



# Tamed

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**Category:** Romance, Action, Science Fiction

**Description:** Crash landing on a planet of woman warriors isn't working out well for us and we've got to work together to win an unexpected challenge. Varnak and Alex's story. Expect to see intrigue, battle and a world where dominance isn't always achieved by brute strength.

**Total Pages (Source):** 19

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## CHAPTER 1

Alex

Isigh and push the strange bar over my head yet again. The hologram room has done a decent job of getting a human gym together but it still looks strange. The bar is glowing and the weights are shaped like an oval and iridescent, see-through.

But my muscles shake and groan. So obviously I'm actually working here even if it looks like some kind of weird disco with the lights.

I grunt and growl under my breath, trying to push thoughts of Varnak out of my mind.

The damn guy is fucking hot. But he's also an annoying, arrogant, obnoxious pain in the ass. He can't deal with me like I'm an equal. No, he has to deal with me like I'm some little woman that he has to take care of and I don't fucking like it. I'm a strong, independent female who can take care of myself and anyone else around me. I want to fight and be trusted to participate as an equal and he just doesn't seem to be able to let go of his own damn prejudices.

"Hey, Alex! I'm in your room, where are you?"

I grunt and holler, "computer, halt program! I'm in the holodeck, Lacey!"

"Oh, do you want me to come there?"

“No, I’m on my way back. I was almost done anyway.” I stalk out of the door as it whooshes open. The new base that we’ve all been working on on the asteroid, Farth One, is coming together great. It’s larger and easier to keep secure since it moves constantly. That means that sometimes the guys have to search for it, but so does everyone else.

It takes me only minutes to get to my room and the door whooshes open when I pass my palm over the security device. I have to admit that I like this part of the alien tech. I like knowing that there is something that keeps unknown people from coming in my room if I don’t want them to.

If only humans had such things maybe some of the things that happen wouldn’t.

By the way, I know that some places have palm readers and such. But these are even outfitted with some weird sensor that feels their intentions. Like it can read their minds. And if they have bad intentions, they don’t get in. It’s a game changer, I think.

If only all the girls out there could have one of those encoded into their dna, then maybe you could just touch your palm and you’d be able to immediately tell if some asshole didn’t have the best of intentions.

Lacey’s standing by my dining room table, smirking at a small green plant that’s sitting there in a strange pot. I found it in one of the abandoned spaces here. This actually used to be a pirate base. Some of the place was undeveloped and that’s the part that the Council decided to use for this base.

But the other side of the asteroid was a shitty mess of a barracks for pirates and in the middle of one of the rooms, barely surviving was this little monster of a plant. It’s an ugly thing that’s got a weird flower on it that’s the same green as the plant. It was beat-up and it looked way out of place in this part of the world and for some reason, I felt a strange affinity for the damn thing even though I usually manage to kill off

anything that I'm taking care of. I've got a black thumb that can and will kill everything in its path. For that reason, amongst many others, I want nothing to do with men. Or males as the case may be since these guys are what I'm left with now since I was kidnapped from Earth. Lord know, they aren't like human men in a lot of ways.

But in others? Yeah. Territorial, alpha and fierce as hell when it comes to their families. I've watched as Lacey got closer to Koehn and I'm amazed that he hasn't lifted his leg and peed on her like a damn dog.

As it is, every time one of the other males on the ship gets near her, he growls like a feral wolf and his lips curl up in a vicious snarl. She seems to find it funny.

I don't.

To me, this more than anything excludes me from ever getting involved with one of these guys. I'm not the kind of woman that's gonna sit back and let a guy get away with acting like he owns me. I'm not a possession. I'm a person. A living, sentient being with thoughts and feelings of my own. I can make my own decisions and I don't need some dickhead telling me what I should do.

Lacey reaches out a finger and touches the strange flower and it jerks back. Her brow crinkles. "That's odd."

My own eyebrows lift and I stare down at the thing. I've never seen it do that.

She puts her finger out again and touches the little plant and it does the same thing. Jerks back and a strange sound comes out of it.

Her amber eyes jump to mine. "What the hell is going on with your little plant, Alex? Are you sure that's what this is?"

“What else could it be?”

“I don’t know,” she mutters. “Did any of the guys get a look at it?”

“No. I brought it right to my quarters and it’s been here ever since.”

“I think you should have Gardon take a look at this.”

I shake my head vehemently and she sighs. “We’re on an alien base and some weird thing is here and you just take it home with you. Have you ever seen that movie Alien? Bad things happen. Really bad things. Take it to Gardon and have him take a look at it. Maybe he knows what it is and can tell you how to take better care of it. And if it’s not a plant? Then he’ll know that too and he can help you dispose of it.”

“It’s still a living thing, Lacey,” I protest. “I don’t want to hurt it.”

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“We are in space, Alex. You need to be careful. We don’t know anything about this. And something that looks entirely safe may not be.”

I sigh. “Okay. But I really don’t think there’s anything wrong with this plant. It’s just a plant.”

“It’s a plant that growled at me. That’s not normal for any kind of plant, Alex. Ask Koehn or Varnak. Ask somebody.”

I glare at her when she mentions Varnak’s name.

She holds her hand up and sighs. “I see we’re still fighting with Varnak, huh? Are you guys ever gonna find a happy place together?”

I snort. “If he ever gets over the bullshit he spouts every damn time I turn around...maybe. But do I not actually think that that’s gonna happen. The male that he is just can’t admit that a woman can take care of herself or manage to fight for her own safety. He’s a sexist alpha asshole.”

Lacey grins. “But a sexy one.”

“For god’s sake, Lacey! I don’t care what he looks like! He’s an ass!” I do care what he looks like and so does my damn traitorous body. Every time I see him my heart rate explodes out of control and goosebumps break out all along my skin.

He’s a beautiful man. Gorgeous even. But I’m not sure if it makes up for that damn terrible attitude of his and the male chauvinist way he acts.

She shoots me a skeptical look. Like she knows just what I'm saying silently.

"I really don't think that you're telling me the truth. But I'll let you get away with it for now. Have you managed to get any training sessions in with the guys on hand to hand combat?"

I snort again. "Hell no! I think they're all afraid of Varnak! And he won't fight me, the big baby!"

Lacey giggles, her golden-brown eyes sparkling wildly. "I cannot picture that guy as a baby! I mean...a seven foot baby?"

I huff out a breath. "Yeah, well, he acts like one, that's for sure. I've hollered at him, I've even begged him to either fight me himself or stop threatening every other male that wants to fight me and he just keeps snorting and walking off like I'm some kind of annoying gnat messing with him."

She waves her hands around in the air and giggles harder. "I think the man is afraid to put his hands on you for fear that something might happen."

"He's not a man. He's a damn alien. And what on earth do you think he thinks is going to happen? He can't possibly think that I would ever let him...."

Her brow lifts and she smirks at me. "Alex, the heat coming off of you two is...well, it's volcanic. It's like it's about to explode all over everyone around you two. I don't think you realize how strong it really is. And how much that guy is fighting it. I think you're his mate."

My face pales and I stare at her, appalled, my head feeling light, strange. "There is no way that I'm any alien male's mate! And if I was...it for sure wouldn't be such an arrogant asshole like Varnak!"

She pats me on the shoulder, her eyes soft and sympathetic. “Good luck with that, Alex. You keep telling yourself that if you need to.”

I glare at her as she walks out the door, whistling. Dammit! I hate that she managed to get me all riled up over Varnak of all things!

## CHAPTER 2

Varnak

My life is a wrecking mess right now, thanks to one tiny, muscular female who wants to fight every male in this place and I cannot bear to let her do it.

I refuse to see her wrap her arms around any other male on this base. My heart would burst if I had to watch something like that. Anger would drive me insane and I’m very sure that I’d probably kill any one of them no matter if they were my friend or not.

I stalk past Koehn and he grunts at me, his eyes shining with mischief. I don’t know what’s gotten into him but whatever it is, if it’s because of his new mate, I almost wish he wasn’t as happy as he currently is. It’s wrecking disgusting.

“How is your little mate today, Varnak?”

Glaring at him, I turn on my heel and stride away. “I don’t have a mate, asshole.”

“You do....you just don’t want to admit it.” He knows. They probably all know which is why they’re accepting my growled statement that they can’t touch her. Even if some of them are dying to go to war with the little demon. She’s been tormenting all of us since she came to this base. She’s taunted us with comments on our manhood and whether we’re scared of the little monster.



Hell yeah I am! I am terrified of her. Terrified to even get near her for fear that I won't be able to let her go. Won't be able to let her take even one step away from me without throwing her over my shoulder and stalking out the door and to a bed so that I can fuck her out of my system.

Which will never happen. I have a mate. I never thought that that could happen. I mean, it's not like I want one. I want to fight until the day I die. I want to do it all and see it all and then destroy anyone that gets in my way or the council's way until I can't do it anymore and I die.

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But I have a mate and I'm assuming at some point that mate is going to manage to slip under my skin and wriggle her way even more into my soul until I can't see a day without her, without knowing that she's my one, my reason for living, for breathing. Just for being.

But for right now? I don't want it. I want to live my life the way I see fit. I want to be able to move without a word and leave for long periods of time.

I just want to be my own male and I don't want anything to mess with that.

I don't want to be responsible for bringing a life into this mean, bad world and worry every damn day of my life that I can't protect them.

I know some of Lacey's story from Koehn. She's been through a lot in her short life and none of it was her fault. Although she thought it was.

I feel a kinship with her on that. My own family was destroyed when our tribe was attacked. In one instant, I had nobody anymore.

It vrecking hurt. Not to mention the female that didn't want me.

So I'm not in a rush to be responsible for anybody else and with Alex?

My hand runs through my hair which I've got down today although I usually braid it up to fight. To be ready at all times.

"That female is not right in her mental state," I mutter under my breath. I cannot be

responsible for her.

Koehn snorts with laughter. I whip around, my fists clenching at my sides. “What is so funny?”

“You. You sound just like me. You can fight it all you want.”

“I intend to. I don’t want a mate.”

“It’s fated. I don’t believe that you can fight that.”

“I can fight any granthing thing I want. And I’ll vrecking win.”

He shakes his head, his white hair a mess from his usual tidy length. But with the biggest smile on his face. He smacks my arm and walks towards a mat in the workout area. “Come on. Let me see you do something beyond crying.”

I snort. “I’m not crying.”

He yanks his hair up in a leather tie. “You’re not fighting either.”

I meet him on the mat. Tying my own hair up, I slip into an offensive posture. “Get ready to get your ass destroyed.”

“Your English sucks. Is that the best trash talk you’ve got? I think Alex could and would destroy you.”

“I’ve been practicing same as you.”

“Difference is that I’m with my mate and she helps me. Alex just seems to be making you into a bigger mess. That sucks as she’s your mate.”

Blood pounds in my ears and a snarl flicks my lips. “I am tired of this talk. What is it exactly that you want from me, Koehn?”

He sighs. “We’re having a meeting about this trip that the females are so excited about.”

“Yeah. I’ve already said I’d do it. I can take one of the two-seater ships. Who are we thinking to go with me?”

“I don’t think you’re going to like the way this is going to go, my brother.”

I don’t like it. I can tell by the look on his face, smug and yet worried.

“There is no way that they could be thinking of sending Alex with me,” I grit out between clenched teeth, my fangs grinding into my bottom teeth.

“That is what they are thinking of doing.” He holds up his hand as I open my mouth to spew a diatribe of swear words. Human swear words fascinate me. “Look at it this way. If you manage to find this female, she’s gonna be scared. She’s not going to understand you at all. And you won’t have the means to add our language to the chip until you get back here. It’s the best way to make sure that she is comfortable.”

“What about my comfort, Koehn? There is no vrecking way I want to take a long trip alone with Alex. The female is a damn menace. The other day she threatened to take my manhood in the most painful way possible.”

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Koehn snorts but buries it under a cough when I glare at him and grit my teeth again.

“What did you do to make your mate say something like that?”

“She found out that I threatened Grudnik.”

He lifts a white brow. “Why?”

He knows. The whole damn base knows. But I growl under my breath. “You know that I threatened to kill him if he touches her.”

“Yes. I do. And now she does. That female is the scariest thing I’ve seen in a long time. I would not close my eyes anywhere near her. She probably will take off your rada.”

“Very amusing, Koehn. But that is why it would be very stupid of me to take a trip with her.”

“Doesn’t matter. None of the other females will go right now.”

“What about Lacey? She’s a pretty strong female. I bet she would enjoy this journey.”

He growls and glares at me. “Now you’re just trying to anger me, Varnak.”

“What?”

“I do not believe this look that you are wearing, Varnak. If you thought that I would send my mate alone with another male you must have hit your head...hard.”

I grin. “I did not think of that.”

“You didn’t think that I would not want my mate, Lacey, going on a long trip with an unmated male who is moderately good-looking.”

I grin. “You make it sound bad.”

“I make it sound like a good way to die.”

I choke on a growl. “You would not trust me with your mate?”

“I wouldn’t trust a fantua with my mate. And he does not have the balls like the females say.”

“Just come to the south bridge in fifty parsecs. We’ll finish this discussion then.”

I grumble under my breath, “That gives her the chance to argue her case.”

“If you mean, Alex, you are right. Good luck, my brother. I’m pretty sure that the females are solidly on Alex’s side on this one and the council members have all accepted her proposal to go.”

I’m fighting a losing fight. I can feel it. But vrecking hell if I’m just going to give up. I am not a quitter. I don’t want to have to take that granthing female. She does something to my insides and I can’t think around her

Her blue eyes are deeper than space and sparkle with annoyance every time she looks at me. Her mouth is full and red, like she has been thoroughly fucked. Which just

makes me want to fuck her.

And I can't. I would lose my soul.

## CHAPTER 3

Alex

“I’m telling you that I’m ready and willing to go on this trip. I want to do this more than anything in the world. I’m fully-healed up and I think we should leave as soon as possible.”

The council president smiles at me. “You are full of fire, Alex. I hope that nothing ever douses that flame.”

I snort. “Meh. I’m not going to be pushed down or out. This is important. If there are other human females out there, they need our help.”

She smiles at me and then turns to Varnak. “I know that you’ve asked to go along as well.”

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“I’m going to lead this trip,” he growls under his breath.

Zuvia nods at Varnak. “Right. That is what I meant. But even if you do, you need Alex with you.”

“I do not.”

“You do. You are not going to be able to communicate with this female if she is there. She does not have our speech on her translator. The Carvallians do not want anything to do with the Arkadian War Fleet so there’s no way that they’ve put it on their devices.”

“I’m sure. However I’m also sure that I can manage until I get back to the base. Even if I have to set up a line between us and the base when we find her so that she can talk to one of the females here to calm her.”

“That all sounds good. But it has nothing to do with taking care of this female and I’m not willing to let her be traumatized in any way. I assume that she already has been, if not physically then emotionally.”

Zuvia sighs, “As council president, I believe that it would be best for all if Alex goes with you. She will be the most help to you. One of the other males really wouldn’t make much of a difference.” She sits straighter and nods her head. “Yes. This makes the most sense.” She turns towards me and sighs, “Are you sure that you are still alright with this, Alex?”

For just a minute, my heart races out of control. I’m about to be stuck on a smaller



ship for an extended period of time with Varnak and he still makes me quiver in places I'd rather not think about even as he blackballs me from getting the practice that I so desperately need and makes me so angry that I could spit.

What the hell am I going to do about that?

I nod my head and grunt. "Yes. I'm good with it." Like a magnet, my eyes slew sideways and I see Varnak's blue-green gaze narrow, his brows almost touching as he furrows his forehead.

She nods her head and then turns to Varnak. "You will both leave in two sleeps." Her eyes turn to steel as Varnak opens his mouth. "I will not change my mind." Then she stands and studies the two of us, her mouth lifting slightly. "I will hope that you two manage to do your jobs on this mission and that you both return in one piece. Good luck."

She stalks out of the room and her acolytes follow along behind her.

I turn when Varnak growls and stalks out after her. Lacey grins at me. "I hope you know what you're doing. He's pretty pissed."

I grunt at her and stand up, stalking after him. "So am I. He's being entirely unreasonable."

I follow him, shoving my stick-straight black hair behind my ear as I trail along behind him. I can see his big, tall frame ahead of me.

"Hey, asshole!" He doesn't even flinch. Just keeps moving and ignores me completely. Just like he's been doing since we got here. Since they found us on that damn ship.

I jog to catch up with him as he reaches the gym. I've come in here once or twice to try and get a fight, a workout. Every damn male here has turned me down even though a few of them looked like they were thinking about it.

I grab his arm and he hisses, glaring down at my fingers wrapped around his arm. I yank my fingers away and stare down at them as they burn like fire. My skin tingles where I touched him. His blue skin is vivid today. Some days he's a muted navy but today his skin is bright sapphire and glows with some inner light.

But those aquamarine eyes are hard and closed off. "What?"

I glare at him and move closer, ignoring the way my skin fires up. My whole body clenches and begs me to move closer to him. I ignore the feeling and focus on his annoying face.

I stick a finger in his face. "I don't know why you can't be civil with me but I've had it, asshole. We're doing this together and there's not one damn thing you can do about it."

"You could say you will not do it. Zuvia will not press you to."

I snort. "I'm not doing that. I'm going. Get used to it. You've blocked me at every damn turn and I'm sick of it. I know what my mission is right now and that's to make sure that any human female who is in this ridiculous situation gets to live the miserable existence that we can even if we can't go home."

"You do not like it here?" His eyes are searching and I can't escape from the light in them.

"I don't dislike it but it wasn't my choice and if there's one thing that I don't like it's people making decisions for me."

“Especially males,” he smirks.

“Yeah.” I shove a finger into his rock-hard chest, watching the muscles of his chest shift and flex and feeling it under my fingers. I suck in a breath, shocked at the raw hunger that blazes to life inside me. “I hate that. You’ve been pushing my buttons from the very beginning. I don’t like it.”

His eyes narrow and shift. “What if I gave you what you want? Would you give in and refuse to take this trip with me?”

I back away and cross my arms over my chest. His eyes follow the movement and there’s something dark hidden in his eyes. Something that makes my body heat up to volcanic levels.

“What do you think I want, Varnak?” My hands run down to my hips and those sea-blue eyes follow them like they’re magnetized.

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His lips quirk into a sly smile that doesn't reach his eyes. "I actually know this, vistu."

My head comes up to glare at him. "What the hell is a vistu?"

He grins fully now. "It's a small animal from our planet that bites and hisses all the time. Very bad-tempered."

Grunting, I glare at him again. "Very amusing, Varnak. But you still haven't told me what you think I want."

"I think you want me to look at you as something but a female. I think you want someone to agree to fight you."

My heart skips a beat and my eyes widen. "You would let someone fight me?"

His smirk widens until it's practically taking over his face. "I would fight you myself, vistu."

The thought of him touching me in any way makes me feel sick to my stomach and my vision blurs at the edges.

There is no way I want that man to touch me. I feel out of control every time he's anywhere near me. I am not sure I'm willing to risk that even if it would give me the training that I crave desperately.

I start to open my mouth to tell him no when he smirks again and crosses his arms

over his chest, his biceps bulging and his chest muscles shifting. “Are you afraid to fight me, vistu?”

Oh, hell no, he didn’t. I know he didn’t try and say that I am afraid. Of him!

Gimme a break! I’m not afraid of any male. Especially not this one.

“I’m not afraid of any male,” I scoff.

“Then prove it,” he growls.

I laugh. “Are you that eager to get your hands on me, Varnak? I never would have guessed.”

“I would rather not. But I will for this. I will win.”

I snort. “We’ll see. What do I get if I win?”

He throws his head back and laughs. “I do not believe we need to worry about that.”

“The hell we don’t. I’m gonna kick your big, blue ass, Varnak! And I better get something for it.”

“Fine. If you manage to beat me, by some crazy act of the gods, then I will withdraw my objection to you going.”

I smile happily. “Then get ready to travel with me because that’s what’s coming. I’m gonna kick your ass.”

“Be ready in fifteen parsecs, vistu.” He turns around and stalks off and I glare at his gorgeously muscular backside. Dammit, why does he look just as good leaving as he

does stalking towards me!

But I don't have time to dwell on that. I've got a male to fight and prove that I'm just as worthy of going with him as any other warrior on this base.

I face him across the mat and glare at him as most of the damn men on this fucking base holler and whistle like fucking idiots.

“Why are all these guys here, Varnak?”

He grins. “Worried that I'll beat you with an audience.”

I huff angrily. “You're not going to beat me. But I didn't intend on being the main attraction tonight.

“So tell them all to leave.”

“As if they would.” I roll my eyes. “Okay. Let's get this over with. I still need to pack.”

It's his turn to roll his eyes. “You don't need to pack because you won't be going.”

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I pat his cheek...hard. "It's cute that you think that."

Koehn strides in and walks to the center of the gym. "Okay. We basically have no rules except no low blows and raising your arm means that you've conceded. At that point, I will declare the other one the winner."

"Terrific. Let's do this," I say and bounce on my feet lightly. I've got the energy and drive to do this. I know I do. I just need a little bit of luck."

Koehn smirks at both of us. "Are you both ready?"

I squat and eye him critically, my hands set in a ready position, waiting until the moment we clash.

He grins. "Let's do this."

Koehn grunts. I guess that means set in Koehn speak because Varnak also squats.

I breathe in deeply, pushing away all the thoughts and feelings of the day and the way everyone is staring at us.

None of that stuff matters.

One more deep breath and the world tightens to just the two of us and then Koehn hollers and I charge forward until I kick sharply at Varnak's knee. He grunts and goes down for one second. Then he races forward and slams into me, grunting as we collide.

I groan and then slip to the ground but before he can say one word I'm on my feet and I slap away the hand he's holding out to me. I bounce again on my feet, feeling light and airy. My fists come out and one of them connects with the well-muscled torso of him and I fight to keep from wincing at the pain in my fist.

He grunts but barely moves. I chase him across the gym and then I grasp his long hair and whip him around until he roars with anger. Then he drops to his knees and bounces almost immediately to his feet.

He circles me and snarls, his fangs exposed, glistening white in the dim gym. "Come on, vistu. Is that all you've got? Surely you can do more damage than that."

I grin cheekily. "I absolutely can." My leg comes out and I grunt as my foot comes into contact with the hard bone of his shin. But it's worth it because he drops to one knee and my fist connects with his side.

"Vreck!"

The crowd around us quiets and he glares at them. "I will not let you best me, vistu. No matter what you do, I will win. You might as well give up now."

I snort happily and shuffle around him easily. "Dude. I have no intention of giving up."

"I should hope not. I don't want to win because you let me. I don't need that."

As he's saying that, I dart behind him and clamber up on his back, startling the hell out of both of us. I can feel him still and the quick intake of breath in front of me.

Before he can do much more than that, I grasp at his neck and throw all of my weight behind me, dropping him to the floor again.



He growls and then all hell breaks loose everywhere around us.

## CHAPTER 4

Varnak

Her body is pressed up against me and I can feel her warm skin sizzling along my own skin. My nerves are dancing and it feels like I can't think more than one second without picturing her under me in another room, in another hour, another second, another lifetime where we could indulge in the dangers and joys of the flesh.

But this is not that time.

"Tell me again why you think you can win this, vistu," I grunt and shove at her shoulder, pushing her off of me and breaking her hold easily.

"Because...." But she stops talking and then her fist connects with my jaw and stars dance behind in my eyes.

I stand up and snarl as I push her back, stalking lightly around her frail little body. It pisses me off that she's the one that insisted I needed to fight her to force her to admit that she's not the right person for this mission.

I don't want to touch her let alone fight her. But I'll be a wrecking moldesta if I let her make this trip with me. I cannot do it. I am just not sure I have the control to keep to my own side of the ship and not sneak in to see her sleep, watch her breathe and dream about her when I do manage to close my eyes for a few minutes. I will get no rest and it will be the worst thing that I could do to myself.

I shake my head again, my ears still ringing as I pace around her. She keeps one eye on me at all times and I can't do anything but look for an opening where I will not

hurt her unnecessarily.

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And I finally get it when she whips around when one of the newer warriors whistles at her and breaks her concentration.

I lunge forward and wrap my arms around her, feeling the zaps of fire dancing along my skin as I hug her to me, trying to keep her still.

Her slender body twists and bends and then her foot comes up between my legs and she steps on my bare foot.

“Oof!” I loosen my grip slightly and that is all it takes for her to whip around and push her open palm up and into my jaw...hard. I can't see anything for a minute and I groan. She whispers in my ear.

“I told you I'll win. Because I'm not afraid to fight dirty with any male. Even you.”

And then her leg comes up and her knee slams into my crotch, bringing me to my knees with a rasped gasp that bellows out of my lungs painfully.

Every other warrior in that room winces and I growl when I see them staring at me like I'm a pitiful male for letting this female best me.

They don't understand that she's a fucking dangerous heathen who would gladly destroy anything that got in her way. Even my balls. Which I think I can taste in my mouth since she got me so hard that it feels like I'm breathing my own testicles.

I learned that word when I was studying those damn books so that I could talk to the females.

Actually one female. The one who's currently standing over me, smiling, as I promise myself that I will not throw up. I won't give her the satisfaction.

Koehn winces and walks over to where I'm lying on the floor, my groin on fire and throbbing and not for the usual reason it is around her.

He grins sheepishly and reaches a hand down to help me up off the ground. Thank vreck, the burning need for her has lessened. Probably due to the incredible amount of pain that I'm currently in.

But I have to admit that she fought like a warrior and she used what she needed to win. As any warrior would.

"I think she won, Varnak."

"I know this, Koehn."

That is all that's said but I limp to my feet and nod my head at her once. "I think that we should leave in the two moons that was discussed. I will talk to you later."

And I limp out of the door, my pride as wounded as my rada right now.

And I know that until we leave, I'm going to keep feeling her under me and wanting her more than I ever thought was possible.

Wanting that slender body pressed into mine, her lean muscles rippling as she put me in my place. I've never felt so...strange. Like a male who feels...proud. And I should not be. I was beaten soundly by a female. I should feel shame more than anything. But I can't.

And that's almost more scary than being alone with the woman who set me on fire

and then tore me apart with what felt like a flick of the wrist.

Females. Ugh. Why can't males learn to live without them?

## CHAPTER 5

Alex

We're finally on our way. I said good-bye to the girls and then made sure to pack the new outfit that I was gifted by Koehn. He gave all of us a new outfit to celebrate his new love.

It was sweet but it kinda made my heart ache knowing that he would probably be the only male who will never show any interest in me. The men at the school would watch me and I could tell that they were interested but for some reason they didn't want to cross Varnak. I'm not really sure why.

Although Lacey told me with her customary smirk that the reason was that I'm Varnak's fated mate. Which is not even remotely possible. There is no way that I'm his mate. He can barely tolerate being anywhere near me. I may not know much about these guys but I do know how Koehn acts with Lacey. He is never anything but focused on making her happy and taking care of her. He would never say the things that Varnak says to me.

And he sure as hell wouldn't do his level best to avoid her.

Now I'm stuck in this little ship with him and it feels so weird to be alone with him.

"Buckle in, vistu."

I glare at him. "Oh, we're still doing that."

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He grins and his sea-blue eyes sparkle with laughter. “If it still fits, why would I not?”

I buckle in and mutter under my breath, “It sounds like you’ve been trying to learn Earth phrases again.”

He powers up the ship and smirks. His big hands on the controls make my mouth go dry and a tingle starts in my belly. “I am fascinated by the way Earth minds work. You think that you are so much advanced and yet you don’t think that there could be other sentient beings out there who match or could beat your intellect. That seems like it’s an oxymoron, as you would say.”

I grimace. “I have never used that word.”

He throws his head back and laughs, his silver hair down for once. It flies around his face and my mind wanders, considering how soft it might be. Wondering how good it would feel against my skin. Would it be cool and silky?

“Is it because you don’t know the definition of the word?”

I glare at him. So much for feeling closer to him and feeling....something for him. Now I just wonder how hard I could hit him.

His crystal eyes slew towards me. His grin makes my heart skip a beat, even though I don’t want it to.

“I know what you’re thinking.” He throttles up the ship and with a flash of light, we

zoom right out of the docking bay and my stomach floats up into my throat, my eyes closing and my body feeling oddly weightless as we take off.

I shake and sit back in the seat, my hands clenching on the soft, padded arm of the seat.

The ship levels off after a few minutes and something warm and rough touches my hand. My eyes fly open and he's squatting in front of me and I don't know how he got there but I can't look away from the soft look in his eyes.

"Are you alright, my vistu?"

I nod my head slightly, still trying to figure out what's going on. My hands shake as I lift them up and touch my face, my mouth so damn dry that I can't even force a swallow.

"Hey, Alex. It's alright. Have you gone to the...". He struggles to grasp a word and then sighs, "the counselor? Is that the right word?"

I nod my head but I feel like nothing around me makes any sense. There's a buzzing in my ears that I can't seem to push out. I cannot seem to focus and it feels like my body is not my own.

"And did you actually talk to them or did you just stare at the screen and wait until time was up?" His lips quirk a little and I struggle with a grin.

"You think you know me so well, Varnak."

He leans back and his hand drops from mine and I find that I fucking miss his touch so much. I don't know what's going on but I don't like it.

I don't like it at all.

"I know you like I know myself and we are much alike, little vistu."

"How do you figure?" I push up to standing after I disconnect from the belt. I put my hands on my hips and growl at him.

"You don't like admitting that you are wrong. You fight anything, even if it's good for you. You can't give in to anything because you refuse to admit that you need someone. Should I go on?"

"Absolutely not. You are wrong. We're nothing alike."

He snorts and backs away. "Fool yourself, little one but you can't fool me. You are afraid right now and I would say that it's because of being back on a ship. It frightens you because the last time you were on, you weren't in control. You couldn't take care of your friends or yourself and someone else was calling the shots. You had so much being taken away from you and you were scared. And you fucking hated it. Which is why you hate being on this ship. And yet you signed up for this trip knowing that it would almost kill you to do it. You're an amazing female and I don't deserve to even be near you."

He stalks off while I'm still trying to process everything that he's saying. His back is stiff and he avoids looking at me.

I sit back down and it doesn't feel the same. My heart isn't pounding. I'm not dying of thirst. I feel...calm. Safe.

Because of Varnak.

"Thank you," I whisper.



He grumbles, “don’t thank me for recognizing your worth, female. Nobody should ever doubt it.”

And that’s the last thing we say for a long time. Until I start to doze off in the chair. My chin slides off my hand once again and he turns to me, his blue eyes like lasers. “Why don’t you go lie down, vistu? There’s nothing you can do right now.”

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I don't bother fighting him. I'm exhausted. I stand and pad back to the one sleeping pod. Apparently we can't both sleep at the same time unless we're cuddling and that's not happening. Even though my skin tingles when I think about lying next to him.

"Help me," I whisper to myself as my eyes close and I finally drift off to the most peaceful sleep that I've had since I was taken.

"Oof!" I groan as something shifts violently and I find myself falling what feels forever until I thud into something hard.

I shake my head and groan, sitting up and rubbing my shoulder which is throbbing like a motherfucker.

Lights are going off all around me, the glaring white and red merging into a horror show of epic proportions. A blaring whoowhoo sound like a siren on a fire truck is blaring and I honestly don't know how the hell I was sleeping through all this until I was thrown.

I stagger to my feet, holding onto my shoulder as I bump into the wall and put my palm on the panel. The door whooshes open and if possible, it gets even louder. I put my hands over my ears and stumble down the short hall to the control room.

"What the hell, Varnak? What is that noise? What's going on?" I fall into the seat and groan.

His eyes are grim, his jaw clenched so tight I'm surprised he can speak at all. "Get

buckled. We've had a malfunction."

My heart drops all the way to my feet. "What does that mean? Malfunction sounds bad."

His eye turn towards me and he grunts, "It is. Get buckled."

I fumble with the buckle as he struggles with the controls and seems completely baffled. Nothing seems to stop the noise. And the sirens are even louder and more annoying.

He glances at me and fumbles with his own belt. "We need to brace for impact."

When I glance out the front view I suck in a sharp breath as the brown and green and blue planet in front of us hurtles at us. "Oh, shit!"

I grab my belt and click it in place quickly. "Where are we?"

"I think it's a planet called Merca 7. We've got minimal information about it. I can see that it's got oxygen so we should be alright as far as that goes but I don't have any other information."

My head reels when I see the planet coming closer. The ship starts to shake and rattle as we hit the atmosphere and begin to burn on re-entry.

I close my eyes and grip the arms of the chair like my life depends on it. Because it just might.

Minutes pass and then I hear Varnak yell, "Brace, vistu, brace!"

My body's thrown to the back and then jerked forward as the ship slams into the

ground and goes airborne again, my stomach sinking and jumping with each bounce. Over and over until we finally land and everything around me goes silent.

“Are you alright, vistu?” His voice cracks and he growls under his breath. “Gods wrecking let go of me!”

I open my eyes and see him wrestling with the seatbelt and then pulling out a huge blade and slicing it wildly.

I giggle and his head comes up quickly, his silvery hair flying around his head and his eyes wild with emotion.

“I didn’t know you cared so much, Varnak.” My voice cracks and it feels like my ribs ache when I groan and attempt to move. “What the hell happened?”

He sighs and sits up straight as he stares at me. “I don’t know. I’ll have to check the data banks and see if they can tell me what the wreck just went on. It didn’t seem like anything was wrong and then all the alarms went off.”

I nod my head and it feels like it’s going to explode. I groan and hold my head with my hands. “Dammit, that hurts.”

He crawls over to me and his eyes study every single inch of me and that fire that barely stays banked around him picks up and smolders recklessly in my body.

“What hurts, vistu?”

“I don’t know. My chest and ribs hurt.”

“Okay. Just relax for a minute and let your body settle down. We’ve had some massive changes and I need to double-check some readings, which I’m not entirely

sure are good readings.”

I lift my head and point out the front of the ship where it has cracked in two.

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“I think we’ve got bigger problems than your readings, Varnak. Look at that.”

### CHAPTER 6

Varnak

Ifollow her pointing finger, snarling when I see a puff of smoke from a large bunch of...something coming closer to us.

I lean down and growl at her. “Do not say one word. I will handle this. And if there is shooting, I want you to duck back in here and hit the emergency beacon and then vrecking hide. I will hold them off as long as I can and hopefully someone gets here soon.”

She snorts at me. “You can’t be serious. There is no damn way that you can think I’d just leave you to die by their hands and hide and go on my merry way. It’s not happening.”

“Do what I say, female.” I stand and shove my way to the front where we’re cracked open. I don’t think that it’s going to be possible to fix this ship and fly it anywhere. At least not without proper supplies. I didn’t see any major cities on this planet so I’m thinking that they’re not going to have even a tenth of what we need.

“I will not. Get out of my face, Varnak. Before I punch you in your stupid, handsome mouth.”

I smirk. “You think I’m handsome?”

She groans and glare at me, her deep blue gaze sharpening to honed steel. “That is what you choose to pick up on? We’re about to be torn apart and murdered on a planet that we know nothing about and you’re going to sit there and fangirl about the fact that I think you have a nice mouth? You’ve lost your mind. Get out of my way.”

Her jaw is clenched and she stumbles slightly on unsteady feet as she goes by me but she doesn’t even slow down.

“I want to find out who and what this is. So if you don’t have anything useful to say, Varnak, please keep your trap shut.”

“I have a lot of useful stuff.”

She ignores me and continues to eye the dust plume that’s coming closer as if it’s about to bite her.

It separates into a huge party of shambling beasts with deep, leather harnesses to control them.

A tall, fiery-haired woman comes forward and eyes the both of us uncertainly. She especially focuses on me like I’m a filthy beast of prey.

She slips off of her animal and the rough beast’s gray skin shudders, its big eyes rolling wildly as it squeals like a pig.

“Who are you and what are you doing here?”

I step forward and start to open my mouth but she whistles angrily. Another woman with dark hair steps forward with some long object and hits me with it, the electric shock dropping me to my knees. I curl up and fight the nausea of pain ripping into my body.

Alex steps up and shoves the damn thing aside. “Hey, who the fuck do you think you are? You don’t touch him, lady.”

“He is your breeder?” The redhead smiles at me. “He does look very virile.”

I can tell what she’s saying but I miss bits and pieces with the pain sizzling along my nerves.

“He isn’t mine,” Alex says and I groan and fight the blackness and the pain of the zap. Trying to convince myself that I don’t feel a damn thing when she says that she doesn’t want me.

I should know how to deal with that by now. When I was growing up on Arkadia there was a girl that I wanted. She was so beautiful. Tall and willowy. Stunning really.

But I came from the side of the planet where the poor lived. My parents worked multiple jobs and barely could feed all their children. And they only had three. And that life meant that no decent female would be mine.

“Perhaps you would be willing to trade him for supplies and help getting off the planet then. I’m sure one of our females would enjoy breaking him in.”

My lip curls and I grunt under my breath.

Alex growls under her breath. “No. I said he wasn’t my breeder but he’s still a fully-grown male and he doesn’t deserve to be treated like a piece of meat by women who seem to get off thinking their so much better than him. Or me. I’ve got news for you ladies. Slavery is or should be dead. Nobody owns anybody else.”

The redhead snorts. “If you choose to stay on our planet, we do own men. And the



women are in control. Don't tell me that you're so worn down by this male that you can't speak for yourself and choose your own destiny. Why wouldn't you choose to trade a commodity that would get you what you want?"

Alex stands tall, her shoulders back. A large bruise is blackening her cheek and one side of her ribs but she doesn't even flinch at standing straight and tall. "I'm not a monster. And a grown person, male or female is not a commodity."

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She smirks. “You sound like a child. Use your mind and realize that this could help you go home.” She eyes me narrowly. “You are human. We have a few ships that we use sometimes to pick up supplies. One of our females could take you back to Earth. You could go home. Surely that is worth one measly male.”

I grit my teeth and glare at the female. But strangely Alex doesn’t agree. I can see her pale skin turning rosy pink, her eyes turning hazy with her thoughts. Her teeth nibble at her full lower lip and I know she wants this. She wants to go home.

But she just sighs and shakes her head, her bell of black hair settling on her soft cheeks. “No. I won’t do that.”

One of the other females behind her steps forward and grunts before whispering in the taller female’s ear. All of them are dressed in skins that are molded to tall, lithe bodies. If I wasn’t so worried I might be enjoying the view. These females are stunningly beautiful. Slim and tall and yet rounded fully. Like a woman. Not like a stick.

But the looks on their lean faces is extremely hostile and I want to holler at Alex to get back on the ship and prepare for the battle that I know is coming.

The redhead steps forward and sighs. “I hate to say this but you do not have a choice anymore.” She nods back at the brunette behind her who’s eyeing me up like a bomb about to blow. “My general has put forward a challenge. She wants the male. If you choose to agree to give him up without a fight, we will of course provide you with help to reach wherever you wish to go.”

Alex glares at the other female and if looks could kill I think this chick would be laying flat on the floor. “And if I don’t agree to this ‘challenge’.” It doesn’t sound like a question.

The head female appears to agree with me and sighs. “Then you must fight to keep him. And if you don’t win, not only will you forfeit your property, you will be executed at daybreak.”

I suck in a startled breath. The ship said these women are a warrior species that broke from the council’s guidelines so they really would send her home if she asked them to.

If she gave me up.

And I sure as fuck don’t intend to let her fight and lose, guaranteeing that she will die.

“I will fight someone. Not her,” I growl and another female steps forward, lifting the damn rod that zapped me.

“You have no say here, male. We barely need your kind. As soon as you don’t prove useful, you will die as well.”

Alex snarls. “You women give warriors a bad name. I’ll fight your general bitch.”

All of the females snicker under their breaths and Alex grins. But the smile fades quickly when the other female steps forward. “I’m going to hurt you and then take your little toy back to my place and fuck him on my furs. Maybe I’ll even let you watch.”

Alex grimaces. “Not going to happen. When and where is this fight?”

“Morning. I’ll provide the weapons for you and we’ll make sure that you eat tonight and in the morning. You will get as much help as Zema does.”

I snort and they glare at me again. “He is a mouthy male. You should just let Zema have him. She will break him of this.”

Alex laughs. “Yeah. Right. Since we’ve had so much of your welcoming committee, I think you should go. I need time to get ready for this.”

“We’ll provide clothes as well. I hope that you know what you’re doing,” she says, her auburn brow lifted.

“Thanks. I think I’ve got this.”

They turn and one female drops off food and clothing from their plodding beasts.

I turn and glare at Alex. “What the hell are you thinking? You can’t fight that female. And now we have next to no time to find a way out of this.”

“Oh, I’m gonna fight her and I’m gonna win.” She grins mischievously. “I told you that I can fight just fine, male. I guess you’ll see.”

## CHAPTER 7

Alex

“We don’t have a lot of time. I wish that I could think of a way out of this. But I don’t think we have the time to play it out.”

I nod my head and smirk at him. “I know that you think that I can’t fight. But I can. I fought for world titles for god’s sake.”

“That’s not the same as what’s going to happen tomorrow. They are going to use every trick that they’ve got to make sure that you lose and you’ve got no knowledge of their fighting style.”

“I don’t need it.”

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“Cocky only goes so far, female.”

“I love it when you throw American slang at me, Varnak. You keep studying. Why?”

He flushes and turns away. “Nothing to do with you.”

I grunt and slog my way through the broken pieces of the ship. “I’m going to take this stuff and check it out. Come with me or don’t.”

“I’m going to show you how to fight. If you have any sense, it won’t happen and you’ll tell them you changed your mind and you intend to go back home.”

I eye him uncertainly. “You would rather be a breeder to these women than depend on me?”

“I would rather you live than die. I don’t want you to fight at all.” His eyes shimmer with something elusive and breathtaking.

“I can fight, dammit! Stop telling me that I’m not worth anything.”

He stops, shocked. “You think that all you are worth is you fighting?” His sea-blue gaze sharpens until it feels like he can see every part of me. Like I’m an open book to him.

“Stop trying to analyze me! I’m not a damn problem for you to solve!” I stomp to the broken wall but he slams me into it, his huge size hovering over me, his teeth bared, his body taut with anger.

“I never thought you were a problem.” His eyes slide down and then he grunts. “Okay. Maybe I did at first. But I would gladly give you up and give up my own life if it meant you were safe and free. You deserve that, my kora.”

I suck in a sharp breath. I know what that means. I glance down and I see the faint trail of vines and flowers moving across his arms, under his skin, faintly lit up, turning his blue skin bright and clear.

“No,” I hiss under my breath. “I am not your mate, Varnak. I’m not anybody’s mate. I am my own person and men don’t like that.”

His sharp eyes soften to the peaceful look of the sea at night. “I know who you are and I do like you like you are. You’re beautiful and smart and you make me want to wrecking love you like a crazy male until you lose your voice screaming my name and you can’t walk the next day.”

I want that. I want to feel like someone wants me.

“I...I do want that too.”

“So leave that stuff for awhile and be with me, my kora.”

I shake my head. “I can’t promise you forever as a mate. That’s not me.”

“Males on your planet must be the dumbest in the galaxy.”

I snort and then laugh out loud. “I think you’ve lost your mind.”

He moves against me and I feel the hard length of him pressed up against me. My core slickens and all I want is to be with him. Tomorrow is going to be bad one way or another. Starting with not getting the chance to go home and fighting a woman

who wants what's mine.

I jerk myself to a halt. "Not mine."

He stares at me. "Let go, my kora. Let me love you. Let me show you what we could be."

He opens the room to the bedroom with his bare hands since nothing is working. Following him inside, I fight to keep from running. I don't run from any male. I learned that lesson the hard way. Thanks to a father who felt like it was his right to beat me every damn day I drew breath. I can still feel the heavy sting of the wood on my ass as I tried to keep from crying.

More than once I went to school with my butt so sore that I couldn't sit without tears rolling down my cheeks.

But I never said one word about what he did. I just waited until I turned eighteen and then I left without a backwards glance and I taught myself to fight so that nobody ever got the chance to use me as a punching bag. And I haven't thought about the bastard for so many years. He is nothing.

Never again will I be somebody's to abuse.

I draw in a deep breath as he stands there and watches me silently. He's waiting for me to decide. He won't take away my choices, my options.

He's a good male. I could do far worse and actually I have.

One way or another I want this. Want him to wipe out all the hurt, pain and bad memories. No man has ever managed up to this point.



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I hold out my hand and he grasps it loosely, not forcing me at all. He steps with me to the bed and I sigh, leaning into his tall body, feeling his warmth and the spicy-sweet scent of him around me, cocooning me from the bad decisions that I have to face tomorrow.

He lies back and nods at me. “Do what feels good for you, kora.” I stand and then strip off my soiled, ripped clothes, letting them fall to the floor. His brows scrunch together and he groans when I stand there fully naked. His burning gaze darts here and there, never landing any one place but eating every part of me up.

“Come to me, kora. Come sit on my mouth and let me please you.”

I pause and I don’t know if I can. But. I trust him. I do and I know he won’t hurt me.

So I clamber onto the platform bed and knee crawl to him. He lifts me by my hips and holds me up making me gasp. He’s so strong. So very strong and handsome.

He’s perfect. And I have to fight to keep him.

Before I can get bogged down by those thoughts, he grasps my thighs and rolls me until I’m over his mouth and his breath stirs my curls. My pussy clenches and I swear I come a little bit just from where he’s touching me.

But when he wraps his lips around my sex and sucks those lips inside his mouth, my whole body clenches so deeply that I feel like I’m bent in half by desire and lust.

“Varnak!” I shriek and he chuckles into my pussy before he pushes a finger inside

and drills me with it while sucking my pearl deep, tonguing it savagely.

I fall forward but his hands steady me as he devours me body and soul. His tongue laps as his teeth nip and I can't think. My whole body feels like it's on fire and my soul feels like it's flying into the ether.

Then he nips my clit between his teeth as he slips two fingers inside my pussy, deep and fast. Deep and slow. Over and over. Fast and slow, deep and soft. His mouth and then the hardness of his fingers.

"Jesus!" I sigh and then it changes to a shriek as he grinds my pussy down on his face and sucks it hard and fast.

"Varnak! Yes, yes, yes!" I can't stop screaming, can't stop coming as he laps at me like he's eating his last meal.

Shaking and shivering, I watch him stand, his burning gaze tearing at my soul, tearing at every last bit of control I've got.

He pulls his shirt off and his bare chest ripples with the movement, his bulging biceps dancing as my eyes drink him in. Then I follow the slight happy trail of silver down to his pants, watching with my breath caught as he slips the bit of leather down and kicks it to the side.

His body is epic. His lean hips top a pair of muscular legs that flex and bend as he climbs back on the bed. My mouth dries out and I watch him, awed. This male thinks that I'm his. Someone so perfect thinks that I'm the one that is made for him. The one person made specifically for him. The one person made for me.

He crawls over me and he pulls the tie out of his hair, letting it glide down around us. It brushes my bare belly and I sigh, letting my fingers wrap in it, feeling the soft,

silky slide of it on my skin.

He bends down and his lips brush mine. “You are mine, little vistu.”

My lips quirk up. “Do you think you could stop calling me a small, angry fur ball?”

His blue eyes flash with laughter. “If the shoe fits, put it on.”

I shake my head, my shoulders shaking with laughter. “Not quite but you’re so close.”

He grinds into my core and my tongue gets heavy, my eyes dropping closed as I groan my desire. “I think I’m pretty close but I think I could get closer. Come here.”

He rolls us and lifts me up. “You are in control, vistu. Let’s see what you’ve got.”

I love a challenge at all times. The challenge and desire in his bright blue gaze makes my thighs part and my pussy so wet that it’s dripping my juices down onto his thick thighs.

Without a word, I slide down onto him and groan. He flexes his belly and he growls like a wild animal. Our skin slides, slick and heated over each other’s and it feels so damn good that my pussy clenches and my whole body tenses as a roll of glorious fire burns inside me, laying waste to all the reasons that this is a bad idea and I slam my body down on his all the way to his thighs. The brush of light hair on his legs on my backside feels out of this world and I struggle to focus. To move against him as all hell breaks loose. Can’t think. Can’t breathe.

His lips take my breast in his mouth and he snaps at the nipple with his fang, raking it hard until I know he’s leaving a mark and I couldn’t give a shit. I want it. Want it all.

I grind down on his shaft and I feel a slight bump at the exact spot where my clit it. My brow lifts and he smiles. "Take my soul, kora. Take every last breath in my body. It all belongs to you."

He steals my breath, steals my heart every time he says things like that. Tears sting my eyes. Nobody's ever just wanted me like he does.

I grind and circle my hips and it feels so good.

"So damn good, Varnak. Don't stop."

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He doesn't. He rolls me under him and his hips thrust into me again and again, the steely length of him hitting somewhere I've never felt someone touch.

And it's his. I'm his. I always will be.

I scream and my whole body goes taut as he drills into me harder, over and over until he grunts and stills and I feel his seed inside me, coating my body and bringing me the peace I've always wanted. He falls across me and I grunt and roll so that he doesn't crush me.

Then I lay my head on his chest and breathe him in, my fingers tangling in the light hair on his pecs.

"I know that you don't want me to say this, kora, but you would be wiser to leave and live out your life happy and free on your planet."

I jerk up and glare at him. "You really do know how to ruin a moment."

"Take from it what you will, but you should not do this."

I stand and start jerking on my clothes, glaring at the jerk. "I am doing this. Nobody is going to make my mate into a chew toy."

His grin rises like the sun outside my door at home. Stunning to see. My breath catches.

"You're my mate?"

I roll my eyes and grab my shoes. “Yeah. It’s great, isn’t it. Love’s a beautiful thing.”

He snorts and eyes me cynically. “You know that Lacey doesn’t act like this with her mate.”

“I’m not Lacey.”

“Thank gods,” he mutters. “So let’s see what you can do.”

## CHAPTER 8

Varnak

My body feels like lead. I don’t want to do this. Don’t want to watch this.

But we fought most of the night and I finally gave in.

I studied her moves and we wrestled like wild animals, thrashing around and beating at each other until I was so damn sore that it felt like my body would come apart.

She took a similar punishment but she never flinched. Never yelled that she was done.

She’s a warrior if ever I saw one. Stronger and braver than any male I’ve ever fought.

“Get into your places, fighters.”

“Don’t forget to watch her moves. If you can see which hand she moves with, which hand she grips with you can guess where each move is coming from. Which hand punches and which hand holds her weapons.”

“We’re not using weapons. As the warrior challenged, Alex has the option and she has chosen hand to hand.”

I sigh and grind my teeth. I hate this.

But Alex just smirks. The other fighter, Lana, moves to shadow her and her right hand moves first and I hope that Alex saw it.

But she’s a smart woman and I think she did.

I see her left hand move slightly.

Then a hand is dropped and the other female races at her, ducking her head to try and headbutt Alex in her belly.

But Alex darts to the side quickly and then she tackles the other female. She doesn’t bother fighting fair either. Pride fills me as she grabs her hair and slams her head into the ground.

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Gasps of surprise around us make me fight a smile. The air is just starting to warm and the sun is barely up, gilding the two bodies writhing around on the ground. My dick jerks in my pants and I glare at it.

Fucker! There's no time for this shit.

Alex slams her head again and then Lana bumps her hips up and knocks her loose. She leaps to her feet and cheers rain around us. It doesn't seem to deter her though. Alex just settles into a crouch and watches wryly as the other woman lifts a hand and then slaps at her. She darts to the side again but this time the other female spots it coming and she darts too and the two bodies collide in a hard hit that makes me wince.

Alex grabs her by the waist and twists and throws her over her hip. Lana lands with a thud, grunting as Alex lands on top of her and wraps her hands around her throat. "Vrecking give up," I growl under my breath.

Nobody hears me because the crowd is chanting loudly, cheers and calls around us.

Lana rolls and suddenly Alex is on the defensive and Lana's hands are wrapped around her throat. My heart seizes in my chest as Alex fights for each raspy breath.

A roar rips into the balmy air around us and all the females still. Then they run, hollering to each other as they grab weapons. My body turns and I face certain death, teeth glistening with blood, fur matted with sweat and dirt and things that I don't want to think of. It lunges upwards, so tall that I have to look way up to see its beady little eyes locked on...Alex.



She's lying on the ground, her head bent, coughing helplessly.

I grab a loose blade and race to the beast. It turns towards me and a long paw swipes out and catches me in the shoulder. I grunt but I drive my blade into his side.

He roars and then drops to the ground, shaking the blade loose before lunging around me to Alex.

The other females keep their distance but one of them is sitting in a chair and her leg is in a cast.

It seems to see the weak female and it charges at her as she screams. Alex gets dizzily to her feet and she sees the other female trying to wheel her chair back desperately. None of the others is close enough to help and it's so close.

Alex and I both grab new blades and I nod to the side. She dips her chin and we stalk around the beast.

The other female eyes us, her eyes bright with fear. But Alex and I just maneuver until we're poised and then when it lunges and its belly is exposed, both of us leap and her blade hits it in the side and my blade plunges straight through its midsection, slicing open its belly.

It rears up and screams, the sound making my ears bleed it's so loud and shrill.

Then it falls to the ground and twitches, blood spilling along with entrails out of its belly. The stench of death hangs around us and my hands are coated with its blood but I don't care. I lunge to Alex and hold her close, kissing her cheek. I glance down at my bare arms and see the darkening trail of vines and flowers on my skin.

"Kora. I love you."

“I love you too, koree.”

I shiver when she says the word that I never thought I'd be lucky enough to hear.

She's mine and she's finally admitting it. Shrieking and crying brings me back to the fight.

I hold Alex close and move her behind me as the leader runs at us. But she doesn't attack us like I expect. Instead she throws her arms around Alex who grunts at the impact.

I stare down at the two females and wonder what the hell just happened. Maybe I died?

But the leader smiles and pulls back, tears in her eyes. “I cannot thank you enough. I thought my little sister was going to die. If you hadn't...” She glances towards me and smiles shyly. “And your mate. If you hadn't killed it she would have died. We weren't close enough to kill it before it got her. Beede are deadly when they scent weakness.”

Nodding my head tiredly, I just hold Alex closer. She wraps her arms around me and breathes deep.

“If you need help getting home we will help you. And this one,” she points at me. “He has made us consider whether a partnership with out breeders, our males might bring us as much as your partnership has. I have never seen a better team. It's like you could read each other's minds.”

I study my mate and smile. “That's because my heart knows hers better than my own.”

Alex grins. “And I know just what trouble he will find and how I can help him get out of it.”

“My name is Iona. And I believe I will talk with the others and then we need to talk to our...males. Maybe there is more to this teamwork that will benefit all of us.”

Iona grins. “If nothing else, at least we’ll know how to deal with this thing.”

She kicks at the beast and then nods her head and leaves us holding each other.

*Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 9:29 am*

“Are you alright, my kora?”

“I am so good that it’s scary, my koree. I’ve never felt so happy. It’s damn scary”

“I am scared too. But it feels right. Like this is what destiny and fate always meant for us to find. Each other. Like you were meant to find your way here.”

She grimaces and smacks me lightly. “I can’t say that I’m happy to be kidnapped. But I am happy that I found you. I didn’t think I’d ever find a male who could let me help him, fight alongside him and not lose his mind.”

I smile grimly. “I almost didn’t. And if I hadn’t, I would have missed out on the best thing I’ve ever found. I used to think that nobody would ever want me. That I wasn’t good enough for anyone. My life was bleak. Until I found you.”

She smiles through tears. “My life was empty without you. And I never thought a giant blue alien would be the male for me but I can’t picture my life any other way.”

“Let’s go find someplace to start our new life together the right way.”

She grins at me but then Iona hollers, “Let us feast. We have so much meat to cook. We want to welcome you to our humble planet right.”

We fall together and sigh. But I smirk at her. “Show me what you got later, vistu.”

“I will tear you apart with my bare hands.”

I throw my head back, laughing so hard I almost fall over. “I look forward to it.”

We follow the warrior females and watch as males slink out to the fires to help cook. But they gradually stand taller as all of them work in sync and nobody orders another around.

It may take some time but I think change is coming to this small planet and I hope that the teams formed here will raise strong children and that they’ll venture into space more.

Now that we’ve met them, I think I’d like to learn more about these warrior females and their strange tribe.

I glance over and watch my kora smile and dance around with Lana. The joy on her face makes my breath catch, my chest aching with love for her.

The gods have blessed me more than I ever thought possible and I’ll never take it for granted.

We’re a team. For now and forever.

Epilogue 1: Alex

“Come on. Let’s see what you’ve got, Varnak.” His white brow quirks as I hold out a hand and wave it at him.

“Oh, you’re going to pay for that, little kora. I’m going to make you eat those words.” His growl makes me laugh out loud and then I duck and dodge when he grabs me and tries to pull me into him.

I feint and then slam an elbow into his ribs and he grunts, his grip loosening.

I duck under his arms and grip his side, leaning into him and shifting my weight so that he flips right over me and lands on his back with a grunt.

I fall on top of him and he wraps his arms around me and then rolls until he's on top of me, caging me in. His hands go to my wrists and he holds onto me just tight enough that I can't get away.

He leans down and his nose skims my ear as he chuckles, "I think I've got you right where I want you, kora. You might as well give in."

My body heats to about a million degrees and every part of me melts into a puddle of goo. But I'll be damned if I'm going to give in. And he should know that better than anyone.

With a quick intake of breath, I jerk my hips up, bouncing him just enough to move my knee and push at him until I can wrap my legs around his middle and then another big buck and he growls as I move out from under him and roll away.

He points a finger at me and growls. "Payback is a bitch, kora!"

I throw my head back and laugh. He's absolutely fascinated by Earth sayings and spouts them all the time, cracking me up when he says them wrong.

"Well, well. You've got one right, koree. Good job."

His smug smirk has me chuckling again. "I can do more than that right, my kora. Come closer and I'll prove it to you."

*Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 9:29 am*

I dance away from him on the balls of my feet, my steps so light it's almost magical. I love this damn holodeck. Keeps me from getting hurt when we get a little carried away. He's a big guy and he's careful but I'm not sometimes.

"Come and get me, Varnak. You wanna play? Come and get me." I whirl around and run, fading into the jungle landscape that's a strange combination of blue and green foliage. It's lush and tropical and sweat pools on my back as I flee.

I can hear his light steps behind me. For a big guy he moves as light as a feather. I can barely hear him and I have to listen hard most of the time.

He doesn't talk and I know from now on he won't. He's focused on the game and the prize...me.

I grin and just as I turn a corner, something tackles me and takes me to the ground, knocking the air out of my lungs.

"Got you now!" I groan and he grasps my wrists and snaps something on them that holds me taut. I can see through them but I know there's something there.

"What the hell, Varnak?" I grumble and pull at my wrists. "I don't think I agreed to role play tonight. And why the hell couldn't you wear the handcuffs?"

He chuckles heavily and then leaps lightly to his feet, his thigh muscles quivering. My belly turns over and heat pools deep inside me, my tongue sticking to the roof of my mouth.

He reaches down and grabs me, holding me high, like some damn sacrifice to his manhood.

Then he throws me over his broad, tanned shoulder.

“Oof!” I close my eyes and grit my teeth. “What the hell are you doing?”

But he says nothing and all of sudden the holodeck changes and the night sky pulses around us with starlight. A gorgeous aurora of gold and green and pink paints the sky and under his feet a soft carpet of green dances on the softest of breezes.

“What is this?”

He parts the leaves and in front of us is a small, square piece of cloth. A woven bag sits on it and he sits me down carefully, opening the bag and starting to pull out a variety of delicious-looking foods.

He finally sits across from me and fiddles with something on my wrists and all of sudden I’m free and staring around at the food spread out around us.

It looks so familiar and yet so damn alien.

He leans back and smirks. “Do you like it, my kora?”

I nod my head but stare at him like he’s gone insane.

“I thought that you might like this tradition of which I’ve read up a great deal. A picnic.”

“I’ve heard of a picnic. How did you hear of them?”



I talked to Lacey and she told me that you like them. Do you not like them?"

"I do. But what are we eating?" It looks familiar."

"Well, over here we have a roast parvet. Which is like a chicken?" I nod my head, snickering under my breath when I should ask him why the meat is green. I sure as hell hope the cook had better cooking skills than I do because I would worry about my cooking green meat.

"And over here we have the traditional potato salad made with runa root."

I nod my head without my face changing at all because it's purple. The potatoes are purple.

Every time he tells me something, I struggle to hold in the smile on my face. "This is so nice, Varnak. But what's the occasion?"

"Do I need an occasion to do something nice for my mate?"

I lean back, grinning and eyeing him up and down like he's a piece of meat. My piece of Grade A stud.

"I think it would help in this instance."

"Okay, here's what I was thinking." He shifts nervously. "I know that you wanted to wait to have small ones but I'd like to at least start trying."

*Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 9:29 am*

I lift my brows. “How long do you think it will take?”

“Who knows? But I’ve read a little bit about human females of a certain age and it seems like it might take longer.”

I hold up a hand and glare at him. “Did you just call me old, Varnak? Because if you did, I’d like to remind you I just kicked your ass!”

He snorts. “Of course I didn’t. But I just want to discuss small ones. I never thought I’d want them but all of a sudden it seems important. Our worlds are opening up and it would be amazing to have someone to teach about our different traditions and stories. How our planets have survived and all that vrecking stuff.”

I smirk. “That’s all terribly interesting. But I don’t want to start trying to have small ones.”

His head drops and he sighs. Like a little boy who’s just lost his puppy or his favorite toy.

“Alright, my kora. If this is what you want.”

I sigh and reach out to pull myself over to sit on his lap, my arms wrapping around his broad shoulders, hugging him tight as I whisper in his ear, “I’m already pregnant, koree. I was waiting for the right time to tell you.”

His face lights up, his sea-blue gaze laser-sharp in his happiness. “I’m going to have a small one?”

“We,” I growl. “And considering I think I have to do all the work that you didn’t do already, I think you should take me out and find me a real chicken that isn’t blue. I can’t eat that. It’s making me nauseous.”

Varnak smirks. “I will search this galaxy for exactly what you want, my kora. I love you, mate.”

I snuggle into his arms and sigh. “I love you too, you crazy man.”

I’m home even in the middle of the stars and galaxies around us because of this male. No matter where we are, I will always be home with him. And I can always trust that he’ll have my back and that he will never treat me like I can’t have his back too.

We’re a team. I had to be kidnapped and end up in space to find the man who could treat me like I was a woman who could fight by his side and he’d never talk down to me like I didn’t matter.

I have the best of both worlds or the best of all of the galaxies. I have a man who loves me and wants me like a woman, but he also fights with me and alongside me and trusts me to have his six. I have it all.

It’s almost worth being kidnapped. I chuckle and breathe into his warm skin as he cradles me close.

Almost.

## Epilogue 2: Jenna

I’m so damn cold. Everything hurts and I can’t see anything around me. I know that I’m awake but it’s all clouds. Like little cotton balls hemming me in.

But outside of the white, I can hear him again. His deep voice calms me. “It’s okay,

little mate. I've got you. Nothing will hurt you. No harm will come to you in my care. Just....don't give up. I promise you that if you come back to me, you will want for nothing. You will be my whole world. Just like you are now."

Something soft touches my hand and I grip it tightly. My eyes open and I see him outside of what looks like a windshield? He smiles at me and even though he's blue and his hair is a soft gray that should make him look old, he's not. I can see the power in his eyes, the banked fury and desire that I don't want to see right now.

Maybe ever.

I glance over, not moving my head and realize that a hand is clasping mine while wearing a glove that's pushed through some kind of hole in the side of the tube.

"Hello, mate." I want to ask what he's talking about but I'm so tired. I hear him hiss as I close my eyes and sink back into the darkness. "Please don't leave me again, mate."

But I can't stay here. Can't stay awake anymore. I'm just so damn tired and I know if I wake there's going to be so much bad, so much that I don't want to see or think about.

"Jenna. I love you, mate. Don't give up because I promise you...I never will. I'll hold onto you until you come back to me."