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The Starlight Chronicles

**PALE STARS**  
**IN HER**  
**EYES**

*Annabel Wolfe*

## The Starlight Chronicles

# Pale Stars in Her Eyes

Jerra has been abducted, indoctrinated, and sentenced to a life of sexual servitude. It doesn't matter that she had a satisfying life on earth, the superior species evolved from her own planet has other plans for her. When she discovers she is the female who must service the three most important males on a ship bound on an important mission, she is both intimidated and rebellious.

Ran Kartel is a diplomat and he knows this expedition is the most dangerous he has ever undertaken. Never does he consider that a human female—inferior in every way—would stir not only his predictable lust but also his heart. Yes, his body must be sated, but he never expected his emotions to be so engaged.

Three males, one human female, and a very combustible situation that explodes under the pale stars...

**Sensuality Rating:** **SCORCHING**

**Genre:** Futuristic / Multiple Sex Partners

**Length:** Novel (30,500 words)

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EROTIC ROMANCE



**Siren Publishing, Inc.**  
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# **PALE STARS IN HER EYES**

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### **Chapter 1**

The clothing was unfamiliar and Jerra realized with a swift glance in the mirror she had the damned thing on backwards. With a muttered expletive, she pulled the soft material back up over her head and turned it around before she slipped the gown back on.

Good God, that was even worse.

She stared at her reflection, seeing the crests of her areola visible over the clinging drape of the neckline. The other way, her breasts were minimally covered so she took it off once more. Her nude body gleamed in the light of the passing stars outside the window of her cubicle and the soft glow of a single recessed light. She put the gown back on the way she first had it and had to be satisfied with the fact the amount of skin showing was indecent. At least her nipples weren't exposed. After all, she had no choice but to wear it.

The door slid open behind her without warning and she whirled, grateful her visitor hadn't entered the moment before and caught her naked. Heat rose into her cheeks as the man who stood in the doorway deliberately raked her body with cool, appraising perusal before he gave a curt nod. He commanded, "Come with me."

"Where?" she asked, her hands clenched at her sides. The dress barely covered her upper thighs and she fought the urge to tug the gauzy material lower.

“It isn’t your place to ask.” In his uniform of tunic, fitted pants, and polished boots, Lieutenant Herad was an impressive figure. Taller than most human males, he filled the doorway to the room that had been her cell for the past few days. His features were starkly masculine, and his dark hair was immaculately neat, tied back from his angular face. He looked both stern and annoyed. “You’ve been schooled, Miss Aubrey.”

“I’ve been kidnapped,” she said bitterly, even though it was probably a stupid thing to argue when she was on a strange ship, bound for a destination unknown, with no protection or a single familiar face. “You took me from my home, violated my privacy in every way possible, and no one has explained to me why. Yes, I’ve been told to cooperate, to stay quiet and obedient, but forgive me if I’m not interested in pleasing my captors.”

“You’ll please at least some of us, don’t worry, whether you want it or not. And you know full well we harvest females from Earth.” His tone was cold and detached. “It is our legal right.”

Jerra fought a shiver of apprehension. Yes, she knew the S-species were in domination and agreements had been made because there had been little choice. Her planet was defenseless against the evolution of a new form of life, the result of a colonization effort and incredible genetic advances. The S-species, or Superhumans, were physically and mentally superior in every way to her ordinary, original race. They were children of the old Earth, spawned to live in diverse conditions on distant planets.

Who would have guessed within a few short generations, they would rule most of the known galaxies and keep their mother planet neatly under their thumb with very little effort?

“What about my parents?”

“They’ve been compensated, don’t worry. They knew this was coming, for they were informed last year we’d decided you were suitable.”

They had known? In retrospect, she had noticed her mother or father hadn’t been as affectionate in the past months, probably in sheer self-defense over her inevitable departure.

It was impossible to keep her voice from wobbling. “You intend to breed me?”

“Yes. Eventually.” His gaze was steady and unapologetic though he must have caught the edge of fear in her voice. “Right now, we are headed out on a

diplomatic mission that will take the better part of a year in your terms of time. On the return voyage to Minoa, you will be impregnated.”

She felt a little dizzy at that revelation, though it was what she feared all along. The S-species were very careful not to become inbred and took human females to make sure the genetic pool did not narrow too much. Jerra said recklessly, “I wish I’d simply broken the law and not stayed a virgin.”

“And had it discovered and been thrown in prison?” He lifted a dark eyebrow in reproof. “Come now, Miss Aubrey, we both know you are too intelligent for such a foolish decision. It’s part of the reason you were chosen. According to the mandatory tests, you have a high level of cognitive function that’s entirely natural. You also meet all the other standards—good health, a sense of self-preservation strong enough to obey the laws, and the most important, physical beauty.”

*Well, lucky me.*

“That’s why we have to take the tests as children?” she asked with cold fury. “So you can pick the next specimen to breed like an animal? We’re told it is to monitor the evolutionary process of mankind.”

“Humans don’t need to know everything. Besides, you will not be bred like an animal, but like any woman, inseminated by a fertile male during sexual intercourse. In the meantime, however, the journey is a long one and the males get restless, even the most disciplined, without sexual activity. We learned a long time ago having a female available when the need arises helps the crew. You’ll be most useful, I am sure.”

The blood drained from her face. She could feel herself go pale. “You...you expect me to...to...with your entire crew?”

For the first time, he looked amused. “No, of course not. Do you have any idea how many soldiers and flight crew there are on a ship this size? Besides, we aren’t barbarians, quite the opposite. I think you’ll actually find your assignment both an honor and a pleasure. Now, come with me.”

She doubted the part about feeling honored and even more the pleasure, but his assurances were a distinct relief. Her current predicament was bad enough. Jerra didn’t move. “What assignment?”

A low sigh escaped him and his eyes narrowed. The lieutenant muttered, “What a stubborn female.”

“We all fear the unknown. I imagine even the S-species has that problem. Just tell me and I am much more likely to cooperate.”

“That would be refreshing, but trust me, you’ll cooperate either way.” He explained briskly, “You will share quarters with three males. Colonel Ian Helm who is in command of the military presence on this vessel, Larik Armada, who is a brilliant engineer, and maybe you’ve heard of Ran Kartel, the diplomat who leads this expedition. For the duration, you are theirs.”

Though she normally did not follow interplanetary news, for there was enough in her own world to keep track of, she had heard of Kartel. He had negotiated several treaties that were thought impossible, and was reputed to have not only persuasive powers but physic abilities.

*Three men?*

The idea was daunting and mortifying. One moment, she had been living a normal life and now, she was supposed to be a concubine to three strangers who would use her only for physical pleasure. No wonder they’d given her clothing that barely covered her body.

*This is insane...*

But apparently it was real.

“Come,” Lieutenant Herad said for the third time with no equivocation in his voice.

There didn’t seem to be anything to do but obey.

\* \* \* \*

He felt her before he saw her.

Ran Kartel glanced up sharply, waiting for the door to open. The girl was apprehensive, and waves of uncertainty and dismay rolled like a lapping ocean surf through his mind. He wasn’t sure he blamed her, for like all the human women on the ship, she had been plucked from her placid earthly existence and brought as a captive to please the men on board. All would later be bred to keep the bloodlines free of mutations and weaknesses in immune systems. To him, the practice was not entirely fair, for his government preached impartial rule, but he



had not crafted the legislation that put it in place. Nor was he involved in any way in the harvesting program, except one.

He would reap the benefit of not having to go three months without sex. That length of time would be nearly impossible, for along with elevated intelligence and superior physical size was an increased sex drive among his kind.

“She’s being brought in,” he murmured to the other two men sitting at the table in the common area of their berth. The room was round, and each of them had a sleeping cubicle. On the other side was a different room, this one with a large window through which a bed was visible from the community area where they ate their meals.

The window into the room served two purposes. The first was so they could enjoy watching the girl at all times, even when they weren’t using her. After all, she was there for their pleasure. The second was to show when she was with one of them, and already occupied.

It was quite a practical arrangement, for there was simply no way to bring a woman on board for every man. The soldiers had to share ten to one and schedule their time, but since he, Armada, and the colonel were the highest ranking men on the ship next to the admiral, they were given not only the privilege of sharing between fewer men, but the most beautiful of the captives.

Armada, the engineer who designed the new super engine that now powered them with silent force across the depths of space, lifted his fine brows. He was like most S-species and remarkably good-looking. Thick fair hair waved around features that were both sculpted and classically handsome. He was tall, leanly built, and keen intelligence showed in his remarkably blue eyes, their color pure cobalt. He said, “I’m told she has blond hair and the color is actually real for a change with human women.” He grinned, making his face look boyish. “Her snatch is just a slightly darker shade.”

“How the hell do you know that?” Ian Helm gave him a glimmering look, his long fingers wrapped around the stem of his glass. He was a contrast to the young engineer with sleek dark hair, high cheekbones, and eyes dark as the endless universe without stars. He was known as a remarkably brave soldier, his build massive and heavily muscled, and he was a good six inches taller than either one of them even though they were considered tall males. Ran had always thought privately he wouldn’t want to ever really see him angry, but normally, the colonel was a very controlled man and had an agile mind under pressure.

“Dr. Yent did the examination. He mentioned to me she was a gorgeous specimen of a human female and her hymen unbroken until he did it surgically. The blood tests confirmed she’s entirely clean of any of their typical diseases.”

“You would ask for such details.” Helm looked amused. “Blood tests, purity issues, and the color of her pubic hair. Tell me, did you inquire on the state of her teeth?”

“I’m an engineer. We like to know just what we’re dealing with. Details are important to us.” Armada laughed.

“Soldiers are less complicated, I guess. I just don’t want my dick to be best friends with my hand for the entire way to Septinium and back. A warm female, S-species or human, beats the hell out of masturbation any day. I’m already tense and we’ve been out only a few days.”

“She’s frightened and not particularly willing,” Ran interjected. “I feel it.”

Both of them looked at him, their expressions hard to read, but he felt their first reaction was one of surprise he even brought up the girl’s feelings. After all, she was just a human and a captive at that. Larik said, “Surely she’s been instructed our captives are never ill-used. Besides, at her intelligence level, she must realize she has no choice.”

It was true, she didn’t have a choice but to submit and service them whenever they wished. Still, Ran wasn’t interested in a woman who didn’t want sex as much as he did. “I just think we should approach this the right way. The four of us are stuck with each other this journey in close quarters, and as you pointed out, Colonel, it’s a long one. If we take care to make sure she’s sexually initiated with as much sensitivity as possible, she’ll be much more likely to participate with enthusiasm.”

“That’s logical.” Armada nodded thoughtfully, taking a sip of wine in his cup. “I want to be fucked back. I’ve never taken an unwilling woman, human or not.”

Helm blew out his breath in a small sigh. “I guess I hadn’t even thought about how the woman might feel. We’re told it doesn’t matter because the humans have no rights. I just knew she was going to be here with us for that purpose and my cock took over. I’ve never forced myself on any female who wasn’t ready to spread her legs with enthusiasm.”

Ran looked around the table. “Which one of us then, goes first? She’s a virgin, though thank the stars and moons it won’t hurt her because the medical

procedure took care of the physical part of it. If properly aroused, she'll enjoy it even her first time."

Helm shook his dark head, his raven hair shifting across the material of his uniform. "I'm very big," he said with obvious reluctance. "Probably too big for an uninitiated woman. One of you two should probably break in our beautiful guest."

That revelation was not a surprise, considering how large the colonel was in every other way, his cock probably was huge. *And 'guest', Ran thought, is the wrong word.* 'Slave' was more appropriate, but he refrained from mentioning it. He looked at Armada. "We can toss for the privilege."

The young engineer thought for a moment, and then said, "No, you do it, sir. You'll know just what she's feeling every moment and surely that'll help you guide her in the right direction. I can wait for her to adjust to the arrangement."

Maybe it was just as well they both agreed before the door slowly slid open. Lieutenant Herad stepped in first, saluted the colonel, and then turned and made an imperious motion with his hand. The creature who answered the unspoken order made the room fall to a sudden hushed silence as she entered.

The first thing that sprang to Ran's mind was that the rumors of her beauty were not exaggerated. Instead, they didn't do her justice. Shining golden hair tumbled over slim, tense shoulders, framing a perfect oval face. Her features were delicate and fine-boned with arched dark blond brows, a straight small nose, and a soft pink mouth. A flush stained her smooth cheeks as the silence lengthened and they stared at her. Long lashes dropped slightly over a pair of azure eyes, the color not the almost startling sapphire color of Armada's, but instead like the pale stones mined on his native planet, Minoa. Her body also rivaled any fantasy, male or female. The girl was slender and lissome, her arms and legs bare, and from what he could see of her breasts and the depth of the inviting cleft between them, her tits were spectacularly large and lush. She wore the standard issue for a female sexual slave—a scanty gown made of an almost sheer material that was a token covering but little more.

She didn't move or speak, not even when Herad nodded his head at their unspoken approval of his choice and silently left the room.

The door swished shut.

Armada finally tore his gaze away and muttered, "You lucky bastard, Kartel."

The girl heard the words and her gaze shifted to him. There was a hint of defiance there and Ran sensed it too, the willful urge to resist even though he knew she had been warned punishment would be involved if she didn't submit. It almost overrode her fear, but not quite, and the warring emotions crowded his mind.

He met those lovely blue eyes, holding her gaze deliberately. "I agree," he told his comrades, without looking away. "Very damned lucky. We all are. Now...if you will excuse me, I think I'll introduce myself."

## Chapter 2

“This will be your room.”

The declaration, spoken in a smooth, almost mesmerizing voice, made Jerra glance around. It was much larger than the tiny stateroom that had been her prison for the past days since her abduction. The floor was smooth but warm under bare feet, and there was literally no furniture, except a large bed set right in the center of the space. A small door was open to show a tiny cleansing room, but the most puzzling thing was a window, open to the room she had just come from. Through it, she could still see the other two men sitting at the table, sipping their wine and watching her. There was no window to the outside world, not even so she could see the monotonous slide of sparkling stars in the distance as they moved through space.

She looked back at the man who had taken her hand and led her inside. “Which one are you?”

“Kartel.”

“Oh.”

The famous diplomat was a tall man, but so far, all the S-species seemed to tower over her. His hair was a rich brown chestnut shade, with golden streaks here and there, and it waved against the strong column of his neck. His face had an elegant yet completely masculine beauty to it with clean lines to his nose and jaw, and a sensual mouth. Arched brows just slightly darker than his glossy hair emphasized his striking eyes. They were a beautiful deep verdant green that on an average human would look unnatural, but on him seemed to fit. Wide shoulders filled his tunic, his legs looked long and athletic, and his posture seemed utterly relaxed. His lips curved in a small smile as if he knew what impressions she was receiving.

Since the evolution, she'd heard the Superhumans were all extraordinarily good looking, and the three men she was to serve certainly fit the description. She supposed that fact was one small consolation.

He said, "You know why you're here."

It wasn't a question and she didn't treat it as one. "You don't waste any time, Ambassador. I've barely arrived. And here we are." She indicated the bed, hoping he didn't notice the trembling of her hand before she let it fall back to her side.

He laughed at the sarcasm in her tone, a low ringing sound that echoed in the chamber. "I see no use in waiting, for you'll only grow more apprehensive. All three of us are already restless and could use some activity to take off the edge, especially myself and Colonel Helm. There is precious little for us to do on the journey. Our job begins when we arrive at our destination."

"And I am to be your...entertainment in the meantime?" She lifted her chin as she spoke, though her heart pounded and her stomach felt tied in knots.

Softly, he said, "We will also entertain you. Tell me, what is your name?"

For a moment, she hesitated, but then she shrugged because she couldn't see the point in refusing, especially since Herad knew it anyway. As far as she could tell, her captors knew everything about her, inside and out. "Jerra Aubrey."

He inclined his head, and his green eyes seemed to look right through her. "There's no need to be afraid, Jerra. Your presence here is about sexual pleasure, nothing more."

"That's the trouble. Nothing more? I am an object to you, not a person, and this is not my choice."

"Certainly you can choose to make the best of what has happened to you. Maybe you didn't know this, but captives quickly flourish in our care. None I've heard of want to go back to their previous life, which should tell you something. Enjoy your time on this journey, and afterwards, breed children as beautiful as you are. You'll be nurtured and well-cared for by the most powerful beings in this universe."

The man was a diplomat, after all, and he specialized in soothing disgruntled rulers and irate nations. It was no wonder he thought he could cast her platitudes and soothe her into his bed, Jerra thought resentfully.

For there was no doubt that was why they were in the room. She didn't have any experience with men, but the way he looked at her indicated an intense carnal interest that was unmistakable.

He was going to have sex with her and there was nothing she could do about it.

"I won't resist you," she said coldly. "But I won't enjoy it, either."

"Are you so sure? You're a virgin after all and have no experience. Most females enjoy sexual release equally as much as men. I think you're going to be pleasantly surprised."

After her physical examination, she'd been taken with the other prisoners to a large room where they had been instructed on how to behave during their duties. There had been little to no explanation about what actually was going to happen, but instead emphasis on cooperation and obedience. Jerra looked at the tall man in front of her with a glimmer of uncertainty. He certainly seemed amused *and* sympathetic to her trepidations, which she had not expected.

"Let's find out, shall we?" He indicated the bed with a graceful movement of his long-fingered hand. "Take off your gown and lie down."

"With them watching?" She felt at once flushed, her heart pounding harder. All she knew about sex was what she'd read in books. Since she was below the age the government would give consent for her to marry, she wasn't allowed much around men on her home planet. A woman had to be twenty-five, and everyone understood it was because the S-species wanted to be able to pick and choose who they wanted.

"If they want to watch us, they can. That's why the window is there. Also, we can tell that way if you are already occupied."

Her cheeks flushed deeper. "Occupied?"

"This chamber is made just for the purpose we are about to use it for, Jerra. You'll also sleep here." He began to unfasten his tunic, his eyes taking on a glitter that made them more brilliant than ever. "Now, the gown, please."

He dwarfed her in size and could easily force her, so she grabbed the hem of the filmy garment and jerked it up off over her head. Without looking at him, her face averted in embarrassment over her nudity, she did as she was told and climbed into the middle of the bed. She felt very much on display, knowing all

three of them could see every bare inch of her and fought the urge to try and cover herself with her hands.

It was easy to know when he followed, for the mattress dipped and she suddenly felt the warmth radiating from his skin as Kartel reclined next to her.

Naked.

Without thinking, she impulsively looked over out of sheer curiosity. He lay propped on one elbow, and a wickedly attractive smile hovered on his mouth. Her lips parted in surprise as she saw the hard, defined muscles of his chest and shoulders, the sinewy length of his legs, dusted with a light covering of hair, and most startling of all, the bold length of his engorged penis high against his flat stomach.

It looked very long and entirely too big to put inside her, and she studied his arousal in unwilling fascination. The smooth length had veins visible from base to the flared tip. A small hole crowned the crest, the slit shiny with droplets of fluid. She could see his shaft pulse slightly in a regular rhythm and realized with a small shock it was the steady beating of his heart.

“You’re curious, aren’t you?” he murmured. “And desirable as hell, which is an excellent combination in a bedmate. We’ll all be happy to teach you every way you can please us. We’ll also demonstrate exactly how we can please you.”

Jerra had to force her gaze away from his straining erection. It frightened her, but she was also inexplicably intrigued. “Why would you care about pleasing me? I’m simply a warm convenient toy with the correct anatomy for you to use.”

His smile widened. “How convenient for you that the portion of *my* anatomy I’ll use is also a tool to bring you sexual satisfaction and great pleasure. And we do care about you being pleased in a selfish way, I suppose, for it enhances the experience for the male when the female enjoys intercourse. Tell me, did you receive an injection this morning?”

She had, though no one had bothered to tell her why. She nodded, doing her best to resist the urge to return to staring at his formidable erect cock.

“The shot was to enhance your sex drive and bring it up to an S-species level. You’ll get them from time to time on our journey.” He still hadn’t touched her, but just looked at her with his captivating eyes, his voice smooth and unthreatening. “So you see, we are not interested in only your luscious body, but also your general well-being. The happier you are with us, Jerra, the more we can all enjoy each other.”



*Was it true?* God, she hoped so for her situation had seemed so hopeless.

“I’m not lying, Jerra, and I’m glad your fears are easing a little.”

Before she could speak, he moved. Nothing sudden, just a shifting of his weight so one sinewy thigh slid over hers, trapping both her legs. His fingers trailed slowly up her arm in a persuasive caress as he leaned forward and captured her mouth.

The pressure of his lips startled her and she stiffened, but all he did was lightly brush against her until she relaxed. It wasn’t unpleasant, for his mouth was warm and tasted sweet from whatever beverage he’d been drinking when she’d arrived. His tongue traced the seam of her closed lips and then with gentle insistence, he forced it into her mouth.

She had never been kissed and didn’t expect the rush of sensation. Heat, the sweep of his tongue, the firmness of his lips as they molded to hers...it all blended into an intimate sense of joining that had nothing remotely to do with the violation she anticipated.

The kiss lingered as he leisurely rubbed his tongue against hers, licked the sensitive corners of her lips, and even ran it along her teeth before sliding back deep inside again and again.

The entire time she could feel the hot throbbing of his erection against her stomach. It still felt huge, but Kartel was right. Her fears did seem to be abating. He hadn’t forced himself on her in any way, she realized with relief, but was coaxing her with his light touch and gentle kisses.

“I like your taste,” he whispered as he finally freed her mouth and slid a warm trail down the curve of her throat with his lips. “I will taste more in a moment. I’d bet you have a delicious pussy, and my tongue is anxious as hell to find out. But right now, your beautiful tits hold my attention. It’s hard to believe these are real and not augmented.”

He cupped one breast first, lifting and squeezing lightly and cradling the weight of it in his palm. His hands reshaped her resilient flesh and his thumb rubbed her nipple in a slow circle that teased the peak to sudden hardness. “Perfect.” His voice was low and held satisfaction she could hear. “So full and firm and female.”

She made an involuntary sound because the brush of the caress on that tingling crest sent a jolt through her stomach that centered between her legs. Delicious or not, her pussy suddenly felt warm and for whatever reason, wet.

Her reaction seemed to please him. “That’s it,” he murmured, his eyes darkened to shaded emerald as he toyed with her breast. “Let your body take over and free your mind, Jerra. Humans innately want sex and it was one characteristic we made sure to not eliminate as we evolved, so we do as well and even more so. Elevated to our level, your body will crave male possession. You may reject *why* this is happening between us, but I promise you won’t reject *what* is happening.”

She wanted to argue, but he began to fondle the other breast, and she lost her voice. Lying on her back, she watched him touch her. For a few minutes, she forgot about the window, but when she glanced over, she saw both of the other males were still there, watching as his mouth skimmed downward and settled over her erect nipple.

When he began to suckle, she had to fight to not move restlessly, not sure what exactly was happening. He moved back and forth, teasing one breast with the heated adhesion of his mouth, and then the other. She had no idea of his intentions when he suddenly rose above her, but the wet tip of his cock replaced his tongue. Semen glistened on her nipples as he pushed the head sensuously against her now stiff flesh, and she shivered in reaction.

“Spread your legs.” The order was issued in a deeper tone and for a moment their gazes locked, his cock resting in the valley between her breasts, large and hot. She could feel the pulse against her much cooler flesh.

When she hesitated, he said with even conviction, “You are becoming aroused, Jerra. Don’t you want to know what happens next? Spread your legs and I’ll make you come.” His arched brows lifted as he smiled darkly. “You won’t be sorry to be introduced to that unique experience, believe me.”

She did as she was told, mostly because he had been gentle so far, and she was a bit shocked at her own reaction to his touch. He was right. She had gone very quickly from resistant and angry, to expectant. Even the sight of his long cock rubbing against her nipples hadn’t been nearly as shocking as it should have been. It normally would have gone against her instincts to open willingly, especially with a large naked and aroused male on top of her, but she spread her legs wide and felt the aching need between them with wonder.

Both Larik Armada and Colonel Helm would see what she was doing, she realized in her haze of confusion over the changes in her body and attitude. They witnessed her open-legged acquiescence and would expect the same thing.

There was a flash of approval in Ran Kartel’s remarkable eyes and he slid downward slowly, leaving a wet trail of his seeping discharge on her torso. To her

surprise, he didn't poise to enter her, but instead went all the way down until he rested in a prone position and his mouth settled on her exposed pussy.

What happened next was utterly shocking and incredible. The sensation of his warm tongue sliding between her labia, forcing the folds apart as he laved up and down, was not at all what she expected. He found a certain spot and teased it, swirling around the encased bundle of nerves with delectable pressure that made her wayward body arch in response. For the first time, she touched him, her hands grasping his broad shoulders. He felt solid and hot, and his skin was smooth and faintly damp.

She gasped. "Oh."

The pleasure was too exquisite to describe.

Almost mindless, she let her thighs fall apart even more, and he cupped her ass in his hands and accepted her offering. The soft wet sound of his mouth moving against her throbbing pussy was punctuated by her small involuntary moans filling the room. Through the haze of rapturous enjoyment, she felt an inner tension rise, as if her body sought something elusive.

A few moments later, she found it.

It was as if a star exploded in a blaze of glorious ecstasy, the brilliance of the release making her entire body shudder with the splendor of the pleasure. A low scream tore from her throat, and she could feel the contractions in her vagina and her womb as her orgasm held her prisoner.

It was beyond imaging and seemed to last forever until her body finally went limp and she felt him slide away.

Upwards. So he once again rested above her and this time she felt the nudge of something bold and hard against her wet, open pussy. Ran smiled, and his almost sinful beauty was striking and potent, reminding her of what and who he was. He drawled, "This is going to be a very pleasant journey, don't you think?"

\* \* \* \*

Her taste was still on his tongue and Ran let her savor her own sexual fluids as he kissed her and began penetration. The fact she was exquisitely tight

was no surprise, for not only was her body innocent still, that was one of the perks of fucking human women. S-species males were larger than human males in every way, mentally and physically. His cock was bigger than what her body was designed to accept, but what was remarkable about human female anatomy, and especially the vagina, was the elasticity of that organ. It always took a little time to get all the way in, and it was pleasurable as hell, but he knew she could take all of him if he was careful. Compared to sex with one of his own kind, her tightness made the experience all the more enjoyable. Luckily, in her case, she was still almost dazed from her first orgasmic experience, and as he slowly worked his cock through her small opening and began to push into the wet heat of her hot, sweet pussy, she didn't seem to register the discomfort at his entry.

If there *were* any discomfort, he realized in some small astonishment as he gave her another inch so slowly, he broke out in a sweat. All he sensed coming from the woman below him was pleasure and her mind had been sending him signals like a beacon the entire time.

Sure enough, a moment later, she made a small sound like a sigh, and her lashes fluttered open as she slightly lifted her pelvis in an instinctive and unspoken invitation.

Yes, she definitely—or her body—wanted him inside her.

Her inner walls were like heaven around the careful invasion, yielding just enough to allow him in, hugging him like a clenched fist. Usually, he had complete control sexually, but whether it was the abstinence of the past few weeks as they readied for the journey and made the trip past Earth to pick up their females, or the way her delicious pussy felt around his cock, he already had the urge to ejaculate. Ran took a deep shuddering breath and fought it, sinking in deeper until he finally reached his goal and his entire length was sheathed in her luscious body.

Jerra moaned and he asked through clenched teeth, “Am I hurting you?”

“I feel torn in half.” She breathed the words in small pants. “But there isn't pain.”

“You feel damned good,” he told her with complete honesty, marveling at not only the pleasure of her pussy holding him deep inside her, but her remarkable and entirely natural beauty. She lay beneath him, framed in the glory of her lustrous outspread golden hair, her beautiful body tinted a lovely post-orgasmic pink. Those full high breasts quivered as she breathed, tipped with delicate rose nipples that had tasted as sweet as any confection.

The amazing fact was her alluring perfection wasn't engineered or manipulated by science—but the simple result of random genetics. He was sure he had never seen a woman so lovely even among S-species females, all of whom were gorgeous. "Tell me when you have adjusted enough to my size that I can move. I know I'm big, and sometimes it takes a few moments."

Her smooth brow knitted. "Move?"

By law, human females were kept as ignorant of sex as possible until a certain age, just so they could be taken for pleasure and breeding purposes if S-species chose them. He wasn't surprised she didn't entirely understand what happened during intercourse. "In and out," he explained hoarsely, wondering if he would explode at once the minute he started. "The friction will make me climax sexually, and you too, if done the right way."

She bit her soft lower lip and just slightly raised her hips. "I see."

"Do you? I'll be happy to demonstrate." He wasn't sure he could wait any longer anyway, so he slid backwards and was rewarded by a small gasp. With his size, the hardness of his cock rubbed against her clitoris and he felt the small shudder of her reaction to the sensuous gliding pressure.

He thrust back in slowly, still aware of her vulnerable smallness. She felt almost delicate in his arms. Yet when she arched her neck back and tilted her pelvis up to take his entire length, the motion was inherently sexual. Even though she hadn't been bred to pleasure men, she also seemed to naturally have that trait as well, because while the added hormones were a boost, she had still climaxed very swiftly.

He wasn't sure he'd ever been so aroused and a small bead of sweat rolled down his jaw. Ran began to move a little faster, backwards swiftly, and forward with deliberate care, nudging her cervix with his engorged tip so he felt softness give to his size. Her hands grasped his shoulders with increasing urgency, as if she needed to hold onto something, and she matched his rhythm with amazing instinctive movements of her hips.

*Definitely a natural.*

The control he prided himself on stretched, slipped, and finally snapped when she suddenly tightened her thighs around his surging hips and her inner muscles clenched. Jerra's nails dug into his rigid muscles as his own orgasm roared through his body and he felt the pain with a sense of elation because simultaneous climax was rare enough and this was...miraculous.

He was sure he had never come with such force and pleasure in his life. His cock flexed as he poured a torrent of sperm deep in her contracting pussy and the white-hot rapture made his mind go blank for a few long, exquisite moments. When he finally caught his breath, he rolled to his side, his muscles quivering and weak, and pulled her with him. He kept his cock buried inside her on purpose, because it felt damned good still and the fit was so uniquely snug, as if her body was reluctant to let him withdraw.

The post-coital silence was peaceful, and she didn't seem to want to break it either. Sprawled across his chest, her legs still open to his carnal possession, she lay quiet and acquiescent in his embrace. He let his fingers drift through her soft hair as his racing heart finally slowed to a more normal pace. Patiently, he waited, for he could feel her confusion.

After a while, she lifted her head from where it rested on his chest and looked at him directly. "Will the others be like you?"

The question was no surprise. He smiled, enchanted with the challenge in her azure eyes. "I have never had sex with either one of them, so how do I know?" Then he dropped the light-hearted tone, knowing his honest answer would ease her restless fears. "I was just teasing. If you're asking if they will they take care to make sure you enjoy it, they will. Both the colonel and Larik Armada are fine men. We all agreed you should be made to want to please us sexually rather than dread it." He stroked her cheek with a forefinger. "I take it from the marks on my back, you'd agree to do it again with me."

"It is rather hard to answer that question when you are still inside me," she answered tartly. With her halo of shimmering hair and pale, silken skin, she looked like a goddess in the old human legends, too flawless to be true.

"I like being inside you." Ran could hear the huskiness in his voice. "I'm asking for a purpose, also. I'll be hard again soon. It's happening already."

Her eyes widened. "You want to do it again, right now?"

"Yes." Before she could answer, he cupped her nape and pulled her down for a long, heated kiss. With amazing swiftness, he could feel the lengthening of his returning erection. He rocked his hips up so he rubbed against her clit and she moaned into his mouth, her sensitized body responding.

As far as he was concerned, it was his answer.

\* \* \* \*

Ian shifted in his chair uncomfortably, his brooding gaze fastened on the room through the window. Idly, he lifted his glass to his mouth. The level of liquid in the bottle at his elbow had diminished to almost nothing and Larik had hardly had much before he excused himself and went to his private quarters.

It wasn't good to overindulge, and Ian rarely did, but lately, he was uncharacteristically restless.

*Damn Captain Kia Liale for that.*

Shit, he really, really wanted her, and the couple on the bed did not help matters in any way. Now he had a rock hard erection and nothing to do with it.

Narrowing his eyes, he tried to ignore the uncomfortable bulge in his pants and watched.

There was no question the human captive was beautiful. They had all been stunned by her lovely face and incredible body, especially since it was entirely natural. Silky blond hair, pale blue eyes, and a soft sultry pink mouth...yes, he was attracted to her. Who wouldn't be? Besides, she had gorgeous breasts for someone so slender. Her rose-colored nipples were small and dainty, and her skin much more pale than any S-species woman, since the diverse races from Earth had long ago been integrated into their genetic make up. Ian admired breasts in all shapes and sizes, and the woman now making love with Kartel for the second time certainly had a spectacular set.

She must be satisfying in bed, also, for Kartel had barely finished the first time and was at it again.

Ian saw his friend lean forward and whisper something in the woman's ear, his mouth nuzzling her neck as his hips began to move. His cock was still buried deep between her spread thighs, and his buttocks flexed as he pulled out partially and sank back in. Her breasts moved with each thrust, the opulent flesh shifting erotically.

It was actually very arousing to watch both Kartel's obvious enjoyment, and her evident pleasure in the way he fucked her. Whatever fears she might have had, Ran had done his usual smoothing of the troubled waters and she was now taking him easily, her slim legs bent at the knee and spread wide open so his long body fit between them.

She was very small. Ian saw how carefully Ran had entered her, and with his own huge size, he would have to be especially cautious.

With Kia, there was no need for such restraint, he mused in wayward memory. She matched him, wild need for wild need. Their one encounter had been foolish, for it was against the rules to fraternize sexually with another officer, but he could still remember the tempestuous physical joy of it. Nothing about it resembled lovemaking. They had fucked each other, pure and simple. Her wet cunt and his eager cock coming together in a fierce and exultant experience that made him wonder if he would ever forget it and move on.

Because he really had no choice but to put it behind him. It was a hard and fast rule, and punishable in ways that would ruin his military career if they were ever caught again together. He simply should not sleep with anyone in his command because it was political suicide to do so.

No matter what he wanted.

So, he would have to make do with their alluring captive and forget his impractical infatuation.

Morosely, he reached for the bottle to drain it.



## Chapter 3

Jerra opened her eyes slowly and felt disoriented when she gazed at the ceiling. It had been painted to simulate the vastness of space, with tiny stars against a dark background, but was static.

No, she wasn't in the cubicle any longer.

Cautiously, she raised her head and looked around. All she saw were pale walls, no furniture but the bed where she lay amidst the tumbled sheets, and the one window into the center room.

Oh, God. She fell back and shut her eyes again. Her body felt odd, a little sticky and well used, and there was a slight soreness between her legs. It all came flooding back and she rested against the softness of the mattress as she remembered every detail.

Ran Kartel had been both gentle and wickedly demanding, and in the end, he had taken her sexually three times before she drifted off into an exhausted sleep. The man had been huge, she recalled with a flush invading her cheeks, but somehow, her body had been able to adjust to that impressive size, and it had felt...well, if she were honest about it, wonderful.

She had liked it.

All of it. The way he kissed her—as if her taste and essence were something he craved—the scent of his skin, the impressive hardness of his very male body. He'd used his mouth on her pussy, and though she'd been shocked, it had felt sublime. The actual consummation hadn't been what she expected, either, not at all degrading but the opposite, as if something profound had happened between them. She did not feel like an unwilling slave, but a woman who had shared an exquisite experience with a male who had also enjoyed it.

A treacherous curl of excitement shot through her stomach. If the evening before had been an indication of the next months of confinement, it would not be anything like what she imagined.

The need to relieve herself made her finally crawl out of bed. Outside the window, the common room was empty, for which she was grateful. It still made her uncomfortable the men could see her almost all the time, but they were either in their own sleeping quarters or gone. Nude, she padded to the cleansing room and used the facilities. There was a small square glass enclosure and she figured out the mechanism with only a small amount of difficulty and gratefully stepped into the stream of warm water. It soothed away the tenderness in her breasts and she washed the dried residue from her body, seeing the streaks on her thighs with wonder at the prodigious amount. S-species probably produced more sperm than ordinary humans at a guess, for everything else about them was enhanced and superior.

Despite the gush of the warm water, she shivered slightly. The engineer they called Armada was as tall as Ran Kartel and had the same lean build. But the other one, Colonel Helm, was enormous. The thought of him taking her was daunting.

But also exciting.

It was shameful, but her pussy suddenly felt hot and wet as she imagined it. The heat and rush of moisture embarrassed her, and Jerra wondered at her purely physical reaction. Undoubtedly, it was the injection, plus the ambassador had done a very good job of her initiation into the pleasures of sexual intercourse. Never in her life had she imagined such acute sensation possible. How he held her afterwards was a revelation also, for she didn't realize how frightened she'd been the past days since she'd been captured. The way his strong arms had cradled her against his powerful body made her feel safe and protected. Though, when she thought about it, they had just met and it was an illusion, albeit a pleasant one.

Well, more than just met, considering what they'd done together. She blushed again, grateful no one could see it.

After washing her hair, she carefully dried it and found in a small cabinet a comb and other necessities. Refreshed, she stepped outside with a towel wrapped around her body, and realized with a small grimace her only article of clothing still consisted of the pale blue, barely-there gown. She slipped it on, ran the comb through her long curls one more time, and went out into the center room.

It was a relief to see a covered tray sat on the table. When she lifted the lid, she found the typical type of food she had been fed so far on the ship. The substances on the plate didn't look familiar but tasted actually quite good. The

strip of something that tasted like beef helped ease her hunger, and other similarly shaped items represented vegetables or fruits. The beverage left for her also had a strange but not unpleasant taste, and as hungry as she was, she didn't turn up her nose. She ate almost everything, and replaced the lid.

Now what should she do?

Fed, clean, and apparently all alone, she went curiously to the door that accessed the ship. It was activated by a device that scanned the eye of the individual who wanted to open it, and she tried, only to see a flashing red light that made her step back immediately and blink. It wasn't a huge surprise she was a prisoner and confined to the cabin space, but it still made the panicked feeling return a little.

What did they expect her to do when they weren't using her for the purpose she had been kidnapped to fulfill? She was not just a body, but also had a mind, and she was used to being active. She had worked back on Earth as a surgical nurse in a prestigious hospital. She had to wonder if the S-species bothered to explain the disappearance when they took someone. Surely her parents would inform the facility what had happened to her, and since females were appropriated often enough, no one would be surprised. Every female human was aware of the possibility. She just hadn't expected it to happen to her.

The hiss of the pressurized mechanism that triggered the door made her feel a nervous thrill. It wasn't Ran Kartel but instead the young engineer, Armada. She took another instinctive step back as he came through the doorway and eyed him warily. His fair good looks were striking, and up close, he was quite young, probably not more than a few years older than herself. He wore the typical tunic, fitted trousers, and polished boots, and they suited his almost slim, tall build. Lieutenant Herad had called him brilliant, and surely it must be true if he were the designer of the engine that propelled the giant ship so efficiently from galaxy to galaxy.

"Hello." He smiled at her and his gaze skimmed her nearly bare body briefly before politely lifting to her face. "Did you see the food?"

"Yes, thank you."

"Kartel tells me your given name is Jerra."

"Yes."

“I hope you don’t mind if I use it.” His smile was open and boyishly appealing, nothing like the wickedly attractive curve of Ran Kartel’s mouth. “You must also call me Larik. We are going to be good friends, after all.”

“That’s an interesting way of putting it.” Jerra couldn’t help the sarcasm. Yes, the night before had been like a sinful, pleasurable dream, but she was still a prisoner.

He caught the inflection in her voice because his brows went up a fraction, but he didn’t comment. Instead, he went over to the wall and pressed a small button she hadn’t even noticed. A panel slid open and revealed a galley, and more importantly, an entire section of screens. “You were asleep when I left or I would have explained to you that there are methods for your entertainment in your leisure time. Food, also, if you get hungry between the times when our meals are delivered. Would you like me to show you how it all works? You can read, or watch films from varied planets, including your own. Games are also available to play at the touch of your hand. There is no need for you to be bored.”

Well, that was something, for she thought it was less than humane to leave her trapped in a small space with nothing to do. “Yes, please show me,” she said, not trying to conceal her eagerness. “I was just wondering what to do with myself.”

He glanced over and his vivid cobalt eyes lit with laughter. “You needn’t ever worry about what to do with yourself, Jerra. We’ll do plenty enough with you to take care of that. But if you want a distraction now and then, I will explain.”

As heat rushed into her face, she wondered if she would blush all the way to wherever they were headed. “I would appreciate it.”

He was definitely an engineer for as he began to explain how to work the various screens, from book readers to projection, he also added so many details about how the machines themselves worked that finally, laughing, she had to stop him. “Just tell me what buttons to push,” Jerra pleaded. “My mind is beginning to spin.”

“Oh.” He looked disconcerted, and then shook his head ruefully. “I apologize. I tend to get carried away. Machines speak to me. I love them and I forget not everyone feels the same sometimes. Let me try to just go over the basics.”

“I think that would be better.”

She stood close enough to him as he took a simpler approach and began again, she could smell the spicy scent of his cologne. It was masculine and intriguing. Against her will, she found herself watching him from under the veil of her lashes.

In turn, she saw his gaze stray more than once over the thin material that did little to conceal her breasts. He glanced down lower too, to where her bare legs were exposed by the shortness of her skirt.

When he finished the explanations, he moved casually to a small shelf and selected a bottle of greenish liquid. "Would you like a glass of wine?"

"My father doesn't allow alcohol, so I've never had wine."

Armada raised his brows. "Your father no longer dictates your actions, Jerra."

It was so bizarre to have been at home less than a week before, living her sedate, sheltered life, and now she was on a ship speeding toward another world, living with three men who were complete strangers. She was no longer on Earth. Apparently her parents had reconciled themselves to her fate, and according to Lieutenant Herad, had even been paid for her. She didn't precisely blame them, for there was no choice if the S-species selected a young woman, so it seemed ludicrous to still abide by their rules any longer. "You're right and I think I would, yes."

He poured two glasses and motioned for her to sit at the table. "We can drink this and talk awhile."

She accepted the invitation, though she lifted one brow skeptically. "You wish to talk?"

"For now." He sank down in an opposite chair. "We have plenty of time. All afternoon, in fact. Neither one of the others will be back until late. They have meetings today to discuss strategies when we arrive at Septinium."

"Why are we going there?" She wasn't sure she could ask in her position, but it didn't hurt to try.

Luckily, he didn't seem to mind. He sat back in his chair, his long legs extended comfortably, and frowned. "The people there are war-like and a bit primitive. They are raiding nearby planets and causing tension everywhere. Our government wants to avoid an interstellar war. Yes, we can step in if it happens and intercede, but prevention saves lives. Kartel is an expert with this sort of

thing, though even he seems doubtful this time. However, he, like Colonel Helm, goes where he is told. Diplomacy first, but military action if necessary. That's why they are both here."

"I see." She sipped her wine and found it actually a bit sweet, the taste lingering on her tongue. "And why are you here? I know you invented the engine, but isn't the ship running smoothly?"

"Her maiden voyage. I am along to make *sure* she stays running smoothly and to help the technicians understand her."

"Her? You sound as if it is alive."

A glimmering smile curved his mouth. "To me, she is. I created her and gave her life."

"That's an interesting take on it, I suppose."

"What of you, Jerra? Will you be able to acclimate to your new life?" His handsome face bore true curiosity and what seemed like genuine concern.

"Do I have a choice?"

"You seemed to enjoy last night."

The word 'embarrassment' took on a whole new meaning at that blunt observation. She couldn't help but glance at the window and remember he had watched her sexual abandon and seen her entirely naked. "It wasn't what I expected," she managed to say in a strangled voice.

"There's more. And with each of us it will be different, I imagine. Sex is a varied world and pleasure comes in all forms." The timbre of his voice dropped just a telltale notch. "When we finish our wine, I will show you. You'll like it, I promise."

She looked at him helplessly, her fingers tightening on the stem of her glass. Then, because she was truly curious, she asked, "I don't understand the window. If it is to demean your prisoners, it isn't necessary. I understand full well I have to cooperate."

His fine brows drew together. "You think it's to demean you?"

"Why else would you allow me no privacy?"

He gave her a direct look from those startlingly blue eyes. "It's there because we like to look at you, of course. It also serves to let us know if you are busy or sleeping, and besides, I'm afraid males are very visual creatures. In short,

we like to watch. I may have not been the one between your legs last night, but I enjoyed it just the same. I had to go to my quarters and relieve myself manually.”

The explanation was made without any apology or embarrassment and Jerra wondered if she would ever attain such a pragmatic attitude toward the act of sex. She supposed she might, given her circumstances, and in fact, probably should do her best to achieve it as soon as possible. “I suppose I don’t really know much about men,” she admitted.

“S-species are not ordinary males like on your planet, either, but you’ll learn. Actually, there is little for you to worry about, Jerra. All you have to do is be willing to give us what we want and if I am a judge from your response to Kartel, it won’t be a chore for you. He claims there is something very unique about you beyond your beautiful face and desirable body, and I am anxious as hell to find out what exactly he means. Tell me, are you finished with your wine?”

She had finished, and felt a little light-headed since she had expected to be dragged straight to her bed. Instead he had sat and conversed with her like she was a guest—not a slave held for his pleasure—so she found it much easier to nod and stand. He motioned for her to precede him into the room, and she did, surprised to feel very little apprehension.

Turning to face him, she said with resignation, “I suppose you want me to take off my gown.”

“Let me.” He stepped closer and caught the hem, skimming his fingers up the outside of her thighs and hips as he eased the material upward and over her head. He tossed it carelessly aside and stared down at her bared breasts with undisguised longing. “You have no idea how much I want to fuck you.”

She had some idea, for the impressive bulge in his fitted dark pants was a pretty obvious indication. When he took her in his arms and bent his head to lower his mouth to hers, she could feel the rigid hardness of his erection through the material, pressed against the softness of her stomach. A jolt of excitement shot through her and his mouth was warm and insistent as he kissed her. The experience was completely different than when Ran had done the same thing, but still very enjoyable. His hands cupped her bare ass and pulled her tighter against his hard body and aroused cock and he gave a low groan into her mouth.

“Get in bed,” he ordered. “I’ll be right back.”

As she climbed on the bed, she saw him disappear into her small cleansing room and emerge a moment later with something in his hand. It looked like a

small oblong capsule about the length of her little finger but narrower. She had actually noticed a box of them in the cabinet that held the other necessities provided for her and wondered what they were.

“Lie back.” He gently pushed her to a supine position and lifted her knees so they were bent and her feet rested on the mattress. “Open for me.”

Jerra eyed the item in his hand uncertainly and kept her thighs clamped together. “What is that?”

“Relax.” He pushed her legs apart so her pussy was exposed and open and his gaze glittered like brilliant sapphires as he stared at it. “The doctor has provided these for all the human females taken and brought on board. When inserted, it will melt quickly and act not only as a lubricant to ease any soreness from last night, but enhances your pleasure. With three of us regularly sharing your bed, you will want to use these on a daily basis, I suspect.”

Since she was a little sore, the idea was probably a good one and it was heartening to have further proof her captors cared at all about the comfort of their prisoners. When he parted her labia, found her vaginal entrance, and inserted the capsule, she didn’t protest. With one long finger he pushed it in as far as possible and she actually suppressed a sigh of pleasure at the intimate invasion. Almost immediately she felt the warmth of the dissolving lubricant and a strange sense of loss when Larik slid his finger free.

“It should feel good, I’m told.” He began to undress, his gaze still fastened on the apex of her open legs. His tunic was tossed aside without care to expose a muscular chest, his boots jerked off as quickly as possible, and when he unfastened his pants and pushed them down his hips, his swollen erection jutted forward. He wasn’t as wide-shouldered as Ran Kartel, but just as athletically built, without an ounce of fat on his body. She had no idea if his cock was as big, but it certainly looked intimidating and large and she took in a shuddering breath as she remembered how it felt to be stretched so impossibly wide.

“It does feel good.” Whether it was the wine, the injection, the aphrodisiac in the capsule, or something that had nothing to do with any of them, she didn’t modestly close her legs, but stayed the way he positioned her, knees bent and thighs open. She could feel the soft mattress at her back, the smoothness of the sheets, and most acutely the tingling in her pussy and breasts.

She wanted him inside her, she realized with a small shock.



He took her position for the invitation it was and knelt between her parted thighs. Very lightly he rubbed the head of his stiff penis over her clitoris and she felt a streak of blissful pleasure. He continued to stimulate her with his cock in one hand, the swollen, weeping tip pressing against the most sensitive spot on her body until she openly moaned.

“By the stars, Jerra, you are so beautiful,” he told her in an echo of Ran’s compliment of the night before. He leaned forward and licked one upright nipple, still teasing her clit with his cock. “I want to see you come,” he whispered against her breast.

Her hands slid into the silk of his blond hair and she closed her eyes, letting sensation take over. “Oh...oh.”

When he sucked the aching crest into the heated recess of his mouth, she felt her stomach muscles contract in response. Still kneeling, he used his free hand to massage one breast, suckled the other, and continued the erotic friction of hard flesh against her swelling clit.

It felt too good, too wicked, and so all-consuming all conscious thought centered between her legs and his teasing cock.

The rush of her climax took her by surprise. Suddenly, she arched and cried out, the first rapturous spasm so acute it made her shake wildly. The pulsing between her legs was accompanied by her womb contracting and a rush of moisture into her pussy as he kept his slick crest against her clit for what seemed like an eternity.

Then he moved, the pressure refocused lower, and Jerra felt him shift, his arms braced to keep his weight balanced.

“Open your legs wider to help me.” Larik’s face was intent, and his beautiful eyes half-closed. “Human females are so damned tight and it always takes some work to get inside.”

She obeyed, spreading as far as possible, wondering as she had the night before if he could actually fit. The engorged head distended the opening of her pussy and pressed forward and she felt her inner muscles resist the unnatural widening but give as he slowly entered her with inexorable carnal demand.

Arms locked on either side of her shoulders, he loomed above her and the fierce expression on his face told her he was experiencing the same almost painful pleasure of invasion and acceptance. The lubricant must have helped for this

penetration was much easier, and in half the time, his long cock was sunk to the hilt.

“This first time will be fast. Sorry, but I’ve been without a female for weeks.” His voice was low and hoarse. “But I can be ready again very quickly, don’t worry.”

She wasn’t worried...she was frantic for him to move. When he began to withdraw, she felt the fluid drag of his rigid flesh with heightened sensitivity and ran her hands along his tight buttocks in a plea for more. He obliged, sinking back inside fully, impaling her so full, she felt completely possessed. Very quickly his thrusts became harder and less controlled and they were both gasping and trembling in sync.

“I’m coming,” Larik gritted out, his bare chest brushing her erect nipples as he thrust deeply and stopped moving. Incredibly, she could feel the immense rush of his release as hot liquid filled her with a forceful flood. As his cock swelled to release his seed, the subtly increased pressure on her clit was all she needed. Jerra screamed and her fingers dug into the small of his back as she convulsed around him.

“Oh shit.” He jerked in response, his cock flexing.

The universe flattened and went away in a dazzling rush. All she could feel was the rapturous pulse of her inner contractions and the flex of his sex as she milked his seed from him. Gradually, they both began to relax.

With his weight braced enough to keep from crushing her, he lay solidly on top of her and she felt very small in comparison. She could smell the clean tang of his sweat, both foreign and now familiar. When she regained her breath, she tentatively ran her fingers up the length of his spine. He quivered at the caress, his face still buried in her tumbled hair.

Larik lifted his head and grinned then, a purely male curve of his mouth that indicated his satisfaction. He stroked her bare hip. “Kartel didn’t lie. You’re an amazing female, Jerra. I was not looking forward to this long, dull journey, but I have changed my mind.”

## Chapter 4

Ran looked around the council room and deliberately gauged the expression on the face of each individual. The opinion was certainly divided and he had the grim feeling that whatever happened when they arrived at Septinium, he would be the one to make the final decision. He said with neutral inflection, "I realize the Minoa government is well-represented here, but we brought along military support for a reason. If Colonel Helm is getting information indicating a strong show of strength when we reach the planet is best, I trust his judgment."

Ian looked impassive at the comment. "I'm getting more and more information each day, but we are still far away. Maybe the situation will change, but if it doesn't, we cannot send in a diplomatic team without protection."

"You'll cause a fight," one of the Council protested vehemently. "The Septinium forces will react predictably to soldiers arriving in their world."

"Maybe." Ran was getting tired of the debate since they were still months away. "We'll have to weigh the facts as they come in, and judge the best course then. In the meantime, we are adjourned for today."

He rose and so did everyone else, and naturally Ian fell into step beside him as they headed back toward their quarters. Ian muttered, "Damn politicians. They want to make the rest of civilization think we are not despotic tyrants. I say the only way to rule something as vast as what we control is to let rogue worlds know they can't step over the line."

"I agree," Ran said wearily. "I know firsthand diplomacy does not always work. Sometimes, it backfires with disastrous results. But I am told to try."

"And I am told to not let you die doing it." Ian looked formidably stubborn as they strode through the long corridor.

"I appreciate the sentiment, believe me." Ran gave his friend a wry smile. They had known each other for a long time, and the friendship had sprung first

from mutual respect, blossomed into recognition of similar strengths and goals, and then genuine affection.

In minutes, they reached their destination and Ran wanted desperately to have a drink and relax for a few minutes. Actually, he wouldn't have minded a bit to relax in an entirely pleasurable different way, but quite simply, it wasn't his turn. The evening before, they returned to find Armada and the lovely naked Jerra entwined and asleep, and Helm had been patient, but it was definitely his night.

Ran gave a sidelong glance at his dark-haired companion as they reached the right level and scanned in. "You've never taken a human female?"

"No." Ian admitted. "They are so small. Trust me, most of them take one look at me and want to faint. S-species females are much easier."

"Like Captain Liale?"

Ian's face darkened. "It was once, and a bad idea. I had too much to drink. We both knew better and could be disciplined for the slip. How the hell do you even know it happened?"

"Just being in the room with the two of you tells me something happened. Please, Ian, I am who I am."

"And damned uncomfortable it can be for your friends, Ran."

"All right, we won't talk about the pretty captain but Jerra instead. The experience is like none other, believe me, when you are inside her."

Ian gave him a sardonic look. "So it seemed the other night. You certainly enjoyed yourself."

"I did," Ran agreed, remembering silken thighs and her almost painful—but entirely pleasurable—tight heat. "Our gorgeous captive is so responsive, I think you will agree it elevates sex to a different level."

"Sex is sex," Ian argued. "One orgasm isn't different from another."

"I'll be curious to know if you say the same thing after sampling Jerra's incredible body. There's something about fucking a female that really likes it."

"You're certain she can take me?"

"Think of it this way, Ian. The vagina on a human female can allow a fully formed fetus to go through it, so while you may be big, you aren't that big. She'll be tight, yes, so tight you'll want to shoot your load as you even try to get in, but

the effort is worth it. Once you're there and you hear those soft sounds she makes as she comes...I am telling you, it's going to be unique."

"That's what Armada claims." The colonel ducked his imposing height through the doorway. "I'm getting more intrigued all the time by our beautiful human."

*Only she isn't who you really want*, Ran thought with unerring conviction.

\* \* \* \*

She had gulped down two glasses of wine with dinner, but she wasn't sure it was enough. Jerra was pleased they wished to include her when they ate their meals, however sitting at the table with three such tall, imposing men was a little uncomfortable, though they treated her respectfully and with solicitude. Tonight she knew what was going to happen afterwards, and it was confirmed by the speculative looks Ian Helm sent at her across the table. The tall colonel was a contrast to the clean-cut good looks of the other two men, having an almost satanic male beauty that matched his incredible physique. Rather like everything else that was rationed out on the ship, she was sure it was due for the brawny soldier to have his time with her.

It was frightening, but then again, her experiences so far had been wonderful and though his sheer size made her nervous, there was an element of exhilaration over the idea of him taking her sexually that made her pulse race.

The dishes were taken away, and her empty glass, and she still sat there, not sure what was expected.

When he stood, she felt her mouth go dry for he was so tall, she barely came up to the middle of his chest. He looked pointedly at her bedroom, and then her face, asking in a matter-of-fact tone, "Are you ready?"

The direct approach was probably not surprising from a military man who commanded men and directed battles, but it left her momentarily at a loss for words. She was also acutely aware of Larik and Ran, lounging in their chairs, obviously ready to watch everything.

No, she wasn't going to think about that.

She swallowed and nodded, rising on wobbly legs. He followed her in, shut the door, and looked at her with eyes so dark, they were as ebony as his glossy long hair. He said coolly, "I am not a smooth diplomat like Kartel, nor a brainy intellectual like Armada. However, I would never hurt a female, quite the opposite, so don't look at me as if I was going to eat you alive. Prisoner or not, you can rest assured if anything happens to threaten the expedition, I would die to protect you."

That speech—made without inflection but obviously sincere—made her blink. Not sure what to say, Jerra stood with her arms at her side and tilted her head up to stare into his face, seeing the elegant planes and angles in a new light, and noting his dark eyes held a soft light at odds with his formidable presence. She stammered, "I...I appreciate that, for I was sure I was not significant, except in the most base of ways."

He lifted one ebony brow in an arch and a surprisingly warm smile lit his face. "On the contrary, you seem to have had a powerful impact on our companions. I'm assured this will be an experience to remember."

He meant sexually, of course, but still, the idea anyone cared enough about her to offer protection was moving. She slipped her dress off and tossed it aside. Nude, knowing the other two watched through the window, she gave him a return smile. They'd both seen it before, so why should she be embarrassed? "Is that a challenge, Colonel?"

Heat flared in his eyes as his gaze raked her nude body. "Maybe."

"I accept." She turned and walked with deliberate nonchalance toward the cleansing room. Once inside, she opened the cupboard and took out one of the capsules, shut the door, and then changed her mind and took out another of the lubricants. She inserted them, though she had never touched herself so intimately much less pushed her finger inside her pussy. She was warm and soft inside, and hopefully, very elastic.

The telltale warmth of the dissolving tablets made her breasts instantly tight and her nipples taut. She walked back out to find Colonel Helm almost completely undressed. He tossed his last boot aside and unfastened his pants.

*Good God.*

She had expected him to be very big. Huge, even, for Ran and Larik were big enough she had been apprehensive about their possession. But this time she was...stunned.

His massive erection was so long and thick, she stopped walking and stared, all her bravado banished. It was obvious he was S-species. No human could ever have such a large penis, though she was not an expert on the subject.

“Don’t be afraid.” The reassurance was made in a quiet voice that belied the fierceness of his arousal. “We can do this so you are in control, Jerra. Just come here.”

In control of...*that*?

When she didn’t move, he took the initiative and lay down on the bed on his back. He didn’t look any less enormous in that position, but at least he wasn’t looming over her. She took a quivering step and another, not sure if she was fascinated or simply hypnotized by his erection.

“You can be on top,” he said softly, watching her cautious approach. “Take it as you wish, as far as you can. I won’t even touch you if you don’t want me to.”

She had pleased the others, and he was being just as courteous and considerate, and she wanted to do the same for him. Not because of some duty she’d been told she owed by her captors, but because they treated her well and made her feel desired, not simply used. “Tell me what to do.”

“Did you use a capsule?” His dark hair was a stark contrast to the white sheets.

A choked laugh gurgled from her throat and her gaze remained fixed on his cock. “Two.”

“Good idea.” He chuckled, the sound reassuring. “As much as you worry I am too large, I am concerned you are too small.”

“Maybe we shouldn’t try.”

“Maybe we should.” He lay there, dwarfing the bed, his nude body truly magnificent. “I need you and as Ran pointed out to me, your body is designed to accommodate more than just this.” He ran his finger along his swollen length as she watched and semen oozed from the large slit in the head.

Jerra could feel the effects of the two capsules and her pussy seemed to soften and weep with need. She was afraid of his enormous size, yet somehow wanted it, too. Squaring her shoulders, she climbed onto the bed. Effortlessly, he spanned her hips with his large hands and lifted her so she straddled him. His large erection lay high on his stomach, and she stared at it.

His hands, long-fingered and graceful for one whose art was war, slid upward and cupped her breasts. She sank her teeth into her lower lip to fight a moan and involuntarily arched backwards, thrusting her nipples against his palms. In turn, he fondled her and watched her reaction through heavy-lidded eyes. He resembled a warrior prince, with a web work of silvery scars across the heavily muscled plane of his chest, and his thick dark hair. "Such spectacular tits," he murmured, rubbing her nipples with his fingers. The pressure was hard enough to make her take in a swift breath, yet also seductively gentle. "You see," he pointed out in that same quiet and steady voice as he stroked her pliant flesh to erect points, "you do want to try. You're soaking wet, Jerra. Take me in your hand."

She looked at him at first in confusion, but when he lifted her easily, she understood.

Wrapping her fingers around his girth, she positioned the flared crest at her entrance and felt her pussy stretch wide open as he slowly began to lower her onto his cock. Bracing her hands on his chest, she squirmed to try to force him in and for a moment she thought it was as impossible as it looked, but slowly, with his hands supporting her weight, she absorbed the tip.

"Oh, God," she moaned and sank a little lower, not sure if it was pleasure or pain, or a beguiling combination of both. He was hot and hard and so big she could not get her fingers entirely around him.

"Yes." The word was a low hiss and his eyes closed briefly. "Oh, fuck, that's good. More."

"I'm trying." Panting, almost wild with need now, she let her weight and the lubricant help her as she took more of his cock into her now burning pussy. The sheer size of it made her want to scream with pleasure for her labia was pulled apart and her clit was hard against his satiny, rock-hard length.

It felt impossibly good and she rocked, sucking in a breath at the discomfort coupled with ecstasy as she slid downward, taking more, more than she thought possible, until she realized incredulously he was in completely and her buttocks rested on the cradle of his hips.

Ian caressed her inner thighs with his thumbs, still holding her hips. "I can wait until you are adjusted to move. There's no hurry."

"Yes, there is," she told him, staring into his dark eyes, knowing her entire body was flushed with need. She could feel the heat in her cheeks, her breasts,



and especially in her aching, stretched pussy. “Lift me a little,” she pleaded. “I’m so close.”

“I never disappoint a lady,” he muttered, her weight seemingly incidental as he eased her up and let her slowly back down.

That easily, she started to come. The first ripple tightened her already overfilled passage around his cock and she went wild, grasping his bulging biceps and unable to keep the orgasm at bay any longer. Head back, her long hair streaming down her back, she clenched around him and her inner muscles shook with the strain of his penetration.

It was incredible, and she gasped out a weak cry before she slid forward against him.

“I’ve got you,” he whispered in her ear. “I need to finish.”

He rolled, and she let him take her until she was on her back. He slid out a little bit the first time and gently pushed back in against her softened, slick flesh, and when she showed no sign of discomfort, began a more assertive rhythm of thrusts in and out. Beneath his large body, she felt overwhelmed, and not just by his size, but by what was happening to her. The pain was gone or incidental and all she felt was his carnal cadence and the joining of their bodies.

She climaxed again almost immediately in complete joyous abandon, and he suddenly gave a fierce growl and pulled back a fraction so when he erupted inside her, the forceful hot gush didn’t cause pain. His testicles were the size of her bunched fists and she felt what seemed to be an endless stream of sperm pump against the mouth of her womb.

Afterwards, when he eased free, she felt hollow inside, as if something were missing. He cradled her close and it felt a little like being held by a rock, except for his long, passionate kisses and the reverent way he explored her body with his hands.

Three gorgeous, considerate lovers and months to enjoy them, she thought sleepily as he nuzzled her neck.

Perhaps being captured wasn’t so bad after all.

\* \* \* \*

Ran sipped his wine and stared through the window at the sleeping girl. The artificial light spilled over her golden hair and lent it highlights of pale platinum. She lay on her side like a child, one hand beneath her cheek, and with the sheet to her waist, her bare, ivory breasts quivered a little with each deep breath. Long lashes lay like delicate shadows on her cheeks.

It was odd, but he had never felt jealousy before. Well, maybe it still wasn't jealousy, maybe it was something else, but he could not think what. Yes, he'd watched her with Ian, seen her enjoyment, and being what and who he was, knew she'd felt afraid at first, but had courageously overcome it and found pleasure instead.

She was remarkable. Incredible. Special in a way that wasn't just sexual. He sensed their intertwined destinies even before the lieutenant had ushered her into the room. He didn't just admire her beauty—though her potent attraction was certainly part of what he felt—he admired her spirit. He didn't need to be told that her circumstances, not to mention the presence of the three of them, were probably very intimidating, yet she had taken his advice from their first night together and was making the best of the situation.

In truth, he was a little confused himself. Yes, he was glad she was bent on enjoying herself rather than feeling forced and used. The trouble was, he uncharacteristically wished she were enjoying herself only with him.

Never in his life had he felt possessive over a female.

Only three days since she'd been delivered and he'd already decided he would petition to be the one to breed with her. The fact he had influence meant almost surely his request would be granted, and he could keep the resulting child if he wished.

He had a feeling he would.

*If* he lived past the landing at Septinium. Ever since they had boarded the ship he'd had disturbing dreams, nightmares like he hadn't endured since he was very young and his parents were killed in an explosion. The sense of foreboding was strong and it had him worried. The future, usually so crystal clear, was full of shadows.

Jerra sighed and stirred in her sleep.

He ached to go to her suddenly. Not to make love to her, but to simply lie there and hear her breathe. It was a unique desire, and it startled him.

“You can’t sleep?”

He glanced up from his brooding observation and saw Ian had come out of his room. He’d showered away the musk of lovemaking and wore a black robe that suited his coloring. Running his fingers through his damp hair, Ian dropped into a nearby chair and followed the direction of Ran’s gaze. His normally hard expression softened. “I wore her out, I think.”

Ran smiled with a little effort. “I think so, too.”

“You were right. She’s exceptional. I came so hard, I was afraid she would overflow. That hot little pussy is remarkable, though.”

“Jerra was afraid she would fail you after pleasing Larik and myself. Since we all treat her well and don’t make her feel like a slave or a whore, she wants to give back. I find it endearing, and quite frankly, arousing. Then again, just looking at her seems to give me an erection.”

“Did you have to go jack off like Armada the other night?” Ian looked amused. “You could have joined us. I don’t mind sharing.”

He’d thought about it, but the trouble was, *he* minded sharing, which was a bit disturbing. When she was in his arms, he didn’t want her attention on what anyone else might be doing to her delectable body.

“No, I’m saving it for tomorrow.” Ran drained his wine glass. “She still has a lot to learn. For instance, that not only can a male lick a woman’s pussy, but a female can lick and suck a cock.”

“I have yet to taste her, and I look forward to it, but having her sweet mouth on me would be like a fantasy come true, and no pun intended.”

They both chuckled, and in the resulting silence, Ran murmured impulsively, “I want to be the one to impregnate her. I thought you should know, since I intend to go ahead and petition now.”

For a moment, Ian was quiet, his gaze still on the window. “I sensed something special with the two of you the minute you touched her. Is this something you see, Ran?”

“Yes...well, maybe. I’m having a little trouble with clear visions right now.”

“Maybe?” Ebony brows shot up. “With you, there are usually few maybes. Are we talking about Septinium?”

“You feel it too, don’t you?”

Very slowly, the other man nodded, his dark eyes unreadable. “I have a bad feeling in my gut. Death. It’s as if I can smell it. I don’t have your damned gift and I am glad of it, but I have good instincts when it comes to battle and it is as if a cold finger is running up and down my spine.”

“That same skeletal finger invades my mind.”

“We shouldn’t go.”

“No, probably not. There *will* be death. The question is ours or theirs.”

“Theirs, certainly.” Ian looked grimly certain. “Even if we perish to the last man, theirs also. It’s a promise.”

“A dark as hell one.”

“This is a dark mission.”

“Except for the girl.” Ran gazed at her lovely face and the graceful lines of her half-nude form. “She’s an unexpected ray of light.”

“You want to breed with her, so I’d say you certainly do feel that way.” Ian cocked a brow. “What would happen if one of us also wanted to father a child with our lovely human?”

“You would have to wait your turn.”

“You wouldn’t object?”

“I am not allowed to claim her completely, you know that. Just the child.” By law, she belonged to the government. Her body could be loaned out for breeding, but with children born to captives, the babies were always put in the care of their S-species fathers. The mothers could be bred again to anyone who submitted for a human carrier and was approved.

“She couldn’t carry my child.” Ian said it with quiet practicality. “I was so large my S-species mother had difficulties. As it is most crossbreed offspring average close to twice the size of a normal human child and the females have to give birth surgically. Even if their remarkable vaginas could stretch enough, their pelvic area isn’t designed for our size. I would never consciously endanger her life.”

Ran recalled clearly how slim her hips had felt in his hands, but the system had been in place for decades and most females carried the babies without too

much trouble. "I am only average in height and weight for our kind. In my case, she and I should be able to breed successfully and without danger to her."

"And so quickly you have decided you want her to be the one to share your genes?"

"Yes." It wasn't easy to explain, so he didn't try, but let the confirmation stand alone. "I'll send the official request tomorrow. The doctor can reprogram her microchip on the journey home."

After her capture and the subsequent physical examination and tests necessary to make sure she qualified for both sexual service and breeding, Jerra had a microchip inserted in her back just below her shoulder blade on the left side. The device controlled her hormonal levels to make sure she did not conceive during the course of her duties, or menstruate, which would be inconvenient. The embedded chip was permanent and would be used throughout her life to control her fertility. It could be reprogrammed in seconds, and when the mission was completed, she was already scheduled to be switched into a breeding cycle on their way home.

Ian still gazed through the window. "Wait until we're close to home to get her pregnant, if you don't mind. I'm sure Larik feels the same way."

Ran smiled wryly. "I thought somehow you both would ask me to delay the period when you wouldn't have any accessibility."

"Hell, yes." Ian chuckled. "How could you blame us?"

Since he had never enjoyed sex so much, he understood their point of view.

He couldn't wait to see her start to swell with his child. During gestation, he was the only male allowed to be with her, and he intended to make the most of that time.

If he lived to see it.

## Chapter 5

The corridor was long, the lighting subdued, and Jerra felt a little self-conscious as she walked along. One on either side, Ran and Larik flanked her much smaller stature, and behind her, she could feel Ian's massive presence as he followed.

As an escort, she supposed it was probably fairly impressive.

She heard the music first, a faint wash of sound in the normally oppressive silence of the big ship, punctuated by a hint of laughter. When Ran scanned through and the door opened, she saw the large crowded room with a feeling of trepidation, but he took her arm and urged her through, and she stepped inside.

Instantly, almost everyone in the room scrambled to their feet, staring at her.

No, she realized, not at her, but behind her to where Ian towered over her diminutive human height. He said coolly, "At ease."

They relaxed, sank back down, and that was when their interested stares actually transferred to her. Through the sea of males, her entourage led her to a table and politely waited as she sat down. Immediately, a waiter arrived with several bottles and glasses, and slowly, the conversation and music resumed.

When they had suggested she hadn't left the room in weeks and asked if she cared to accompany them to the recreation area, she had jumped at the chance. But she hadn't thought about the fact it would be mostly soldiers, or that everyone would be curious to see the human female who was assigned to please the three most important men on the ship.

"Everyone is looking at me," she muttered, taking a sip from her glass.

"Of course." Ran looked amused, the low lighting gilding his chestnut hair and handsome face. "Males like to admire lovely females and you are more noticeable than most."

“We’re showing you off,” Larik informed her with his irresistible grin. “It’s a bit arrogant of us, I suppose.”

“My officers claim I’m more relaxed than usual.” Ian poured himself a glass of the sweet wine she had grown to like. “Now they will know why.”

“Why aren’t there any other women here?” She glanced around, still saw she was the center of attention, and flushed.

“There are a few S-species female officers.” Ran looked bland, lounging in his chair as he gazed at her. “The captives don’t normally have time to relax often. Remember, there are only three of us and we keep you busy enough.”

It was true. She rarely had much time to herself and though she had lost track of the passing days, Ran had told her they had been out now two of the three months it would take to get to their destination.

“You said it was getting monotonous to stay in our quarters all the time.” Larik generously filled his glass.

She had, but, despite the unfamiliar music playing and the clink of glasses and low hum of voices, it was still another room filled with men who looked at her with only one thing in mind. “I admit I didn’t expect to be of such interest.”

“Speaking of female officers, here comes Liale, Colonel.” Larik looked past her shoulder, and Jerra fought the urge to turn and look, held in place by the sudden change in Ian’s expression. After months of sharing quarters, meals, and her body with each one of them, she had begun to know them quite well individually. She hated to admit Lieutenant Herad was right about anything, but she had grown to feel honored to be chosen for the assignment given to her. Though they were not at all the same, her three lovers were all inherently *nice*, in and out of bed. They enjoyed her, but truthfully, only with the provision she enjoyed them, too. The giving of pleasure was a mutual journey, and she was not just the convenient receptacle for their lust.

In her mind, she had categorized them more than once. Larik was completely intellectual, yet constantly irreverent, and he considered sex light-hearted play, often tickling and teasing her, and they laughed together frequently even in bed. They had become fast friends also in a platonic way, and played games in the afternoons, usually squabbling over the results. He loved to make the most outrageous sexual wagers on the outcome, and she had learned to not press her luck, for with his mathematical inclinations, he could figure the odds and bet with uncanny accuracy.

Ian Helm was the opposite, serious, straightforward, and extremely capable. He rarely smiled, but she found when he did, it was compelling and lightened his normally stern expression. As a lover, he was careful, surprisingly gentle for such a large man, and often he liked to indulge in long periods of foreplay before the actual act of sexual intercourse.

As for Ran Kartel...well, Jerra found she thought of him the most, and knew a different excitement and enjoyment in his arms. He was naturally sensitive due to his special gift, and she experienced not only heightened pleasure when they made love, but also an almost disturbing sense of belonging. The way he kissed and held her made her feel not just wanted, but cared for, and she had the dismaying feeling she was falling in love with the handsome diplomat even though she tried to maintain a neutral distance. There was something about his self-assurance, his quick, seductive smile, and the weight of the responsibility he wore so easily that made him fascinating to an unsettling degree.

"Mind if I join you?" A female voice, husky but unquestionably higher in pitch, interrupted her reverie, and Jerra glanced again at the sudden impassive expression on Ian's face.

Ran nodded. "Hello, Captain Liale. Please, have a seat."

"Thank you." The new arrival sank into a vacant chair. She was like most S-species and very tall, probably almost as tall as Ran and Larik. Shoulder-length honey-colored hair brushed her shoulders and she had crystalline gray eyes. Her uniform tunic did not hide the fact she was statuesque in build, not just her height, but in her impressive breasts and the full flare of her hips.

Jerra was not gifted with any modicum of Ran's talent for reading the emotions of others, but in this case, she did not need it. The S-species officer looked at her and it was easy enough to read the emotion in her crystal clear eyes. Since the dislike couldn't be personal, Jerra assumed it had something to do with one of the males sitting at the table with them, and it was not difficult to guess which one.

Ian cleared his throat, but it was Ran who said quickly, "This is Jerra, Captain."

The female officer smiled, but there wasn't much warmth to it. "Yes, I know. She is rather hard to miss by both her attire and the staring eyes directed this way. Who can blame them, I suppose, for it isn't everyday one of the human females is brought into the officer's recreation area. In fact, it never happens."



Larik murmured in his easy way, "There isn't a rule against it, though."

"No." Captain Liale inclined her head and accepted a glass from one of the silent but efficient waiters. "I suppose there isn't, though this particular one might cause a small riot. They tell me she isn't surgically altered in any way. It is a bit hard to believe with those tits."

"I am sitting right here." Jerra kept her voice mild, but she wasn't about to be discussed like an inanimate object. "I'm pleased to meet you, Captain. It's pleasant to see another female after being surrounded exclusively by males so far this journey."

The show of spirit made the beautiful captain finally meet her eyes. "I am sure it has been quite a...*trial*."

Ian blew out his breath at the silky sarcasm in her tone and his eyes glittered. "Captain."

The word was a warning, and Liale smiled thinly before picking up her drink and taking a sip. "Don't worry, I will behave myself, Colonel. I was merely commenting on her exceptional beauty, but it isn't necessary, is it, for you have already noticed."

Jerra glanced at Ran uncertainly at the acid tone of the comment, but he seemed more amused than anything, and so did Larik. It was Ian who looked profoundly uncomfortable, and she never would have thought to see his normal formidable composure shaken.

It was her turn to have her composure rattled because Ran reached over and took Jerra's hand, twining his fingers with hers and—very publicly—lifting it to his lips. He gently kissed her fingers. "I've certainly noticed."

It seemed like the hum of voices faded away as Jerra looked into his green eyes and all at once, she felt completely breathless. The affectionate gesture also seemed to take the jealous captain by surprise, for she suddenly found a great interest in her drink and she looked away.

If Jerra hadn't already been in love with him, she would have fallen into that particular abyss and gladly at the soft light in his eyes.

God help her...she was lost.

Though they had barely just arrived, he stood then, and since he still held her hand, pulled her to her feet. "We're going back."

Larik laughed, his blond hair gleaming in the subdued light. "I take it Ian and I need not rush our evening."

"Stay out as long as you like." Ran grinned back. He inclined his head. "Good evening, Captain Liale. I'm sorry to leave so abruptly, but—"

Dryly, she interrupted, "I think I understand your sudden urge to depart, Ambassador." She glanced at Ian, and for a moment, her expression was full of unguarded longing. "Believe me, I understand."

\* \* \* \*

What was it about her?

It was too much to try and decipher their lovely captive's intangible draw, but it existed, and over the past month, he had found himself sinking deeper and deeper.

Sinking deep, yes. It was exactly what he wanted to do. Between her legs, in the wet, hot heat he knew would consume him with perfection. Maybe it was the news he'd received that morning, but he felt a sexual hunger like he never remembered.

"My legs are not as long as yours. Can we slow down a little?"

The amused but very real protest made Ran realize he was striding down the hallway and practically dragging Jerra with him. Her scantily clad body looked small and graceful in the artificial light, and he wondered why the hell he'd ever thought he would be comfortable letting a battalion of soldiers gawk at her near nakedness. Sharing her with Larik and Ian was hard enough. He slowed down and abruptly swept her up into his arms. "Sorry. This will be faster."

"Ran!" The protest was said in a breathless laughing voice, but she pressed seductively against him and he could feel the voluptuous fullness of her soft breasts against his chest through his tunic. Her azure eyes were veiled by thick lashes, but he caught the gleam of excitement in those entrancing depths. The thin short dress she wore barely covered her luscious body anyway, and as he carried her through the hallway, she tugged it down as best she could over her thighs.

When the door to their quarters opened, he took her inside and straight into her room. Without much finesse, he deposited her on the bed and stripped off her gown. Full ivory breasts quivered enticingly with her quickened breathing and she watched him jerk off his clothes with a small smile on her soft mouth. Her lissome nude body was all pale curves and inviting shadows, especially the apex of her long slender legs, and he couldn't wait to touch and taste every inch of her. What's more, because he sampled her unequalled sexuality this past month as often as he could, he knew she was just as eager and probably wet and ready as hell.

His cock, already fully hard, stiffened further as he got in bed and pulled her against him. As they kissed, he rubbed the stiff length against the soft plane of her smooth stomach and groaned against her mouth. Ran rolled over to his back, moved his mouth to the sensitive hollow below her ear, and whispered against her neck, "Suck me, Jerra. I need relief before we can even start."

Obligingly, she started to scoot down the length of his body, but he caught her arms. "No." His voice was raspy with sexual arousal. "Like this."

He urged her into the position he wanted, lying on top of him face down the opposite way, her legs parted so her delectable pussy was visible. Letting his hands rub her ass, he could smell her arousal and his nostrils flared slightly at the same moment he felt her small hands caress his engorged penis and the first swirl of her tongue over the head. Usually, he liked to watch as she took him in her mouth—the sight almost as exciting as the exquisite heat and suction—but this way, with her golden hair spilling over her graceful back and the wetness of her open pussy against his chest was good, too.

Really, really good.

Too good, actually.

Jerra stroked his balls and the base of his shaft as she ministered to the tip of his cock and as much of the length as she could take. He could feel the pressure of the back of her throat as she slid downward, and see the up and down motion of her head. A low growl came from his chest. The pleasure of it was so much. The heat of her mouth, the brush of her tongue, and the skillful stroking of her hands worked him quickly into a fever pitch, and at the very last second, he wrapped his hand in her long hair and tugged her upward. His discharge was too much for her to swallow without choking, and he never came in her mouth. He groaned as he felt the rush of ejaculation rise through his pulsing cock and spurt out of him, covering her breasts and torso. She continued to stroke his flexing cock until he

began to soften, and Ran could feel the warmth of his semen slick and slippery between their bodies.

“You have such a beautiful ass.” His hands ran over the mounds of her buttocks, teasing the crack, and finding the small puckered hole there. He felt a fleeting moment of regret that the one thing he could never do with her was penetrate her anally with his cock. He was simply too big for her tiny orifice, but since there were a myriad of other pleasures they could give each other, the regret was only that. Extremely fleeting.

“Bring this a little higher, sweetheart.” His fingers slid lower and found the wetness of her pussy, just tracing the seam of her labia. “I crave a taste.”

As usual, Jerra did not need much urging. Like most females, she loved oral gratification. She wiggled backwards the necessary distance, his discharge making her slide easily, and Ran lifted her hips so she was on her hands and knees above him and her pussy poised over his waiting mouth.

“So pretty,” he murmured, parting the soft, moist folds with his long fingers and seeing the vulnerable pink tissue beneath. The small bud of her clitoris in its protective sheath looked slightly swollen already and he reached out the tip of his tongue and lightly teased it.

Her reaction was immediate. She shuddered and murmured his name in a way that was an unmistakable plea.

“A little lower,” he told her and she obediently opened her legs wider and sank down so his mouth was in direct contact with her heated center. She tasted divine as he skillfully began to bring her climax with his lips and tongue, and he savored her sexual fluids. Different from the S-species females he usually took to bed, her juices were sweeter, like honey and woman. Making love to her was different too, and it wasn’t just the tantalizing tightness of her warm pussy, or her matchless beauty and responsiveness. Maybe it was the way she managed to be both captive and seductress without surrendering anything of herself she did not want to give. Just earlier, he had seen her challenge Captain Liale for treating her like an object. She wasn’t one, and refused to be thought of that way.

Maybe that had been the moment he knew he had to take her back to their quarters because he couldn’t wait to feel that same fire in bed.

Or maybe it was the way all the men in the room wanted to fuck her and he resented the hell out of it and wanted to whisk her away and keep her for himself.

That was the trouble. He wanted to keep her for himself. Forever. The realization made his hands tighten on her hips and for a moment, he went still, arrested by the notion of permanent possession.

Jerra moaned and moved in protest. "Please...please..."

Pushing the revelation from his mind, he concentrated on giving her what she wanted, knowing from the way she reacted as he lightly pushed his tongue into her pussy, she was close. When he stimulated her clitoris by sucking on it with gentle pressure, she went over the edge and cried out as her slim body tensed and began to shake in open carnal release.

She sank down on his chest finally, as if her arms could no longer hold her. For a while they stayed that way, and Ran waited for her to recover, content with stroking the elegant curve of her spine. He could tell the moment she noticed the returning swell of his erection for she slightly raised her head and gave a muffled laugh. "You have admirable stamina, Ambassador."

"I'm inspired." The promise was made in a light-hearted tone, but he wanted to make love to her. Face to face, so he could kiss and hold her as they reached for the ultimate pinnacle together.

\* \* \* \*

There was something different, but she couldn't quite figure out just exactly what it was. From the moment Ran had taken her hand and lifted it to his mouth in front of a crowded room, the gesture so gallant and reverent she was almost moved to tears, she had sensed a subtle shift.

In power.

Before, she had none. It had been made clear to her from the moment she had been taken and put on the ship. She'd been forced to give up her family, her clothes, her body, and most of all, her freedom. Confined and helpless, she'd done everything possible to make the best of her fate, and it had worked to a certain extent. Her only true resentment of the current situation was the fact she still had no say in her future.

Perhaps it would be better to worry about that when she wasn't sprawled on top of Ran Kartel's splendid muscular body with his cock lengthening before her eyes. Jerra reached out, closing her hand around his impressive length and

squeezing gently. She traced the line of his stiffening penis with her fingers, and cupped his balls. They felt heavy and full, and if the evidence of his very recent climax wasn't spread all over the upper part of her body, she would have never thought he'd come not long ago.

There was something to be said for S-species men. They truly were Superhuman when it came to sex. All three of her lovers could regain an erection in a very short time and she had been informed it took an ordinary human some time to recover from orgasmic release.

"On your back." Ran easily moved her so she was supine and he adjusted himself over her. It was both habit and instinct to automatically spread her legs, and he settled there naturally as he leaned down and nibbled on her lower lip with just the slightest playful pressure of his teeth. His eyes closed as he prodded her vaginal opening with his cock, and Jerra took in a long breath and relaxed her inner muscles like she had learned to do in the past weeks. The conscious act eased his entry, but she found each time, she still was amazed at how disparate in size they were and yet could come together with such acute pleasure.

Aflame with the rush of her desire as she felt him ease inside her, Jerra ran her hands up and down the bunched muscles of his back. "You feel immense," she whispered, lifting her knees to give him complete access to her willing body.

"And you feel...perfect." His eyes opened as he slowly pushed toward total possession. "And so damned ready for me."

She was ready. Primed and ready from their mutual, earlier love play. And it was just as well. If experience served, they would spend most of the night in each other's arms. Of the three of them, Ran was most definitely the most demanding, insatiable in his need for her, and since she felt the same way about him, it was hardly a problem to accommodate his desires.

*I love you.*

The thought, which she normally tried to guard, or at least keep at bay by concentrating instead on the act of sex itself, sprang to her mind. To her dismay, she saw a reaction as his eyes narrowed and his inexorable advance halted. "What?"

"I didn't say anything." She quickly averted her gaze.

"You know you don't have to speak it out loud. Not with me."

She knew. That's why she consciously didn't allow anything but physical sensation to be in charge when they were together. To try and distract him and herself, she lifted her pelvis and tried to absorb more of his erection.

"Jerra." He didn't move to help, only half-penetrating her, his arms braced by her shoulders. "Look at me."

She shook her head, suddenly afraid. Of what, she wasn't sure, but definitely afraid.

"Look at me."

Finally, she obeyed, meeting his emerald eyes with defiant challenge, her heart feeling tight in her chest. "What?"

The set of his mouth was tense, as were the powerful muscles of his shoulders under her hands. "I would like to hear you say it."

A human captive in love with one of the most powerful males of the entire S-species? A male who manipulated nations and policies, who interfered in wars and held the ear of the entire government? It was ridiculous, and she knew it.

"No." Her refusal was decisive. "I won't, Ran. I think we both understand why."

Still unmoving, he smiled in a slow curve of his lips that made her breathing hitch to a higher notch. "You have the most damnable stubborn pride of any female—human or otherwise—I have ever met. And you are wrong, I don't understand. What's wrong with telling me?"

"Maybe because it's hopeless." She didn't want to feel anything but pleasure right now, and certainly not despair. "Just fuck me and forget it, please. I'm here and you can tell I'm ready for it, can't you?" She wriggled her hips, feeling the unsatisfying depth of only half his rigid cock.

"Stop trying to distract me." His expression was a mixture of tenderness and censure. "I want to talk about this."

"Now?"

"When better than when we are making love?"

Flippantly, she said, "I thought we were fucking."

"Then you were wrong. Have I ever used that word once in front of you? Even in the beginning, I have never referred to what happens between us that way."

In retrospect, he hadn't. Larik did often enough, but to him, sex was a game, and even he used the crudity only to tease her.

"No," she admitted.

"Is that what you feel I do to you?" His verdant eyes were dark, and his mouth a little tight. "Just use your body so I get off? Admit it, Jerra, from our very first time, you knew that wasn't true. Now, tell me."

He was right. He'd been sinfully tender, giving generously as well as taking, and the culmination of any woman's romantic dreams as a lover. Handsome, intelligent, sensitive, and solicitous; the list of his attributes went on. They all treated her more as a friend than a mistress, but Ran most of all. No wonder she'd been supremely foolish and tumbled into her current state. Inexperienced and alone, it was naïve for her to have dreams of forever, but maybe a romantic fantasy wasn't so surprising. At least she was pragmatic enough to realize it was just that—a fantasy.

But it didn't stop her from loving him.

"Fine." She said the word with quiet resignation. "I love you. I'm surprised you haven't sensed it before, but I've been doing my best to keep it hidden."

"I *have* sensed it before."

"There, you see, so why did you make me say it? Can we please just continue?"

"Yes, we can. In a moment." He stared down at her, holding her gaze. His thick hair was ruffled attractively against his strong neck and his muscular, bare torso glistened in the soft lighting. "First, I have something to tell you. I asked to be the one to inseminate you on our return voyage. This morning, my request was granted. I'll father the child you are scheduled to breed."

Jerra felt a burst of joy, for she had been apprehensive over the event she knew was destined to be initiated once they were headed back to the home planet of her captors. Larik was frank with her on any subject she cared to discuss, and the way he described the process made her feel both cold and nervous. She could be shuffled off to some unknown male, for the sperm donor had to want to breed with a human, and be responsible for the resulting child.

Slaves—like her—did not get to keep their children.



At least Ran would have theirs and she would know the child would be safe in his hands.

His face blurred as her eyes filled with tears and she felt the warm rivulets run down her cheeks. "Oh, Ran."

"Don't cry." With the pad of his thumb, he brushed her wet cheek. "That means we will have most of the next year together, Jerra."

"I know. Do you have any idea how relieved and happy I am?" She gave him a watery smile and touched his face, tracing the sensual curve of his lower lip. "Now, make love to me. I want to feel you all the way inside me."

At last, he obliged her and slid forward until she was fully impaled with his glorious length. It always felt good, but this time it was a heightened experience, and when he began to withdraw and sink back into her, Jerra felt a fierce elation that was both physical pleasure and emotional relief.

It was only a reprieve, she knew it, but a year was a long time.

As usual, she climaxed first, easily, her body arching into a long thrust as the erotic joy of it exploded in her brain, her nerve-endings, and centered between her legs. Ran didn't stop but continued to stroke his large cock in a carnal rhythmic motion into her pussy, and before long, she felt the contractions begin again. This time, he went with her, a guttural groan coming from his throat as he stiffened and his seed spilled in a forceful flood that coated her inner walls and filled the mouth of her womb.

Replete, she lay in his arms afterwards as he kissed her with slow, rapturous movements of his tongue and lips. They were both sticky with his sperm, and she was filled with it also, the warm liquid seeping from between her legs in decadent evidence of their lovemaking. He carried her to the cleansing room and they showered together in the warm spray, washing their bodies of the residue, touching, kissing, and whispering to each other. He took her there once more, holding her in his arms, her legs wrapped around his lean waist as the water flowed over their joined bodies and they came together again.

Her happiness might be temporary, but Jerra refused to think about it as she rested against his broad chest and felt the mutual wild beating of their hearts.

\* \* \* \*

Ian watched as Armada rose and left the table to join a group of engineers nearby. He gave an inward curse at being left alone with Liale. Larik could have a little more loyalty, but maybe the tension was making him as uncomfortable as it made Ian.

“Don’t bother to conceal your feelings, Colonel.” The words were said sarcastically and in a low tone.

He glanced over and pretended to not understand. “What do you mean?”

“Oh, please.” Captain Liale’s long perfect fingers smoothed her glass. “Your scowl could melt the inner core of Minoa. You don’t want me here.”

“You know, Captain, you have a very forthright approach, especially since I’m your commander.”

“The trouble is, Colonel, you don’t scare me the same way you intimidate everyone else.” Her gaze was level and fearless.

“Is that so? I could order you to go.” Ian growled the words, knowing he would never say them. Despite his resolve, his gaze dropped to the swell in the front of her tunic. By the stars, the woman had glorious breasts.

He wished he didn’t know firsthand what he was missing.

“You avoid me.”

There was no denying it, so he didn’t. “Yes.”

“Why?”

Giving her an exasperated look, he drank from his almost empty glass and said nothing.

She leaned forward a little, her blond hair, regulation length, at her collar, her lovely face set. “Are you sitting there thinking about what you are going to do to your pretty little human when you return to your quarters, Colonel? Tell me, how does such a slender small female manage to handle your immense cock? I’ve seen it at full attention, remember?”

He remembered, that was the trouble. Her obvious jealousy was flattering, but not what he needed at the moment. “What I do with Jerra isn’t your business, Captain.”

“The men talk about how good it is with the Earth captives. Certainly Kartel seems to think so for it was pretty obvious exactly why he dragged her off so quickly. The girl barely had a chance to sit down.”

“You saw them. There is a unique bond there. I’m sure they’ll spend the night enjoying the hell out of each other.”

Her brows were a darker shade than her honey hair, and she lifted them a fraction. “So you will be alone tonight? It needn’t be that way.”

“You know the rules, Kia.” The words came out fiercely and he almost stood up and walked away from the table. Almost. But somehow he couldn’t quite do it, for if he couldn’t have her, at least he could be near her. “I’m not just protecting myself. We’d both be fools to risk it again.”

“I know. But I’m still willing.” Though normally she was cool and professional in every way, and an ideal soldier with her natural air of competency and resolve, her mouth trembled just slightly as she spoke. “Does it tell you something about how I feel, Ian?”

It did, for she was also a career soldier. He shook his head, but his gaze locked with hers. “We can’t.”

Through the music and hum of voices, no one could hear what they were saying anyway, but she suggestively dropped her tone. “Follow me to my quarters in a little while. I’ll be waiting, naked, wet and ready for you. Remember, with me, there is no need for restraint. I can take all of you in any way you wish to have me. Yes, I am sure your beautiful captive gives you pleasure, but does she give you passion? I can give you both, and you know it.”

It was true. With Jerra, he had to be very careful and gentle. Her lovely responsive body accommodated him, and he thoroughly enjoyed every minute they spent in bed together. But he had fallen for the off-limits captain long before Jerra had been assigned to them. In bed, Kia was a match for him in every way, and her aggressive approach to lovemaking really turned him on.

She liked it a little rough, fast, and hard—and she was exactly right, she was passionate as hell.

His treacherous cock swelled, but he said firmly, “No.”

She stared into his eyes as if oblivious to the crowd around them. “I’ll be waiting.”

“I won’t come,” he said, not at all certain he was telling the truth.

Liale gave him a slow smile and stood. “Yes, you will. We’ll both come, Ian. Think about it.”

*Damn the woman.* He watched her walk away, admiring the shape of her ass, and fought the urge to jump up and put his fist through the wall. Or maybe use his rock hard dick instead. He was embarrassingly aroused so quickly, he couldn't believe it. Normally, he would go back to their berth to Jerra and take care of it. After all, she was there for that purpose, but things had changed in the past few weeks. He didn't have to be told—neither did Larik—that their lovely roommate and the ambassador had moved beyond a purely sexual relationship. One had to only watch them together, in and out of bed, to see the emotional connection. It made him feel guilty now if he wanted her, and if he could satisfy himself in another way, he would.

He *could* actually.

With the female he really wanted.

*Fuck!*

The minute he shoved himself to his feet, he knew he would fall from grace and fall hard. Yes, he wanted to honor the strict guidelines that governed his job, including those that stood in place to make sure senior officers did not get involved with their subordinates. He understood the risk of feeling more for one of his soldiers than the others, and how it could compromise tactics in battle.

The trouble was whether he went to her or not, he already felt that way. He would die to protect Jerra as he had promised her. He would die a hundred times to protect Liale, and that was just that. Abstinence wouldn't change it.

If anyone noticed his distraction as he left, he didn't care. Ian strode off and made record time as he navigated the long corridors and lifts, the image of Kia, nude and waiting, embedded so firmly in his mind, his cock ached with every purposeful step. There were few enough female officers that she had her own berth. He scanned in, his position as commander giving him access to any room on the ship.

The door slid up and his heart stopped for a moment.

The beautiful captain was true to her word.

He stepped inside, his mouth going dry as he surveyed the image of her nude, gleaming body on the all-too small bed. The single room was simple and compact, and it made the impact of her graphic, sexual pose all the more dramatic.

Kia's eyes glittered as she watched him step inside. Her long legs were spread suggestively apart, and her hands held her lavish breasts lightly, as if displaying their sumptuous fullness. It was temptation incarnate, just as she meant it to be.

She was wet in anticipation of his arrival. He could see the moisture glisten on her labia. Ian said roughly, "You win, Kia. I hope we both don't lose."

If she felt the same worry, she didn't show it. "I can't lose if you're inside me. Hurry, Ian."

Hurry did not describe the way he shed his clothes. Frantic was much closer. When he freed his cock, she sucked in an audible breath and stared at his rampant length. "Bring that here. You know I want it."

"Don't worry, you're going to get it, all right." It was almost a threat the way he said it, for his need was such he could barely breathe. She'd pushed him on purpose—and it had worked—now he was ready to push back. Into her.

A moment later he did. No tender words, no persuasive kisses, but instead he lowered himself between her open thighs and thrust his cock into her waiting pussy with insistent need.

She arched and gripped his ass, forcing him in all the way, her breathy exhale a hiss of pleasure and exultation. "Yes...just like that. I love how big you are. No one feels like this."

He didn't want her to think about any other male, and in response, he leaned down and took possession of her mouth, his tongue graphically plundering. Kia battled with him in predictable ferocity, cupping his head and tangling with him in a war for dominance as they rolled on the bed and almost fell to the floor.

It was so hot and he was so damned aroused, he had to move.

"Fuck me," she whispered against his lips. "Really hard, Ian. I like it that way."

Well...shit, he knew she did. It was what made her irresistible enough he could throw away half his life for a single night of pleasure. He slid backwards and surged forward deep, feeling her nails score his buttocks, marking him. His lower body pumped fast, giving her what she wanted, and she gave it back to him with the roll of her hips and the strong grip of her thighs.

Arms braced, he stroked inside her, and watched the transformation of her expression as her orgasm rose. Her face grew beautifully flushed, tinting the

smooth skin, and the color of her eyes seemed to actually darken as she stared up at him. Low, sexy moans came from her throat, and her tight nipples brushed his chest as he pounded into her.

It was a damned good thing the berths were all soundproof for she screamed as she came, her body arching wildly. The grip of her pussy as it tightened around his cock sent a jolt right down to his balls. Ian let the giant wave of release crash down, no longer holding back, and the rapturous rush of sperm exiting his body made his eyes shut tightly and his muscles shake.

The downward spiral back to reality was gradual and he became aware he was sprawled on top of her body. Although she was tall and fit, he was still considerably bigger, and with a small apologetic grunt, he shifted his weight.

Kia laughed and peered at him through her long lashes. "Believe me, you have nothing to be sorry for, Colonel. On my part, I hope you aren't bleeding."

At a guess he was, for he could feel the stinging scratches on his back and ass. "If I am, I don't care." He could still feel small pulses ripple through his cock, the sensation acutely pleasurable. No, she wasn't as exquisitely tight as Jerra, but he and Jerra weren't meant to be life partners, anyway. He had the unsettling feeling he and Kia were and they came together in a perfect fit. He'd known females in a sexual way since he was old enough to get an erection. The woman looking up at him with a confident, satisfied smile was different. She was his equal in many ways, and her audacity took him off-guard. She'd now managed to get him to forget duty twice, and he had a feeling it was going to happen again.

Ian stroked her cheek. "We'll arrive at Septinium in less than two weeks. Kartel has a bad feeling about this mission. I share it."

The feline-like contentment faded from her face. "If we can get a clean landing, we've enough soldiers to take control, don't we?"

"By all reports, yes. But this is a planet that frequently does not follow the rules. We have no idea if the information they have fed us on population and military installments is accurate. Scans show more organic forms than what we thought, though they deny taking slaves or hiding armies."

She frowned. "I don't like the sound of that."

"Neither do I." Ian eased his cock out from between her open legs and rolled to his back. He stared at the ceiling. "I don't want you to go with the diplomatic guard, Kia. I'm sorry. I know you thought it was your assignment, but things have changed."

Her reaction was predictable, for she shoved up on one elbow and stared at him. “What’s changed? I’m a damned fine officer and my men expect to escort Kartel and the government emissaries off this ship and protect them. We’re ready for it, Ian, believe me.”

“I know you are. Your command will still go. I’m taking them. You’ll stay onboard and help guard the vessel.” His voice shifted to the implacable tone he used when issuing orders.

“Is this because I’m female? If so, you’re violating regulations, Colonel,” she said icily.

“It’s because you’re *my* female.” He clamped one hand on her shoulder and pushed her back down on the bed. In a swift, fluid motion, he rolled on top of her lush form again. “And in case you haven’t noticed, I’m breaking regulations right now because of you, Captain Liale. So don’t spout official rules to me when my come is all over your thighs where it is definitely not supposed to be.”

She seemed momentarily speechless and he grinned lazily. “What? No smart-assed comment? That isn’t like you, Kia.”

“*Your* female?” The comment was made breathlessly.

“I’m not this damned stupid for anyone else.” He hadn’t really lost his erection even after his forceful climax, and he rubbed his cock against her hip.

“I’ll have to resign.”

“I know. I’m sorry, but we can work out the details later. Besides, if we breed, you’d have to, anyway. Once officers become mothers, they have to take permanent leave, you know that.”

Her hand came up and touched his face and her eyes looked luminous. “You wish to breed with me? I was afraid you’d ask to be the one to inseminate your beautiful little human.” She made a rueful face. “I’m jealous as hell of her.”

“I noticed, but in case you haven’t been paying attention, Kartel applied right away for that privilege. Besides, I doubt she could safely do it for me. You, on the other hand, will have no problem carrying my child. I like the idea, though it has never occurred to me before to want to share my genes with any female.”

“It has certainly never occurred to me to resign my commission for some arrogant male, either.”

Ian’s brows shot up. “Arrogant?”

“Immensely arrogant.” She reached for his erect shaft, wrapping her fingers around the stiff length of it and making him suppress a groan. “Although I admit you might have cause to be proud of this, Colonel Helm. It’s a very magnificent cock.”

“I’m glad you think so. Care to test how much you like it again?” He leaned down and kissed her, and all dark thoughts of the upcoming landing at Septinium were banished.

Liale made a purring sound low in her throat. “Absolutely.”

“Roll over.” He wanted to see just how bold his passionate bedmate might be. She liked it on the edge, she liked it hard and demanding, but how far would she go? Not waiting for her to comply, he easily flipped her onto her stomach and ran his hands over the mounds of her ass. He parted her and rubbed a questing finger over the small puckered hole between her cheeks.

Kia quivered. “What are you doing?”

“I want you this way.”

“In my ass?” As a soldier, she was used to being blunt.

Ian stifled a chuckle. “If we’re throwing caution to the winds, why not? Have you before?”

“No.” Tousled blond hair moved across her shoulders. “I’ve never trusted any male enough for anal sex.”

“Do you trust me? I think you’ll like it, as a little pain with your sex makes you hot, Captain.” As he spoke, his finger traveled lower, to delve into the slick heat of her pussy for lubrication. Then he smeared his sperm and her fluids over her rectal opening and eased his finger in to the knuckle. The small muscles of her sphincter clenched and then relaxed.

“Shit, Ian,” she moaned into the pillow. “Your cock is too big if that’s how your finger feels.”

“I’ll get you ready, don’t worry.”

He did so, inserting another finger, widening her as he probed, and then a third, convincing her body to accept him. His cock was already slick from intercourse and when he slid his fingers out and positioned himself, he rubbed the tip enticingly between her buttocks. “Tell me again how you can take me any way I want you.”



“Do it.” Kia arched so he prodded her harder.

He entered carefully, not wanting to hurt her, but to give her a new experience he was convinced, with her extraordinary audacity in bed, she would enjoy.

He was so right, he discovered.

As his rigid penis worked into her ass, his lover moaned.

Hell, yes, she loved it.

## Chapter 6

Jerra paced across the room for the hundredth time and took in a deep shuddering breath, trying to stay calm.

The second explosion had been much louder and the huge ship actually shifted enough, she felt it.

Oh, God, what was happening?

She knew the diplomatic team had left that morning, for even if Ran hadn't been dressed in a different uniform, she would have been able to tell by the way he kissed her. His mouth had lingered on hers with a gentleness that had nothing to do with sexual need, and he held her so closely, she almost could not breathe. Ian also, had looked formidably grimmer than usual and she had heard enough discussion on the matter to know they were all worried about the success of trying to use persuasion to solve the Septinium problem.

Apparently, they had been right, for suddenly she could hear the rhythmic beeping of hundreds of alarms and the ship shuddered violently enough she was thrown to the floor. Shaken, she scrambled to her feet and fought a surge of pure unadulterated panic. If the ship was actually being attacked, what was happening on the surface of the planet itself?

*Ran!*

The opening of the door made Jerra whirl in relief, but her heart sunk when she saw the tall, blond female captain step inside. Her cool gaze grazed over Jerra's body and she smiled thinly. Kia Liale said, "You aren't hurt. Good. The last hit was close to here. You'd better come with me, human."

"What's happening?" Jerra clenched her hands into fists and stared at the S-species female she suspected now kept Ian occupied most nights. "Where are they?"

“Down there. Now, let’s go. Apparently someone will have my head if you are killed because I didn’t move you someplace safer.”

*Down there.* The simple explanation was no explanation at all. “Have you had communication? What is going on?”

“My job isn’t to explain anything to you.” Liale stalked toward her. “Come with me or I’ll throw you over my shoulder and carry you out.”

“Aren’t you worried?” Jerra said defensively, but she stepped forward willingly enough. Anything was better than being trapped with her unruly fears alone.

For a split second, the captain’s face showed bleak emotion. “Yes. But it’ll do no one any good, whereas if I stay focused on my job, I can at least follow orders. Now, are you going to cooperate?”

“Yes.” Jerra nodded, feeling at least a small measure of connection. She followed the tall officer outside the quarters and down the hallway, noting with dismay most of the lights now flickered and she could smell the acrid hint of smoke in the air.

They went down several levels, and Liale took her into a small berth with a single bed and austere pale walls. She pointed at the bed. “This is my room and more centrally located, so safer. Sit down, lie down, do whatever you want, human. I guess we are stuck here together, since my orders are to take care you aren’t injured. Quite frankly, I resent the duty, but I’ve been trained to do what the commander wants.”

Ian had ordered protection for her? Jerra said coolly, “It occurs to me, Captain, he ordered it because he also wants you in a safe place. Your jealousy is misplaced. It isn’t me he’s protecting.”

Ian’s lover looked at her with her crystalline eyes. “His cock has been inside you. It’s pretty straightforward to me.”

“It wasn’t exactly my choice, which you know full well.”

“I still resent you, human.”

“That isn’t exactly a secret.” Jerra sighed, sat down on the bed, and pushed back a stray lock of hair from her cheek. “Ian hasn’t touched me in a long time, if that makes you feel better.”

“A little, yes.” Liale’s shoulders relaxed a fraction and she sank into the room’s one chair. She added a moment later, “I hoped he hadn’t, but wasn’t sure. There are some things I am not allowed to ask. Thank you for telling me.” She smiled then, the first glimmer of any warmth Jerra had seen. “Quite frankly, I could not picture how someone as large as Ian could possibly mate with someone so slender and delicate.”

It was a personal subject, but then again, the topic of sex didn’t embarrass her any longer. Jerra laughed. “Carefully, if you want the truth. Thank goodness the capsules exist to ease the differences in our respective sizes. When I first saw him, I was terrified.”

Captain Liale looked at her with level contemplation. “Actually, I doubt that. For someone with no real physical defenses against us, you seem to have been able to manage very well, Jerra. Look at Kartel, one of our leaders, so taken he barely leaves your side, I’m told.”

“I love him.” Jerra wasn’t sure why she confessed it to someone normally antagonistic to her, but the words tumbled out, anyway. Probably because she was so worried she would never again hear his laugh or feel his persuasive touch. “They are all considerate to me, which I would never have imagined, but Ran and I connected from the beginning.”

“So Ian says. It’s a pity really, for the ambassador cannot have you permanently.”

“If you think I don’t know that, you’re wrong.” She took in a deep breath. “I try not to think about the future too much, and right now, I would trade anything just to have Ran safe. My lost freedom and the conditions of my captivity seem insignificant when I am worried about his life.”

The captain narrowed her eyes. “You do love him.”

At that moment, the ship rocked again. Liale jumped up and was slammed into the wall by a second shudder, her tall form colliding with such force she seemed momentarily stunned.

Jerra found herself on the floor once more, a little dazed at being thrown so hard. A high-pitched whistle pierced her consciousness and she caught her breath and got up. “Are you hurt?”

“I don’t think so, but someone is.” Ian’s lover looked grim as she rubbed her shoulder. “That alarm means we have casualties.”

The thin sound was more unpleasant than ever now that Jerra understood its significance. “Where are you going?” she demanded as Liale scanned the door open.

The other woman said shortly, “The main bay. I’m guessing they are bringing back wounded from the surface. If they need help, it’s my job to be on hand. You’ll be safe enough here, human.”

“I’m going with you.” Jerra said it firmly, with no equivocation.

“No, you are not. You’ll be a distraction and a nuisance.”

“I’m a trained nurse.”

Liale eyed her and there was a flicker of indecision in her expression. “Truly?”

“Yes.” It was irritating to realize she was regarded as having no purpose, except the sexual one she had been selected for by her abductors. “Believe me, Captain, I had an existence before the S-species decided to take over my life. I wasn’t just a nurse, but a surgical nurse.”

“You’re too young.”

“No.” She said it with gritty conviction. “Believe it or not, I’m actually very intelligent and was trained at an exceptionally early age. Now, shall we go?”

“I could get in trouble if I take you. I am not sure what Ian would want. I’m pretty sure he doesn’t see past your pretty tits and that tight little pussy he’s been in so often.”

Jerra fought the urge to lash back, taking a deep breath. She gave the S-species female a level, steady look. “You are letting your jealousy affect your judgment, Captain Liale. If help is needed and I can give it, I am sure Ian would want me to be useful.”

“Maybe so,” she admitted grudgingly and glanced over her scanty attire. “I wish you were wearing something else. I can see your breasts almost as clearly as if you were naked. But maybe you can help.” She gave a small grimace. “Besides, this way at least I am still keeping you with me like he wanted. Come then, but follow orders.”

Grateful to be able to do anything besides sit and worry, Jerra nodded and followed her out the door.

\* \* \* \*

His side was on fire, his mouth tasted of soot and smoke, and he was bleeding everywhere.

He was still way better off than Kartel.

*Shit!* He'd failed.

Ian pressed on the welling wound in his friend's stomach and bit back the string of swear words he wanted to let loose. There was shrapnel embedded deeply from the explosion and Ran's breathing had gotten ominously shallow.

It was hard to imagine such vitality extinguished, but it was not impossible. Ian had been a soldier long enough he'd seen plenty of death.

"Fuck, no," he muttered, his bloody hands slippery as he applied enough pressure to keep the ashen man lying so still from at least bleeding to death. "You aren't going to die, Kartel. No way. Stay with me." On an afterthought, he added, "Think of Jerra."

For a moment, he could swear his friend's eyelids fluttered.

If that was the way to keep him alive, he wasn't above exploiting it.

"She's so soft, isn't she?" he said in a persuasive whisper. "So warm inside, so tight and responsive. I see how she looks at you, and you told me how she loves you. If you leave her, she'll be fated to servicing other S-species males her whole life, and bearing children who will be taken away immediately. Is that what you want for her?"

Kartel gave a small groan, and despite his own wounds, Ian felt like leaping up and cheering. He went on, hope glimmering. "I think you could try and free her. No, it isn't done, but why not try? Petition the Council to see if they might gift her to you. It isn't like you haven't served Minoa in every way possible. When you pull through this, they are going to owe you for insisting we go instead of listening to your advice. They'll know it. Call in all your favors."

Ran opened his eyes, but his stare was unfocussed. "What...happened?"

Damn, he'd lost a lot of blood. The extraordinary pallor of his skin was frightening.

"They didn't give us a chance," Ian said, gratefully feeling the transport lock into docking mode. "The first bomb exploded before we even landed. They

destroyed our craft and we crashed. From there, they started a full assault on the ship, keeping rescue at bay. Finally, I was able to get through with a few orders.”

“What?” Kartel’s green eyes held intense curiosity besides his obvious pain and weakness. Mangled and bloody, he seemed only half-conscious, but it was better than nothing.

“We took out the capital.” Ian was no diplomat and he was not going to apologize for having a heavy hand. He’d recommended that strategy all along. “Most of their population and the full seat of their government. If they didn’t expect it, they were fools. They cannot attack diplomatic S-species envoys. In my mind, if they didn’t want to talk, that’s just fine. We can deal with each other in a much simpler way.”

“Simple?” Ran smiled, a ghost of the real thing curving his lips.

“Dead is simple,” Ian explained succinctly. “No matter the race, everyone understands death. Most universally decline the honor.”

“I didn’t...want...that.”

“I didn’t, either. They did. You do peace. Let me handle war.”

“You got it.” His friend’s eyes drifted shut, his pallor pronounced.

“Whoa. None of that. You aren’t leaving, got it? Tell me, what do you see for our lovely Jerra? Surely you’ve had visions? Come on, stay here and we’ll talk about it.”

“She looks even more beautiful pregnant, but who knows if it is mine. I’ve been having some problems seeing clearly lately and we all know she is supposed to be bred.”

“It’s yours.” Ian fought the tightness in his throat. “I feel it like I felt the ominous repercussions of this fucking misguided mission.”

“Right now...she’s frightened.”

“I would guess. They’ve been blasting at the ship, but once we were clear and their main defenses eradicated, it should be quiet up there. Plus, Kia is with her.”

“Kia is as frightened as she is.”

Ian felt his mouth tighten. He said gruffly, “That isn’t possible, Ran. She’s a soldier. Trained, hardened, and experienced.”

“She’s in love. It changes the chemistry...of...everything.”

Damned insight. Ian was infinitely glad he didn’t have it. “We’re here. Everything is going to be fine now.”

“Is it?”

Ian said firmly, “Yes.”

The doors opened and the first medical staff poured in. Ian saw them check visibly as they registered the severity of the injuries of the occupants of the craft, and he told the nearest doctor briefly, “Bomb.”

The man nodded and dropped to his knees next to Kartel, shouting for assistance. Ian was shouldered out of the way and he reluctantly left his friend in more competent hands.

Moments later, he was glanced over by a young female doctor who apologetically pronounced his wounds superficial and left him for someone who needed her more. Unfortunately, there were plenty of those. Regardless of his rank, he handed over bandages, carried stretchers, and did whatever he could for his men.

When he first spotted Jerra, he thought perhaps he was hallucinating. She was bent over a fallen man, her small hands busy at work with what looked like professional competence as she dressed a wound, her long unbound hair like a golden curtain. Despite his injuries, the fallen soldier was smiling and Ian really couldn’t quite blame the young male. Considering the low cut front of her almost translucent dress, he probably had one hell of a wonderful view of her spectacular breasts.

If Jerra was there...

“You’re bleeding, Ian.” Liale spoke gruffly as she strode toward him, but her face was pale. Her eyes glittered as she scanned his myriad of cuts and scrapes. “Why aren’t you being treated?”

“I’m told it is insignificant and I agree.”

“It looks bad.” She gestured at the blood dripping from his fingers.

“Take my word, it’s just a few flesh wounds and forget it.”

She muttered something about a stubborn male and he grinned for the first time since the explosion and crash, feeling a moment of light-hearted relief. “You



have no idea,” he informed her, just barely resisting the urge to throw his arms around her to kiss her soundly despite the melee of milling medical personnel.

“What went wrong?” She took the other end of a stretcher, lifting it with ease, her tall athletic body moving fluidly.

As they took the unconscious soldier toward the open bay of the ship, Ian told her, “Everything. They didn’t exactly welcome us with open arms but hit the transport and we crashed. Then they began a full assault. Luckily, both Kartel and I expected trouble.” He shrugged. “The craft behind us was full of the soldiers in your command, Kia. They are very well-trained men. My compliments, for they got us out quickly and efficiently.”

She nodded, shouldering her way through the door. “They work well together. What of Septinium?”

“I would guess they now understand that when S-species send a request for peace negotiations, they should behave like civilized creatures. That last explosion was fall out from our retaliation.”

“Where’s Kartel?”

Ian had expected her to ask, for the tall ambassador was hard to miss. “On one of these stretchers somewhere, hopefully with a very competent physician in attendance. He’s lost a lot of blood, I’m afraid.”

“Jerra won’t handle that well.”

He lifted his brows. “You care how she feels?”

Kia scowled. “I didn’t say I cared. I merely know how your beautiful little human feels about him.”

“I told you if you gave it a chance, you might actually like her.”

“I wish you’d never touched her, but you’re right, she can stand up for herself, despite the fact she’s a captive. I can perhaps understand why Kartel is so obsessed with her.” Liale grimaced as they carefully deposited the stretcher on a nearby bench in the medical area. “Besides the obvious reasons, of course.”

“She is beautiful.” He couldn’t resist making the comment for he loved Kia’s combative possessiveness. It matched his own fierce desires.

“She says you haven’t touched her in a long time.” His lover immediately bristled and put her hands on her hips. “Was she lying to me?”

“No. In my experience, Jerra does not lie. It isn’t her nature to be dishonest.”

“Stop complimenting her.”

“Is that an order? Let’s not forget I am your superior officer, Captain.”

She was predictably unfazed by the reminder. “I am your female. That means I am the only one you want in your bed. Forget your pretty little human, Ian. Besides, as far as I can tell, she belongs to Kartel.”

Ian felt all urge to tease her melt away. “I only want you, Kia, you know that. As for Jerra and Ran, well, let’s hope he lives so we can see what happens next.”

\* \* \* \*

Everything was a haze. The pain, the sound, the coppery smell of blood, none of it made sense.

Except one thing.

A hand. One small hand, dwarfed by his much larger one, clasping his fingers.

Ran turned his head a fraction and his nostrils flared as he drank in her scent over the combination of other impressions assaulting his senses. He knew that fragrance better than anything in his universe.

*Jerra.*

He tried to whisper her name, but it came out instead as a low croak, and immediately someone slipped an ice chip into his mouth. She bent closer for he could feel the silky brush of her hair on his cheek.

“Hush, Ran. Stay quiet. The doctor took enough metal out of you to build a second ship.”

It certainly felt like it, so maybe she was right.

Cool fingers touched his cheek. “Sleep and heal. That’s another advantage of being S-species they tell me. You’ll recover twice as fast as an ordinary human.”

Recovery was an abstract concept. The only solid thing was the brush of her fingertips on his burning skin and the musical sound of her voice.

“Stay,” he managed to mumble.

“As if I would ever leave,” she said in tremulous whisper.

Contented, he drifted off.

## Chapter 7

She really could not believe it, but the man had an erection.

Jerra said forcefully, "No."

"You're a very cruel nurse." Ran smiled at her from the bed, all lounging persuasive male. His bare torso still covered with bandages, but his long cock was decidedly erect beneath the sheet casually drawn to his waist. "I obviously need you. Can't you help me out?"

In exasperation, she shook her head. "You are hardly recovered enough for gymnastic sex, no matter what you think."

His green eyes held an undeniable smoldering heat. "I'll happily let you do all the work. Besides, I know for a fact they are still giving you the injections because you are scheduled to breed. I also know Larik and Ian leave you entirely to me, so you are as celibate as I have been lying in this damned bed. Tell me you don't want it, too."

He was right. She wanted him. But above all else, she wanted him *well*. It had been weeks since they started their return journey to Minoa and his recuperation coming along nicely, but whether or not he was ready to make love to her still hung in the balance. "I think it is a bad idea, no matter what I want."

"Aha. So you do admit you want this." He brushed down the sheet and touched himself, his graceful long-fingered hand running up the length of his impressive erection to the tip. Semen beaded on his finger.

"Yes." She wasn't going to deny it, but neither would she encourage him to do something that might impair his already miraculous recovery. "Desire should be separate from something that could be a damned bad idea, Ran."

"Sit on me. I won't even move if you insist."

She eyed him uncertainly, tempted but unsure. "If I hurt you, I won't forgive myself."

Triumph gleamed in his gaze. "You are less than half my size. How could you hurt me? Besides, you cannot let me lie here in this state all day. My balls actually hurt. Come on, take off your clothes and bring that glorious body over here. I'm going to bet you're already wet."

She *was* wet and hot between her legs, her pussy throbbing at the sight of his engorged penis. "Ran," she said in reproach, but did slip her dress over her head. Her nipples were already stiff with desire as she approached the bed. When she reached him, she consciously stayed just out of reach. "I still think this is a bad idea."

"I think it is a marvelous idea. Step closer."

His heavy-lidded gaze seemed to hold her prisoner and she did what he said, the command in his voice hard to deny. Immediately, he slid his fingers up her inner thigh and slipped two into her pussy, gently exploring and stretching.

She almost came right then.

Those damned shots. He was right. Taking the injections without any sexual relief was difficult. Jerra moaned and Ran laughed lightly. He thumbed her clit and she quivered violently.

"Climb up," he invited, removing his soaked fingers. "It's all yours."

She was careful as she got on the bed and straddled his hips. She grasped his cock and positioned the tip at her slit. As always, she had to gradually absorb the large width and length of his shaft, her body opening to accept it, her breathing shifting into a rapid pattern as she filled her vagina inch by inch.

It felt so good. So right. She loved him beyond what she believed was possible.

Ran's gaze was riveted on the joining of their bodies, watching as his cock slowly disappeared inside her. "Yeah, sweetheart, just like that."

When the tip nudged her womb, she began to climax. It was beyond her control, the pleasure so intense and so denied during his weeks of recuperation she shuddered uncontrollably and cried out in abandoned satisfaction. In return, Ran growled, "Yes."

His hands spanned her hips, pushing her downward and forcing himself deeper as he ejaculated. The copious amount of sperm seemed to pour into her forever, each flex of his release a hot spurt she could feel with amazing, vivid sensation.

“I needed that.” He said the words with a dazzling smile, still firmly holding her in place impaled on his stiff penis. “Don’t bother to get off because I’ll want you right back here again in a moment. We’ll slow things down this time if you don’t mind.”

It was encouraging to know he felt well enough to have his sex drive back, but she still worried over tiring him too much. “I want to please you, you know that, but promise me you won’t overdo it.”

“You do please me.” His hands slid upward to her breasts. He began to stroke and fondle her, rubbing her nipples with his thumbs, cradling her flesh in his palms. “More than any female I have ever known.”

As he had never said he loved her in return, desire was probably as close to that sentiment as she would ever get. She’d had plenty of time to think about the situation while she cared for him in the days since the failed mission. He was an important individual and it was demonstrated by how his injuries and possible death had caused a furor not just on the ship, Larik told her, but on their home planet.

A powerful S-species male did not become permanently attached to a human female slave, she needed to face it. However, if he enjoyed her enough, maybe he would ask to keep her for sexual service and she would be content.

Anything to stay with him.

“You please me, also.” Her voice was soft and she looked into his emerald eyes.

“I like the idea of being your only lover.” He rolled a taut nipple between his fingers with delicate precision.

Larik and Ian had also given her pleasure many times, but Ran was the one she truly loved. “I like it, too.”

“The doctor told me this morning he has reprogrammed your chip so you will ovulate.”

“Yes.” The idea of his child growing inside her made her feel both joy and despair over the inevitable separation.

“Then we need to make a concentrated effort to impregnate you.” Ran dropped one hand and with one skillful fingertip stimulated her clit. Almost immediately, she felt the flutter of orgasmic sensation deep in the pit of her

stomach. He watched her face as he applied just the right amount of pressure, and beyond her will, her entire body began to tremble.

Jerra moaned her pleasure, her open thighs tightening around his hips, his cock stretching her deliciously wide. At his urging, she began to ride him, lifting up and sinking down on his shaft, the lubrication of her arousal and his discharge making the motion easy. True to his word, he did not move, except to encourage her with his hands.

When she climaxed again it was wild and abandoned, her throat arched back as the rapture of it slammed through her body. She felt his response as he pumped into her, his breath escaping in a long hiss of satisfaction.

“That’s enough,” she told him sternly when he protested as she climbed off his lean body. “You still need rest, Ran.”

“You are a very bossy nurse, have I mentioned that?” The grumble was pure male. “Last I knew, I was the one with the authority.”

“No one could force me to do anything to harm you no matter who they are.”

“For someone who looks like an angel, you can be very fierce, sweet Jerra, and not just in bed.” His laugh rang out, low and mellow.

It was all too easy to recall the heart-stopping moment when she had first seen him on the stretcher, covered in blood, his flayed skin and gaping wounds a horrifying sight.

“I love you,” she said simply and reached for her discarded dress.

\* \* \* \*

Ian sat in a chair, dwarfing it with his size, his long legs extended. He said, “I’ve written my report and the Council has it. What they do now is up to them.”

“My guess is they will consider it not as much of the disaster it was because your swift actions actually solved the problem. I doubt Septinium will be a future threat to anyone.” Ran rubbed his jaw, glad to be out of his bed for the first time, just the mere fact of donning his clothes making him feel more like himself. They sat in the common room of their berth and he had actually felt like drinking a glass of wine.

“Or they might discipline me for taking such an aggressive approach.”

“They might.” Ran knew his government’s opposition to being perceived as high-handed. “But I doubt it. Not with half of a diplomatic team dead and the other half wounded. They knew we wanted to negotiate a peaceful solution, but they wouldn’t have sent you along if they didn’t think it was possible it would not turn out that way.”

Ian nodded, his dark hair brushing his neck. “True enough. I have other troubles, though. I suspect they know of my relationship with Kia. There is no way others on this ship do not suspect where I spend my nights and that I’m directly breaking the rules. She is going to resign, but that does not change the fact I’ve breached the code of ethics.”

“I think you underestimate the loyalty of those who serve under you. I doubt anyone has reported it.”

“If they have, though—”

Ran shook his head. “They don’t know. Trust me.”

His friend gave him a keen look. “You see this?”

“Yes. Besides, they would contact me for confirmation. After all, we share a berth.”

Ian seemed to relax. “That’s good to know. I never imagined I would ever do such a thing, but you know, she has a powerful effect on me.”

“I do know.” He couldn’t help it, his gaze strayed to the window and the bed visible through the glass. Jerra napped often in the afternoons now that she was pregnant.

Ian followed his look. “Yes, I imagine you do know. Tell me, when will they let you know what is going to happen?”

“I am going to meet with the board as soon as we get back. Already, I have requests from several members for a face to face interview.” Ran felt his stomach knot. “I hope you’re right and they grant my request. The laws governing intermarriage are archaic and date back to the evolution. At the time, we were emerging into our own species and the separation of the genes made sense. But now we are deliberately breeding human genetic patterns back into our bloodlines. Surely, forbidding mixed marriages is based on a rule that is no longer necessary.”



“There is a certain amount of snobbery involved, you know that, Ran. You are a public figure, an S-species hero, and for you to wish to mate with a human took them weeks to approve. Marrying her might be met with refusal. In their eyes, she is simply a slave and inferior, no matter how bright and beautiful.”

He knew all of that only too well. “She helped save lives.” He hoped the testimony of the doctors and the soldiers and others she’d worked on during that fateful return to the ship would aid his cause. “There was no obligation on her part to wish to help. Let’s remember she was abducted for the purpose of sexual servitude. She owes us nothing, yet she gave freely, anyway.”

“I am the last one to disagree with you on the point, and believe me, I will lend my weight to any argument you make.” Ian idly fingered his wine glass. “Tell me, does she know?”

“That I wish to make her my life partner? No. As you just pointed out, it might not be possible, so why get her hopes up for something that hasn’t been approved of for generations. If they refuse, I will settle for keeping her as my personal property. If they refuse that...” His voice trailed off as he contemplated having to let her go to be bred to someone else. Finally, he finished with quiet emphasis, “I am not sure what I will do. I see most things with clarity. For myself, it isn’t as easy.”

Ian nodded, his face set. “Who knew when we set out on this mission, it would so change our lives.”

Ran smiled. “I didn’t see how, but I knew before we ever set foot on this ship, things would never be the same for either of us. I believe I mentioned it.”

“Yes, you did. I don’t know if I should envy Armada for not having an emotional involvement with a female, or feel sorry for him. He’s grumbled more than once about having to share one of the other humans in deference to your possession of Jerra, but I know he’s also happy for you.”

“His turn will come.”

“Oh, really, will it? What do you see?”

“Chaos ahead for him. It has to be a female. What else causes so much confusion in our normally ordered lives?”

“Nothing.” Ian said the word succinctly and drained his glass of wine.

\* \* \* \*

She was alone.

Truly alone. Locked away and forgotten.

Jerra stared out the window and saw the foreign landscape with a sense of fatalistic contemplation. When she had been escorted off the ship, somehow she had assumed Ran would come to her. Instead, she'd been taken to the room she now occupied, and despite her requests for information, told nothing about what was happening.

Gently, she pressed her hand over the subtle swell of her abdomen. The doctor had explained since S-species had larger children, she would show the pregnancy much faster and grow larger. Luckily, the babies needed a shorter gestation period and he had already given her the date she was scheduled to deliver.

And what happened after that?

No one seemed to know. When she asked Ran, he had simply kissed her and began to make love to her, the distraction obvious but an effective tactic. She had the distinct feeling he either didn't know himself, or didn't want to tell her.

*Please don't let it be the latter*, she prayed.

The door opened, startling her out of her abstraction. Jerra turned, her mouth parting in surprise as she saw Captain Liale step inside. Since they were hardly the best of friends—but had come to an uneasy truce in her opinion—she was both surprised and glad to see a familiar face.

“Hello, human.” Liale tossed something on the small bed. “I’ve been sent to ready you though it’s hardly a duty I asked for. Put that on. You can’t go as you are.”

“Go where?”

“Before the Council.”

“What council?”

“I am not interested in explaining. If you don’t get dressed right now, we’ll be late and it won’t help, believe me.”

There was something about her tone that made Jerra stifle her urge to argue. She saw the garment on the bed was a gown made of some filmy—but thankfully not transparent—material, and as she picked it up, it flowed over her hands with a unique softness. The gold threads glimmered in the pale light of the three moons that hung in the sky outside her window.

Nudity no longer bothered her, not after living with a window open to practically her every movement, and she gratefully took off the translucent gown designed to display rather than conceal her body, and slipped on the one Liale had brought her. It hugged her curves but fell almost to the floor, at least not showing off every bit of her anatomy. She ran a brush through her long hair and turned around.

The tall captain looked at her with what seemed like actual approval. “Your beauty might sway them. Come, let’s go.”

“Sway them how?”

Liale made an impatient movement with her hand. “The governor has requested you be transferred into his care.”

An icy lump seemed to settle in her stomach. “What? They can’t. I’m pregnant with Ran Kartel’s child.”

“The Council can do whatever they wish, believe me, and he will get the child no matter what they decide. Now come.”

She had no choice, as usual, but to obey. If she wanted, Ian’s lover could easily physically force her because of her superior size, and she would just as soon preserve whatever dignity left to her. Jerra followed her out, her palms damp, and they went to the same sort of small transport used to bring her to her latest accommodations. Liale refused to say anything more as they traveled across the teeming city and Jerra finally subsided into an uneasy silence.

The security measures required to get into the building they finally reached were complicated, but they seemed to be expected. Several of the S-species guards looked at her curiously and Jerra tried to keep an impassive expression. Once inside, Liale took her down a series of long hallways, past more guards, and finally into a huge room.

Cool air brushed her bare arms and she shivered. It was the size of a small amphitheater and she was led to the very center, where a semi-circle table faced a small dais. To her relief, she saw Ran amid the members who sat there, but her elation faded when she registered the impassive expression on his handsome face.

There was no welcome in his green eyes and no emotion in the way he looked at her.

Her heart felt as if it plummeted through the floor.

Liale briefly saluted the panel and left with quiet efficiency.

“Jerra Aubrey?” One of them, older, with a dark beard and piercing eyes, spoke her name slowly.

“Yes.” She nodded, feeling their unabashed scrutiny.

“The governor has petitioned to have you made his personal property due to the nature of your superior service during the recent mission. Normally, you must understand, once taken from Earth, you belong to the government of Minoa. The unusual request is currently under debate.”

*The governor? Not Ran?*

She looked at him and still he simply sat there. She had known she would be passed on to other S-species males for breeding, but he had promised her they would at least be together for the period of her pregnancy. “What is it you wish from me?” she asked boldly, doing her best to look composed when what she really wanted was to burst into tears.

“Actually, I suppose we were more curious than anything.” One of the others spoke out, his gray hair and regal bearing impressive. “I am told you insisted on helping after the wounded were brought back from Septinium. Tell us why if you will.”

“I was hardly going to let anyone suffer if I could do something about it.”

“But you are a slave,” another one said.

She looked directly at the speaker. “Quite frankly, I have never felt that way. Yes, you captured me, forced me into sexual servitude, and have even bred me, but there are some things you simply cannot own. In my heart, I am free. When I give, it is of my choice. You can take all you wish, but the only thing of value is what is given. If you choose to force me to go to someone other than Ran Kartel, I suppose I can do nothing about it. However, rest assured they will never enjoy me as he did, for I love him and right now his child grows inside me.”

The older gray-haired opened his mouth as if to speak, but then lapsed into silence. The bearded man spoke instead. “I see. Thank you, Miss Aubrey.”

It was a dismissal, but she didn't move. Instead, she looked at Ran, hoping he would see the emotion in her eyes. "You are not going to fight for me in any way?"

"I have."

The resignation in his voice made her furious. "That's it? You would let me go so easily? I am not your slave, and you well know it. We are lovers. It is an entirely different thing."

"I agree." The ghost of a smile seemed to hover around his lips. "Entirely."

"I do not know who the governor is and I don't care. I will not be passed off—"

"Miss Aubrey, you are dismissed."

"I am *not* dismissed." There was too much entirely at stake for her to care about their high-handed rules. She was shaking, her unhappiness tangible and all consuming, and she clenched her hands into fists. "Perhaps you think you are superior, but I will tell you that isn't true if you do not let love and compassion govern your actions. It isn't simple, believe me, because I know firsthand the difficulties of gaining affection for someone who has complete and utter control over your life. But being powerless physically does not make you powerless emotionally. I do not care what you all decide. I will not—"

"Jerra." Ran stood up. "I am the new governor of Minoa."

His declaration stopped her rant. She stared at him. "What?"

"I am the new governor. I was just appointed. The Council is now trying to decide if the law needs to be changed so humans and S-species of either sex can marry legally upon my recommendation. So far, it is outlawed because your race is considered inferior." His emerald eyes glimmered in amusement. "I think, however, you just made quite a point on the subject."

Her knees felt actually weak. "I did?"

He left his position at the table and came around toward her. "Yes, you did. I don't believe there is anyone here who is in question over your feelings."

"Ran." She didn't even realize she'd moved until she felt his arms draw her close and she buried her face against his chest. "I have missed you so much."

He stroked her hair and laughed softly despite their audience. “I know. Believe it or not, as inferior as my passion might be to your human emotion, I do have a modicum of sentiment and I have missed you, too.” He glanced at the Council. “Well? Have you made a decision?”

## **Epilogue**

It felt like their first night together.

Jerra laid her son gently in the cradle. His extraordinary beauty always amazed her, but then again, she felt the same way about his father. Thanks to Ran, she had even been able to communicate with her parents several times, and he'd proposed a trip so she could let them see their grandchild as soon as he was old enough to make the journey. She quietly eased the door to the nursery open and slipped out.

"Is he finally asleep?" Ran waited for her in bed, propped on one elbow, the soft starlight outside the window illuminating his thick shining hair and brilliant eyes.

She nodded. "He was hungry."

Her husband smiled. "As far as I can tell, he is a voracious eater for someone so small. I'm a bit jealous for he currently gets to spend more time with your breasts than I do."

"They are free at the moment." She hadn't bothered to refasten her gown and saw his gaze glimmer as she walked toward the bed. Her breasts, heavier now since she gave birth, swayed as she moved. The doctor had confirmed it was fine now for her to resume normal sexual relations and she was more than anxious.

"I was rather hoping you might find a minute or two for me."

She shimmied out of her nightdress. "Are you really jealous?"

"Quite the contrary. Seeing you hold my child is the most moving experience I could ever imagine." His brows lifted. "However, I won't bother to deny I want to make love to you. My erection kind of gives me away."

She teasingly lowered her lashes. "I think you will find me very cooperative and subservient, Governor Kartel."

He chuckled. “Subservient? That doesn’t describe you, I’m afraid. From our very first meeting, I knew that. Now, come here and let’s recall our initial introduction detail by detail. It seems to me we both enjoyed it very much.”

Jerra slid into his arms. “You didn’t give me much choice but to enjoy it as I remember it.”

He rolled her to her back and settled his mouth against hers in a persuasive tender kiss. When he lifted his head, he whispered, “If there is one thing you’ve taught me, my love, is that there is always a choice. Lucky for me, I chose you.”

She was the lucky one, she thought drowning in his next kiss, feeling his passion but also his love under the light of the pale stars.

**PALE STARS IN HER EYES**  
*The Starlight Chronicles*

**THE END**

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## AUTHOR'S BIO



Annabel Wolfe/Kate Watterson/Emma Wildes is the author of numerous erotic novels and short stories. Reading has always been her passion and she finds that vibrant characters with strong personalities have a tendency to draw her straight into the story. History is her passion, and it reflects in her choice of wickedly dashing heroes and willful heroines. She lives in rural Indiana and is working on her next romance. Please stop by and visit at [www.annabelwolfe.com](http://www.annabelwolfe.com) or [www.emmawildes.com](http://www.emmawildes.com). She would love to hear from you.



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