hand to pull her hair up so that I could see her take me. It was a sight that I will never, for as long as I live, will I ever forget it. Her mouth stretched wide of accommodate me and those sounds she made, fuck they drove me wild.

When I was the on the brink of coming, I yanked her off my dick and finished undressing her. I wasn't as gentle as I should have been throwing her on my bed but I had to be between her thighs. My mouth lapping at her core sucking and licking until she was humping my face furiously chasing her pleasure.

Chloe moaned when I sank my fingers into her core and she came hard against my face. Her pleasure dripping off my fingertips.

I moved my finger from her core to her tight hole and ringed the tight tissue there.

Chloe gave me a surprised look.

"Has anyone ever taken you there?"

My voice was like gravel and I didn't know what I would do if she said yes.

Chloe shook her head. I could see by her tight nipples and baited breath that the idea aroused her. Leaning over to a cubby off the side of my bed I grabbed a small vial of oil. The almond scent filled the room when I removed the stopper and coated her anus. Then I made sure my fingers were good and coated before I moved to her.

She moaned softly as I pressed against her ring.

"Just relax, Chloe, I am going to make you feel good. You want me to fuck you, right?"

Her dazed eyes met mine and she nodded.

"I am going to fuck you so good that you will never want anyone else, ever again."

She gasped as my finger slid inside of her. The oil was beginning to warm her skin and she squirmed beneath me taking my finger deeper.

I moved carefully to touch her pussy with my other hand and to add another finger in her ass. She took me so beautifully, never once jerking away. As I teased and rolled her little clit I could tell that she was once again climbing the peak of release. I stroked my impossibly hard cock making sure it was coated well with the oil before pushing it against her ring.

It took me a minute to get inside and once I did I knew that my time was limited. She was so fucking tight and she had begun to grunt and bear down against me it caused my pleasure to skyrocket. Her eyes were glassy as she clung to my arms, taking me deeper with each inch.

"It feels so," she gasped as I slid further inside. "I am so full, fuuuuck."

I was losing control of the situation. She thrust against my cock and then I was slamming into her. The hand on her pussy rubbing furious circles until she started to cry out my name. When she came, her body arched off the bed her mouth open and her pussy and ass squeezing me so hard that I blew my load right then.

I couldn't wait another moment, her orgasm was so gloriously sexy it took my breath away.

She came for a long time clenching on my cock, and when I slipped from her, grabbing something to clean us both off, she mumbled something about a shower.

But when I pulled her against me she grabbed onto my body like a lifeline.

"I like your dick in my ass," she said against my neck, biting softly.

"My dick likes your ass, and your pussy, and your mouth. I am starting to think there is nothing that my dick doesn't like about you."

She laughed, I could hear the exhaustion in her tone, "You aren't what I thought you were."

She said the words so softly, that at first, I wasn't sure what she had said.

"Excuse me?"

She stiffened a little and I worried I had just fucked everything up. But then she repeated herself, "You aren't what I thought you were."

I hold her closer, "I really like you, Chloe. I don't want to scare you, but I thought you should know."

She was quiet for a moment, but she hadn't stiffened like before. Maybe she had fallen asleep? I was content to just hold her in my arms.

I had mocked Axel for falling so hard for Sarah, and here I was not only falling for Chloe but maybe… no surely, I was in love with her.

And then I heard her sleepy tone, "I don't hate you, Zack. I don't want you to think that."

I smiled against her hair, "I'm glad."

When her breathing evened out I knew she had fallen to sleep. With a feeling that things were going to be okay I too went off to dreamland. The next thing I knew there was a pounding on my door.

"Hey, fucktard! Wake-up and come kiss bro!"

Chloe stirred, "What the hell?"

I winced, "I think Rafe and Drake are here."

"Come on, lover! I am starting to think there is someone else!"

What came next shocked the every living hell out of me.

Chloe stepped out of bed, thankfully taking the sheet with her and pounded back on the door.

"He's my fucktard now, asshole. Go away!"

There was silence on the other side of the door as Chloe made her way back over to me and collapsed on top of me.

I turned with her in my arms and kissed everywhere I could see.

"That was the sexiest thing I have ever seen!"

She grumbled and tried to hide from my kisses, but I could see the slight smile playing at her lips. I heard my dad in the hallway tell Drake that it was time for breakfast. Thankfully, dad took care of things, because I was well on my way to sinking inside of her tight pussy, and there was no way I would stop for anything.

**

We were late for breakfast.

Thankfully my mother had saved us something. Rylee and Heath were arguing about how many things she wanted to take on the mission and Drake and Rafe were telling stories, that I had to admit, were pretty damn funny.

"So, we spend the night in each other's…"

My mother cleared her throat stopping Drake's explanation in its tracks.

Drake flashed my mother a grin that should never be sent to a mother and said, "In each others company. I do have some discretion."

She waved a wooden spoon at him, "Drake, I have known you since you were in the cradle and one thing you have never shown is discretion."

He laughed, "No, you are probably right about that. Anyhow, after our night of '*playing cards*' I escorted her down to the lobby and told Vanessa goodbye. What I didn't realize was that I had

'*played cards'* with her twin sister Vanessa the week before, and this was Valerie. Shit, I didn't even know she was a twin! If I had known I would have invited…"

"No more stories," my mother flashed Drake a look and he zipped his lips.

Rafe, on the other hand, was clapping him on the back, "Twins? You have all the luck! How is it that you constantly have girls falling at your feet?"

Drake shrugged and gave his signature cocky smile, "I guess they just can't help themselves."

Chloe looked over at him and shook her head.

"What?" he said teasingly, "You want a piece of this?"

Chloe took a napkin and dabbed at her lips before answering, "I would rather eat glass."

Then she turned to my mom, "That was amazing Betty, thank you."

With that, she kissed me right on the mouth in front of everyone. Before I could even respond she got up and started walking away.

"I have a few things left to pack," Rylee was saying as Chloe passed.

Chloe motioned to her, "Come make sure I have everything I need."

Drake has always been the ladies man. I honestly don't know if there has ever been a time that I haven't been a little bit jealous. The look he gave me was both shocked and amazed.

"Your girl there, she's something else."

I couldn't help the shit eating grin on my face, "My girl, don't forget it."

Chapter 16 – Chloe

The space flight to Volton was rather uneventful. Rylee and Heath took turns blushing at what the other one said, it was adorable. And Zack practiced not wanting to crush Heath's head in.

Drake continued to act like the frat boy, I had a hard time believing that this guy was the smooth operator that the Commander and spoken about. In my opinion, he was brash, rude, and full of himself.

Rafe, on the other hand, turned out to be a pretty nice guy. I liked how laid back he was taking everything in his stride. We talked a little about the imprinting program, apparently, he was next up on the docket and he didn't know how to feel about it. It was good for me to see it from his perspective. I had been so angry at Zack for what I had thought he brought upon me. But as Rafe described how he was just informed this would be happening and he had no control over it, it gave me such insight.

It was strange to think that he had that looming over him. Maybe my way it happened to me was better? I was about to die and was given a second chance. Rafe was just living his life, and told that any plans he had for the future were now changed, because they found someone to imprint with him.

He had been dating someone, not seriously, he assured me. But even still the program seemed to take precedence over personal feelings and situations. I knew that I needed to talk to Zack more about it.

So that night I pulled him into our sleeping chambers and rather than attack his body, which I longed to do. I asked him, "Tell me about when you found out you were going to have an imprinted pair."

He blew out a long breath, "I want to be honest with you. But the last thing I want to do is hurt you, Chloe."

I smiled, "I know that. I just want to know where you were at with everything."

"Honestly," he sighed, "I was pissed. There had been so many screwups before, and I didn't want to waste the time going to pick you up when the chances were you wouldn't make it. I never wanted to be part of the program, and I think that added to my bad attitude. I am sorry, Chloe. I feel terrible about that now."

"Where you… dating anyone?" I held my breath, waiting for the bad news.

"Zeus, no! Where would you get that impression from?"

I told him about my conversation with Rafe and the light of understanding dawned in his eyes.

"Chloe, I have been head over heels for you since the moment you opened your eyes. This is probably too soon, but I am in love with you. I didn't ask for it and didn't want it. But I am so thankful that I was chosen out of the galaxy to pair with you."

It was the perfect things to say.

"It's not too soon," I said gruffly. "I am not good with words like this. But Zack, I care deeply about you. I don't know about love, I have never been in love before. But I know that my heart speeds up when you are near. And I know that I want to lay beside you at night and I feel safe in your arms. But, I have to tell you, I'm scared."

He nodded pulling me into his arms, "I know, and I will be here, I promise."

He gathered me close and held me through the night. The next morning we arrived on Volton. Several other airships were arriving at the same time for the celebration. We waited in line until it was our turn to land.

The climate here was much different than on Zeron. We had thick boots and heavy winter wear, but that hardly cut through the chill that seeped into my bones the minute we were off the aircraft.

Rylee bounded along with restless energy. She talked to everyone we came in contact with. Thankfully she was just as friendly to the girls as she was the guys. Otherwise, I don't know who would have had the heart attack first, Zack or Heath.

When we were taken to the palace, we waited until we could be presented to Tantar. The man wasn't much more than a boy. He even had the first flush of innocent youth on his cheeks. He greeted us warmly and indeed did seem quite friendly with Drake. Maybe there was something to the Commander's judgment there after all.

Tantar asked for a moment of privacy with Zack and when he returned his mouth was grim. We left that room and were taken into a smaller antechamber. At first, it was just our team but Tantar soon joined us.

"There was an attack on the palace last night. Hooded figured came out of the woods and began shooting poisoned darts at the guests. Thankfully we were able to remove the venom before anyone was seriously injured, but they are getting braver these rebels."

"Is Mart here?" Rafe asked with a surprising amount of nonchalance.

Tantar shook his head, "No, he had business with someone but he should be here today."

"We have reason to believe he might be involved in the violence," Zack was completely straightforward with Tantar.

"No!" Tantar laughed, "Mart would never do anything like that."

"How does he feel about your sexual proclivities?"

Tantar flushed beet red, “I don’t see how that is any of your business.”

I was surprised that Zack was being so forward, but I also felt proud that he was backing up my idea. I felt a surge of strength from him. As I looked at Tantar I could see danger lurking around him.

“Tantar,” he turned to me in surprise. I hadn’t spoken at all until this moment. “My name is Chloe and I am from the planet earth.”

He nodded, “Yes, we were told you were something of a healer?”

“Yes,” I confirmed his statement, “But there is more to my SUPER abilities. I am able to sense things about people. I can’t really describe it. But there is a danger that is lurking around you.”

Tantar didn’t seem impressed, “Okay, tell me about everyone in this room.”

I gulped audibly and Zack moved forward, “I hardly think that is necessary.”

But I raised my hand and stopped him, “No, I will do it.”

I looked at Rylee first, “Rylee has a kind heart and wild spirit, she longs to be seen for who she is as a woman and not a child.”

Tantar scoffed, “That is terribly vague.”

I shrugged, “Do you want me to finish or not?”

He waved a hand for me to continue.

Looking at Heath I assessed what I saw, “Heath is in love with a girl that doesn’t realize it. He is honest and true to the cause.”

Heath blushed and his eyes flashed to Rylee who consequently was staring right at him.

I turned to Rafe, “Rafe is worried that people will find out he lost his money.”

Silence, and then Rafe scoffed, “How could you possibly know that?”

I ignored him, looking deeply into who he was, “Rafe struggles with gambling.”

Zack moved in front of me when Rafe took a step in my direction.

“There is no way that she could know that,” he looked angry and confused.

“It is her ability,” Zack warned, “Nobody in this room will say anything about it.”

“Drake will,” I blurted out. “He is a womanizer and a fraud. He hasn’t done anything truly terrible, but I sense that given the right opportunity…”

And then I gasped, the realization hitting me, “Drake has been contacted by the Stavainians.”

Immediately Rafe and Zack grasped Drake when he tried to run.

“Fucking bitch,” Drake spat, “I haven’t even done anything wrong.”

“You haven’t decided what you are going to do,” I knew this to be as true as anything else I had said.

Rafe pulled out a strange looking device and held it against Drake’s neck. He cursed and swore but the next thing I knew Drake’s eyes closed and he slumped against Zack.

Zack moved him to the floor and secured his ankles and wrists.

“I am almost hesitant to ask what you think of me,” he flashed me a grin.

Tantar’ hands were shaking, “We need to talk.”

Chapter 17 – Chloe

I didn't go to prom or spend hours of time on my make-up and hair. So, I have to admit that I wasn't the best canvas for Rylee to do her magic on. A trap was laid out for Mart, and it all came down to the ball being held in celebration of Volton's rich history and young king.

If that wasn't stressful enough. Somehow Drake had managed to escape from his captors, and was now heaven only knew where.

And now, rather than searching for him, we were putting on finery to attend the ball. It was decided that even with Drake being a loose cannon, it was worth the effort to capture Mart.

The story that Tantar had told us was sadly one that I had heard before. I met other kids that lived on the street. In a strange way, it is something of a community. You know whose turf you can crash and who will slit you from neck to navel.

Usually, the kids I came across had a familiar theme. Drug use and/or abusive families. When Tantar broke down and told us about his uncle being abusive, I remembered the other kids that I had known. I wondered if they made it.

His uncle had been loving and kind until he found out that Tantar was gay. Shortly after he started hitting him. He was going to beat the impurity out of him. The other classes, they could love where they may, but not royalty. His duty and his planet depended on it.

Tantar was afraid and rightly so. He had promised his uncle that he would marry and produce an heir. He had even gone so far as to break up with his boyfriend. I was shocked that he would allow his uncle to push him around in such a way. It seemed to me that this boy was not fit to run the planet no matter what blood was in his veins.

I said as much to Rylee as she helped get both of us prepared.

Rylee shrugged, "I felt the same way. But I don't know how much The Intergalactic Council interferes with the planet's government."

"I just feel that the Stavanians couldn't have picked a more perfect place to attack. Their leader is young and under the thumb of a terrible man. Who is making the hard decisions here? Because if Mart is the driving force then when we capture him will Tantar be able to stand strong enough on his own?"

Rylee applied the last bit of shimmery substance to my eyelids and then moved back to see if I was finished.

"I do think that Tantar has what it takes," Rylee said finally. "He needs guidance though, and who better to do that than a man who is well revered and in need of a change in scene."

"Rafe," I smiled, "That would be perfect. It could give him something to take his mind off things and it would benefit Volton."

Rylee handed me a few bangles for my wrist and added some for her own. We wore long ballgowns with more shimmer and seethrough fabric than I was comfortable with. However, Rylee assured me that this was the going fashion for such an event.

I had gotten used to wearing the uniform for warrior's while on Zeron and actually missed the jumpsuit.

There was a knock on the panel connecting Rylee's room with mine and Zack's. When I opened the door he stood there in his dark leather pants and shiny boots. His broad chest was bare except for a sash of sturdy purple silk indicating that he was from Zeron.

I wasn't going to complain about that custom. My mouth watered and my fingers itched to touch him.

"No, don't!" Rylee said firmly to both of us, "You will not ruin everything I just did."

"You are fucking gorgeous," Zack breathed.

Rylee answered for me, "Yes, she is. Make sure she stays that way."

He laughed and wrapped an arm around my waist, "What I wouldn't give for a few moments alone."

I felt the same way. Just being near him had my pulse pounding and my knees threatening to buckle. Heath and Rafe stood behind Zack, I hadn't even noticed them.

But as I turned to see Rylee's appreciative eyes go over Heath's bare chest and abs I stifled a giggle. This could get interesting.

Heath's sash was purple like Zack's, but Rafe had a black one indicating that he was from The Intergalactic Council.

"The procession as already begun," Heath held his arm out for Rylee. "It's time we made our way to the ballroom."

Rafe fiddled with his comms unit, "No one is to take Drake, Mart, or the Stavanians on alone. We will stay together as much as possible."

I nodded, knowing that there wasn't any way I would be leaving Zack's side.

**

The ballroom was lit with a thousand candles and tiny sparkling lights. There were people there from all over the galaxy. Queen Neopia and I crossed paths just as we were to meet Tantar. Her fiery red locks and skin as black as night reminded me of those first few days when my heart was full of anger and sorrow.

"You seem to have found yourself, human."

I nodded, "Yes, but I thank you for your hospitality while I was on your planet."

Her eyes widened in surprise. I was able to get a good read on the woman. She wasn't evil, merely greedy and selfish.

A slow smile crossed her beautiful face, "We could have done well together."

I allowed a smile in reciprocation, "Perhaps."

Zack's arm tightened around me protectively and Queen Neopia laughed.

"It would seem that you aren't as anxious to lose her as you once were."

The vein in his jaw jumped with his ire.

"I love this woman, and would do anything for her."

Queen Neopia inclined her head in his direction, "It is well that you see the treasure she is."

When she walked away, I could feel the tension radiating off of him.

"Zack, she means no harm," I tried to soothe him but then I realized he wasn't angry with her but at himself.

"I don't know how you could ever forgive my stupidity," he ground out.

"Zack," his eyes met mine and I hated the anguish in them. This man had taught me how to live again. "I love you, Zack. So very much, please leave the past where it should be."

He clutched me to him and kissed my temple tenderly. "I wish that I could show you how much I love you. I want to have your taste on my tongue, your body on mine…"

Whatever else he had been about to say was cut off when the brilliantly lit room plunged into darkness.

There was chaos as people ran into each other. Nobody's comms devices were working. The inky blackness seemed to rob every one of their sanity. Zack held me close in his arms, protecting me against those that had started to shove their way toward the exits.

But all exits were sealed. There was no way out and no way in.

"Are you alright?" he whispered in my ear.

"Yes," my reply was strong. "We need to find Rylee and the others."

Just then there was a flash of light from the dais. I could see Tantar struggling with the man I recognized to be Mart. There was a dagger gleaming in the light.

Screams erupted from the crowd as they realized that there was more than the hint of danger in the room.

Then suddenly the lights were back on. We glanced wildly at the dais but Tantar and Mart were gone. It was like they vanished into thin air.

Chapter 18 – Zack

There was mass pandemonium in the room, as Volton guards stormed the area, searching for Tantar. Many of the attendants were huddled into small groups. They looked frightened and confused, which I am certain was the intent of the attackers.

Rafe gave me a look, “You and Chloe go see if you can find Tantar. Heath, Rylee, and I will see what part two of the evening's entertainment will be.”

“You think there will be more?” Rylee asked.

I nodded, “Rafe is right, this is likely a diversion for the larger crime. Mart could have taken Tantar anytime before now. He clearly had control over him. We need to see what the bigger picture is. Are the comms units working?”

Chloe clicked her wrist and it flickered to life. “What caused everything to shut down?”

I had experienced something similar to this when I was working with Axel and Sarah on our last mission. Zeron intelligence had a device that would stop all communication within a certain amount of space. We had used it several times to speak openly. I had a hunch that when the power was cut, this was deployed to remove communication and make the confusion stronger.

Chloe grabbed my arm, “We need to go this way.”

I had stopped second-guessing her intuition. Chloe had a way of knowing things, it was almost a second sight. I raced after her as she ran to the now open doors and down a servant’s hallway. We came to a door that looked to be leading to a maintenance closet.

“What?” I started to say, but she yanked the door open and it showed a set of stairs leading downward.

Without another word, I started down the steps with Chloe close on my heels. We could hear someone talking and I motioned for her to step lightly so that we could get closer and figure out what was going on.

“I still say we need to kill them all.”

The voice was unfamiliar to me, but the person who spoke next was all too familiar.

“No, I am sure they bought it. They will never believe that I am in on it.”

Chloe’s mouth dropped open.

The next person to speak was Drake, “If we don’t deliver The Commander’s son and his imprinted pair to the Stavainians, we are as good as dead. I brought them to you, just as I was expected. So either way, I will be paid.”

“Stupid fool!” The other man had to be Mart, “And now that Tantar has fed them that story about me I can’t go out there. You are an escaped convict and Tantar…”

“Tantar what?” Tantar’s voice cut through his uncle’s rage. He no longer sounded like the friendly boy that we had met. There was a hard edge to his tone. “I did exactly as I was supposed to. It was Drake that was to make sure they were within grabbing distance when the lights went out. But no, he got himself caught by the human no less. It was no easy thing making it look like my guards were incompetent enough to let you escape, Drake.”

Choe raised a brow and the silent outrage on her face had me wanting to laugh. The woman was clearly affronted by Tantar’s remarks.

“Yes,” Drake sneered, “Because it was my fault the human was some gypsy fortune teller.”

“Silence, we are solving nothing with your bickering. If we cannot get away and fake Tantar’s death before the trail gets back to the crown about Rafe’s missing funds we will all likely hang.”

That I had not been expecting. It was well known that Rafe was quite possibly the richest man in the galaxy. Or at least he had been until Chloe outed him in front of all of us.

There was the sound of a door opening and then footsteps on the stairs. We were trapped between whoever was coming along and the meeting down below.

“What are we going to do?” Chloe mouthed the words more than said them aloud, but I heard it all the same. And the truth was that I had no idea.

“Did you hear that?” Tantar spoke and then there was the sound of a chair scraping against the ground.

Any second we would be discovered. I shoved Chloe between me and the wall just as a Stavainian dignitary came rushing down the stairs. He stumbled when he came upon them, clearly surprised and not expecting to run into anyone.

When he spoke it sounded sharp and was in a language that I had never learned. We all have communication electrodes that allow interplanetary understanding of communication. So, it was strange to hear a foreign language coming out of his mouth.

The door slammed open from below and before I knew it Chloe had crept around me and attacked the Stavainian. With a sharp headbutt, she knocked him clean out.

She looked over at me and smiled. I am not sure that I have ever loved her more. She was a badass fighter and it was sexy as hell.

We raced down the stairs and met the other three. Chloe took on Mart who clearly had no formal training. I heard a sickening crunch and knew that his arm might never be the same. She turned to Tantar but I couldn’t continue watching her. I had Drake to deal with.

He wasn't a weak political figure. Drake was a warrior just as I was, his skills were battle-honed and he had the edge of knowing that if captured he would be tried for treason and put to death. But I had a greater advantage, there was no possible way that I would allow Choe or myself to be taken by the Stavainians.

I sent my fist flying. I went for the weaker points, the eyes, groin, kidneys, while he did the same. We were well matched and I knew the first moment he drew blood. The ring on his finger cut deep into my skin. There was a gash under my left eye, but I didn't care.

As Drake gave a moment of hesitation, I went in low and was able to hoist him up. A dagger sank into my back and I gasped from the sudden pain. Suddenly, I couldn't breathe. With all of my strength, I threw Drake down the stairs. He landed with a sickening crunch, his head bent at an unnatural angle.

I slumped down, not able to stand any longer on my own two feet.

"Zack!" Chloe's anguished cry came from somewhere far away.

I wanted to go to her. I didn't know how she had faired with Tantar. But I couldn't do anything, but flight the blackness.

A sudden warmth enveloped me, and I felt the air return to my body. I was floating, or at least seemed to be. The burning in my chest subsided and I felt myself returning to the present. My eyes flashed open and there, with her arms wrapped tightly around me was Chloe.

Her hands were glowing and her face was covered with tears.

"Don't die, Zack, don't die!"

I felt strength returning to my body and I moved to take her into my arms.

"You were dead, I saw you," she sobbed against my shoulder.

"Not dead, just badly hurt." I looked down and saw Tantar glaring at me behind a makeshift gag. His hands and ankles were tied with strips of fabric that were torn off of Chloe's already revealing dress.

Wiping her eyes she looked up at me, "Don't ever die again!"

I loved this woman so much.

"I won't, I promise."

There was another slam of the door above and Rafe, Rylee, and Heath came running down.

"You are bloody hard to find!" Rafe growled.

"Does nobody listen to their comms unit?" Rylee huffed.

I hauled Chloe closer to my chest and then stood. She tried to complain, saying I didn't need to carry her. She was worried about the wound reopening, but there was nothing that would take her from my arms.

I said to the three of them, "Tie up the Stavainian behind you, Drake is dead, Tantar and Mart were in cahoots with him. We did the hard work, so I am leaving the clean-up to all of you. By the way Rafe, Tantar was bragging about stealing your money, you may want to look into that. I am taking my lifemate to our room."

"Lifemate?" Chloe blinked, "What is that?"

Rylee grinned, "I have a feeling you are about to find that out."

Chapter 19 – Chloe

Zack carried me clutched to his naked chest all the way to our sleeping quarters. And once there he didn't stop for explanations. His mouth covered mine in a searing kiss that had me clutching him like a lifeline.

I felt so alive, my heart was beating madly in its cage and the body felt electrified. I couldn't help sinking my fingers into his hair. I loved the feel of his bare chest against mine, but the few things I still had on were hindering my mission to have him inside of me.

I wrenched my lips away and began to yank the dress off of me.

"Chloe, I am in love with you," Zack took my hand and I almost yanked it back so I could take the rest of my things off.

"I love you too," I said quickly, wanting to get back to the task at hand.

"No, Chloe, listen to me. When two people love each other very much…"

"I've had the birds and the bees talk, Zack. What is this about?" I shouldn't have been so snappy but I wanted him, desperately.

He barked out a laugh, "I am trying to tell you! Chloe, I want to be lifemates, do you accept me?"

"Are you insane? You are stuck with me forever, or at least until I die, again. And make sure I am really dead this time. I will be your imprinted pair, your lifemate, your wife, your lover, I don't care what you call it. You are mine and I am yours."

He growled and kissed me hard. His hands going to my waist and lifting me onto the bed. He then ripped off the remaining clothing and shed his leather pants. When that big glorious cock came out to greet me, my mouth watered. He looked like heaven and I wanted him anyway I could have him.

Zack spread my legs wide and kissed the inside of my knee. Next, he kissed the inside of my thigh and then he was licking me. His tongue stroking my wet folds as he tasted every drop of pleasure.

He pulled away before I could come and I whimpered softly in dismay. With the head of his cock, Zack stroked my entrance making sure that I was prepared for him.

"I claim you, Chloe, as my lifemate and my soulmate. And then he thrust inside of me. I felt the power in his words and repeated them to him.

"I claim you, Zack, as my lifemate and my soulmate."

He thrust wildly inside of me and I had to admit that this was bar none the best fucking in my life hands down. I felt the tingles of my first orgasm overtake me and then shortly after another followed in its heels. I was putty in his hands and I had never felt so safe and protected.

Zack plowed into me hard and if marking me with his cock. I knew that there would never be another who would fuck me like this, within an inch of my life and still leave me wanting more.

When he finally came I felt a closeness with Zack that I can't even explain. I fell into a deep sleep. I hate to say I slept like the dead, because I did that once before. But I slept deeper than I had in as long as I could remember.

Wrapped in his arms, I awoke feeling genuinely happy. It was a little disconcerting, but I was in too good of a mood to care. I slipped out of his arms and went to use the bathroom. After I did my business I noticed something curving along the edge of my spine.

Doing a double take I yelled, "Zack! Did you draw on me?"

I heard a muffled, "It's the lifemate mark."

"Get in here!"

There were the sounds of movement followed by Zack stumbling into the bathroom naked and sexy as fuck.

He blinked and then looked closer at my spine.

"It's ancient writing," he said reaching out to touch the letters.

"What does it mean?" I asked wishing that I could see it better.

"It's from your earth actually, it's an old scripture. It says, 'Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God'." He cleared his throat, "It's true, I will go where you go and stay where you stay. You have changed me, body and soul, Chloe. I love you more than you could possibly realize."

I felt the tears welling in my eyes as he turned, and I saw precisely the same tattoo on his back.

"It would seem that I understand better than you think."

Zack turned to gaze at the markings in wonder and then he gathered me in his arms.

"You said that I changed you," I struggled to find the words that I wanted to share with him. "But I think that both of us were lost and drifting. We are better together, more than what we could have ever been apart."

**

Life has a funny way of working itself out. The Intergalactic Council took over Volton until lineage could be traced to the next living relative. Strangely enough that just happened to be Rafe, the man who had his fortune returned to him.

Having been a warrior, Rafe was up to the challenge and it was a short three months later that he was crowned the new king of Volton.

Sarah was going stark raving mad having been asked to remain on Zeron while she was being monitored. Her pregnancy was progressing normally, and she was finally given the okay to travel again. Axel and Sarah made plans to visit their friends on Seron and invited Zack and me along.

I was learning how to create a new family. I could never have imagined the things that I have with my lifemate. Rylee and Heath are officially dating. Zack is doing surprisingly well with it; The Head Commander is not.

We have news that another human is in transport to Volton, being a perfect match for Rafe. The citizens of that planet are in outrage. They swear they will not be ruled by a human outsider. It would seem that Rafe and his imprinted pair will have their work cut out for them.

I can't help but wonder what she will be like. What the circumstances were that brought her here. I hope that she has an easier time of it than I did, but then again, there isn't anything that I would change.

"What are you thinking about?" Zack grins and wraps an arm around my waist.

"The new girl," I sink into his embrace, "I can't help but wonder if she will be as lucky as we were."

Zack kisses me softly, a growl in his voice when he replies, "I hope that Rafe does a better job than I did. I still don't know how you could have forgiven me."

I rub myself closer feeling his length hardening against my belly, "Perhaps you had better show me once more how sorry you really are."

He swears under his breath and then suddenly I am lifted into the air and he is trudging back to our room.

"Again?" Rylee mutters.

"Always," I reply, "always."

EPILOGUE

“Betty, I really can’t have any more!”

The older woman rolled her eyes and slid another pastry on Chloe’s plate. “Nonsense, child you are no bigger than a minute.”

Sarah held her plate out patting her rounding stomach, “Eating for two, I don’t mind taking whatever you have left!”

Betty smiled indulgently at Sarah and gave her the tray to take as many crème filled pastries as she wished to. “I am just going to run along and make sure that the Commander has eaten his noon day meal.”

“They call that a quickie on earth,” Sarah said between bites of goodness.

Chloe choked on her tea, “Sarah! They are practically my in-laws!”

“They still have sex,” Sarah said practically, “Right Betty?”

The older woman winked at Chloe and Sarah, “Not dead yet, quickie? Is that what you called it?”

“No!” Chloe moaned, and Sarah nodded enthusiastically.

As the door slid closed the two women sank into companionable silence.

“You know,” Sarah said after a time, “I think I’ve gained fifteen pounds since they sucked me up here.”

Chloe snorted, “You are pregnant. I am pretty sure they recommend more than that on earth. And your husband is the size of Paul Bunyan.”

Sarah’s smile grew into a knowing smirk, “Yeah, the big sexy beast is all mine. I marked him good.”

Chloe raised her brow, “Is this another sex filled talk that is going to make me cringe? Because I just want to warn you. I sometimes mark Zack as well. My nails are wicked long right now.”

Sarah laughed throwing her head back and tucking her feet up on a small stool in front of her. They had begun to swell occasionally, and Axel fretted when she didn’t take care of herself.

“No, I am talking about the life marks,” Sarah leaned forward and whispered, “Where did you get him?”

Chloe unzipped her uniform and yanked her tank off to show Sarah the words across her back.

Sarah sat there for a moment stunned.

“What does it mean?” Sarah asked and Chloe explained about the scripture from the bible.

“Chloe, that is truly beautiful,” Sarah stood and traced the letters with her fingertips. “I love that he marked you with something that would remind you of earth. What is on Zack?”

Chloe frowned, “I just showed you.”

“You mean, you and Zack? Your markings match?”

Chloe nodded putting her top back on and zipping up her uniform. “Is that weird?”

Sarah had a concerned look on her face, “No. It’s actually really touching and now I am worried about me and Axel.”

Chloe huffed out a laugh, “You are crazy, what are you talking about? I have seen your markings they can’t even be covered by your uniform. Shit woman, if he was a dog marking his territory I would say that there isn’t an inch that he didn’t touch!”

Sarah’s lips twitched, “That is true. Stupid Neanderthal.”

She said it with such love and devotion that Chloe knew in some convoluted way, Sarah meant it as a compliment.

“Tell me,” Chloe encouraged, “Where did you mark him?”

“You don’t know?” Sarah said excitement lighting her face.

“No, should I?”

Sarah laughed and then stood again. At the top of her lungs she yelled out, “Axel get your ass in here! I need you!”

In less than two minutes Axel was tearing into the room, weapons in hand.

“What is it? What happened?”

Sarah pushed the hand down with the sword and leaned up to kiss the underside of his chin.

“Just needed you for a second.”

“Oh,” Axel leaned down and kissed Sarah hard and fast, “I only have a moment, we are in a meeting with Rafe. What can I do for you?”

“Chloe asked about your life mate mark,” Sarah blinked up at Alex with a wicked grin on her face.

Zack who had followed Axel into the room moved to sweep Chloe into his arms.

“Fuck no! You are not showing your ass to Chloe!”

“Ass?” Chloe’s face flushed, and she glared at Sarah who was cackling as Axel shook his head in exasperation.

“Sarah wanted to make sure that everyone knew who I belonged to,” Axel scooped Sarah up just as Zack had. “She marked her name on my ass.”

Chloe burst out laughing, “Your ass has Sarah’s name on it?”

Axel sighed, “Sure does.”

“Now, for more pressing matters,” Zack said with a growl, “Who taught my mother what a quickie was?”

Needless to say, as Rafe waited with increasing frustration, several ‘quickies’ were happening that were not so very quick.

He was alone when the report came through.

“The subject is awake,” Von cleared his throat. “Are you still a gambling man?”

PROLOGUE

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Rafe was alone when the report came through.

“The subject is awake,” Von cleared his throat. “Are you still a gambling man?”

Rafe growled, “Is that a joke?”

The older medical man fidgeted with his comms unit. “Axel and Zack have been lucky with their imprinted pairs. This new specimen. She,” he paused as if searching for the right words, “She is different. You need to come and see for yourself.”

Figuring that there couldn’t be one more thing that could go wrong in his life, Rafe stood and followed the medic into the sick bay. After all, it was one small human girl, how much trouble could she possibly be?

Chapter 1 – Lexi

PART 3

Five more minutes. I knew I had about five more minutes before that stupid alarm went off and I would have to get up and pour myself into something Lycra and head to the gym. The thought was less than appealing.

I really hated to work out despite the vast amount of workout clothing that I owned. It wasn't my fault that the stretchy material hugged the body just right and the new cheeky pants had just enough elastic in the middle seam to make my ass look amazing.

Cheeky pants.

I sat bolt upright remembering that I was going to do a review for the hottest brand of workout wear. And this social media post, this could be the one to launch me into a total internet starlet sensation. Watch out Jenna Marbles; I was totally going to blow this out of the galaxy.

I reached for my phone and nearly fell off my bed.

Only, I wasn't on my bed, or even in my room. I clutched the sheet to my chest and took deep breaths employing the 4 7 8 breathing technique. I knew all about it from video #58. First, you exhale with a whoosh sound through your mouth. Second, close your eyes and inhale quietly for the count of four. Third, hold your breath for the count of seven. Last, exhale through your mouth making another whooshing sound to the count of eight.

I did everything just like I had taught my viewers, but I still felt like I was going to puke up my guts. I wasn't sure if it was from fear or from an actual upset stomach. I wasn't feeling the greatest.

Everything around me looked—sterile.

My phone had to be around here somewhere. I mean, I had my phone near me at all times. You never knew when something Instaworthy would pop-up, and I wasn't one to miss an opportunity. Well, this was one hell of an opportunity.

I wrapped the sheet around me and climbed off of the bed. I had some kind of a tube hooked into my arm, that I contemplated yanking out. But then I wondered if blood would spatter. I wasn't really a blood girl. I was more of a unicorns and rainbows kind of girl.

Yanking the IV pole behind me, I moved around the room looking at the strange medical equipment and searched for my phone or worst-case scenario, a computer I could log into.

I bumped something on the wall, and a door opened.

Smiling at my rather ingenious move, I pushed the IV pole through the doorway and began to walk down the hallway. Everything looked so strange; it wasn't a facility that I was used to or one that I had visited before. I hadn't been sick, not that I could remember.

Why was I here?

And where were the nurses and doctors?

Just as I finished the thought, an older gentleman came racing around the corner with the largest man I had ever seen. Like he could have given The Rock a run for his money. I nearly dropped my sheet.

"Do you have an agent?" I asked. "Because I know a few that would snap you up in a heartbeat."

The older man looked dubiously at the giant hunk of man meat.

"Human," his deep voice caused my skin to prickle with awareness, oh, he was good.

"You could do voice over, or WWE, I mean, the possibilities are endless."

A massive hand ran through his dark hair, "What is she talking about?"

The older man shrugged, "Miss, I am Von."

I gave him my winning smile, "It is lovely to meet you, Mr. Von. Did you want an autograph?"

His lips twitched, "No, that won't be necessary. Tell me miss, what was your name?"

I faltered a little, "You don't recognize me?"

Okay, so many I wasn't quite a household name, but I had come pretty damn far. I couldn't go to the grocery without someone recognizing me.

"It's Lexi," I blinked and turned to the less than impressed behemoth, "Lexi Gallagher, I have been on the Today Show at least a dozen times."

"What in the hell is the Today Show?" the handsome beast growled.

"It's part of their television programming," Von explained.

"Who the fuck cares about that?"

Each word was like a dagger piercing at my soul.

I pulled up to every inch of my five foot six and frowned at him. Video #12 how to deal with a bully. Number one, be confident.

"Excuse me, sir."

Number two, stay connected and act quickly.

"I can see that you are agitated, and I am sorry for that."

Number three, use unemotional language setting limits.

“But I will not tolerate you belittling my dreams. Excuse me, Mr. Von. I need to find a way back home. Could you assist me?”

“Is she fucking kidding?”

My jaw ticked, but I chose to ignore the large bully.

“Come along, my dear, we have a lot to discuss.”

I frowned at Von’s choice of words but as he had started pushing the IV pole I was attached to I found it difficult to stay in the place where I had been standing.

“What is your name?” I threw the question over my shoulder in a small attempt at civility toward the tall cranky beastly man.

“Rafe,” he bit off.

I let it roll around my mouth for a moment before repeating it, “Rafe, it’s nice.”

It was sad that my feet chose that precise moment to trip on the edge of the sheet and that I started to stumble. My IV being yanked from my arm and some white liquid spurting everywhere. I thought fleetingly at least it wasn’t blood.

But the earlier feeling of nausea was back with such an intense force that as I was falling, I felt everything inside of me lurch. And then he caught me.

I don’t know how many seconds I was in the air between falling and begin caught. But the second Rafe’s bare hands closed around the top part of my arms everything stilled. My stomach settled, and my mind started to clear. I felt my lungs begin to fill properly and my heart take on a healthier rhythm.

It happened in seconds, and yet it seemed like it was much longer. I yanked out of Rafe’s grasp. I knew my eyes were wild and that I wasn’t just at any old hospital.

“Where am I and what is going on?”

Rafe put his hands up in front of him, “Easy, we just need to talk to you.”

He was a massive wall of muscle; it seemed crazy that he was trying to talk me off the ledge. But all the same, I felt angry, agitated that I didn’t know what was going on.

“You have three seconds to tell me what is going on.”

Rafe smirked at me, his handsome face taking on a look that seared itself into my brain and I felt my girly parts do things that they should never do when I am naked and vulnerable.

I reached out and grabbed his arm. And then to both of our surprise, I yanked him off his feet and threw him over my head. I wasn't even winded. Rafe went crashing into a wall leaving a massive dent.

"Fucking hell!"

Von beamed at me, "Nicely done!"

"I, how?" I stumbled over the words, "How did that happen?"

It wasn't lost on me that Von took a giant step backward before explaining to me.

"You are on the planet Zeron. You have been found to carry the rare gene Z13 and have imprinted with Rafe."

And me without my phone, if this wasn't Instaworthy, I didn't know what was.

Chapter 2 – Rafe

Life had been particularly shitty lately, and I know that when one is obscenely wealthy, they aren't supposed to have problems. But, if I could just take the briefest moment to remind you, life had really sucked lately. Not only was my fortune stolen from me but I was also outed to the intergalactic council for a gambling problem.

Compound this little gem with the fact that I was just crowned ruler over the planet Volton and they hated humans, despised them actually. What better timing than now to have my imprinted pair be located on earth.

For just the briefest moment I wondered how she died. My head felt like it was ringing and I disentangled myself from the wall she had just about put me through.

"So," I drawled, speaking to Von, "Strength seems to be her first ability."

The pampered princess looked down at her nails and shrieked. I expected one of fingers to be hanging off or at least an open wound. I snatched the hand looking at it intently and then flipping it over. I was very much aware that she was inches from me in a thin sheet that was losing its war with gravity. I was also very much aware that she was naked under that sheet.

The only thing saving her was the stark raving crazy that she wore like a badge of honor.

"You broke my nail! I just had them done! It's seventy-five dollars to get them dipped."

Von peered over her, "Dipped in what?"

"Who the hell cares?" I snapped startling them both. "Look, you are a human specimen that has been sent here by your planet because you carry the rare genetic gene Z13. Our files created a match in the system, and they sent you here to Volton. Are you keeping up with me?"

She nodded, a small furrow appearing between her brows. It was then I noticed that she was inching away from me. I snatched her wrist to keep her from escaping, sorta forgetting about the mega strength.

Seconds later I was staring up at the ceiling and watching as the sheet billowed out behind the girl as she ran. For the briefest of moments, I caught the curve of a tight butt cheek.

Fuck.

Von stood over me. I winced, "You need to trim your nose hairs."

He smiled, "You need to work on your romance."

I flipped him a rather obscene gesture and moved to sit up. Rather than offer a hand, Von smiled wider and looked through his files.

"It would appear that your Lexi was something of a celebrity on earth. That should be a good fit if she is going to help you with the ruling of Volton."

Back on my feet, I growled down at the older man, "By celebrity, you mean loved and adored, am I right?"

Von shrugged, "That is one explanation."

"So, how do I live with a woman that is used to being the social spotlight? She will be a pariah here; they already are angry that she is coming and there are death threats against her."

Von moved to go back to the med unit, "I suppose it is a good thing that she is so very strong then."

I scoffed, "Are you saying that she just beats up everyone who pisses her off?"

Von raised a brow, "Men do it all the time, why is it offensive if a woman does it?"

"Oh no," I raised my hands, "This has nothing to do with sexual equality. She is a human!"

I heard a scream coming from somewhere down the corridor followed by a loud thud.

Von motioned for me to go, "You might want to hurry."

Damn the man!

And damn this fucking program! I wasn't ready to be involved with a woman and wasn't interested in what Axel and Zack had made of their pairings. Shit, right now I would be happy if one faction of my life was in order, just one.

Another piercing scream filled the air, and I took off at a run. I rounded a corner and saw a man unconscious on the floor. I raced over to him and checked his pulse; thankfully he was still alive. Running further down the way, I saw where Lexi had gone.

She was huddled under a table in that blasted sheet. She was holding a broken piece of steel, something that should have been far too heavy for a girl her size to lift. Her eyes were calculated and strangely calm.

"I just want to go home. So, as soon as you are willing to negotiate my release, we can get things moving."

I fought rolling my eyes as I barked out a command, "Leave us!"

At the sound of my voice, the men and women scattered, even the guards did as they were told. I saw Lexi's shoulders slump a little. She wasn't as unaffected as she would have had them believe.

"I meant what I said," her voice was crisp, "I just want to go home."

"You aren't on earth anymore," I tried to explain.

“Look, I don’t know what cult I have stumbled into or how I got here. All I know is that I want to go home.”

“You can’t,” I said flatly, “You died on earth.”

She paused for a moment and then surprised me by laughing. Her eyes lit, and her mouth softened, and she was momentarily stunning.

“I am not dead,” she said with a grin. “Nice try, I can pinch my skin, and I have a bruise forming where that weird IV was.”

This was getting old, “You are in space.”

She scooted out from her hiding place nearly giving me a view of those round nipples.

“Really, and everyone here just happens to speak English?”

I frowned, “No, feel the back of your neck.”

I took her hand and moved it so that she could feel where the implant was for the universal communicator.

“You can understand almost any language with your implant in.”

Her hands were shaking, “I don’t have an implant.”

I gave her a strange look because we both felt it underneath her skin.

“You don’t understand. Why would any of this be possible?”

“The only subjects earth sends us are people who are seconds from their own death. The galaxy is at war with the Stavanians. They are horrible creatures that are trying to wipe out all intelligent life.”

“How did I die?”

Her eyes began to look glassy, and I took a step back, “You aren’t going to cry are you?”

She blinked furiously, “What did I wear to my funeral? Did it match?”

Shit, it was a full-fledged storm warning.

“I am sure you were lovely. Look, let’s go back to the med unit and see what Von knows?”

She nodded and allowed me to led her away from where we had been speaking. But with every step, I knew her heart was growing more and more heavy.

My biggest mistake was looking at her. I should have just marched her down to Von and not let my eyes stray from the task at hand. But my gaze was fucking ADD and did whatever the hell it wanted too. Her face was a steady stream of tears.

She wasn't sobbing or even holding things back; she just walked beside me with an air of sadness that made me want to rip a hole in my chest. Or bet a few mill on a card game, which is precisely why I shouldn't be anywhere near this chick.

I had to stop her crying; I couldn't look at it anymore. Lexi mad was better than Lexi sad. So, I did what anyone else would have done. I grabbed her sheet and held it above her head. Mission accomplished, she was no longer crying.

But then my gaze went on another holiday, this time taking in every fucking inch and curve of her perfect body.

"Fucking hell, Lexi," I rasped, barely breathing. With tits like that, no wonder she was famous.

Chapter 3 – Lexi

I want it noted somewhere that I am not a crier. I actually despise crying, not because it makes you weak or shows your frailties. No, I hate crying because some women are pretty criers and their tears are like sparking raindrops of goodness that adorn their cheeks making them even more beautiful than they already are.

And then there are the rest of us. Blotchy, snotty messes with red-rimmed eyes and quivering chins that resemble a hyena in heat. Not that I have seen a hyena in heat, but I do have a vivid imagination. For the briefest of moments, I wished that I could do another podcast or video tutorial on what to do when aliens steal your body and you ugly cry.

Surely there would be some magic concealer out there that would love to appear on my vlog.

But it was too soon for happy thoughts; I needed to wallow a little bit longer.

An arm shot out behind my back wrapping around me and hauling my body into a brick wall. Or actually not a brick wall, but a hard masculine chest that felt like granite. It wasn't a hug precisely. I can honestly classify it as one of the most awkward moments to date.

Our bodies were smashed together, but I was still so sad, and he was standing as still as a statue.

I looked up at Rafe through tear stained eyes. He was trying not to look at me, which confirmed the ugly cry suspicions. I probably was in rare form. But I did manage to catch his gaze.

The look in his eyes was hard to classify, the mixture of emotions showed compassion, panic, wariness, frustration, and something else I just couldn't quantify.

"Don't cry," he rasped. He was so much taller than I am that he rested his head on the top of mine. The hand that held me against him was rubbing slow circles on my back, my bareback. The sheet was somewhere in a puddle on the floor.

I should have been horrified, but all I could think about was the fact that I was dead. Or if not dead in reality, I was dead to everyone that knew me.

"Everything that I worked for, it's gone. My family, I haven't talked to my mom in two weeks. I was mad that she posted some pictures from my ugly years. How stupid is that? And now I will never talk to her again. And my boyfriend, what about him? It's like I am in the middle of a mass break up. That is traumatizing; I ought to know, there was a whole special on it. And Rafe, I am breaking up with everyone I have ever known and everything that is familiar. I can't stop the tears, even if I wanted to."

I don't know how much he understood of my little speech because the emotion kept clogging my throat making things sound high an pinched.

I shivered in his arms.

He bent down and scooped me up under the knees, and the awkward sort of hug turned into something different, something softer. His arms pulled me close, and I melted against him. The heat of his body seeping into mine. I wound my arms around his neck and let the tears fall.

I knew the minute that his arms tightened, and he turned around that we weren't going back to the med unit. He walked briskly down the halls and up some stairs. There was the whooshing sound of a door opening, and then he sank down on something soft and cradled me even closer.

"I'm sorry."

He didn't expound on it or try and talk me out of my grief, he just held me. I found it more comforting than I can even express. Sometimes I can be high strung, I know that is not hard to believe, but as such, I need an outlet to get all of these feelings and emotions out. It felt like Rafe was almost absorbing it from me.

I cried until my head hurt and tears ran dry. But finally, I felt some peace.

"I didn't chose this for either of us," his deep voice rumbled through me. "I am sorry for your losses. We can learn more about the circumstances of your…"

"It's okay," I mumbled against his chest, "Or, it's not okay. But we can do that later. I am a little cold."

"It's funny, I could have sworn that it was as hot as blazes in here," he stood from the chair and set me onto a large bed. Keeping his back toward me, he walked over to the wall and pressed a button. A compartment opened, and I saw a closet was hidden away. He pulled out a shirt and tossed it over his shoulder. "Put this on, and we can talk to Von about what steps we need to take next."

I pulled the soft cotton fabric on and snuggled into its warmth, but I still felt cold. With my head pounding and my heart hurting, I didn't feel like moving anywhere. Pushing the covers back with my feet I snuggled into his bed.

I immediately smelled his scent and turned my head into the pillow.

"What are you doing? Don't do that!"

"What?" I barked back.

"You can't sleep in my bed," he stated flatly.

I opened a bleary eye, "Why not?"

The sound he made was similar to a snarl. "Some things are sacred. A man's bed is a man's bed. Look, you can't sleep here, naked, in my bed!"

For some reason, his outrage on such a large man sounded funny, and I felt a smile cracking.

“I am not naked. I am wearing your shirt. And I didn’t know that it was your bed.” I yawned loudly, “And now I am tired and am going to go to sleep.”

He stood there muscles heaving and chest contracting with each breath, “You don’t listen.”

I ignored that one because what could I say? I saw no point in obeying him when we were both pawns in a larger game.

Rafe growled, “I will just leave you then.”

The first step he took away from me I felt a little pang, the next step another. By the time he got to the door, I had sat up, “Don’t leave!”

Rafe turned, “What?”

“Please, don’t go… I need someone to stay with me.

Rafe frowned, “I can have someone come in.”

I shook my head, “No, It has to be you.”

I didn’t want to explain that he had become something of a safety blanket to me.

Rafe sighed and sat back down on the chair he had vacated when he first brought me in here.

I sat up on the bed wrapping Rafe’s large shirt around me

“Can you come any closer?”

Chapter 4 – Rafe

Somehow I managed to end up hanging off the edge of my own bed with the human sprawled across my chest as she slept. Every time I tried to move away from her, the whimpers were so gutwrenching that I couldn't leave the room. I wanted to talk to Von; surely he should be educated in human females.

It wasn't that I hadn't been with a female before. But space women were different, or maybe Lexi was just different. It was most likely that blasted connection. I could feel it strumming through my veins as I tried once again to move us to the center of the bed.

Did Zack and Axel go through this much trouble?

Okay, so there was the mishap when Zack left his mate behind on an unfriendly planet. That was badly done. But his pair had even became life mates with Zack just as Axel did with his human.

The thought of tying my life to another made me want to puke. I wasn't in any position to make another drastic life change. And there was still the matter of my gambling addiction that needed to be addressed. I was dealing with it, but the urges were still there.

Just tonight I had a message on my comms unit from Archer Baines over in the Gamma Quadrant. Stupid bastard can't be trusted. I suspected he had something to do with the Stavainians invading the planet Volton. Tantar, the previous king, had been young and foolish. But he wasn't the mastermind behind it all.

But no one was more foolish than myself for trusting any of them. I have always been too quick to trust, and this last few months I thought I had lost everything. I know you are thinking, stop harping about it. Listen, I was raised with a silver spoon in my mouth, we never wanted for anything. Being the richest man in the galaxy has its perks. But when it all comes crashing down around you, that is when you learn who your real friends are.

Now it's been a little over three months since I was crowned king of Volton. Instead of ruling like I should be, I am stuck Zeron until I can get Lexi in good enough form to go home.

Man, it seems weird calling Volton home. That really didn't matter, what did matter was that I need to get back to my planet, they are hungry, angry, and more than a little bit volatile.

I just wish I knew how things with Lexi would work out.

She didn't have the thick skin that the other humans seemed to have. Those tears…

Why did they affect me so strongly, and why did the sight of them make me want to turn the galaxy inside out just so she would smile again. Her rambling about fame was slightly disconcerting, but surely she would get over that? She had to.

Lexi moaned and shifted on top of me brushing my cock with her knee. The last thing I needed was for the boys to take a hit. I was already hard from her amazing body being pasted onto mine like butter on toast.

My hands went reflexively to her hips trying to still her motions. There had to be some type of award for living through such extreme torture.

This was just one more headache that I didn't need.

I smiled reluctantly when I thought about her powers. Of course, she would get super strength. Not only does that make a man feel incredibly emasculated when a chick a third of his size can beat his ass. But the whole innocent way she went about it was fucking adorable. Lexi was a killing machine with pink nail polish and plump lips.

"Rafe?"

Her voice was husky with sleep and could have easily been something to stroke my cock. It strained against the zipper of my uniform.

"How are you feeling?"

She pushed up on an elbow, consequently digging it into my sternum. But she was so small it didn't hurt. I was thankful she hadn't put her super strength behind it.

"Better," she said raspily, "Can I use your bathroom?"

I nodded, "The washroom is just across the room. Let me show you how to use it."

I walked her into the room and showed her the commode and the bathing unit. It sprayed from all sides, but it was hard to turn on if you weren't used to it.

Lexi found the idea that we didn't have cloths to dry ourselves strange. But the moment the dryers turned on I heard her shriek of pleasure.

That grin I had been fighting from before reappeared.

She came back out in the shirt I had loaned her.

My breath caught for a moment. Her eyes were shiny, but not with tears, she was happy. Her lips were pulled into the sweetest smile, and her hair hung glossy and beautiful down her back.

"I like you bathing unit!" she exclaimed.

She took a step forward and then frowned, "I don't know why I have the urge to touch you."

Images of places that I wanted her to touch me filled my mind.

"It's the imprinting," I grumbled, "It is important that we are symbiotic pairs that work together. I know this is all strange, but we have a lot to do before we can return to Volton."

Lexi's head perked up, "We aren't staying here forever?"

“On Zeron? No, this isn’t my planet, and even still, you have seen nothing of it yet.”

“I thought we were on a spaceship,” she said innocently.

I had the strongest urge to tuck her into my lap.

Woah, where had that come from?

“We will be boarding a spaceship when the time comes to go home. But for now, we are to get acclimated and start your training.”

She blinked impossibly long lashes up at me, “Training for what?”

“To be a warrior, like me.”

I thought I stated it rather plainly, but her face was a mix of incredulity and humor.

“You are shitting me.”

“My dear, if I only was.”

Chapter 5 – Lexi

"So, my dear, it's been a little over a month," Von smiled kindly at me after giving me a physical and deeming me worthy of traveling to Volton. "What do you think so far?"

"Well, if I am honest, I like the blend of fabric on the uniforms. But, Von, they have to allow me to choose my own color patterns. Black? That does nothing for my complexion!"

Von's lips twitched.

"Oh, you mean, about everything?" my smile faltered for a fraction of a second.

I had struggled with some depression when I first was transported. Von said that it was perfectly normal. I didn't know if he was just being kind or if it was really true.

I had met the other human girls, Sarah and Chloe. They were both very sweet to me and promised to help in any way that they could. But you see, they were nothing like me. I was better behind a camera. I knew that, and that is where I always tried to be.

Face to face interactions with people often made me nervous, and I tended to say things off the top of my head. I suppose that for most people this wouldn't be a problem, but it always was for me.

When I was younger, they said I had a social disorder, and I went to therapy groups. If I had a nickel for every therapy session, I have ever attended I would be one rich girl. Or I would have a lot of damn nickles. I didn't tend to fit any of the molds. I wasn't angry, didn't stutter, wasn't shy, or disinterested in people.

I was just awkward.

I wanted to know everything there was to know about everything. I liked pretty and sparkly things and wanted to share that with everyone I met. It's no wonder that I had been so successful with my vlog and tutorials. Once the awkwardness of being face to face was removed, I could teach and gush about the products to my hearts content.

That doesn't mean that there weren't haters. Lord knows that there are always haters in the world. But I had more positive feedback than negative, and that meant something to me.

Here in space, I don't have a screen to hide behind. Not only that, but think about being one of three humans in a sea of aliens as thick as molasses. I didn't just stick out like a sore thumb; I was a red beacon of light that everyone and anyone automatically stared at.

There is a difference between staring in admiration and staring at the freak show.

I forced a smile and answered Von, "Things are going better."

"What about the panic attacks?"

I cringed when I remembered the few times I had thrown someone against a wall or inadvertently ripped something apart when I grabbed it just wanting to hold on to something. The panic attacks and depression weren't new to me. But with the additional super strength, it made things a little tricky.

"You are applying your patch weekly?"

I nodded and pushed the side of my uniform over so that he could see the medicinal patch. The great thing about medicine in space was that so far I didn't have any side effects and all I had to do was put the small patch on my collarbone every week, and it would emit the correct amount of serotonin to keep my brain in good working order.

"How is your training with Rafe going?"

I winced, "I am trying to be more careful. It is hard to turn the strength on and off. I don't want to hurt him any more than I already have."

Rafe had already been treated for broken ribs, a concussion, and a broken arm.

"I have something that I think will help you and Rafe."

Von rose and went to the table lifting the dark fabric.

He smiled ruefully, "I do apologize for the color. But this uniform should help protect Rafe against your strongest blows. It is made out of star crust, which is ten billion times stronger than steel. It is incredibly rare, and we only had enough to fashion this one set of clothes. That being said, dirt and sweat will not stick to it. The suit is indestructible."

I blinked taking the fabric into my hands, "I can't believe how soft it is."

Von moved to the table and brought up one more suit in a smaller size, "Of course, we wouldn't forget about you."

I placed Rafe's down beside me and then picked up the new uniform. Like Rafe's, it was dark in color almost charcoal. But there was a glittery reflection from the star crust that shimmered everytime you moved the fabric.

It felt like silk against my fingertips, and I felt a surge of strength coming from the fabric that surprised me.

"What is it?" Von asked seeing my distress.

"It is nothing," I shook my head. But the steady flow of power between the suit and my body continued. "Von, are stars alive?"

He looked curiously at me, "That is a highly debated topic. Why do you ask?"

"I feel something when I hold the fabric. Almost like the star is reaching out to me, is that possible?"

Von went over and took the suit from my hands.

I immediately felt it's loss. It made me angry and a little scared. I snatched it back from the older man.

"You said it was mine," I pushed it behind me protectively.

Von's huffed, "It was an experiment. It would seem that you do have an affinity with that star, how very unusual. You spacecraft leaves tomorrow morning. Would you keep me updated on the comms unit as to how you and Rafe are doing and if the suits are working properly?"

"Yes," a faint flush covered my cheeks, "I am sorry, Von. I didn't mean to snatch it from you. I just felt like it had chosen me."

Von placed a hand on my arm, "Then it shall be with you. And Godspeed or whoever you believe in. I wish you happiness at your new home Lexi. You have a good heart. Let them see it, and they will soften toward you."

If I had only known at that moment just how much they wouldn't like me, I doubt I would have ever gone to Volton. But then, I supposed there had to be a reason that Rafe and Von didn't do a better job preparing me for the hatred that was coming my way.

When we stepped off the aircraft in the warm Volton sun, I was greeted with rotten fruit and death threats.

Chapter 6 - Rafe

"Damn, Rafe, this is no way to treat a lady. Come here, sweetheart."

The moment I heard his voice the little hairs on the back of my neck began to stand up. I want to make it clear that I love my brother. We have been through a lot together, and he is my only family.

However, he is a womanizing hell-raiser who has never taken responsibility for anything a day in his life.

Our father was killed when the Terret attacked Omega Quadrant. My father was a high commander with the Imperial Forces and a highly decorated warrior.

None of that carried a whole lot of weight to the two little boys that he left behind. Our mother left when Akara was a baby.

Who is Akara?

The jackass that is currently trying to schmooze Lexi into going with him. And I will be damned if she isn't following the douche bag.

"I've got it, Rock."

Akara ignored me like I hadn't spoken, not that it was a surprise. The man had a radar that detected hot women, and it never was off. I am telling you he could go to the coldest reaches of the galaxy and find something hot and nubile to get his rocks off.

Hence the nickname, Rock.

"Rock!" I reached out trying to grab his uniform, but the tricky bastard avoided my hands.

He shot me a devilish smile, and I wanted to kick his ass. There were so many things that I loved about my brother. But this... this wasn't one of them.

"Excuse me," Lexi pushed the hand that he had around her waist off.

My lips twitched. What in the hell was I thinking? Lexi could take care of this on her own. We had been training for a few weeks now, and she successfully kicked my ass every single time.

Thankfully with the new uniforms, she was no longer breaking my bones. I don't know how Von managed to come up with stardust, but my body is eternally thankful.

"I said I have this!"

I watched as my baby brother by five years managed to get himself thrown into the nearest wall. Lexi turned her wide blue eyes were full of irritation.

"Who was that guy?"

She moved closer to me and took my hand. I know that this shouldn't turn me on so much, but I will be damned if it didn't. These past few weeks of working closely together had been horrible on my libido.

I could smell her everywhere I went. I don't know how the woman managed to smell so amazing when we showered in the same washroom and used the same soap.

But whatever she was doing, she smelled fucking incredible.

It had gotten so bad that I was constantly sporting a semi and half the time had to beat one out at night praying that I was quiet enough that she wouldn't hear me.

That is another fun fact about the imprinted pairs that Von didn't share with me until later. We needed to stay in rather close contact. It felt like I was missing a limb when I got too far away.

Rock pushed himself from the wall shaking his head, "Shit, you are spicy, I like spicy."

Lexi tightened her grasp on my arm, and again I was thankful for the new suit that made it, so my bones didn't snap.

"Rock, this is Lexi, she is my imprinted pair. Lexi this is my younger brother and regular pain in the ass Akara, but everyone calls him Rock."

"Why?" Lexi blinked down at him, "You look nothing like the Rock. Your brother on the other hand..."

She trailed off when Rock gave her a funny look.

"You don't know anything about The Rock, Dwayne Johnson, do you?"

Rock shook his head, "Nope."

Lexi sighed, "I am sorry I tossed you. But it isn't smart to grab onto someone you don't know."

"You look like you weigh less than my favorite chair. How was I to know that you would have the ability to smash me into a wall?"

Lexi stuck out her hand and flashed him that killer smile that always managed to make my insides get warm and wobbly.

"Let's start again, shall we? Hi, I am Lexi."

Rock got to his feet; he was about a head shorter than I was, but we shared the same olive skin tone. The main difference was that he had green eyes where I had a deep brown.

Honestly, the ladies usually favored Rock because he was easier going than I was. It was nice to see that Rock's lady magic hadn't immediately won Lexi over.

"It's nice to meet you," Rock said shaking her hand and wincing. "You are terribly strong for someone so small."

Lexi beamed at him, "That is nice of you to say. Listen, I am covered in weird liquids, and chunks of what I am hoping is food and not people parts. How about we conduct this little get to know you after I have showered?"

Rock's face broke into a smile, "I don't suppose you need any help with that shower?"

For the second time that day, Rock ended up smashed against the wall. Only this time Lexi had nothing to do with it.

"She is off limits douche bag! Do you understand me?"

"Fucking hell, Rafe! My teeth are loose; now I am going to have to see the medic!"

I took a menacing step forward, and Rock's eyes widened in surprise.

"You are serious about this?" he said it more to himself than to me. But I nodded regardless. It was best that Rock knew the boundaries."

Lexi slid closer to me and slipped her hand back under my arm. I immediately felt calmer.

"Hey, we can catch up with Rock in a little bit. Would you show me to our rooms?"

Lexi had barely managed to sleep without me near her. I swear I hadn't had a good night's sleep since she arrived.

"Yeah," I grunted, "Right this way."

We moved past Rock who called out, "Yeah, I am good! Don't worry about it. I have got this on my own. You two go ahead."

Smartass, I felt another smile attempting to creep out.

"That's your brother?" Lexi said quietly as I led her into the heart of the castle and toward the King's chambers.

We went inside, and I showed her where she would be sleeping. She looked at the soft bed and then her eyes shot back to mine.

I rubbed the back of my neck, "Yeah, Rock is my brother. And this is our room."

"Ours?" she repeated.

"I can get another bed in here. The king before wasn't mated, and I haven't taken a life mate either. We can do some redecorating, anything you want."

Lexi nodded and then moved to the bathing chambers. The opulent room had her gasping in pleasure.

"I think I would rather just share with you."

My cock cheered as the rest of me filled with dread.

Chapter 7 - Lexi

I held my breath certain that Rafe was going to try and let me down gently. I knew that he hadn't planned on me and wasn't into starting a relationship. And I could totally respect that, hell, I was still a little weirded out about Jason.

We had been dating for over a year, and I am more than certain he was going to propose. The weirdest part was that I hadn't missed him nearly as much as I should have.

I missed my vlog and the crazy viewers that would stay up and pimp my stuff. I missed my family and our cat, Patches. I even missed the silly emails that my Grandma would always forward because she was sure she would die if she didn't send it out as instructed. No matter how much I tried to convince her that chain e-mails can't bring certain death, she would shake her head, and then I would find the next one a few days later.

I missed all of that. But Jason, he and I really were living two separate lives. He was a DJ on a local radio station and hot as hell. I liked that we both were mini-celebrities, my star, of course, was brighter, but I had thought it was a good match.

That was another thing. Ever since my abduction, I had come to think that maybe my life wasn't as meaningful as I had thought it was.

My videos had helped hundreds of thousands of people. I knew so because they clicked the thumbs up button. You don't click like unless you like it.

Okay, my grandma clicked love on almost everything. But she was like that. She loved people and life and clearance sales like nobody else I knew. So, she was a serial social media lover, but besides grandma, most people had control over their clicks.

Nobody clicked anything here besides the stupid comms unit on our wrists. I had to admit they were cooler than my smartwatch. I could call other planets, order food, check the weather, and my temperature all at the same time.

I also was loving the bathing room. They had this dryer that dried all your bits and even your hair. And the soap was so gentle that I never needed moisturizer.

I missed moisturizer. But I didn't miss Jason.

So, when Rafe hinted that there wasn't a spot for me to sleep yet, I jumped on it. Not because I wanted to jump into another relationship.

But my lady parts were lonely.

I hadn't just used my hand since I was a teenager. Usually, I enjoyed a thick throbbing unit that had rechargeable batteries. I needed to get laid to put it plain and simple.

The room that Rafe had led us into was gorgeous, and I noticed that this washroom was even better than the one we shared on Zeron.

"I am just going to shower, okay?"

He looked at the drying fruit that was stuck to my suit and hair.

"I am sorry they treated you this way. Something will be done to those that dared to behave in such a manner."

Rafe sometimes had a stick up his ass. And by sometimes I meant most of the time.

"It's okay," I shrugged, "They weren't expecting me, and they don't know me. I will win them over."

His face clearly betrayed his lack of confidence in my plan, but rather than argue I shut the sliding door on his face and went about taking off my new uniform. It really was gorgeous with the threading of starlight.

I moved to the laundry spinner and placed the fabric inside. All you needed to do was hold it down, and in thirty seconds or less, your clothes were clean and dry.

The upside was that they smelled as good as freshly washed clothes at home after mom had used fabric softener. The bad side was that they didn't give you multiple outfits.

I believe Rafe said that it was wasteful.

Like clothes could ever be wasteful, it didn't make any damn sense to me at all.

I turned on the water and got inside the large shower. Water sprayed at almost every angle. Using the soap, I lathered up and blissfully lost myself to the loveliness of getting clean.

After setting the soap down, I picked up a shower head that was moveable and sprayed everything that I thought I might have missed.

It was only by accident that the spray caught me between the legs and I felt a wave of pleasure jolt through me.

I moved it again letting the spray smack against my clit, and a moan escaped my lips. I couldn't do this when Rafe was just outside the door.

Could I?

I took one of my breasts into my hands and pinched the tip. Angling the shower head to hit me just where I needed it, I moaned again and began to thrust my hips. There was a dial on the side that made the stream of water more condensed and come harder.

Fucking hell, I loved their showers.

Before I knew it, I was coming hard, my legs were wobbly, and I found myself slipping down the shower nozzle flipping out of my hand and my body sprawled across the floor of the shower.

"Um, are you, all right?"

Rafe stuck his head around the door and then stepped in when he saw me on the floor.

"Are you okay? Did you have a seizure?"

I moaned and grabbed my head where I had smacked it against the wall.

"No, I am just an idiot."

He shook his head clearly not understanding. He must have access to the controls on the outside because the water turned off and the drying began. I was dry and clean when he opened the door and reached out a hand.

Our eyes met, and it was then that he really took in my naked state. The way my breasts were tight and heavy, the curve of my hips and the length of my thighs.

His breath caught, and I knew I had him right where I wanted him.

Chapter 8 – Rafe

So much naked, everywhere my eyes feasted there was more naked until I could have sworn my eyes were drowning in it. I couldn't look away, couldn't breathe, and couldn't stop my cock from giving this human the full salute.

I saw it, the moment when she decided that I went from Rafe to prey. The surprised look that she had morphed into one of intent and desire.

Rosy nipples flashed from the most perfect pair of breasts ever created. How I could ever look at her again without picturing them was beyond me. I still had my hand out, but rather than take it, Lexi flipped to her knees and straightened. Her figure had my balls aching to touch, taste and partake.

"What happened?" I croaked, trying to get my bearings.

"I slipped," she shrugged, and her breasts bounced deliciously.

"What were you doing to slip?" I still didn't get it. The bathing chamber was built so that it was safe; the floor was non-slip.

My eyes widened even further, and my breathing cut off when she slipped a hand between her legs and began to stroke her pussy.

I wish I could say that I handled things, but the sputtering that came out of my mouth was less than brilliant.

"You wanted to know what I was doing," she said with an evil smile. "This is what I was doing. I was picturing you above me, your hard body sliding along mine. My fingers in your hair as you licked your way down…"

I grabbed her under the arms and had her in the bed in less than sixty seconds. I threw her down and was ripping out of my clothes in record time.

I knew I was making all of the wrong choices and that this wasn't what we should be doing. But all of that perfect naked flesh had circumvented my brain and went straight to my cock and nothing by way of my brain was working anymore.

This is the old Rafe. The gambling, live life by the seat of your pants and grab life by the balls, Rafe.

My cock was hard throbbing and aching to get inside of her perfect body. I picked up her foot and started kissing up the inside of her ankle. She smelled perfect and tasted even better. Every moan, every sound and look only made me harder until I was aching to be pounding my aching dick inside of her so hard that neither of us knew where she ended and I began.

Her body shuddered as he approached the juncture of her thighs. She was wet, more than wet she was slick, and her hips lifted as my lips grazed her inner thigh. She wanted me to fuck her pussy with my mouth, and there was nothing more than I wanted.

With my hands, I pushed her thighs wide. She was pink and pretty and smelled like heaven. I licked her from end to end. I kissed her pussy deep and smooth, stiffening my tongue I fucked her deep and then moved to flick her clit back and forth. I sucked her folds and teased her until she was scratching the top of my head and yanking at my hair.

Her orgasm swept through her, but I didn't stop, I knew that she had another one in her. I used two fingers rubbing them against the front of her g-spot and just like magic she squirted her body releasing as she shuddered hard.

"What, fucking shit, what?" Lexi's hair was a mass of tangles, "What was that?"

I smirked at her, "You squirted."

"That's not a real thing."

I raised a brow and looked at the dampness on my chest.

She looked from that to the raging hard on that I was still sporting. With a smile, she scooted closer and moved to push me back. I allowed her, wanting to see what she would do.

Lexi gingerly climbed onto me and put the tip at her entrance. She looked at me, and I could see that maybe she wasn't as experienced as she wanted me to believe. I took her face in my hands and began to kiss her. Her mouth was made for kissing. Those plump lips begged to be sucked between my teeth, and her mouth tasted like sin and desire. I loved the way she softened in my arms and how her breasts smashed against my chest as if she just couldn't get close enough. My cock slid a little inside of her.

We both groaned, she was tight, and I had just entered the best damn slice of heaven I had ever experienced. I continued to kiss her, learning every nuance of her mouth. Her body was so pliable when she was turned on. She pushed down further encasing me even more, the heat of her causing my cock to throb. It felt fucking amazing.

My hips lifted of their own accord and I moved a little bit further in. I loved the way her nipples grazed my chest. Her hands were on my pecks and mine had landed on her hips. I was about half way inside of her and felt like I was halfway inside heaven and halfway in hell.

Then shocking the fuck out of me she slammed herself down taking me all the wall. She screamed, and I grabbed her hips holding her still.

"Are you all right?" I gasped.

She grimaced, "You are too big."

Normally that would please the fuck out of me, but I had no desire to hurt her. I kissed her again slow and steady. Letting her decide when she was ready to move.

When she started to rock back and forth, my cock was so damn hard it could have hammered nails. Sweat poured down my back, and my hair was soaked. I had never had a sexual encounter be so physically restraining before. I wanted to move, pound into her; I was ready. But I didn't know if she was.

Lexi made a noise, that sounded like impatience, and I took it for her need to get things going.

I grabbed her hips and flipped us over and then lifting her hips I began to fuck her. I used my thumb to rub her clit. Lexi moaned and grabbed her tits pulling on the tips. She was so uninhibited, so beautifully sexual that I knew I wouldn't last very long. I rubbed faster and saw her eyes flash before she shattered once again bringing me over the edge with her.

"Shit! What about birth control! We didn't use a condom!"

I groaned, she had yelled this right in my ear.

"I am not in a fertile cycle."

"Wait, what?" Lexi pushed up on her elbow.

"The males on my planet determine of a female gets pregnant."

Lexi's lips twitched, "Really?"

"Is that funny?" I frowned.

Lexi laughed, "No, yes, I don't know."

I felt my lips forming a smile.

"Listen, was that your first time?" I had to ask even though I thought she had said she had an earth boyfriend.

Lexi frowned, "No, Jason and I were waiting until marriage, but there was that one time. Shit, I am such a slut."

Chapter 9 – Lexi

I could do this. I just needed a little PR work, and I could totally be the new Lexi, superhero chick that slept with her…

Yeah, I didn't know what to call Rafe. He wasn't my boyfriend, and he wasn't a sidekick. He was my roommate with benefits.

Okay.

Taking a deep breath, I looked into the mirror, pretending it was a camera and started again.

I can do this. I can be the new Lexi, superhero chick that occasionally sleeps with my hot roommate.

I swallowed hard and really stared into the mirror. My pores looked amazing, not that I am bragging, they really have some things in space that are ridiculously awesome. I didn't even really need to wear make-up even though Rafe assured me that if I wanted to, it was available.

Did I want to?

Was my favorite color pink sparkle?

Some things shouldn't be questioned. But rather than the full mask that I used to wear, I painted my lips red and deepened my lashes with some mascara. That was it. I really didn't need anything else because I wasn't hiding blemishes or monster pores.

A part of me really wanted to do a mini-series on the benefits of space hygiene. But I knew that the people on Volton wouldn't appreciate my work.

To put it mildly, they were kinda mean. Like mean-girl mean, and I was definitely the ugly unpopular girl.

With a sigh, I zipped up my suit and immediately felt better. There was something special about the stardust that had been woven into the fabric. It connected with me on a level that I can't even explain.

With a smile, I turned and made my way out of our chambers and into the main part of the castle. We were supposed to be having a meeting with the planets leaders in a few minutes, and I had only stopped to freshen up.

"There you are," Rock grinned and approached me with his arm outstretched,

I leaned in for a side hug, and that was when he whispered in my ear, "Don't eat anything inside the meeting."

As if I needed another reminder, my stomach was still a little queasy from the last time someone tried to poison me. And to make matters worse now Rafe was insisting on being my taste tester, and he looked terrible. These people were barbaric.

I smiled and said in a regular tone, "Glad I could make it. Is Rafe inside?"

Rock nodded and led me into the large conference room. There was a massive table in the center of the room, but aside from that and chairs, it was empty. It didn't even appear to have walls even though I checked and they were there. The technology made it appear as if the room was floating in the middle of courtyard overlooking the village below.

In some ways, it was very beautiful, deceptively beautiful much like it's residents.

Rafe was standing at the end of the table, and he looked to be arguing with an older man. As we approached, they broke off their conversation. There was something wrong with the way that Rafe was looking at the man. He didn't trust him.

I don't know how I knew this, but I did.

Rafe reached out and pulled me into his side. I felt like a volleyball being passed between the two brothers. It was sweet in a way that they were trying to protect me. Especially when realistically I could kick both of their asses and then some.

"Lexi, this is Archer Baines, he is here from the Gamma Quadrant and a member of the Intergalactic Council."

The older man smiled revealing teeth that were edged in gold. He reminded me of an old-time rapper, and I fought a smile.

"Mr. Baines, it is nice to meet you," I gave him my Lexi star-studded smile and watched as it took effect.

Men were pretty easy to read, you had a few categories that they fell into. There was the horndog that chased anything in a skirt. The gay best friend who is self-explanatory. The could be a brother that I felt for Rock, and sadly I was started to recognize how I felt for my earth boyfriend, Jason. And then there was the dirty old man, that liked to look and sometimes touch. Him, yeah, you had to watch.

Archer Baines was a dirty old man. His eyes lit with something like looked like greed and then he looked at me from the tips of my eyelashes to the pointy toes of my boots. I knew that my uniform was long sleeved and high necked. But after his perusal, I felt like I needed a bath in Lysol.

"Please, call me Archer."

He went to extend his hand, and I visibly shuddered. I knew if I touched him he would likely go through the invisible wall.

"Lexi, I needed to talk to you. Please excuse us. I am terribly sorry. Rock, please keep Archer entertained, and I think there is a tin of cookies left over from the last meeting that you can offer him."

Rock picked up right where Rafe left off and thankfully I was being led away from Archer Baines and his creepy pedophile vibe.

I grinned up at Rafe, "He's a winner, where did you dig him up?"

Rafe flushed a little. I liked the way that his lips tugged at the corners and his eyes seemed to smile before his lips did. He was so ruggedly handsome that I just wanted to stare at him. But when he was like this, all cute and shy, that was when I wanted to jump his bones.

Pretty much that was ninety-five percent of the time. You will notice that I included my sleep time because the dreams that I had staring Rafe—hot damn.

"He is someone that I knew from my destructive days."

I blinked, "What?"

Rafe looked away, and his cheeks colored even more, "You know, the gambling problem?"

Yes, Rafe had told me all about how he had gotten in over his head and almost lost the family fortune. I told him that if he lived in the Victorian times and held a title, he would be my favorite book. Needless to say, Rafe wasn't sure that I truly understood what he was trying to tell me, but I did, I totally did.

"What does Archer Baines have to do with that?"

Rafe blew out a breath. He conveyed more in that action then he could have with a whole discourse of words.

I put a hand on his chest to stop him, "You know what? Let's talk about it later. You have a meeting to run and probably an assassination attempt to block."

I could see the relief in his eyes before he looked down at my hand, "You are pretty amazing, Lexi."

Five little words, nothing glamorous or even anything that I hadn't heard a hundred times but coming from Rafe they felt fucking fantastic.

Chapter 10 – Rafe

“Fucking hell! Lexi!”

I stormed out of the king’s chambers with panic licking through my veins. I had awakened alone, and the bed was cold next to me. The worst possible scenarios started racing through my mind as I searched for her.

“Rafe, what the hell?” Rock stumbled out of his room in his boxers. His hair was sticking up in a thousand different directions, and I heard feminine laughter inside of his bedroom.

In a flash, I had him by the neck against the wall, “Where is she?”

“What are you talking about?” he managed to look indignant and breathless at the same time.

“Lexi,” I snarled.

His eyes widened, “She’s not with you?”

I released him, “She’s not with you?”

Rock made a face between disgust and pity, “Brother, she is your imprinted pair. What in the fuck would she be doing in my bedroom?”

I felt stupid for even suggesting it. But I couldn’t wuss out and say that so I straightened, “Who is in there?”

Rock laughed, the stupid fuck head laughed at me.

“Look, there are two girls in there from the Ebony Quadrant. You are welcome to go and see them, but I am warning you they might think it’s a party. The more important thing is where is Lexi?”

I felt my heart thud against its cage, “We need to search the palace.”

The humor had left his face, and he nodded, “Yeah, let me just grab my comms unit, and we can call the troops in.”

“Who are we searching for?”

I turned around and stared at Lexi who was standing in the hallway barefoot eating a treat.

“Where have you been?” I managed to choke it out rather than scream it at her.

She eyed me funnily, “I couldn’t sleep, so I went down to the kitchens. It turns out the staff are pretty cool. I really like Cook.”

I couldn't help myself. My arms locked around her waist and I dragged her into my chest. I didn't care that it was bare or that she was smothered as I squeezed her tight. I needed the skin to skin connection. My heart was still trying to decide if it would settle down or not.

"Um," her voice was muffled by my skin, "Are you okay?"

Rock was laughing again.

"Go to bed Fuck Face," I growled at him.

"With pleasure, Cock Sucker."

He winked at me and then made a whipping motion with his hands. I would have flipped him off or maybe thrown him through a wall, but that would mean I had to let go of Lexi.

Yeah, that wasn't happening.

"Rafe, what is going on?"

I picked her up not breaking our connection and started to carry her back toward our room.

"You were gone," I explained as if that would make everything clear.

"Only for an hour, maybe two at the most."

She placed her arms around my neck clearly okay with how I was manhandling her. I wished that I could say I would be able to separate, but all I could think about was how many times she had almost been poisoned this week. Or the lecherous way that Baines had tried to stare her down. I wanted to kill the bastard and almost did.

"It's not safe here for you to go off on your own."

There I said it clearly and didn't have to say anything about the weak ass why that I felt like a momma's boy when she was suddenly missing.

"Rafe," she placed her hand on my face, and I knew that she could feel the pulse that still hadn't settled down. "I am not made of glass."

"I am not going to allow something to happen to you."

I jostled her a little to open to the door, but I wasn't about to let her out of my arms.

She laid her head against my chest, and I looked down at her chestnut locks with the streaks of gold, and some were as pale as starlight.

"Rafe, I can't stay in this room all day every day. And I can't live afraid of what someone is going to do to me. I think that the pairing knew the troubles I would face. What are the chances that my superpower would be strength? You have to allow me to be me."

My initial impulse was fuck no.

"What could you possibly do down in the kitchens for two hours?"

She moved again in my arms and as I sat in the chair near the fireplace she turned and straddled my lap. Rock might have been in boxers, but I was in a silky pair of pajama pants and nothing else. With her straddling me I could feel the heat of her pussy pressing against my cock.

And she wanted to talk like this?

"Cook was teaching me how to bake things. I don't know very much about cooking, and I have been thinking. You know how upset I was that I can't do my vlogs and videos anymore? Well, part of what I loved about doing those things was learning. Rafe, it was really fun to go to the kitchens and have Cook teach me those things."

I blew out a sigh and felt like the biggest bag of dicks around. All she wanted to do was find her place here, and I was so damn worried about myself that I wanted her strapped to my side.

She mistook my action and cupped my face in her little hands, "Don't be upset."

I smiled and reached out to kiss her nose, "I am not upset with you, Lexi. I should have thought more about your happiness. I know that the meetings that you have been attending are borning and that you often are left to come up with your own entertainment. I am happy that you have found something you like."

She smiled, and I felt like I had just witnessed a star being born. The light inside of her radiated through those blue eyes and her perfectly white smile.

She was so fucking beautiful.

She's not for me.

I had to keep reminding myself this. I wasn't stable, shit, I still had urges to go and blow off some steam with a round of cards. I was doing my best to keep ahead of the addiction, but it wasn't easy. I just couldn't start a relationship when I was such a mess personally.

"So, we are good then?" she asked biting her lip gently.

Both my cock and my heart made themselves known. I seriously needed to get better control of my body because it was like she was the puppetmaster and I was dancing along after her.

Grunting, I nodded and set her off my lap, "Yeah, we are good."

Standing I went straight into the washroom, but before I could close the door, she had followed me.

"What happened just then?" her face was flat, but her voice sounded angry.

"Nothing," my hands flew in the air. "That was nothing; I am glad you are okay."

"Are you running away from me?"

My eyes snapped to hers, “What in the fuck does that mean?”

Chapter 11 – Lexi

I hadn't really spoken to Rafe beyond the rudimentary things since last evening. To be perfectly honest, I was bugged that he wouldn't tell me what was going on. Wandering around the castle, I ran into a few servants and spent some time with Cook. She suggested that I go down to the nursery and see if they needed any help.

I had no idea that there was a nursery in the castle but it made sense, the workers would need to put their kids somewhere. I followed the corridor down and heard them before I actually saw the group. There were kids ranging from three months to twelve.

The workers eyed me warily when I walked in.

"Is there something we can do for you?" an older woman approached me.

"Hi, I am Lexi," I stuck out my hand, and she eyed it before looking back at me.

"I am Norleen. If you have taken a wrong turn, I would be more than happy to help you return to where you need to be."

I dropped my hand and swallowed, "Well, actually, I was coming here. I heard that you might need some help."

Silence.

Even the kids seemed to stop their playing to turn and look at me with a curious expression.

"Madam, we are perfectly equipt to handle the children," a dark-haired woman snapped at me from across the room.

I smiled at her, "It's Lexi, and I don't mind learning. I haven't had a whole lot of experience with kids."

"All the more reason for you to stay where you belong," she retorted.

Norleen scowled at her, "Darla that is no way to speak to your king's companion. You will apologize at once."

I wanted to stop her, the last thing I wanted was an apology from someone who didn't want to give it. But I had a feeling that Norleen ran things down here and it would be best for me not to rock the boat.

"Beg pardon, Madam."

"It's Lexi," I said clearly so that she would know I heard her slight.

Turning to Norleen, I spoke plainly, "I would like to learn more about the nursery. Will you help me with that?"

She could hardly turn me away when I asked in front of everyone. She knew full well that I could easily ask Rafe to insist that she let me stay. But I didn't want to go to those measures. If I was going to find a place for myself here, I needed to do it on my own terms.

"They need help with the children under three, follow Darla, and she will show you the way."

"Thank you," I couldn't help the excitement that lit inside of me.

Darla huffed but didn't say anything as she led me down the hall and pressed her hand against a screen opening the door.

"Connie," Darla called out sharply. "This is Lexi. She will remain with you. It is Norleen's orders."

Connie was a beautiful girl with long red hair and pretty green eyes.

"Goodness, what did you do to sent down here?"

I laughed, as Darla snorted something and walked out without saying goodbye.

"Don't worry about her," Connie grinned. "She always walks around here like there is a stick up her ass. Now tell me how you ended up on kid duty."

I shrugged, "I asked for it?"

Her eyes widened, "Shut up! Are you insane?"

Just then a little boy started to cry when another child took his toy.

"Tommy, give that back to Allen, he had it first!"

Tommy put the toy into his mouth as if to say he really didn't care what Connie said.

She went over and pulled the toy out and then grabbed some spray off the wall.

"What is that?"

"This?" she showed me the bottle. "It's a disinfectant spray that is non-toxic. It's as safe for the kids as water."

I took the bottle from her, "That is really cool!"

She smiled handing the toy back to Allen and then her face turned into a grimace, "Tommy, did you poop?"

Indeed it did smell like someone had an accident. There were five children two boys and three girls. One of the girls was sleeping, and the other two were building with blocks.

"How long have you worked here?"

She looked up from the changing table where she had taken Tommy.

“My mom is Norleen. I have been coming here ever since I could walk.”

“Did you want to work with the children?”

She looked at me quizzically, “What do you mean?”

“When you were a child is this the job that you wanted to have? Did you ever want to be anything else?”

Connie frowned, “I never really thought of it. You are born into your working class here on Volton. My parents are caregivers. Father works with the elderly and my mom you just met. But I never dreamed of being something I wasn’t. What’s the point?”

This was new to me. I had no idea this type of class system existed on the planet.

“What other positions are there?”

Connie thought for a minute, “Well, I know that there are four tiers on Volton. The lowest are the servers. The next class is caregivers. We are below the blessed, who are surpassed by the honored. The only one higher than the honored is the king.”

“What kind of jobs do the blessed perform?”

She blinked, “I don’t know.”

Over the next few hours, I learned more than I could possibly believe about the people who lived on this planet. Connie had literally spent her entire life in this area of the castle. They had a school where they learned about the work they were expected to perform. But they weren’t even given a chance to decide if they wanted to be a nurse or work with the elderly they were assigned by the honored.

According to Connie the honored made most of the decisions for the planet. That was what they were born to do. It was unlike any religion or culture that I had ever encountered. As she taught me about her humble beginnings, I couldn’t help but feel a little uncomfortable

I was rocking Nicki, one of the little girls, when Rafe came storming into the room.

“Lexi, I have been calling you for over an hour!”

I looked down and noticed that the comms unit wasn’t on my wrist. I glanced across the room and saw that Tommy had it in his mouth.

“Just a second, I will put Nicki into her crib, she’s asleep anyway.”

Rafe watched me maneuver the toddler out of the rocking chair and into the crib with her assigned name. I went over to Tommy and grabbed my comms unit, but I replaced it with another toy so he wouldn’t be sad. Then grabbing the spray, I cleaned my comms unit and strapped it back on.

“Hey Connie, I don’t know if you have met Rafe?”

Rafe turned to the Connie, “It is a pleasure.”

Connie gaped at him. The sweet loveable girl that had chatted with me all day was gone and in her place was someone that looked terrified—of Rafe.

“I will come back tomorrow,” I promised her. “Thanks again for a great day.”

Rafe nodded to Connie and then followed me out in silence. As we walked down the hallway and through the main nursery corridor, there was total silence.

When he finally got out of earshot, he grabbed my arm, “Are you insane? Someone could have harmed you!”

I bit my lip wondering how much of Volton life Rafe really knew. I needed to find out more, that was certain.

Chapter 12 – Lexi

I turned and looked at myself in the mirror making sure that I didn't have my dress tucked into my underwear or anything equally embarrassing. This was the first royal ball that I had attended, and I was excited to see how it went.

Over the past few weeks, I had spent a lot of time with Connie getting to know the kids and helping where I could. I found it rewarding, surprisingly much more than I had my vlogs or podcasts. I was also able to spend time with Cook and had mastered a few different baking skills.

Granted, I was nowhere near her level. But I was feeling more a part of the castle and a bit like a resident of Volton.

My relationship with Rafe had been a little strained. I had decided not to push him. This wasn't much like the old me. But I had noticed that with me backing off he was more apt to come and seek me out. His eyes watched me when we were in the same room, and I felt the attraction between us.

The door swished upon, and I saw Rafe standing in the doorway with his arm resting slightly above his head on the door casing. He was in a black tux and looked devastatingly handsome.

His eyes, dark and penetrating took in every inch of my low backed dress. The front was high and tied around my neck. However, the sides were generous, and when I walked, you could see the curve of my breast near my arm.

Obviously, this was a no-bra dress. I debated pushing the envelope but at the last minute thought it might be good to see what came of it.

"Wow," his voice was low, "You look incredible."

I turned and smiled at him taking in every last inch of his muscular body.

"So do you," I tucked a stand behind my ear and moved forward to greet him.

Rafe leaned down and kissed my cheek. It was a simple gesture, but in that move, I felt his presence lighting up my insides. I wasn't sure if it was the pairing or just us, but I loved how he made me feel.

"You smell amazing," he growled, "Maybe we should just stay here."

Wait, what?

"Yes," I said immediately, and he laughed.

"I wish that we could."

His eyes told me that he wished a whole lot of things that had my cheeks heating and desire pooling in the pit of my stomach. I wondered what had happened. How could he go from hot to cold so quickly?

Taking his arm, I walked alongside him as he led me down the hallway and across the sky deck to where the ball was being held. The flickering lights from candles filled the room. I knew that it was only an illusion, they wouldn't have wasted that kind of money on candles, but the effect was stunning.

Instead of leading me to where many of the ambassadors and important guests were mingling Rafe led me to the dance floor. It wasn't very crowded, and I felt a little self-conscious as he swept me into his arms.

But once we started to dance, the rest of the world fell away. I couldn't have told you who else was dancing, nor what they were wearing. I didn't know what delicacies that Cook had served at the refreshment tables. All I knew was that Rafe's arms around me felt right, this was right.

One dance turned into two and then three. I wasn't sure how long we were out there, but I could have danced the night away.

One thing bothered me though. Why tonight? He had been cold for days, weeks even. Was this just for shoe? Suddenly that euphoric bubble of happiness inside me burst, and I looked away from his face.

"What's wrong?" he whispered.

I shook my head and attempted to push out of his arms.

Cursing under his breath, Rafe led me away from the dancefloor. He ignored people that called out to him and led me out to the balcony. The fresh air certainly helped, but I was confused. I wanted to be alone.

As he found us a private place to sit, he took my hand.

"Tell me what caused you to look that way."

I tried to paste on a smile. I was perfect at the plastic smiles. Lord knew when I was on earth that I had needed them. Jason was always chatting up pretty girls in front of me. He said that as a DJ he needed to have that player vibe. I had smiled and said I understood.

When I had been passed over for job promotions because I just wasn't the right image or the best representative of a serious businesswoman, I had smiled the plastic smile and said I understood.

This was a language that I spoke fluently. I knew the art of deception when it came to hiding how you really felt. There was no room for emotion in these things.

That was a large part why I loved my social media accounts. Hundreds of thousands of people could say they adored you simply for being who you were.

I felt a tinge of guilt. I wasn't sure that was really me either.

"Don't grimace like that," Rafe ran his thumb over my cheek and sighed.

Swallowing the plastic smile, I went for confident instead.

"I am fine. How about we go inside and look for Rock? I haven't seen him yet tonight."

I went to stand but a strong arm grasped my wrist, and I soon found that I was sitting again.

"Rafe," I said his name not really knowing what my next words would be.

"Just tell me," he asked gently.

"I don't understand," I blurted out. "One minute you hot and we are fucking like rabbits and the next you are so distant that I wonder if I dreamed it all. And then tonight you are attentive and acting like I've blown your socks off. I don't understand what you want from me."

He stared, but I refused to look away.

"You are right," he said finally.

"I know I am right," I growled, "I just don't know why you chose not to notice me until tonight. That is a lot of mixed signals."

His hand tightened around my waist, "There has never been a time since I met you that I haven't noticed you. Fuck, Lexi, you invade my thoughts in the daytime and haunt my dreams at night. I can smell your perfume on my pillows and find I don't want to get out of bed. You deserve an explanation, and I am sorry I have been acting strangely."

The story he began to tell me wasn't one I hadn't heard before. I knew about his gambling problem and how the intergalactic council had thought at one point that he might be involved in the problems of Volton. It had all been a giant mistake, and instead of being arrested, Rafe was made the new king.

His money had been restored, and he was given a second chance.

But as he talked to me, it seemed that Rafe was terrified about making the same mistakes.

"That is common with addiction to be worried about falling back into the previous patterns."

"You know about addiction?"

I smiled, this time a real one.

"Yeah, I used to help out at the women's prison near my home. They had an addiction group and needed support mentors for some of the inmates. I was paired with this amazing girl named, Shay. She had been addicted to drugs and gotten into some pretty terrible things."

“Wow,” Rafe blew out a breath, “I don’t know what to say. What happened to her?”

“She was released after serving her time, and then we lost touch. I don’t know if she stayed clean, but I hope that she was able to. The leader of the group would always say that you never make it. Addiction recovery was a lifelong process. You could be on day one or day a thousand and one, and you would still need to treat each day the same way. I often thought about that, and even studied up on some things and did a vlog.”

“Lexi,” he tilted my chin up to meet his gaze, “Why would addiction matter so much to you?”

I winced, “I guess it doesn’t really matter here. But at home, it’s a big secret.”

“Home? You mean on earth?” he clarified.

I nodded, “My dad is an important official, but he is also an alcoholic. When I was younger, he was pretty abusive.”

Rafe was stunned. I didn’t like the pity that I saw filling his eyes. I was fine. That had been a long time ago, and we all went to therapy for it.

“Hey, it’s okay,” I said softly.

But before I could say anything else, I found myself being smashed against his broad chest in the tightest hug imaginable.

Chapter 13 – Rafe

“Lexi, I need to talk to you,” my words were husky to my own ears. “I owe you a huge apology.”

She blinked those massive blue eyes at me, they were trusting and sweet, and I felt like the biggest dick in the galaxy.

“What is it?” she asked softly, her hand against my chest.

All I could think about was putting my hands all over her. I wanted to hold her, to make up for lost time. However, I needed to come clean with her.

Ever since she arrived, I had all these preconceived notions of who she would be. And then when Lexi came, she was far different than I expected, but I still thought the worst of her. I acted like she was burden, and not like the partner that she was supposed to be.

I needed to get things back on track. I needed to clear the air and start fresh with her. Lexi understood a part of me that few did. She was kind and had a forgiving heart. I only hoped that it would extend to what I was about to say. Because I feared that when she learned why I had kept my distance, she might not want anything to do with me.

“When you first came here, I judged you harshly. I thought you were shallow and immature.”

Her brow furrowed, “Okay?”

I could tell that I had hurt her feelings and it only made me feel worse. But I needed to get things out into the open.

“I have had plenty of girls that have wanted to be with me in the past because of my money. There is a certain amount of exposure that comes from the wealth in my family. I am used to women trying to use me for my position, and that was before I had become king.”

Her body stiffened in my arms.

Fuck, I was screwing this up, and I didn’t want to do that.

“And then you arrived, and you were asking strange questions and always worried about your appearance.”

This time when she pushed me away I let her. The last thing I wanted was to be thrown against the nearest wall.

“Lexi, listen, I know that you aren’t like that now.”

“What do you mean?” her voice was brittle. “I am very concerned about how I look and how others perceive me, I always have been. I might not be a gold-digger, that was what you were implying was it not?”

I flushed, “I know you aren’t after me for my money.”

She laughed, but there wasn’t any humor in it.

“I wasn’t after you for anything. I stupid enough to think that maybe we might have someone more than just this fucking bond that seems to be rather pointless. I have to be honest with you Rafe, I really don’t know why I am here. What happened on earth? How did I die? Why am I here just to do nothing? I am not helping you with the planet nor am I using my super strength at all. Maybe you shouldn’t have interfered with me.”

I felt a surge of anger, “And just allow you to die?”

The thought made me angry, and I wanted to shake her. How dare she suggest such a thing?

Lexi turned to go, I reached out to grab her hand, but the moment I touched her, she burned me.

I quickly released her and looked down to the red spots on my hand.

Her eyes flashed, they were so blue that they appeared to be shining. Her pale skin was radiant, and for a moment she reminded me of something or perhaps someone.

“Would it have mattered if I died, honestly? Rafe, you can’t call this sad existence living. I am such a fool. I hoped that we had something, even if it was small I was willing to nurture it and to help it grow. But the entire time you saw me as nothing, a woman that cared only for herself. I have never fit in Rafe, never in my life. I know what it is like for people to dislike me. I think that is why I loved the social media because I could only show the pieces of me that people would love. But I wanted something different with you. I wanted to be real. I thought you saw me for who I really was. Yes, I am flighty, and yes I make stupid choices sometimes. But have you ever thought to consider that instead of being conceited I might not think I am good enough? Obviously, I am a better actress than I thought, I have always fought to hide the real me. But I wanted to show it to you, fuck, I am such an idiot.”

She turned on her heel and began to walk away. I couldn’t let her go, not like this. I reached out and grabbed her again, spinning her around. I ignored the way my hands burned. It went up my arms and into my chest but I continued to hold onto her.

“I do see the real you. It just took me a minute to pull my head out of my ass.”

“I don’t want to hurt you,” she said through gritted teeth. “So let me go.”

“No,” I shouted, “I am not going to let you walk away from me angry like this. I didn’t mean to hurt you. You wanted to know why I was hot and cold…”

“Oh, I understand. My body you might be attracted to, it’s the inside that repel you.”

The way she said it, I knew that she had felt this way before.

"I'm not Jason," I said slowly.

She blinked and then cursed, "Let me go! I am warning you, Rafe. I am likely to kill you."

"I see the beautiful, kind woman you are. I have watched you with the children. I have talked to Cook and Connie and many others. They say you do whatever they ask of you no matter how menial. I do know you, Lexi. I know the real you. But I had been a fuck-up and pushed you away. I let my problems cloud my judgment."

The burning had reached my face and down to my torso. I wondered if I would be covered in blisters, but it didn't matter. I would much rather face that than have Lexi walk away thinking that I didn't care about her.

I did care; sometimes I wondered if maybe I cared too much.

I needed to show her, the time for talking was done.

Lifting her off the floor, I kissed her.

Her mouth was like fire and flames erupted between us. The heat of her body pressing into mine, had my blood feeling like lava was pouring through my veins. I kissed her with everything that I had. I didn't care if anyone came across us or if she did throw me into tomorrow. I had to show Lexi that I wanted her, all of her.

She whimpered my hold on her arms broke as she wrapped her arms around my neck and began to kiss me back. I clutched her to me and thanked every god and all the stars above that she wasn't attempting to kill me.

My lips were raw and bruised, and my body was throbbing with need. I had been wrong, so fucking wrong. All of this time I should have had Lexi by my side. I thought I was protecting her and in truth, I was causing the rift between us to grow deeper and deeper.

Never again would I be so stupid.

"You might want to take that somewhere more private."

Rock's voice interrupted loudly.

I broke the kiss and growled at my brother.

He grinned at me and took a step back, "No need to show your teeth, but there is also no need to put on a show."

I had forgotten we were at the ball. The secluded spot where we had gone was now filled with guests that were looking on with wide eyes. I didn't give Lexi a moment of protest. I gathered her into my arms and started stalking toward the door.

"Take care of things, Rock," I called over my shoulder.

Lexi still had her arms around my neck.

“Aren’t you being awfully presumptuous,” She said with a hint of a smile.

“I intend to spend the next few hours groveling,” I said truthfully. “Between your thighs.”

Her cheeks heated, “By all means, carry on!”

Chapter 14 – Lexi

Rafe carried me back to the royal bedchamber as if I weighed nothing at all. It was a strong reminder of just how different things were in space. My former boyfriend had to carry me once when I twisted my ankle. Now, I want to preface this with something. I am not fat, but I do have curves. I know the difference between the two.

Jason, however, did not. He went on and on about how heavy I was until we made it back to the car. We had been hiking and neither one of us were outdoor people. Honestly, I had convinced him to go because I was testing out a new pair of tennis shoes.

I didn't give them a good rating. But in hindsight, it was probably my fault. I was a novice and shouldn't have been on the trail without a better guide. Jason went along with it because I guilted him into it. There were times when he would grow distant and I would insist that he do something with me.

It made me wonder if maybe he was cheating on me. I never once even considered the possibility when I was on earth. A part of me was still stinging from the things that Rafe had said. He was right on a number of things and that hurt the worst.

I tucked my face into his chest and allowed our link to soothe the ache.

As he walked to the bed he kissed the top of my head and set me down. I couldn't help the whimper that escaped my lips. But I clamped them down tightly as soon as I heard it. I was strong and didn't need a man. I didn't need anyone.

I blamed the link for the desire to be near him.

He started to remove his tie and undid his cufflinks. There is something so sexy about a man undressing. I was mesmerized as I watched him remove each article of clothing.

"Do you like what you see?" he asked in a deeply amused tone.

I had leaned back on my elbows and crossed my ankles enjoying the show.

"Immensely, I would say to hurry, but there is no need to rush what I know to be a show-stopping ending."

That brought a laugh to his lips.

"There is nobody like you, Lexi Gallagher."

I bit my lip, "Is that a good thing or a bad thing?"

He glanced up.

His shirt was removed and he his pants unfastened. I could see the silky fabric of his underwear and the undeniable arousal beneath it. I loved how the muscles on his chest each molded into the next one. He looked like he was carved out of stone.

A man had no right being that attractive.

Rafe frowned and moved over to where I was lounging on the bed.

“You are perfect just the way you are.”

I rolled my eyes, “We both know that isn’t true.”

“Lexi, I don’t think that people ever get to know the real you. It is like you are constantly throwing things at them to keep everyone at arm’s length.”

My cheeks heated, “I have a lot of interests and hobbies.”

He just stared at me until I broke.

“Look, I just worry that maybe they won’t like the real Lexi. She isn’t very interesting. And anyway, everyone knows that if you want to change something about yourself you should do it.”

He leaned over and cupped my face bringing his lips close to mine.

“I have no issue with you wanting to learn things. But Lexi, you are wrong. The real you is beautiful and kind, she helps children and bakes cookies and from what Rock has told me is an excellent Poker player.”

“He is dismal, I only look good in comparison,” I said frankly.

The little crinkles at the corners of his eyes smile before I heard the chuckle in his voice.

“And you are damn sexy when you’re funny.”

“I wasn’t trying to be funny,” I answered honestly. But my tone was breathless and a bit inviting.

“You don’t need to try to be anything,” he breathed against my lips. “That is what I am trying to tell you.”

He sealed his mouth over mine and pushed me back onto the bed. His large body covering mine and pressing me into the softness of the mattress. It felt amazing to be pressed there, his hands cradling my head and neck while his large body surrounded me.

I was lost in the stroke of his tongue. He was relentless, kissing me deeply until I couldn’t think or reason, I could only feel. My skin was on fire for his touch and we were wearing way too many clothes. I arched into him loving the way that I fit so well against him.

Rafe had slipped his hand up my back and unfastened the dress at the nape of my neck. He used his hands to peel it down and groaned when he realized that I wasn't wearing a bra.

His hands went to my breasts and then his lips trailed down my jaw and across my collarbone until he could kiss the swell of my breast. He spent far too long squeezing and rubbing my skin. He traced lines until gooseflesh covered my skin. And then when I was all but screaming for his touch he finally sucked one nipple into his mouth.

Rafe didn't do anything by halves. His other hand was sliding up my thigh and pushing the fabric of the dress away until he was able to grab the side of my panties. And then in a Herculean effort, he yanked my underwear right off me.

I squeaked as it scraped down my hips, but his hand was quick to move to the center of my thighs and soon I was moaning. He stroked my damp folds, pushing my legs apart and settling between them as he kissed and licked the other nipple. My hands were on his shoulders, in his hair, scraping his back, and cradling him against my breast as one finger entered me.

I gasped and leaned into the invasion. I was so wet and when he increased it to two fingers my hips started to buck. Moving some of that liquid heat to my clit it circled it a few times before going back to stroke back and forth, ever so slowly.

He was driving me wild, I needed the release, I was chasing it for all I was worth. I suddenly didn't care how it came about I just wanted to break apart in his arms.

His touch became more insistent. His mouth nipped at my breast and bit the fleshy underside. His fingers began to fuck me in earnest and I was lost to all of the sensations that were literally driving me crazy.

I was shaking, panting, crying his name and then I broke. A million things seemed to splinter apart as wave after wave of delicious extasy washed over my frame.

I came hard, the heat between my legs coating his hand and the tops of my thighs. I could hardly catch my breath and never wanted it to end.

"End?" Rafe smiled rakishly.

"Did I say that aloud?" I gasped.

He nodded, "Sweetheart, we are only beginning."

Chapter 15 – Rafe

If you were to ask me what the most beautiful thing in the galaxy. I wouldn't even hesitate to answer. This, Lexi, right here and right now, sprawled out with her legs splayed and her pretty hair a mass of tangles around her face. The way her body is languid from my tongue, and her skin pink from my tongue, that is what would come to mind.

I moved over her and cupped her face, "I think I am falling in love with you."

She blinked at me, and then did it again.

"Am I dreaming?" Panic flashed through her eyes and she pinched my arm that was near her hip.

"Ouch!" The woman had wickedly sharp nails. "What did you do that for?"

"How could you love me? You hardly know me. Look, is this just *I love you because we are fucking?* Because if that's the case I understand and will pretend that I didn't hear it."

Okay, that was fair. "I want to get to get to know you Lexi. I want to know everything about you. And I don't think you have to know a person completely to start falling in love with them."

"But Jason said he loved me and that didn't feel anything like this."

I had a hunch that Jason was a bit of a douche bag.

"What if we table that for later?"

She blinked again. Her impossibly long lashes brushing against her cheekbones.

"Table it?"

I controlled my smile, "You know, put a pin in it? We can talk about it later. We have other things to do right now."

As I said the last words I moved until my body was pressed into hers. I was holding my weight on my elbows, but she felt every inch of my arousal. Her mouth dropped open and I had visions of filling it with my cock.

I loved the way her breath hitched and the little vein at the hollow of her throat began to pulse.

"What?" she swallowed, "What did you have in mind?"

I wondered how she would respond to me telling her that I wanted to fuck her brains out. I wanted to take her from behind. I wanted her to ride me while her tits bounced above me. I wanted her ass, sweet Zeus, I wanted to fuck her perfect ass.

Her hand crept up and cupped the side of my face. "Did I lose you for a second there?"

I turned to kiss the center of her palm. “No, just thinking about the things I want to do to you. You are so perfect, Lexi.”

She frowned, “No, I am far from perfect.”

But she was perfect for me.

I thought it best to keep that little tidbit to myself and just leaned down to kiss her lips. She moaned into the kiss and I loved how she threw herself into it. Her leg wrapped around mine and she tried to lift her pussy up to meet my cock.

The little vixen! I picked up her other leg and tucked it behind me as well so that my cock could slip along her slit. I slowly ran my cock back and forth marveling at just how wet she was. I could swear that she was even more wet than when I stopped eating her out.

“Rafe,” her breathless sigh had my dick pulsing with need. As much as I wanted to torture her, it was damn near killing me.

I pulled back, smiling at her whimpering noises to my retreat and then moved her on her hands and knees.

“Spread your thighs, Lexi. I want to see your pussy.”

She was hesitant, likely feeling embarrassed about the position. Didn’t she realize that I loved seeing her ass in the air, just waiting for me, torturing me.

I leaned down and took a bite out of her ass and she squealed. I licked the love bit and brought my fingers to her slit rubbing and caressing her until she relaxed once again.

Then I brought my fingers up to the tight ring of her ass and began to slowly circle the rim. She moaned and pushed her hips back into me. I took that as the green light to keep playing. I continued to rub her clit and then bring moisture to her back entrance.

Her body was fevered, and she was rocking into my movements.

“Fuck me, Rafe, please stop teasing me.”

I moved to position my cock and entered her pussy. Her heat and tight fit were overwhelming. But then she began to squeeze her vaginal walls, begging me to thrust deeper, take her harder.

My careful control began to slip. I rammed into her slamming her hard enough to move a foot on the bed. I didn’t want to knock her off, so I grabbed her hips to keep her in place.

I began thrusting back and forth increasing my speed and loving the way she moaned beneath me.

“You are so fucking tight. I love seeing you like this.”

She growled in response and shoved her hips back harder against me.

I took my fingers and spit on them then I went back to her ass. I circled the tight ring pressing gently with my fingers as I fucked her pussy. The gentle moans were now cried of pleasure. She clutched the sheets like a lifeline and gave as good as she got.

I pushed my finger inside of her ass moving slow enough with my hands as to not hurt her. One finger became two and I watched as it opened for me. Not unlike the unfurling of a flower. She was so damn gorgeous.

I thrust two fingers in her ass and tilted her hips so that I was hitting her at new angle. She screamed and suddenly her pussy was clenching me hard and fast as she came all over my cock. I bit my lip and tasted blood as I fought coming.

I pumped into her until she was spent and then I pulled out. My cock was slick with her juices as I moved it to her ass hole. Lexi moaned, and I saw her look back with a little uncertainty. She wasn't the only one that worried this might not be the best idea. But I wanted her so badly and she wasn't saying no.

I placed the head of my cock against her ass opening and began to press inside.

"Just relax your muscles, baby. You have this."

She concentrated on relaxing and my tip slipped inside with every moment she was able to take me further and further until she was filled to the max. My dick had never been anything so tight, so perfect. I was sweating bullets, the droplets getting into my eyes as I began to fuck her perfect ass.

She was still at first but as I began to move Lexi learned the rhythm and began to move with me. Soon I saw her fingers grabbing the sheets once again. I moved inside of her tight ass, watching her closely for any signs of distress, but none were there.

She began to push back harder, and I moved one hand to her clit and began to rub circles once again. I needed her to come this way. I wanted to do so many things with her, to her, but I didn't want to scare her with my needs.

She began to tighten, and I knew that she was starting up the twirling spiral of pleasure that would release her into ecstasy. The sounds she was making were guttural, raw, and utterly erotic.

I was close, too fucking close and needed her to come. I pinched her clit and she came. Her scream echoing through the cavernous room.

"Lexi," I gasped and pulled my dick out to spend on her back. Ribbons of cum coating her back and ass.

She slumped down, no longer able to stay on her knees.

"That was…"

Shit, I waited for her to say terrible or disgusting but she didn't.

"Fantastic."

I grabbed a cloth and wiped my cum from her back. We could shower later, but for now I wanted to hold her, to be with her, and hopefully convince her to take a chance on loving me.

Chapter 16 – Lexi

“Hi, my name is Rylee Cole, it’s so nice to meet you.”

I shook hands with the bubbly young woman. “Lexi Gallagher, but then you most likely already knew that.”

She grinned, showing perfectly straight teeth, “Indeed. Is it true that you can throw a warrior through a wall?”

I felt a flush of color rise on my cheeks.

“Rylee!” the man that I had been introduced to earlier, Heath, I believe his name was, tried to admonish her. But Rylee ignored him.

“I would love to see it.” She continued, “my brother’s life mate Chloe is a healer and Sarah, the other human super has laser eyes, but they are both pregnant.”

She said the last as if it were a huge disappointment.

I laughed, “Was that something that you didn’t want to happen?”

“Oh, I like babies as well as the next person I suppose, but it seems that nothing terribly exciting happens when someone is pregnant.”

I snorted, “You wouldn’t consider growing another organism inside of an individual something less than extraordinary?”

Lexi’s lips twitched, “Well, if you put it that way.”

I laughed, “I am only teasing. I know what you mean. But I am confused. I was under the impression that the humans and aliens couldn’t cross breed. Is this a program that they have entered?”

Rylee shook her head and Heath blushed. Suddenly, I felt very nervous and remembered all of the times that Rafe and I have had unprotected sex. I hadn’t even considered the implications of such actions. I was under the understanding that I wouldn’t get pregnant.

The color drained from my face and I immediately stood.

“I am sorry, I will need to excuse myself. I am in need of a conference with the king.”

“I didn’t mean to stir up trouble,” Rylee said weakly.

But I was already half way to the door.

I wrenched it open a tad too hard and it flew out of the casing. I didn't even bother to apologize when I heard their gasps of astonishment. I only set the door aside and went through the gaping hole in search of Rafe. I was a woman on a mission.

Rock was the next to encounter me. He opened his mouth to greet me, but something in my expression had the words dying on his lips. Instead he stepped out of my way and when I grunted, "Where is he?"

Rock was smart enough not to pretend to not know who I was inquiring after. He pointed into the conservatory and I brushed past him. The closer I got to Rafe the angrier I became. There was no way that the man couldn't have known or realized what was happening between us. Did he not care? Or was he that selfish? Did I matter so little to him? What about my thoughts? Wasn't he going to talk about any of this with me?

I saw him near the back of the conservatory with a few of his advisors. His face lit when he saw me and I almost caved. Stupid man, it was difficult to be angry when the sheer joy on his face touched something deep inside. But I was angry, hurt even.

"I need to speak with you."

I keep my tone even, if a bit curt.

He nodded, "Certainly, I can get away in just a few moments."

"Now," I interrupted, barely containing my temper.

He frowned a little.

The dignitaries raised their brows in a supercilious manor that made me want to smash their heads together.

"Of course," he turned to the men and women. "Please excuse me."

He walked over to me and took my arm. When I visibly flinched, he was taken aback and whispered, "Lexi, what is going on?"

"Why didn't you tell me that aliens and humans can make babies?"

Perhaps I was a little too loud, or perhaps they were too noisy, I really am not sure what the case was. But there was a small titter of laugher. The small bit of laughter was the tipping point. You see I had spent a great deal of my childhood being made fun of and this was one moment where I was vulnerable and didn't need one more thing.

"Lexi, this isn't the place for this conversation."

I felt like I had been hit.

My fists where clenched and I knew that if I were to touch anyone it wouldn't be good. I also knew that my feelings for Rafe went a lot deeper than I wanted to admit. But I still wasn't sure

how deep they were. However, I didn't know where I sat with him. And as I looked at those men and women who were looking at me with those mocking expressions that I couldn't stay here, not like this.

Not only did they know now that I had slept with him, but they knew that I could be carrying his child. I was stupid and immature, and they would never respect me. I could beat the shit out of all of them, but that wouldn't solve anything. They would never see the real me.

Turning on my heel I did the first adult thing in my life and walked away.

"Lexi," Rafe called out, but I ignored him, and he didn't follow me.

Honestly it was for the best because with every step I took a fresh set of shame took space in my head until horror of horrors I began to cry. I made it back into the main hall when I ran in to a very worried looking Rylee.

"Aww, fucking hell, this is all my fault. I am so sorry, Lexi. I am such a big mouth."

And then she did something that I had needed since I came to this forsaken place. She wrapped her arms around me and hugged me close. I cried into her shoulder and felt like I was six years old and nobody wanted to play with me on the playground because I was just a little bit different than everyone else.

"Look, do you want to come and visit Sarah and Chloe? I think you are just a bit homesick."

I gulped back the tears. I wasn't sure how seeing two other women that were earthlings like I was would help, but if it would give me some distance from Rafe I was all about it.

"Yes, can we go immediately?"

Rylee frowned, "It's a few days to get to our planet. Won't you need to talk about this with your imprinted pair?"

I shook my head, "No, Rafe doesn't do anything with me. Everyone on the planet hates me, they hate all humans. I spend the majority of my time changing diapers in the nursery, which I am not complaining about, I love the babies. But they won't miss me, I promise."

"We can leave whenever you would like," Heath spoke from behind us.

I looked up into his eyes. His jaw was set tight and his eyes were hard. Even Rylee looked surprised at his expression, but she blinked and agreed that anytime I was free we could leave.

"I can go now; my suit is made of star dust and cleans itself."

Heath's eyes grew wide, "Only people with connection to the stars are able to wear suits of star dust, I thought you were human?"

It was my turn to go silent, I thought I was too.

Rylee took me by the shoulders, “There is a legend about a race that came from the stars. They were stronger than any other, braver, smarter, but they sacrificed all to save the galaxy and were never heard from again. Lexi, I wonder if you are from that race. You don’t seem as tied to Rafe as some of the other pairs have been. We need to speak to Von about this. Come, let’s see what we can discover.”

Chapter 17 – Lexi

"Beings never lived on the stars, but they did have some affinity with certain stars. That being said when those stars grew older the colonies left their planets and weren't heard from again. What I can only suppose is that you are a long-lost descendant of one of those races. You would be surprised at how many humans on earth are not 100% human."

Von smiled at me, "I can see I have surprised you. What questions can I answer for you, Lexi?"

Something about speaking with Von helped settle some of the questions inside of me. I was usually much more settled with who I was. But it seemed that since I had come to space I felt like the lost little kid that didn't fit in and I hated it.

Vonn's scientific voice helped to bring things back into perspective for me.

"Why did you suspect that I might have the affinity with the stars?" I asked.

Von nodded as if I had asked a good question. "When you were waking up at the beginning you mentioned that you had Asperger's but not to tell anyone. I believe they call it being *on the spectrum* on earth. This was my first clue. Any difference from what earthlings consider normal usually hints toward an alien base. In this case it was the traces of your star heritage. I couldn't have known for certain until you held the suit sewn with the star fibers and saw how you responded to it. It was then that I knew for certain that my suspicions were founded."

I blushed furiously. I must have been really out of it to bring that up. I never mentioned the Asperger's or the spectrum to anyone. My mom and I used to call it my super power, but my teachers when I was growing up acted like I had something majorly wrong with me. I was a bright child, often testing much higher than my classmates. But I was different. I liked things a certain way and liked my routine to be a certain way.

I would get notes from the teachers saying things like, 'Lexi was laughing uncontrollably because the Clifford book was placed in the Arthur box. This is unacceptable.' Mom called these notes, *nasty grams*. She tried to tell my teachers that in my mind Clifford the Big Red Dog just walked into Arthur and DW's living room and that was a little funny. But they obviously didn't share the same sense of humor.

I had with therapy and with age managed to hide a lot of my quirkier side, or at least I had tried to. That's why I liked the vlog and social media circus. I was so much better at controlling what people saw and therefore people really liked me. But they didn't really know the real me. They saw the controlled version of me that was edited and trimmed down.

I turned to Von, "Wow, I had no idea that I told you that."

"That's why I made you the star uniform, I knew you would be compatible. Honestly, you don't need your imprinted host Rafe as much as some of the other humans did. That doesn't mean

that you can survive without him indefinitely. But you are strong enough both mentally and physically to have a longer break should you wish it. As for the other business, you are not pregnant, and we can place an IUD to prevent that. You are also not required to have a permanent relationship with Rafe just because the other women have."

I swallowed, feeling strangely hollow inside. I really liked Rafe. But I didn't know if I loved him. I honestly didn't know him well enough and if I was being honest I wasn't sure that I knew myself well enough to be jumping into any relationships.

"Yes, please place the IUD," I asked.

"Lexi, there is another thing. I want to talk about what you were doing when you were taken."

I blinked trying to remember but my mind was coming up blank. "I am sorry, I can't really remember."

Von sighed and grabbed a tablet and off the shelf of the med unit. "I can show you. Are you sure that you are ready to see this?"

"Yeah, of course I am."

He handed me the tablet and I took it into my hands. There was a group of girls and I knew immediately where I had been. I looked up at Von grinning, "I was at the women's and children's center doing a volunteer class. One of the biggest problems for these moms is that they have never been on a job interview before and they have no idea how to dress for an interview, what to say, how to wear their make-up, that kind of thing."

He nodded but continued to look worried. I watched the video recognizing several of the women. I knew a few of them had abusive husbands and another was running away from her drug dealer boyfriend.

Frankie was there for the third time, she was one that I was really hoping would make it away from her husband. At forty-five, she had never held a job and had no employable skills save house cleaning. When she came in this last time battered and bruised I had begged her to just come and stay with me. But she had insisted on making her own way.

She had two grown daughters that had moved across the county and she refused to go to them for fear of bringing their father to their doorstep.

I watched as Frankie worked at learning to type. The cute way that she bit her lip and focused on the keys. But out of the corner of the tablet I saw a shadow come onto the screen. And then I saw people screaming and a gun being raised. My body tensed as I watched on the screen as I jumped in front of Frankie knowing what would be coming next. But I never would know what would come next because the screen went blank.

I looked up at Rafe. "Well?"

“Her husband is serving the rest of his life in prison.”

“But Frankie?” I asked desperately.

Von shook his head.

I felt like throwing up.

“Why didn’t I save her?”

Von blew out a breath, “Even if we hadn’t have pulled you. He killed seven of the women in that room that day. I showed you this because Lexi I don’t think you have any idea of who you are.”

“I don’t understand.” And that had to be the most honest sentence I had ever uttered in my life.

“You are very literal. You see yourself harshly and judge yourself on a stiff measuring stick. I think you believe that you are extremely shallow because people have told you that you are shallow. They are not aware of all of the charity work that you do. Have you even told Rafe that you worked at the women and children’s center? The first thing you did at the palace was start working with the children. This is not someone who is shallow.”

I felt a lump of emotion in my throat, and I didn’t like it.

“I only do that to feel good. It is a purely selfish endeavor.”

Von laughed, “You are also one of the most honest individuals I have ever met. That is also very much in line with your star heritage. I want you to spend a little time with Chloe and Sarah. Not because there is something wrong with you, but because I want you to see that there are so many things that are very right with you.”

“I don’t need a pity party,” I snapped.

Von raised a brow, “Then don’t throw one.”

Chapter 18 – Rafe

"Where in the hell is Lexi?"

Rock looked at me like I was an idiot which only served to piss me off even further.

"Um, isn't she your—whatever she is?"

"You had better fucking watch yourself," I had him up against the wall in about three seconds.

Rock's eyes were wide, and he blinked twice, "You are starting to act like her."

"What in the fuck does that mean?" I growled.

"Nothing!" he held up his hands as much as he could. "Only, I am not on trial here. And the last time I saw her she was with Rylee Cole."

"Rylee Cole left to go back to her home planet."

Rock actually winced, "Yeah, I think Lexi was on the manifest. I figured you knew about it."

"Fuck!" I exploded, "No, I fucking didn't know about it! Shit, Rock! Why would you let her go! I just fucking told her I loved her, and she leaves? Fuck!"

His eyes grew even wider if possible. "You said the L-word? Were you drunk?"

I seriously contemplated punching the shit out of my brother.

Fuck it.

"I can't believe you just hit me!"

Rock held a rag to try and staunch the bleeding of his bloody nose while I arranged a flight on the fastest rocket ship to Zeron.

"You have to be in charge of this shit show while I am gone."

Rock looked horrified, "How long are you going to be gone?"

I shrugged, "I have no idea. As long as it takes to get there and convince Lexi that I really do love her."

Rock gave me a pitying look, "You know, I really don't see the draw of monogamy. I think you are making a mistake."

"I think you are a cock sucker, but you are my brother and I still love you. Oh, and I forgot to mention that there was a message from the intergalactic council for you."

"For me?" Rock scoffed, "that can't be right."

"I don't have time to be your secretary. Just check it out."

He rolled his eyes and then left the room, presumably the shower and take care of the blood.

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"How was your space travel, your Majesty?"

I had no desire to make small talk with the servant at the space station in Zeron, but years of breeding won out.

"Very good, thank you. I am looking for Lady Lexi."

The older man nodded, "She is at the Commanders home. Come with me."

I followed the man through an elaborate system of dwellings. Just when I was thoroughly confused as I often was on Zeron things started to look familiar.

"I will take it from here," I told him. I could hear Sarah's voice through the chamber door.

"I am the fattest pregnant woman in the galaxy."

I pressed the button alerting them of my arrival.

A servant opened the door and for a moment there was silence. Then screaming erupted as everyone jumped up greeting me with excitement. Sarah was indeed very pregnant. Chloe was just a few months along. Betty, Zack and Rylee's mother was thrilled to see me. The only one that seemed leery was Lexi.

Once we settled down and had some tea, Sarah rested her drink on her belly and leaned her head back on the chair. She had the whitest blonde hair I had ever seen and wasn't very tall. Chloe swore like a sailor, had dark hair and was taller with a harder look to her. They both had been very kind to Lexi and that endeared them to me.

We had been talking for twenty minutes or so when Axel and Zack came home from a training exercise. I immediately asked for a conference.

"What's wrong?" Zack took a swig of beer.

"I told her I loved her," I said honestly.

Axel made a face, "She rip your balls off?"

I sighed, "She left the planet and came here."

He nodded, "Yeah, earth chicks, they aren't like space women."

I frowned, "In what way?"

Zack smiled, "In every way. They are better. You need to talk to her. Find out why she is upset."

It sounded so fucking easy, surely it couldn't be that easy.

I turned to Axel who was snorting at Zack.

"That is terrible advice."

"What would you do?" I asked.

"I would pick the girl up and carry her somewhere she couldn't get away. Then I would let her know that I loved her, and she was mine. I would tell her that as many times as it took until she understood it."

Zack rolled his eyes, "That is the caveman approach."

Axel shrugged, "You will see that we are happily life mated and married."

I wrinkled my brow, "You do know that she could easily carry all three of us away if she wanted too."

"That's wicked cool," Axel nodded.

Zack shook his head, "Don't take advice from this idiot. Just talk to her."

I felt conflicted. On one hand I knew that Zack was probably right, but on the other Axel's romance was pretty notorious.

"Go get your girl," Axel smacked me on my back nearly sending me into next week.

I stood and walked back into the room with the girls.

Lexi looked at me warily when I walked right up to her.

"I am in love with you."

Her eyes narrowed as her cheeks heated. "You don't even know me that well."

I shrugged, "I intend to fix that."

Then I leaned down and picked her up, risking life and limb. Chloe and Sarah sighed as I lifted Lexi into my arms cradling her against my chest.

"What now?" she said, clearly embarrassed.

"I am supposed to ravish you," I said.

"In front of my new friends?" she asked with mortification.

"Yes!" Sarah said clearly delighted with the change in afternoon plans.

"No!" I said quickly.

"I will show you to her room," Rylee offered, swallowing a huge smile.

"Rafe, did you get a chance to give that message to your brother?" Zack poked his head into the room as I carried Lexi to the hallway.

"Umm, yeah, I did, why? What was it about?" I knew I sounded more than a bit distracted.

“His imprinted pairs arrived.” Axel added.

“Pairs? I thought they only sent one?” I froze on the spot almost dropping Lexi.

Sarah snorted, “Looks like lover boy will have his hands full with identical twins.”

Chapter 19 – Lexi

My heart was racing, and my traitorous hands had slipped around Rafe's neck as he marched us confidently down the corridor. I could feel the steady rhythm of his heartbeat against the crazy erratic beating of mine.

The moment we were inside my room I expected his lips to be on mine. But instead he pulled back a little and stared into my eyes.

"I do love you, Lexi. I know you think that I don't know you. But I know your favorite color is pink glitter sparkle, whatever that is. And I know that you claim to be allergic to exercising, but you work out more than anyone I know. I see how kind you are with the royal staff and know you have a big heart. I know you will be a fantastic mom one day and I know that you are the perfect person for me. You might not need me, Lexi, but I need you."

My lip trembled as I tried to take in everything he had said to me. He could have spouted about how good we are together in bed, that would have been the honest truth, but it would have left me feeling unworthy and cheap somehow.

He could have went on about how the children in the care center need me, and I would have most likely come back because I missed them, but I would have felt like I wasn't his first priority.

But Rafe went and said the one thing that could possibly win my heart over. He was right, I didn't need him. I wanted him, missed him, loved him even, but I didn't need him. But I desperately needed him to need me.

I didn't wait for the rest of his speech which I am sure he spent the entire space flight on. I just launched myself into his arms and kissed him for all I was worth. I loved this big crazy man that had somehow managed to make me feel like maybe he might need me even a little bit.

His lips caressed mine, demanding and then coaxing, unravelling all of the fears that I had locked inside of me. His hands slipped from my waist to cup my breasts and I loved the way that he caressed me through the fabric of my uniform. I wanted more, the feel of his hands on my bare skin.

He pinched my nipples then rubbed the tender nubs to soothe the sting and I felt it clear to my pussy. I was wet and aching and had to admit that what he had done truly swept me off my feet in more ways than I could possibly imagine.

Rafe ripped his lips away, "Clothes, off."

Apparently, we were down to single syllables, I certainly didn't mind as we both managed to strip the other of our uniforms and I was able to see the wide expanse off his chest and deep vee that lead to his long hard cock.

I ran my finger across the muscles of his abdomen and over his hip loving the way that he shuddered from my touch. I felt powerful and yet protected at the same time. When I cupped his length and felt the burning heat of his need for me he grabbed me and kissed my lips hard.

There was nothing gentle about this kiss, it was hungry and needy. His mouth slanted over mine and his hands were everywhere. One moment he was teasing my breasts and the next his was cupping my ass. I gasped when he brought a hand up into my hair, fisting it and tilting my head to the side so that he could kiss me even deeper.

His other hand found the juncture of my thighs and he felt just hot wet I was for him. I could never hide my natural response to this man. There was something elemental about us that no matter what nothing could take that away.

He slid a finger inside of me, his tongue mimicking what he was doing to my pussy. And then I found myself picked up and whipped around onto the bed. I landed on my stomach, but Rafe was there to pick up my hips and burry his face in my pussy.

I clutched the sheets in my fists and shamelessly shoved my ass back opening my legs so that he could get to my core and eat me the way I needed. Rafe was relentless, licking and sucking on my clit, his scruff gently abrading my skin until I couldn't take it any longer.

"I need you inside of me!" I pleaded with him.

"Come on my face baby," he commanded, "I know what you need. Come on my face and I will give it to you."

He sucked my clit into his mouth hard and suddenly I was coming hard and fast. I buried my face into the pillows and screamed as he continued to work me through the orgasm. And then when I was about to collapse into a heap of pure bliss he slammed his length inside of me.

It was raw and passionate and as my body scrambled to accommodate him I realized that I didn't want to ever be without Rafe. The connection that we had when we were together was electric. I might have insecurities and we might have a way to go before all is well. But I wanted this to work more than anything else in my life.

I moaned as his body slapped against mine, the sounds and smell of sex filling the room. He had a firm grasp on my hips, one that I was certain had I not been as strong as I am might have left bruises. But the sharp sting melded into the beauty of our fucking. He used me hard and rough and yet I felt cherished and loved.

"Shit, Lexi, I don't know how much longer I can hold on," he gasped leaning over my body and grabbing my hair once again. My back arched, and he hit me at a new angle, deeper, and rubbed against my g-spot.

He must have been able to tell from my cry that I was toppling over the edge because I felt him ram inside me twice more before he unloaded inside of me and I went into one of the best

orgasms of my life. I shook as the sensations rendered me senseless for a moment. The pleasure was all encompassing and he held me living every moment along with me.

As we slumped together on the bed I remembered something.

“I spoke to Von about birth control.”

He blinked. I am sure after the earth-shattering sex we just had it wasn’t what he had anticipated me saying.

“That’s fine, I also take a male birth control. I wasn’t playing fast and loose with you Lexi. While I would love to have kids someday, I don’t think we are anywhere near that stage.”

It was my turn to be surprised, “Guys have birth control?”

He nodded, “But we can be double covered it’s probably a good idea.”

“Why didn’t you tell me? When I was screaming at you all of those things?”

Rafe gave a rueful smile, “You were so upset, and I wasn’t sure what was behind it. I wanted to talk to you about it all after I got rid of the ambassador from Seron. But by the time I got to you, you were gone. I should have spoken with you immediately. I am sorry Lexi. I have never been a king before and find that I am failing a little at everything. So, I wanted to speak with you about taking on some of the work. I want you to rule as Queen, as my equal in every way.”

Chapter 20 – Lexi

Six months later...

"Sarah, how did you manage to deliver a ten-pound baby?" I gasped as she relayed the harrowing events that led up to her delivery.

Baby Jax was just about the sweetest thing I had ever seen. He cooed and laughed, grabbing for my hair and I had to snuggle him close again. I loved the baby smell of his skin.

Sarah wrinkled her nose, "There are several things that people don't tell you before you have a baby and then there are loads more that you will need to learn while having an alien's baby."

I grinned, "That sounds like a tabloid that I would have read at the supermarket."

Chloe looked up from where she was nursing her newborn Ramee. "Do you ever regret coming Lexi, not that any of us had a choice. But are you happier now?"

I felt my cheeks heating and knew that they could see the sign of Rafe's life mate pairing on the side of my neck. It was a lovely vine that stretched the entire left side of my body. Rafe said it was deceptive just like I was. At my protest he had laughed and explained that I appeared beautiful and fragile like the vine. But in truth I was far stronger and occasionally deadlier than people gave me credit for.

I could hardly complain about my mark when his chest and torso are covered with star symbols. I supposed that I wanted to share that part of me with Rafe. Things had been difficult at first, the planet was still adjusting to the fact that I was now the queen.

But was I happier? Was I glad that I happened to be carrying the genetic code that would throw me into an entirely new life?

"I never really lived until I came here," I answered honestly.

Chloe put Ramee to her shoulder to burb and sighed, "That is lovely, I think I know just how you feel."

Sarah nodded, "I agree; however, I don't know how things are going to go down for Rock and the twins. I can't imagine that they will be happy with the arrangement."

I couldn't help the involuntary wince as I thought of Rock with Iris and Ivy. It was the main reason behind Sarah and Chloe's trip to Tantar. Von was officially releasing them to us because Rock was off fighting in the Milky Way and there wasn't any reason for them to be in Zeron any longer.

"Do they still plan on joining Rock on the battle front?" I asked.

Chloe shrugged, "I would imagine so."

"Axel said that things are heating up," Sarah bit her lip. "It makes me worry about the distance between us. I don't get sick like I did when I first came, but I don't like it."

Chloe nodded, "Zack is headed back out there, he was only allowed three weeks for the delivery."

Rafe and I weren't expected to be warriors, in fact our main responsibility was keeping this planet from falling into the wrong hands. But I felt bad for my friends, and I worried about their mates as well as Rock who had become a wonderful brother to me.

"The Stavainians are gaining ground and I heard that the planet Seron has been taken over once again." Sarah said through clenched teeth.

I knew she had friends there.

"I am sorry," I offered.

Sarah glanced up at me, "I am too. We will get them back, and I am sure they will be fine."

But by her tone I could tell that she wasn't as confident as she wanted to be. I had to agree. It seemed that the Stavainians were gaining ground on many fronts. It was a scary feeling, one that I didn't want to overtake Tantar.

Betty came into the room with a tray of fresh cookies. "I have just been to visit Cook and I must say that she has some of the most delightful recipes. Does anyone want a cookie?"

Jax squealed and reached out his hands toward Betty. It was obvious that he loved his grandmother. I traded her the baby for the tray and passed it around.

Just as I was about to sit down the door slammed open again and the twins Iris and Ivy storm into the room.

"We just got word that part of the Intergalactic Fleet are missing," one of them said. I think it was Ivy, but they were identical and hard to tell apart.

Rafe was just behind them, "The commander wishes to speak with you Betty."

The color drained from the older woman's face as she quickly handed Sarah baby Jax and left with Rafe to the conference room. Sarah and Chloe seemed to be stunned and baby Ramee started crying but Chloe didn't notice.

"I am sure they are fine," I stumbled over the words not at all certain that things were fine.

The twins looked at me dubiously.

"I think we should go after them," the other twin suggested.

"With babies?" I said incredulously.

Sarah stood up, “She’s right, we are here for a reason. What purpose does it serve if we are all back here?”

“But we haven’t got our powers,” Ivy rubbed her arm self-consciously. “What help could be possibly be?”

“Maybe you don’t know what your power is,” Chloe added, finally snapping out of her daze. “It took me some time to realize that healing was my power. Not everyone is immediate like Sarah and Lexi.”

“I don’t feel the pull to him either,” Iris shrugged, “I think they got it wrong.”

Rylee came into the room, “I can have a ship ready in the next hour. Who’s in?”

**

Rafe pulled me against him in our bed and kissed the back of my neck, “Are you alright?”

I nodded, my hair brushing his chin, “Yeah, just thinking about things.”

He turned me in his arms, “They are going to be okay.”

“I know, or at least I hope so. I am glad that Chloe is staying home with both of the babies so that Sarah can go. And I am glad that Iris and Ivy are going, with Rylee the four of them should be able to get some information. I just feel anxious.”

He tenderly kissed my forehead and then my eyelids, “you have the biggest heart, Lexi, that I have ever seen. Sarah is downright scary, she will find them.”

I nodded again even though we both knew it was hopes and wishes we were going off of.

“There was something else that the twins said that has been on my mind,” I said softly.

“What is it?” he whispered against my neck, kissing and making me hot and bothered.

“Iris thinks that they weren’t supposed to be paired with Rock. She said that she didn’t feel anything, no pull, no urge to be with him, nothing. Even when I was freaking out and fighting things I still felt something. Could Von have gotten it wrong?”

Rafe moved his head back to look at me, “In theory it should be fool proof. But life never does go exactly as planned. I know that the moment I touched you I wanted to be in your presence, it made me feel better and I hated it. You never know…”

He trailed off before kissing me again and soon my mind was on him, the man I loved.

To Be Continued in Book 2