



The General's Bride (The Thibian Chronicles #2)

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Category: Fantasy

Description: Humiliated when his intended flees their betrothal dinner, General Zahn promises his king he will find Princess London and bring her home — but not before she's been properly punished. Despite their union being a political arrangement, Zahn is surprised by the instant lust London inspires when he finally recaptures her. Maybe their marriage won't be so dull after all!

After losing her mother and sister at a young age Paris Randall learned how to take care of herself. Several disappointing relationships later, she's given up on relationships and love. But when a tall dark hunk whisks her away, on his spaceship she changes her attitude. The attraction is instant, but the only problem — he keeps calling her London!

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London sat rigidly as she watched her father, Emperor Blaze, stand to make the formal announcement she'd been dreading all night. How could he do this to her? Why was her mother allowing it to happen? She shot a resentful look toward the object of her despair.

General Zahn.

With back erect and head held high, he wore an unreadable expression on his stern face. His dark green eyes, which could almost be mistaken for black at times, were hard as though he were contemplating a strategy of war instead of attending his own betrothal dinner.

Admittedly, London found Zahn extremely attractive, with his wavy, long black hair inherited from his Zenobian ancestors, square jaw, long proud nose, and full lips.

Truth was, many Thibian women were enamored with the decorated general. Several noble houses had offered up their daughters as potential brides for him, however, he'd set his sights on a much bigger prize: the Emperor's only daughter.

Her.

But like so many men on Thibius, Zahn was just too overpowering for her taste. Despite acknowledging his good looks, her heart simply refused to engage with him. The times they were able to converse, he was cold and reserved, speaking very little and not allowing her to really get to know him.

He treated her as if she was an asset to be gained and not a potential partner whom

he'd treat as an equal. He didn't bother to try to learn anything about her. Once he'd even scolded her when she'd laughed a little too loud at something one of her ladies in waiting had said. He'd told her it was behavior unbecoming of a princess.

And now she was about to become engaged to him. Tied to this humorless man male for the rest of her life and popping out baby after baby so that he'd have heirs who'd probably be just as obnoxious as him.

London didn't want the fate of her mother. Granted, her parents' love for each other was obvious for anyone to see. They often sneaked off to be alone and were always touching, but there was no doubt in London's mind that her father was in charge in all matters.

While her father was indulgent to his wife's whims, he always had the final say. He was also jealous of her mother so much as looked at another man. London wondered if it was because he viewed the queen as his property. Her mother didn't seem to mind but there was something about it that London simply didn't understand.

That was the way of things in their world, and London was certain General Zahn would try to rule her with an iron fist as well. Maybe she could learn to live with a strict husband if weren't for her lack of feelings towards him. He simply didn't make her pulse race or heart beat faster. The one chaste kiss they'd shared hadn't stirred any fire within her core like her mother had promised it would.

No. She couldn't let this sham betrothal take place. And she knew exactly what she needed to do.

After the banquet was long over, she'd slip past her guards, sneak into the docking station and take one of her father's ships. She only knew how to man one of the smaller aircrafts but with all the automation on the larger ships, she was certain she could figure it out.

But if she ran away, she'd need to get far away from Thibus. Even out of this solar system.

There was another galaxy that hosted a planet of humanoids who looked just like her. Her home planet. A place she had vague memories of.

Earth.

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Chapter

One

“ G irl, your legs must be tired, because you’ve been running through my mind all day.” The corny remark was followed by a lewd whistle as the would-be Casanova eyed Paris as if she were a piece of prime cut meat.

She rolled her eyes heavenward, biting back the retort on the tip of her tongue.

Why had she let her co-workers talk her into coming to happy hour with them? She should have hit the gym, then taken a long hot bath and afterwards, curled up with a good mystery novel.

It certainly would have been much better than sitting in a smoky bar with drunken colleagues she normally didn’t hang out with outside of the office. And getting hit on by guys who got their pickup lines from their dads wasn’t exactly her cup of tea either. Hell, she didn’t even drink. What was she doing here?

“Hey, baby, are you deaf? I’m talking to you.”

Paris took a sip of her cola and did her best to ignore the pest standing next to her.

When her unwanted suitor grasped her shoulder, she finally acknowledged his presence. “You’re touching me, which I didn’t give you permission do. I’ve given you no indication that your advances are welcome. So you can either leave me alone or you’ll be pulling back a bloody stump. The choice is yours, buddy.”

A snarl crossed the man's nondescript face, his hazel eyes narrowing with hostility. He yanked his hand away as though he'd been burned. "Are you a lesbo or something?"

"No. I'm just someone with taste."

"You see, that's the problem with you bitches. You all think too highly of yourselves. That's why most of you are single and bitter."

Paris rolled her eyes heavenward. This wasn't the first time she'd had this insult thrown at her and it probably wouldn't be the last, but it was a unique experience to be told this from someone who appeared to be twice her age and wearing a cologne that smelt like burnt fish.

She swiveled in his seat to face him and gave him a slow, disrespectful perusal. "Considering what's out there, I'd rather be bitter and single."

"Frigid bitch," he muttered before storming off.

Asshole .

Why did men assume a woman was a lesbian because they were rejected? Or even worse, bitter? God forbid if some women just preferred their own company and wasn't interested in a relationship.

Men were all a bunch of immature babies.

"Smooth move, Paris. That's the third guy you've shot down in less than an hour. That last guy was kinda cute." Carol from the finance department took the empty barstool next to hers. She'd been the one to invite Paris to happy hour.

Paris shrugged. “Was he? I didn’t notice. But I did notice the overwhelming scent of his cheap cologne.” She took another healthy swig of her soda and then glanced at her watch. Maybe if she left in a few minutes, she could make it home in time to catch the rest of the documentary series on space she’d been watching over the past few weeks.

“I take it you’re not having fun here tonight.” Carol flipped a lock of her long brown hair over her shoulder.

“This isn’t really my scene, but I appreciate you inviting me here. I don’t want to take you away from the others. You don’t have to keep me company. I needed to get away from the smoke in that corner everyone was sitting in. I don’t mean to be a spoilsport. Go ahead. I don’t mind.”

“It’s okay. I’m not really in the mood to hear another fart joke right now. Is anything else the matter? You’ve been looking kind of down lately. Actually, I’m surprised you agreed to come out with us tonight.”

A faint smile touched Paris’s lips. She’d been thinking the same thing. “Maybe I’m just trying to break up the monotony in my life. It seems like all I’ve done lately is go to work, go to the gym, and then go home. It’s been months since I’ve even dated.”

Carol snorted. “I find that hard to believe. All the guys in the office practically fall over their feet when you’re around.”

“And I also know most of them call me the ice princess behind my back. I’m no fool. They’re interested in me because I’m a challenge to them: typical male response.” Paris sighed before taking another sip of her drink.

“Careful, Paris, you’re going get the reputation of being a man hater if you keep talking like that.”

“Would that be so terrible? Maybe then, I’ll be left alone.”

“You can’t really mean that. It would be a shame for someone as gorgeous as you to remain single.”

“So if I was unattractive, I’d be unworthy of a relationship?”

Carol scoffed and placed her hand against her chest. “That’s not what I meant. I’m just saying that you’re bright, pretty and when you’re not being so gloomy, you’re a nice person. I think you’d make someone an ideal partner.”

Paris sighed. “I know you mean well, Carol but to be honest, I’m all burnt out when it comes to dating. I’ve had too many failed relationships to want to try again. At the rate I’m going, I’ll probably be single for the rest of my life.”

“You’re too young to be so jaded.”

Paris raised her shoulder in an uncaring shrug. “Maybe so, but it’s my life and right now I like it the way it is. Look, I think I’m going to head out now. Thanks for inviting me.”

“Already? You’ve only been here for an hour, not even that really. And you’ve barely interacted with anyone. When I invited you, I was surprised you showed up, but when you did, I was hoping you’d hang out with us more.”

“I’m sorry for not being very social. You’ve always been so kind to me and I felt bad for constantly turning you down for these work events. I thought I’d be up for this but I was wrong. And the smoke is giving me a headache. I didn’t realize they still allowed smoking in public buildings anymore.”

“To be fair, they don’t but the owner tends to look the other way and no one says

much about it because the drinks are strong, and the appetizers are all five bucks. In this economy that's nothing to sneeze at."

"I guess that makes sense."

"I'm glad you could come out tonight even if it was just a bit. Maybe you and I can hang out, just the two, in a less rowdy location."

A faint smile touched Paris's lips. Carol was a nice lady. Under different circumstances they probably could have been great friends instead of acquaintances on very good terms. Paris blamed herself. It was hard opening up to people when she'd learned long ago the only person she could count on was herself. Everyone she'd ever cared about—she'd lost.

"Sounds good," she answered although she knew she'd find an excuse to back out later. "I'm off now. I think I've had enough of being a killjoy for one night, but thanks again. I'll see you at work tomorrow."

Carol frowned. "Okay, hon. If that's what you want, but you'll be missed."

Paris lifted a brow. "I seriously doubt that, but it's nice of you to say so."

"Be safe." Carol gave her a hug before going to join the rowdy group on the other side of the bar.

Paris sighed, throwing a twenty-dollar bill on the bar and grabbing her purse.

The subway ride home for once was peaceful. It was after rush hours, and she was able to get a seat for the duration of the ride. It was a cool summer night, and the three blocks Paris walked from the subway station to her upper Manhattan apartment was pleasant. Once inside, she happily kicked off her high heels.

Her tiny efficiency was only four hundred and fifty square feet, but in this neighborhood, it cost the earth. Still, it had a great view of the city, and it was her very own corner of the world. It was the first place she'd had all to herself. Nearly every inch of space was covered with furniture and knickknacks, making the place seem smaller, but she loved it.

Paris grabbed a bag of cheese curls and flipped on the television before flopping down on her daybed. The documentary about the discovery of new planets was in its final minutes. She cursed herself for forgetting to record it. Lately, she'd been fascinated with all things space and she didn't have the faintest clue why. It made sense to her that mankind wasn't the only intelligent lifeforms out there. It was an arrogant assumption that Earth was the only planet in the entire universe with functioning societies.

When she was younger, she dreamed of being an astronaut and exploring the deep recesses of space but without the encouragement of a loving family, she'd given up on that idea and had gone the practical route. Space travel hadn't crossed her mind again until she's stumbled on this program.

Once her show was over, she trudged to the bathroom to begin her nightly ritual of brushing her teeth and showering.

Totally boring.

When had her life become so lame? "Paris," she spoke to her reflection in the mirror. "What you need in your life is a little excitement." She studied her image. Large, slightly tilted dark brown eyes stared back at her in a medium brown face. Paris tucked a strand of her shoulder length black hair behind her ear. She'd recently gotten a silk press to change things up, but she preferred her natural curls.

Her lips were large and bow shaped, and nose tip-tilted and slightly wide. She hit the

gym three times a week to maintain her hourglass figure. If there was one thing, she could change about herself it would be her height.

Five-foot-four wasn't tiny, but the short jokes she received most of her life were something she could do without. Overall, Paris supposed she was an attractive woman, but in her opinion not so much as to receive all the attention she did at the bar tonight.

What was it with men? Did some kind of sensor go off in their heads when they knew a woman wasn't interested? Why did they assume a woman couldn't get by without them in their lives? It wasn't that she disliked men. That wasn't the case at all, but she'd yet to find one who excited her enough to take a chance on.

The ones she had dated fell into four categories: mama's boys, conceited jerks, or men who only wanted to get in her pants. And her least favorite kind —the men who wanted know what you were bringing to the table, when they couldn't afford a table. They were the type of men who expected a woman to be perfect in every way. Beautiful, accomplished, financially independent and intelligent. Meanwhile, they had three baby mamas, bad credit and questionable hygiene.

What the hell?

Paris had her fair share of that last type of guy.

It wasn't that she didn't believe in love. At one point in her life, she'd desperately craved it. But time and time again, she'd faced one let down after another. She'd been cheated on, lied to and disappointed in general. Dating for her was just one let down after another for her.

Where were all the nice guys that claimed to be out there? She saw other happy couples out there, but it just wasn't happening for her. So here she was. Single and

resigned to a fate of possibly dying alone. Besides, it wasn't so bad. At least if she remained alone, she wouldn't get hurt again.

Could the problem lay with her? Perhaps she was too picky, but was it so wrong to have standards? "You're going to be an old lady by yourself," she said to her reflection. It was just as well. She'd been alone most of her life. Why should the rest of it be any different?

Twenty years ago, at the age of two, her life was irrevocably changed when her mother and sister went missing. Some would think she wouldn't have such clear memories from such an early age, but she did.

Paris recalled the night her mother had taken her sister London to the doctor. She'd wanted to go, crying when she didn't get her way. Paris had been left with the babysitter. When they never returned, she was shattered. She'd stayed with the babysitter for some months, for how long she couldn't remember exactly, until she was placed in a home for orphans. That part of her life went by in a blur. Some of the people in the foster homes she'd lived in were nice, some not so much, but they all had one thing in common: eventually she was separated from them.

Because of that, she'd built a protective shell around her heart. Not a day went by when she didn't think about her mother and sister. When she was old enough to research their disappearance, Paris had learned the authorities had found her mother's car turned over at the side of the road, but no bodies. Police suspected foul play. In her heart, she didn't want to believe they were dead, but all evidence pointed to that theory.

It wrenched at her gut to think about them and how different her life would have been if they hadn't disappeared. Would she be so closed off to others, mistrustful and cynical? She'd give anything to be the carefree person a woman her age should be. After all, she had a decent job as an underwriter for a large insurance company, her

own place and enough money in her savings account to treat herself with luxuries every now and then.

But that hole in her heart from the disappearance of her mom and sister remained. There were times, Paris wished she'd gone missing with them. At least then they'd be together.

Turning away from the mirror, she undressed and stepped into the shower.

Yep, she definitely needed some excitement in her life.

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Chapter

Two

The DNA tracker beeped louder with each step he took. He was getting close. This device normally used for hunting back home had come in handy. He wished however, that his ship could have pinpointed his target's location to a smaller radius so that he could have tracked her down by now.

Nonetheless, Princess London would be captured by day's end, and he could call this mission successful.

The sooner the better to get off this barbaric planet. He'd heard some tales of Earth, the only planet inhabited by humanoids in this solar system. It had recently become a popular spot to visit for slavers.

What he'd heard of this place didn't prepare him for how primitive everything seemed, or the way the air was tinged with the faint scent of smoke. There were some flying ships in the sky but from what he could ascertain, the technology was so primitive it was laughable.

Zahn also observed that most people traveled by vehicles on the ground with wheels. The scan he'd done on this planet from his ship told him of heavy pollution and decay.

The only redeeming quality he found about Earth was that it was the birthplace of Queen Calliope. The citizens on Thibia were reluctant to accept a former concubine

as their Queen but she was a fair and benevolent ruler, often stepping in for the Emperor whenever he needed to be away for diplomatic travels.

Princess London, the adopted daughter of the Emperor...his betrothed was also from Earth.

Zahn clenched his teeth when he thought about her taking off in such a manner that was unfitting of royalty.

It made sense that she would flee here to blend in amongst the inhabitants. It had been difficult finding a place to land his ship without being noticed.

He and his men had settled on one of the numerous tall buildings in the city, cloaking the ship before entering the atmosphere. Perhaps he should have found out what kind of clothes the natives wore before arriving on this planet, because everywhere he went people stared. The Earthlings weren't much different in appearance, but their gear was more conservative.

No matter. He only had one general goal in mind—locate Princess London and take her back to Thibius. But first he planned on dealing out some well-deserved punishment for her defection. No one had ever treated him that way before. Royalty or not, how dare London humiliate him in front of all the planet's dignitaries by running out on their betrothal dinner and then fleeing Thibius altogether?

Zahn had promised her father, Emperor Blaze, that he'd retrieve her, omitting what he planned on doing to her before they made it back to the Malazian galaxy. He'd tan her luscious backside good and teach London who her master was. If Zahn was being completely honest with himself, pride was what drove him to chase after her.

It had been an honor to be chosen by the Emperor to marry his much sought after daughter. Zahn, who'd come from noble lineage, chose to earn a name for himself

rather than rely on his family's name. From an early age, he wanted to succeed.

Through sheer will, determination and hard work, he'd made his way through the ranks of the Royal Army until he'd reached the top spot. He'd amassed a fortune of his own, and had become Thibius's greatest champion. It only made sense that the mother of his heir be accomplished in her own right and Princess London was beautiful, graceful and royalty.

There was no better choice in the kingdom for him. So what if she didn't excite him as a mate should? Zahn was sure, given time, they would do well together. She was very beautiful and many sons of noble house had offered for her hand. For her looks alone, it wouldn't be a hardship to bed her. There was the added bonus of her having the right pedigree.

Still, that nagging sensation in the back of his mind made him wonder if he should have stronger feelings for her. Many arranged marriages lacked affection in the beginning but grew in time. Love wasn't a requirement he sought in his future bride, but it worried him a little that he felt little more than brotherly regard for her. It barely roused his manhood, when he'd kissed her that one time.

Damn.

All would be fine. Perhaps in time, his body would acclimate to hers. Once he had her back on his ship and set about exacting his revenge, he was sure some other kind of feelings would surface. Zahn frowned as the device beeped almost out of control. There were two dots on the DNA tracking meter.

How could that be?

He'd bribed one of the servants at the king's palace to bring him something personal of London's, in order for him to track her. What he got was a hair brush. The strands

of hair loaded into the device had brought him this far. Why was it malfunctioning now? One of the dots was immobile, but the other was moving further away from him.

It had to be some kind of fluke. He tapped the machine. Both dots were still there. He'd have to make a decision soon as to which direction he should go.

Damn it all!

He'd go for the one closest, which happened to be the one not moving. Zahn walked in the direction of the dot. He soon found himself in front of a large structure. What kind of place was this? The tracker told him there were several people inside. There was only one person he was interested in finding.

What was the princess doing here? Well, he'd find out soon enough. When he tried to open the door, Zahn discovered it was locked. It seemed like a primitive form of security. He could easily open it with a simple master pick, which he produced from his utility belt. He had it open within seconds.

When he entered the building the tracking device beeped louder. There were several doors around her. He held the machine in front of him, then above him. She was upstairs. Zahn let the tracker guide him. Another flight of stairs later, he stood in front of a door he was positive London was behind. Getting inside was even easier than the door to the building.

Once inside, he looked around with a frown. This tiny place was littered with cheap looking furniture and was no bigger than the closet where he housed his boots, in fact it was smaller. He heard running water. Turning the DNA tracker off, he placed it on a nearby table and moved toward the sound.

The door was slightly ajar, steam seeping out. Walking inside, he saw her silhouette

behind a curtain. It appeared to be a primitive shower of sort.

His lips tightened in disgust. What was she doing in this tiny hovel?

She hummed an unfamiliar tune. Part of him said he should wait for her to finish washing, but the other half said seize her ! She had run away and humiliated him. She belonged to him, per the betrothal agreement and it was his right to reclaim her.

She was his!

He ripped the shower curtain open. London whirled around with mouth agape and eyes wide. The hands that had been in her wet hair immediately covered her breasts. She wasn't the only surprised one.

Zahn's body instantly quickened.

He'd seen the nude bodies of his various lovers over the years but he'd never had such a visceral reaction like this. He expected London to be nude when yanked the cover back, but he was not prepared for the way he felt.

Female attire on Thibius was made to show off the pleasing forms so he had an idea of what London would look like naked. Even with that in mind he was mesmerized.

He couldn't tear his eyes away from her perfect figure. Though her hands were over them now, he couldn't forget the sight of those full breasts tipped with dark, nearly black nipples. Her tiny waist and well-rounded backside had his mouth watering. Zahn found himself clenching his fists at his sides so he wouldn't pull her against him.

There was something different about her, he couldn't quite put his finger on it. Her hair was short and there was a beauty mark on her upper lip. It had to have been

there, but in the back of his mind he wondered why he had never noticed it before, especially when it emphasized her full, sensual lips.

Before he could further examine her, she released a blood-curdling scream. Her reaction angered him. How dare she pretend outrage after she'd put him and her family through what she did?

He grabbed her forearms, hauling her against his chest. His mouth covered hers to silence the scream—at least that's what he'd intended, but instead something else happened. His initial arousal that he fought upon seeing her naked body came back full force.

She pounded her fists against his chest, but it barely registered to him. The more London squirmed and wiggled to get out of his grasp, the tighter he held on to her. She twisted her head away, but he recaptured her lips, reveling in their sweetness.

In his mind she was his and it was his right to claim her as per the agreement of their arrangement.

He wanted her and he would have her.

Having London in his arms like this, her body wet and slick against his, had lust coursing through his veins. He realized mating with her wouldn't be the trial he thought it would be. On the contrary, he'd enjoy her very much.

Paris tried to push herself out of the hulk's grasp and break his suffocating kiss, but every time her head moved, his would follow. Where had he come from? Who was he? This was supposed to be a safe neighborhood. Things like this didn't happen to her.

Not only that, why wasn't she completely repulsed by his touch like she ought to be?

Instead, an incredible heat flooded between her thighs.

No! This was wrong.

She wouldn't allow this bastard to rape and then possibly kill her. Using the only weapon she had at her disposal, Paris brought her knee up and slammed it into his crotch as hard as she could.

He released her, letting out a loud grunt. He loosened his hold just enough for her to wiggle out of his arms. She couldn't run out of her apartment with no clothes.

Paris contemplated grabbing the throw blanket from her daybed and wrapping it around herself, but decided, under the circumstances, it was best to get the hell out of here.

That split second when she hesitated cost her, because her intruder caught up to Paris. He started to speak, but she didn't understand a word he was saying, not that it mattered. She had to get away. In her struggle, she hit and clawed him. When she tried to scream, he covered her mouth with a large hand and spoke in that unfamiliar language again.

Oh my God. I'm going to die.

She kicked and lashed out, which only made him tighten his bear-like grip on her. He was unrelenting. How could she ever escape? Maybe if she pretended compliance, he'd think she had given up and relax his hold. Paris went limp in his arms. "Please let me go," she whispered in desperation.

"My purse is on the dresser. Take it. Just don't hurt me."

The hulk placed Paris on her feet and turned her around to face him. At first, she

believed his eyes were black, but they were actually a dark fathomless green, so deep and mesmerizing she could barely look away. His face was hard and chiseled as if from granite.

He could have been a handsome man if not for the harsh look and firm set of his thin but well-shaped lips. She allowed her gaze to slide over his bare chest. He had to be the broadest man she'd ever seen, his body all ripples, hollows and hard planes. It occurred to Paris that his style of dress seemed a little out of place.

The man wore a brown leather vest and what looked like deerskin pants clung to muscled thighs. Black, swashbuckling type boots ending at his knees finished the look.

He reached out.

Paris flinched, but forced herself not to pull away when he caressed her cheek with his calloused palm. Why was she warm all of a sudden? She couldn't possibly be attracted to this weirdo -- even if he did have the body of a god.

No! It wasn't possible. Easy, girl, let him think you've surrendered. Then wham! A gust of heat flickered between her thighs. The barbarian lifted his other palm and cupped her face as though mesmerized.

Paris's lips parted slightly in her bewilderment. Why was her body responding to him this way? She didn't want to like it—couldn't.

Just as his lips touched hers, Paris brought her knee up again. Unfortunately, this time he was ready for her. Quickly turning to the side, he slammed her into the door.

Her head banged against it, creating a dull ache. Her vision grew blurry, and the room started to go dark. Paris's last conscious thought was that she was going to die.

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Chapter

Three

“ M y love, you’ve been out here for over an hour. It’s time for bed.” Emperor Blaze stepped outside and entered the mechanical garden, his gaze falling on his beloved wife, Calliope.

If he could, he’d wipe the sadness from her lovely face, but her pain mirrored his own. Calliope turned to him with a smile on her face. She still made his pulse quicken, body tighten, and cock stir whenever she was near after all these years. There was so much love inside of him for this woman, there weren’t words adequate enough to describe his feelings.

Blaze held his arms out to her.

Calliope walked into them, pressing her head against his chest. “Mmm. I needed this. I thought you were in a meeting with your council.”

He sighed. “They had no more to add from our last gathering.”

She looked up at him, large brown eyes filled with worry. “So it may be possible London didn’t get out of the heliocraft before it exploded?”

“No. I’m not saying that, simply there have been no new developments. Don’t worry, my love. She’s out there somewhere. We’ll find her and when we do, she’ll be brought home safely.”

“Have you heard from General Zahn yet?”

“Not yet, but I’ve decided not to lay London’s fate completely in his hands. I’m going to Earth to bring her back myself.”

Calliope placed her hands on his chest. “Then I’ll come too.”

“No, my love. Someone must stay here just in case Zahn returns.”

“Jayru can be here. He’s old enough.”

“But I would feel more comfortable if you were here. Besides, if I were to take you with me, I wouldn’t be able to keep my hands off you.”

She raised an arched brow. “Do you mean to tell me your mind is on you know what right now?”

Blaze grinned. “If by you know what you means fucking you, that’s exactly what I mean.” He took a seat and pulled her onto his lap, taking her mouth in an urgent kiss.

The passion for her burned strong with each passing moment he spent with her. To think, he’d once had a harem, several women vying for his attention night after night.

When Calliope came into his life, however, Blaze knew she was the only woman for him.

He loved her with every breath in his being. His cock ached for her. A faint whiff of her hot pussy wafted to his nose. She was ready for him.

Blaze grabbed the hem of her dress and pulled it over her dark creamy thighs. Her skin was so soft under his palm, like warm velvet.

She wrapped her arms around him, pressing her breasts against his chest. “Oh, Blaze,” she sighed into his mouth.

Calliope’s tangy, sweet taste titillated his senses, sending bursts of sensation up and down his spine. Blaze wedged his fingers between her thighs.

She wore no underwear. It was futile anyway. They never lasted long whenever he was around. She spread her legs further apart with a moan. The incredible heat hit him immediately.

Yes, she was ready for him all right.

Easing two fingers inside of her hot sheath, he gently fucked her. She wiggled her hips, grinding and moving to the rhythm he’d orchestrated.

Calliope pulled her mouth away from his and rested her head against his shoulder. “Oh, Blaze. Yes. Please, just like that.”

Blaze thrust into her several minutes more before extracting his fingers from her moist hole and rubbing a damp digit across her full bottom lip. When she ran her tempting pink tongue across it, he grew more aroused. His cock was close to exploding.

He sucked his fingers, savoring Calliope’s flavorful cream. Unable to contain himself any longer, Blaze moved her aside just long enough to undo his pants.

In hurried movements Calliope stood up, and straddled him, her dress hiked over curvaceous hips. She lowered her wet cunt over his cock. She was so tight around him. She was made especially for him. With gritted teeth, Blaze grasped her hips and guided her along his length. “Oh, yes, my pussy. All mine,” he groaned.

“My cock,” she moaned in response. She pressed kisses along his neck, sending waves of molten hot fire through his veins. She was his queen, partner, lover, and woman.

Her pussy muscles clenched around him, holding on like a vise. “I love you so much, Blaze.”

“And I you.” He thrust his hips harder into her, slamming his cock, driving as deep as he could go.

Her breasts bounced as she moved with him, her fingers digging into his shoulders. A sudden explosion burst inside of him. He spewed his seed up her tight channel. “Blaze!” she screamed, signaling her own peak. She shuddered against him.

Calliope wrapped her arms around his neck and held him tight. “I really needed that.”

Blaze kissed her now sweat-glistened forehead. “As did I. These past few weeks have been a trying experience for all of us. Our sons are just as affected by their missing sister as we are. Jayru’s temper has been quite fragile lately, and our youngest...”

She frowned. “What’s wrong with Taylon?”

“I thought I caught him crying.”

“Well, he’s still a little boy.”

“I know, but I think it embarrassed him that he’d been discovered.”

Calliope pouted. “Aww, my poor baby. Maybe it would be best if I remained here for my sons. I’ll miss you so much.”

Blaze cupped her face in his palms. “I promise to return as soon as I can.”

“I won’t return until London is home safe.”

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Chapter

Four

Zahn had never been happier to be back on his ship. Now that London was in his grasp, he could head back to Thibius, but first, he'd see that they delayed the trip back for a couple days. He planned to mete out a little punishment.

He stretched out in his tub, sipping the heated wine from his chalice. The pollution on planet Earth left him with an unclean feeling. Zahn contemplated the events since he'd captured London. Something was definitely different about the princess he couldn't quite put his finger on. She looked the same, save the haircut, but still, there was something else about her.

For one thing, when he caught her in the shower there had been fear.

Considering what he had in store for her she ought to be afraid, but there was a look of... what was it exactly? It almost seemed as if she didn't recognize him.

After she'd passed out, Zahn had checked to make sure she was all right. Other than the bump on her head, he assured himself London was fine. He then used his cloaking device, normally used as a tool in warfare, to carry her back to the ship. It had been annoying enough to have all the curious bystanders staring at him on his own, but carrying an unconscious woman was quite another thing.

Placing his chalice down, Zahn stood up and grabbed a towel before drying himself.

It was time. He threw on a robe and strode into his adjoining room. London lay face down, arms stretched out with each wrist chained to his bed posts. Her legs were spread apart as well— also secured by the shackles. And she wasn't wearing a stitch of clothing. The expanse of soft silken skin, gently curving to a curvaceous backside, had his cock stiffening.

She was still unconscious, but not for long.

He walked over to the bed and sat next to her prone body. Her hair, which was now dry, framed her face with tight curls. He was so used to seeing her with long hair but the curls suited her.

He grazed her hair with the back of his hand. It was soft and he wanted to keep touching it but the rest of her still naked form caught his attention. Unable to help himself, he trailed his fingers along the back of her thighs. His gaze drifted to her plump pussy lips. Zahn continued his exploration, allowing his fingertips to graze her folds. Just then, she shivered as though sensing his touch and enjoying it.

He licked his lips in anticipation of the pleasure to come. London groaned, moving her head from side to side. She was coming to. Good. He preferred her to be awake for what he planned for her. She looked so lovely, so innocent in her slumber.

Then he remembered the humiliation he'd suffered at her hands and anger tore through his chest. "Wake up," he growled, nudging her shoulder with a fierce poke.

She didn't deserve to pose as an innocent, even in sleep. Not after what she'd done.

London stirred, a moan escaping her full lips. She stayed still for a moment before twisting her head until their eyes met. She opened her mouth as if to scream, but he covered it with his palm.

“Silence! You have a lot of nerve, Princess London Blazedawtyer, to run away from home the way you did, worrying your parents and dishonoring your Emperor. People have been put to death for less, but you... you think because you’re a princess, you can do whatever you want. I’ve seen how you’re able to get your way with your father and mother, but it won’t be so with me. No, you’ll soon learn who your master is, and I am he.”

London’s eyes widened with what looked like fear, her muffled yells behind his palm still loud. Zahn almost felt sorry for her, but he couldn’t let her think she’d gotten the best of him. He’d show her he wasn’t as easily manipulated as everyone else on Thibius. With his free hand, he brought his palm crashing down on her rear. “Now be quiet.”

Zahn was aware of his strength and knew he didn’t use all of it, yet her dark eyes welled with tears. Maybe he was rougher with her than he should have been. “I wouldn’t have done it had you behaved, London. I am not a bad man. Things could be pleasurable between us as well. Let me show you.” Zahn removed his hand from her mouth before lowering his head.

He pressed his lips on the back of her graceful neck.

She stiffened momentarily and then renewed her struggles.

“The more you fight, the more you’ll tire yourself out.”

When she continued to fight, he slapped her buttocks again, this time with more power. He’d have her complete obedience before they made it back to Thibius. She stopped moving. A faint smile touched his lips. At least she was a fast learner. He watched her expression to see if she would try and scream again. London remained silent. They would be mates, so what better time to acquaint himself with her delectable body than right now?

She was at his complete mercy. On his ship, there was no one to override his commands. He was king. “I warned you, did I not? I told you to be still. If you try to test my authority again, you’ll receive more of the same. Now... where was I?” Zahn brushed his lips across her shoulder blade. Though she didn’t respond, she didn’t flinch away either.

He ran his hands along the delicate curve of her back, reveling in the softness of her pleasing body beneath his fingertips. Her dark skin hue against his pale hand created an erotic contrast. His cock throbbed, trying to break from his robe.

Her flowery scent drifted to his nostrils, making him more aware of her than ever. Each time his palms moved up her back, he brought them down, lower than before until he cupped her rounded cheeks. They were so luscious and firm, somewhat large for a woman of her petite stature, yet it was sexy.

This was the kind of backside meant for riding and fucking and that’s exactly what he intended to do—but not right now. At the moment, he wanted to draw a response from London and prove she wasn’t as indifferent to his touch as she pretended to be.

The kiss they’d shared earlier was not a figment of his imagination. She wanted him too. The longer his hands remained on her, the more she moaned.

Zahn dipped his hands lower, until his fingers grazed the puffy lips of her cunt. She shivered, a soft gasp escaping her lips.

He felt her heat. Zahn smiled. “Ah, so you do like this?” He kneaded her inner thighs careful not to touch her sex again. By the time he was through with her, she’d be so hot for him she wouldn’t be able to think straight.

London whimpered before biting her lower lip and squeezing her eyes shut as if blocking him out. He wanted no barriers between them, but for now, just knowing he

was capable of turning her on was enough.

When she started to tremble, Zahn could no longer resist touching her where he most desired to. He eased one finger between the damp folds, pushing into her hot channel.

London groaned, straining against his hand.

Zahn chuckled. “You pretend you don’t want this, yet you’re wet for me—and tight.” Though he knew she was supposed to be a virgin, it filled him with possessive pride to have the fact confirmed. London was so snug around his finger she couldn’t be anything but.

She bucked her hips, almost as if she were trying to pull away, but he placed a palm on her back, to still her. “There’s no use pretending, sweet princess. You like what I’m doing to you.” Slipping the digit in and out of her, Zahn carefully watched her reaction.

London’s eyes widened at first in what looked like surprise, then she groaned, making her pleasure apparent. Her fragrant pussy titillated his sense of smell. He had to taste it.

Zahn pulled his now dew-soaked finger from her cunt and brought it to his mouth, licking every drop of her essence from it.

Then he positioned himself between her legs, his mouth level with her succulent pussy. Her wet button peeked out from her moist labia, hot and ready for his lips and tongue. Gently parting her, Zahn buried his face between her legs and captured her clit with his teeth.

“Oh!” she cried out, her body jerking.

He loved her responses, so innocent and passionate at once. She reacted to him as if she'd never experienced such sensations before.

That was a good sign, because from here on out, there'd be no other for her, whether London cared to admit it or not. The tangy, musky flavor of her made his tongue tingle. She was delicious.

Zahn wanted more!

Releasing her clit, he pushed his tongue into her damp hole, thrusting into her.

London wiggled and squirmed, mashing her pussy against his face. She murmured incoherent words, but they went unheeded. He needed her more than he'd ever thought possible.

He captured the drops of her excitement in his mouth. Zahn lifted his head long enough to chuckle at her eagerness. "Patience, Princess. We have plenty of time."

Lowering his mouth again, he ran his tongue from her clit to the slick entrance of her wet pussy. What had happened in that time since London had run away that made him want her so much?

His cock was so stiff it ached. When he'd touched her, it hadn't been his intention to experience this burning lust. Zahn had wanted to teach her a lesson, but now, it seemed he was the one who was learning something. He had to stop, but just one more lick, a little suck.

That's all he needed.

With a groan, Zahn pressed his mouth against her cunt, his tongue leaving no inch of it unexplored. London was so wet she literally dripped with her need for him.

She screamed with pleasure, wiggling and grinding against him. London rattled her chains, this time not to break free, but from the inability to keep still.

More than anything he wanted to slide his cock into her tight sheath, but the orgasm would have to be earned. Reluctantly he pulled back.

She whimpered and lifted her hips as though begging for more.

Zahn licked her juices from his lips. London was a tasty temptation he had trouble resisting. Getting off the bed, he stood over her. Confusion clouded her eyes.

London's lips parted in an unspoken question.

“Yes, you wanted me, but you can't have me—yet. Think about it while I go to the upper deck and check on the ship.” He walked out of the room then.

Leaving her was harder than he thought.

When the door shut behind him, Paris let out a sob. What the hell just happened?

That maniac had kidnapped and chained her to his bed, yet when he touched her, her body burst into flames.

She'd had boyfriends in the past, but the most she'd allowed was heavy petting.

One boyfriend had even fingered her, but none of her past men had ever made her feel anywhere near this insatiable lust. Paris had never been so close to an orgasm in her life that wasn't ministered by her own hand.

What kind of person was she to respond so wantonly to a complete stranger? Sure, it had been a while since she'd dated, but she wasn't that desperate for a man. Never

mind he was one of the sexiest pieces of man candy she'd seen in a while.

Are you nuts ? This man took you away from your home and took you to ... where in the world was she? This place had a futuristic feel about it.

Paris stretched her neck as far as it would go to get a look around her. The room was spacious enough. At first glance, it was like any ordinary bedroom, but the walls were metallic, and the window reminded her of the kind you saw on a cruise ship except bigger.

The feeling of movement was another thing that struck her. Was she on some kind of shuttle? Not to mention, when her captor spoke it wasn't in a language she recognized. The only word she'd picked up from his deep, guttural words was London.

He'd said it often enough for Paris to believe he thought that was her name.

Paris's breath caught in her throat as a thought occurred to her. He believed that's who she was. How could that be? Her sister and mother had been missing for twenty years. Could it be that this man had something to do with their disappearance?

If he believed she was her sister, then London had somehow escaped him. It was the only thing that made sense. Now that she'd figured that out, how on earth would she get away? Worse still, how would she squash these inconvenient feelings she had for him, especially when he thought she was someone else?

She'd wanted some excitement in her life, but this wasn't what she'd had in mind.

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Chapter

Five

Some excitement this was turning out to be. The adage be careful what you wished for certainly came to mind. Paris's last coherent thought was crying herself to sleep. She remembered experiencing the most delicious dream. Warm hands had massaged her flesh, heating it to near burning.

Fingers delved into her hot slick channel, almost taking her to a climax, but denying her, leaving Paris with a desolate feeling. More than anything she craved total fulfillment.

When she woke up, Paris was no longer chained to the bed, nor was she naked, but she might as well have been. The metal bra, cool against her skin, was tight and pinched her breasts uncomfortably. Thong underwear was barely covered by a blue silk loin cloth. She looked like a chick in chain mail from one of those really bad sci-fi B movies.

Who had dressed her in this obscene outfit?

Instead of the large soft bed she'd fallen asleep on, she was in a chair, her hands positioned on the arm rests. She looked around her. The odd room had the appearance of some kind of mad scientist's lab, with all its weird looking gadgets. The walls were covered with monitors.

When she attempted to stand, restraints popped out of the arm rests and quickly

locked over her wrists, holding them in place. Her bonds tightened the harder she struggled. What kind of device was this? Had she been brought to a high-tech torture chamber? And where was the barbarian?

She gasped when her restraints gripped her harder. Only when she relaxed her body did they loosen—slightly. “Help me! Please someone help me!” Paris screamed, even though she had the distinct impression no one would come to her aid. She still had to try. “Please, someone!”

She would not cry. No matter what she wouldn’t let that bastard win. Screaming at the top of her lungs and twisting around in the chair, she tried to get someone’s attention, but that only served to make her throat ache and wrists hurt.

Suddenly, the monitors came on and they all showed her. What was going on?

The large screen in front of Paris showed her close up. Heat surfaced in her cheeks. To see herself so up close and personal like this was embarrassing. The way her hair was tousled, coupled with the obscene outfit she wore, she looked like a harem girl.

Is that what the hunky alien had in mind? Put her in some kind of harem? If that was what he thought, he had another think coming. Realizing it was futile to try escaping from the tight bonds, Paris calmed down and thought of her next course of action.

Just then, the object of her earlier contemplation walked into the room. He was dressed similarly to the way she’d first seen him in, but this time he was bare-chested.

Her heart fluttered. Damn. She wasn’t supposed to be happy to see him. He’d kidnapped her for crying out loud.

A smile crossed his harsh face, but it wasn’t one of humor. The expression in his eyes was hungry and lustful and Paris couldn’t fight back the shiver that spread through

her body. She licked her suddenly dry lips.

Maybe if she tried to reason with him, he'd let her go. Just as soon as the thought crossed her mind, she realized it was wishful thinking on her part. Especially with the way he now looked at her.

His gaze latched on to the small movement of her tongue and she turned her head away, unable to meet the intensity of that dark green gaze. Why out of all the men she'd ever run across was this the one who made her more aware of her femininity than any other man—this person who might not be human? She'd seen enough sci-fi movies to realize maybe there could be some kind of reptilian creature beneath his humanoid flesh.

Paris forced herself to look into his eyes again, trying desperately not to get lost in their depths. "Please let me out of this thing. I think you've made a mistake."

He frowned, cocking his head to the side. Then he spoke harshly in that indiscernible language.

"I don't understand." She shook her head.

His nostrils flared. Holding out his wrist, he pressed down on a raised part of his skin.

She wondered what he was doing. "Did you hear what I said?" she demanded.

"I heard you the first time, but now I finally understand what you're saying. What game are you playing? Why are you speaking in the Earth tongue?"

"You speak English!" Her eyes widened in surprise.

The barbarian gave her a narrow-eyed stare. "It seems like I must since you're not

being cooperative. Thanks to this language chip I've implanted in my arm, I can understand and speak most known languages."

"Who are you?"

Again he frowned, his eyebrows knitting together. "So you wish to continue with the games, Princess?"

Her eyes widened. "Princess? Me?" She'd been called many things in her lifetime, but this was a new one.

"Aye, London. You are a princess, though a spoiled one. Perhaps it is time for you to behave as someone befitting your station."

"My station? I don't even know who you are!"

"That is enough, London!" he roared.

There was that name again. Her sister! "Look, there's been a misunderstanding. I'm not —"

"Silence! The only words I want to hear from your lips are the sound of you begging for mercy. By the end of the day, you'll be screaming my name. And once we're back on Thibius, we're to be married as planned."

Blood pounded in her ears as her heart rate sped up. "Married? Are you crazy? I'm not —"

"London, I've already told you, I don't want to hear it. You've caused me enough trouble as it is."

His statement stunned her. London was supposed to marry this man? This situation was getting stranger by the moment. Is this what had happened to her twin? And mother? Were they abducted by aliens?

Alien abduction? Maybe she's seen way too many science fiction movies but somehow, she believed if there were other intelligent beings on other planets, they'd be green with multiple tentacles. Besides, being built like a supersized muscular version of a comic book hero, he looked like any other human.

As fantastical as being taken to another world sounded, it sort of made sense. When she was old enough, Paris had investigated the disappearance of her mother and sister but had found no traces of them. The only clue left behind was her mother's abandoned vehicle with her keys and purse left behind. Most people would have given up on the idea of ever seeing their loved ones again but in Paris's heart, she knew her sister was somehow alive despite there being no trace of her.

Maybe it was a freaky twin thing, but it explained the dreams she'd had growing up of a girl who looked like her, but wasn't. The girl had been in a strange place, in different clothing. Clothing appeared to be made from the same material the barbarian now wore.

Had she secretly known of her sister's whereabouts all this time? And what about her mother? Was she also alive? Hopefully her sister and mother hadn't been separated. "Do you know what happened to my mother?"

"Oh?" He lifted a dark brow. "So you've finally given your poor mother a thought? The queen has been worried sick about you. Not that you care since you saw fit to run off the way you did—stealing one of your father's heliocrafts? Those small ships weren't built to cross galaxies. You're lucky to be alive. How did you get as far as you did?"

She didn't understand any of the nonsense he spouted besides, what he'd said about her mom. She was also alive? "Whoa! Wait a minute. My mother is a queen? How is that possible? When did that happen?"

He tilted his head to the side and looked at her as if she'd sprouted an eye in the middle of her forehead. "I see you're still in a game playing mood. Fine. We'll see if you like my kind of games." He walked across the room to what looked like a control panel with all kinds of buttons.

Paris renewed her struggles. "Look, there's been some mistake. I'm not Princess London. My name is —" Her words were halted when a pair of mechanical hands popped out from the sides of the chair and grabbed at the fastening of her metal bra. She renewed her fight.

What kind of contraption was this? "What are you doing to me? This isn't funny."

"It's not my intention to amuse you. No. By the time I'm finished with you, there will be an altogether new emotion you're going to feel."

"This is rape," she hissed at him.

He threw his head back and laughed.

It wasn't the reaction she'd expected.

"There's so much fire in you, Princess. You were all sweet smiles and coyness on Thibius. Has Earth changed you so much?"

"I told you I—oh," she gasped. The mechanical hands undid the front clasp of her bra, setting her breasts free. Heat flooded her face.

Fire blazed within the depths of his gaze. Her nipples puckered against the cool air of the room.

“You throw out that word rape so easily, but was it rape when you moaned and wiggled against my fingers and mouth? Was it rape when I fucked you with my tongue? You were so wet, you were ready to come and would have if I hadn’t stopped.

Admit it, Princess, you wanted me.”

Sheer stubbornness made her deny what they both knew was the truth. Maybe her mind didn’t want him, but her body seemed to. Paris would be damned if she’d admit it though.

“Ah, I see you want to say you didn’t feel anything, but your body will give you away every time. You have a gorgeous body, London. I’m going to enjoy acquainting myself with it.”

“Never. The only thing you can do for me is let me go!” she raged, angry tears springing to her eyes. She was more upset with herself for the sensations she had no business feeling. What had this man done to her?

“Princess, there’s a lot I can do for you, like this...” He pressed one of the buttons on the panel. The metal hands tweaked her nipples, applying just enough pressure to cause a tingling feeling between her thighs.

“No,” she whispered trying to stave off the pleasure creeping up on her.

“Yes, Princess. Take a look at the screen here.”

She followed the direction of his finger and saw an impression of her body in

different shades, mostly red and green. “What is that?” she squeaked.

“It’s you, Princess. This monitor indicates just how hot you are. The more aroused you become, the higher your heat level rises. The chair you’re sitting in monitors that and it’s recording it on this screen. So you can say what you like, but I’ll know the truth.” He pushed another button. The mechanical fingers increased the pressure on her nipples.

“Please don’t do this to me.” Paris squirmed in her seat, trying not to like this too much. Beads of sweat popped out on her forehead. “Oh, God,” she muttered.

“Just accept you want this.”

“When pigs fly,” she hissed.

“Hmm, I’m not familiar with that particular animal, but judging from the way you say it with such vehemence, flying isn’t something these pigs do. In that case, I’ll make you beg for your release.”

“I’d sooner see you in hell,” she spat at him, defiant even when she knew she couldn’t win.

“Again, another word I’m not familiar with. I think I can suffer this hell, as long as you’re there with me. Look at the screen. You’re getting hotter. Do you see how red your body has become?” His soft taunt didn’t help matters.

More than anything, Paris wanted to wipe the smug expression from his face. “Is this your sick idea of a fantasy, holding me hostage this way? Can’t you get a woman without tying her down?”

His eyes narrowed. “I’ve never had a problem with any woman, but you’ll soon learn

I keep what is mine and make no mistake about it, Princess, you are mine.”

The dark-haired barbarian seemed to have more surprises for her. Restraints came out near the bottom of the chair and shackled her ankles. Then the legs of the chair spread, pulling her thighs open. “What are you doing?” Her words came out in a husky moan, as the mechanical hands squeezed and kneaded her breasts. This shouldn’t have felt good -- but it did.

“Proving you wrong. You say you’ll derive no pleasure from this, but we’ll see.”

Her eyes widened when a trap door opened on the floor in front of her and a large menacing-looking piece of equipment rose and slid forward until it rested between her legs. “What is this thing?”

He didn’t answer, merely pushing a few buttons before turning to watch her, his eyes glittering.

Paris was too fascinated to utter another word. A long thin rod slid forward, not stopping until it rested between the opening of her thighs. The little probe maneuvered her thong, pushing it to the side of her labia. Then it retreated, only for another object to pop out which looked a lot like a miniature dildo.

Her breathing was shallow as her pussy grew moist. The instrument moved forward, sliding up and down her slit. Paris squirmed in her chair, no longer able to fight the fierce desire flowing through her body.

One of the metal hands continued to caress her breasts while the other slid down her body until it rested on the tight nest of curls between her legs. Her gaze slid to the screen that monitored her heat level. The color had changed to red all over. She must be crazy for allowing this to happen to her, but what choice did she have? This contraption of metallic evil was making her feel things she didn’t want to.

“Tell me how you feel, Princess,” the barbarian spoke, his deep voice low and intimate.

“No,” she whispered, not making eye contact with him. The last thing she wanted to see was the look of triumph on his face.

He chuckled. “Still fighting it?”

“I won’t give in.”

“I’d say you already have, Princess, but we won’t argue about it. I don’t think words are needed right now. Your body says it all.” He pressed more buttons.

This time the mechanical hand dipped lower, not stopping until it reached her clit, latching on and squeezing. The slim metal dildo pushed forward, not going deep, but probing just enough to send a pulse of delight along her nerve endings. There was a slight discomfort. She had a battery-operated boyfriend at home, but this was much slimmer.

Technically, she was still a virgin, having never gone all the way with any man.

It galled Paris that it was him of all people who introduced her to all these new sensations.

The heat within her burned in her belly. She was ready to break the restraints and touch herself. Her fingers wiggled and she writhed in the chair. “Oh, God,” she groaned. Being stimulated in this way was like nothing else. Paris closed her eyes and imagined it was the barbarian’s hands and cock bringing her close to her peak.

Was she nuts to think this? She had to be, but that didn’t matter at this moment.

What was happening to her felt too good to deny right now. Her juices flowed, wetting her thighs and dripping onto her seat. The metal dildo slid in and out of her, and Paris finally opened her eyes. The first things she saw were intense green eyes boring into hers.

She licked her lips nervously. He wanted her and by God, she wanted him too.

And she didn't even know his name.

"Say the words," he suddenly growled.

"What?" she asked dumfounded.

"Tell me you want this."

"I..." Could she finally admit it to him? "I..."

"Say it, Princess. Tell me you want me."

"Don't make me say it."

His eyes grew stormy. "Say it now!" he growled. The harshness of his tone snapped her out of the trance she'd been in.

"Never," she hissed through gritted teeth.

"No?"

"No," she agreed stubbornly.

"I'll have your complete surrender, but you won't be rewarded until I am."

Turning back to the control panel, he flipped a switch which shut off all the machines.

The monitors went black and the metal hands and dildo retreated. The sex machine moved back, the floor swallowing it once again.

The bottom of the chair slid back, pushed her thighs back together. Her ankle restraints unlocked. The only things that remained were the bonds around her wrists.

“Why... why did you stop?”

“From your very lips, you said you didn’t want this. I’m simply giving you what you want, Princess. Perhaps the next time we meet, you’ll be a little more honest with me and yourself.”

And with that, he left the room.

Paris screamed her frustration. “You son of a bitch! Come back here and finish what you started!”

There were many things he could have done, but leaving her body on the verge of climax for the second time without the means of relief was by far the worst thing ever. Was there something wrong with her? Why did she want him so much, and the question that plagued her the most: why didn’t she try harder to tell him she wasn’t London?

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Chapter

Six

“Sire, I think there’s something you need to see.”

Blaze looked up to see Captain Lormanir had entered his private chamber. “Does it pertain to my daughter?”

“Of course, Sire. I wouldn’t have disturbed you otherwise.”

Blaze nodded. “Very well, I’ll join you shortly.”

Lormanir bowed before backing out of the room and leaving Blaze alone once again.

Where was London? The land mass of this part of the world alone was quite large. Their only bet now was the DNA tracker, but even with that, they’d have to lock on to her coordinates and that could only happen if they were within a couple hundred miles of her. It would be at least another day or so before they picked up her exact location.

He shut his eyes and sighed. The last words he and London had exchanged were angry ones. Blaze had been so sure he was doing the right thing by arranging London’s betrothal to one of Thibius’s champions. Instead of being happy about the union, however, London had immediately expressed her displeasure. If he’d only listened to her, she’d be home safe instead of on this primitive planet doing who knew what and with whom.

London was an innocent, pampered for most of her life. How would she ever be able to fend for herself? He shuddered at the thought. He'd give anything to find her safe, even re-thinking her betrothal to Zahn. In the back of Blaze's mind, he'd known it wasn't a love match between the general and his daughter, but he believed Zahn would take good care of London.

How could he have been so selfish as to sentence his daughter to a loveless marriage, especially when he himself loved his Calliope with each breath he took? He'd been so concerned with securing her future, Blaze hadn't taken love into consideration.

His portable communicator beeped. He looked at the device on his wrist with a frown. No one was authorized to contact him while he was on the mission, unless it was one of his family members. When he hit the hologram projector, the image of his wife appeared. "Calliope. It's a surprise to hear from you. Is everything all right with you and our sons?"

She gave him a small smile of reassurance. "Yes, we're okay. I didn't mean to make you worry. I contacted you because I wanted to check on your progress. How are you doing?"

He threaded his fingers through his hair in a gesture of frustration. "We may have found a couple leads. I believe we should find her soon."

Calliope clasped her hands together, relief evident on her lovely face. "Oh, thank goodness. I've been fretting about that since she left Thibius. I've had trouble sleeping, but I can at least rest easier tonight knowing you'll find her. Do you think you'll be home soon?"

"I don't know. I certainly hope so. I miss you, my love."

"And I you. Our sons miss you too. Taylon runs to the shipping dock and stands there

for hours waiting for your return.”

Blaze’s heart tightened when he thought of his youngest son. He loved all his children equally, but Taylon was particularly sensitive. He would be special one day.

“Tell him his father misses him very much as well. Has there been any word from Zahn?”

She shook her head. “No. I thought we would have by now. It’s odd that he hasn’t contacted anyone yet. If he were using one of your ships we’d at least be able to track where he is, but he used one of his own. The radars haven’t even detected any ships in our orbit within the last few days.”

Blaze rubbed his chin. Why hadn’t Zahn checked in? Maybe he was experiencing some difficulty in tracking London. This planet was twice the size of Thibius with ten times the population, but still... “I’m sure we’ll hear from him shortly.”

Tears glistened in her beautiful brown eyes. “I hope so. I want my baby home. I can’t lose another daughter.”

“I know, love, and I vow that you won’t. I have as much at stake in the matter as you.” London may have been his adopted daughter, but he couldn’t love her anymore if she were of his blood.

“I need to go. I’m going to spend some time with our sons. Be safe, Blaze.” She blew him a kiss before her hologram disappeared. Knowing how much his wife counted on him, Blaze understood he couldn’t fail.

He composed himself before leaving his room and heading toward the deck to see what Lormanir wanted.

“Sire.” The captain bowed to him when Blaze arrived on deck.

Blaze waved his hand in the air dismissively to all the crew standing respectfully at attention. “Carry on.” To Lormanir, he said, “I trust this is important and something that will lead us to the princess.”

“Yes, my liege. If you would please follow me, I will direct your attention to this telemonitor.” The captain pointed to a large monitor with grid lines and blobs which Blaze assumed represented land.

“What am I looking at?” he asked.

“We were able to determine where the princess has been through a newly developed system, even more advanced than the DNA tracker. We didn’t want to mention it earlier, because we weren’t sure if it would function properly. I saw no point in getting your hopes up in case it didn’t; however, there seems to be some abnormal activity in the area where the machine says the princess is.”

Blaze frowned. “Abnormal in what way?”

“I’m not sure, but it almost seems as if there were two of her.”

“Of my daughter? That’s not possible. Everyone’s DNA is unique only to them.”

“I realize that, Sire. We’re not sure how this could be either. However, the reading in this area tells us we’re closer to the princess’s location than before.”

“And the two readings?”

“We’re only getting one now. We don’t know why there were two before, but now there isn’t. I can think of only one possibility to explain this occurrence, but I don’t

know if it would fit with the princess.”

“Just tell me your theory,” Blaze demanded, growing impatient at the way Lormanir prevaricated.

“There are certain species that can reproduce more than one child at a time who look identical. Triplets, quadruplets and twins I believe. Can Earth women breed in such a way?”

It suddenly made sense to Blaze. The only reason two people would share the same DNA was if they came from the same fertilized egg... twins or other multiples as Lormanir had just mentioned. London was a twin! But... Paris had perished. Hadn't she?

In his quest to find his daughter, would he also find the twin they all believed to be dead?

Zahn was growing impatient. He'd put London through one sexual torture after another, yet she still hadn't cracked to his satisfaction. Yes, her body responded to him, but he wanted to hear the words. Something niggled in the back of his mind, however.

The more time he spent with her, the more he needed to be around her.

He wanted to know more about her besides how her body reacted when he touched her. What made her smile? Why did he feel the sudden interest in her when it wasn't there before she ran away? At first, Zahn thought it could be his pride. Now he wondered if it was something else altogether. A something he wasn't quite comfortable with. The sound of her voice made his heart speed up and the way she looked at him with those dark soulful eyes of hers sent a shiver of awareness up his spine.

No. He would not allow her to get under his skin. Letting the princess wrap him around her little finger was not an option. Men were supposed to be in charge. He'd seen some of his comrades fall under love's spell. It weakened them. He would always keep the upper hand where London was concerned.

His thoughts turned to the latest punishment he had in store for her. She was chained to the wall in his bedroom, dressed in an outfit of his choosing. He made sure it showed off her delectable body to perfection. It was getting difficult, however, to not stick his cock into her tight hole.

If only she'd submit. He would have her surrender if it was the last thing he did.

Walking to his room in long strides, he halted when he caught sight of London.

He'd left her alone to contemplate her fate. She'd been so defiant up until now, so it came as a surprise to find her in the state she was currently in.

Tear streaks stained her cheeks. Her head was slightly bowed. He could still make out the forlorn expression in her eyes. The apparent sadness she displayed canceled out the erotic pose of her arms chained above her head.

It tore at his heart to see her so upset. She didn't lift her head to acknowledge his presence. Had he finally broken her? Not likely.

Maybe she was trying to manipulate him by making him feel bad for her. Yes, that's exactly what she was trying to do. Zahn wouldn't let her get to him. She would submit and now.

He stalked over to her and grabbed London's chin, forcing her to meet his eyes.

"Look at me, Princess."

Her eyes locked with his. “Go ahead. Do what you have to. I won’t fight.”

Zahn lifted a brow. “What are you trying to say?”

“You win. You’re bigger, stronger, and better than me. I don’t have any fight left in me. Isn’t that what you wanted to hear? Just please, do what you have to do and get it over with. I don’t know how much more of this humiliation I can take.”

His eyes narrowed. “Do you think I’ve humiliated you?”

“Wasn’t that your goal? You’ve done nothing but try to make me want you and then when you see that I do you leave me alone. I don’t want to go through that again. I only wish you’d finish what you started.”

“So you admit you want me?”

“Yes.”

“And that I’m your master?” he asked softly, testing London to see if what she said was true or if she was playing a game.

Her lips tightened briefly, a spark of her old defiance peeking through. So the fire wasn’t completely extinguished within her.

Good.

He was finally reconciling himself to the fiery London and found he liked her very much. Zahn wasn’t sure if he wanted the meeker version of her back. Which one was her true self? He’d soon find out.

“If that’s what you need to hear, then yes,” she finally answered his question.

“Since you put it so sweetly, Princess, you won’t mind if I do this?” He cupped her face in his hands and lowered his head.

She flinched ever so slightly, but it was just enough for him to pick up on it.

“I thought I had your complete obedience,” he whispered against her mouth.

“You didn’t say anything about kissing.”

“But as your master, I get to do what I’d like to you and I want to taste your sweet lips.”

“What makes you think I won’t bite you?”

“Because you’re trembling. You do want this.” He crushed her lips beneath the persistence of his mouth, but she soon responded. With a sigh, London opened her mouth underneath the pressure of his insistent lips.

He explored her sweet recesses, leaving no part of them untouched by his tongue. His body was hot for her. His cock ached to be inside of her, but before he finally took London, Zahn wanted a real admission of surrender from her.

He tugged at her metallic bra, pulling it off altogether and freeing her full brown globes. They filled his hands perfectly. She was made just for him and he had to have her!

Zahn ground his erection against the juncture of her thighs. He didn’t know how much longer he could hold off. “Tell me you want this,” he commanded.

“I already did,” she moaned.

“Say it again. This time mean it.”

“You’ve already taken all I have to give.” She lowered her lids.

“Say it,” he bit out. “Or so help me I’ll walk away and leave you like this.”

She glared. “You wouldn’t.”

“Oh, but I would and I have before. What makes you think this time would be any different?” He hoped she wouldn’t call his bluff. He didn’t think he had the strength to walk away from her at this moment. “Do you need some incentive,

Princess?” He bent down in front of her and licked one nipple to a hard tight tip and then circled it.

“Oh, yes. Don’t stop.”

“Tell me how badly you want this.”

“I do.”

“Say the words, Princess,” he ordered.

“I want you.”

“Zahn.”

She stiffened. “Huh?” Confusion momentarily clouded her eyes. If he weren’t so hot for her, he would have analyzed her emotion further.

“Say my name.”

She hesitated, but only for a moment. “Zahn. I want you, Zahn. Please. Don’t torture me.”

He should have done just that, remembering how she seemed to have no compunction for running out on their betrothal, but he couldn’t do it. He needed her too much. Walking away from her would have punished himself just as much as it would her.

Zahn moved to her other breast and captured her other nipple, sucking and tugging on the turgid tip. She was delicious.

London wiggled and groaned, clanging her chains together.

He grasped the loin cloth covering her pussy and tore it away, exposing her treasure to his gaze. Zahn knelt on his haunches, bringing himself eye level with her cunt and parting her slick folds. “You’re already wet for me. You smell wonderful.”

He touched her slit with the tip of his tongue.

London trembled, pushing her pussy closer to his face.

Zahn enjoyed the way she responded to him. Her sadness seemed to have disappeared. He knew it had been a ploy! So why did he still feel that guilt in the back of his mind?

Hastily he pushed it away, slipping a finger inside her slick channel. “You’re so tight around my finger. Imagine how much more so you’ll be around my cock. Ride my hand, Princess,” he commanded softly.

She obeyed, grinding her pussy over his thrusting finger.

Zahn took her clit in his mouth and sucked with voracious pulls. The swollen jewel

seemed to throb between his lips.

“Zahn,” she whispered.

The sound of his name on her lips was pleasing to his ears. He added another finger into her hole, stretching and readying it for his cock. Yes, he’d have some pussy tonight.

“Zahn, I’m going to come.”

He wanted her first orgasm with him to be from his cock filling her. He pulled his fingers out of her channel and released her clit before standing up again.

He walked across the room to retrieve the key to her cuffs.

“No! Don’t leave me again! I can’t take any more,” she yelled, rattling her chains as if trying to break free. They both knew that action was futile, but it was gratifying to know how worked up she was. Even when she begged she was defiant.

Once he had the key in hand, he took his time making his way back to her.

“Princess, even if I wanted to leave you there as you deserve, I cannot. I also have needs that must be seen to and you’re the only woman who can assuage them.”

Chapter

Seven

Paris almost wept with relief when he unlocked the chains holding her captive.

She nearly collapsed when she was freed, but Zahn caught her, hauling her against his hard body. His mouth covered hers in a blatant show of possession, his tongue thrusting forward.

Her desire for him was so strong she met his tongue with her own. Since he'd captured her, Paris had grown addicted to the taste of him. She could no longer fight what she'd been feeling for him.

With each time he'd brought her body to the brink of incredible pleasure only to withdraw, she'd died a little more inside. She didn't want to experience that gnawing feeling of unfulfilled lust. When he'd chained her to the wall in yet another revealing outfit, Paris figured she'd get more of the same treatment. So once she was alone, she gave in to the tears.

He'd broken her to the point where she'd become obsessed with his touch, craving it. When she slept at night, Paris would have the most deliciously erotic dreams of Zahn taking her to the heights of fiery passion—to completion.

The press of his taut body against her breasts sent shockwaves of delight shooting up her spine.

He dug his fingers through her hair, gripping it tight and deepening the kiss. He took over, dominating and claiming her. She'd never been so turned on in her life. Her pussy pulsed.

His take charge attitude was an aphrodisiac she couldn't resist. Maybe this was what she'd been waiting for all her life. A man who knew what to do and wasn't afraid to take what or who he wanted.

Zahn's kiss took her breath away, but she didn't dare turn her head, not wanting to break the tight seal of his mouth over hers.

When he finally did lift his head to look down at her, his breathing was ragged, his eyes blazed with desire. "Ah, Princess, you're so beautiful. I had reservations about our joining when your father decreed it, but from that first kiss... you denied it, but I think you felt the magic too."

Shame coursed through her when she was reminded of who he believed she was.

The man belonged to London. Could she go on with this knowing what he thought?

Paris's sense of fair play wouldn't allow her to continue this without at least trying to convey the truth. "Zahn, there's something you need to know about me."

His eyes darkened. "I already know the most important thing about you. I want you. Are you telling me you've changed your mind, because if you have —"

"No. I haven't, but you keep calling me Princess."

"If you don't wish me to do so, I'll call you London if that's what you prefer." He made a move to kiss her but she turned her head away.

“That’s not what I meant. I’m not who you think I am. I’m not the princess. I —”

The expression on his face halted her words.

His nostrils flared and his face turned a deep shade of red. Paris could almost see the steam coming from his head. His eyes narrowed to dark green slits. “So the games continue. I thought we were past that.”

“I’m telling you the truth,” she protested, not liking her word doubted. She was honest as they came. Hell, she even gave back the money whenever a cashier gave her too much change back.

“The only truth that’s come out of your mouth is how much you want me and I’ll give it to you —only because it suits me. I was starting to think you had fee — well, never mind.”

Paris didn’t have a chance to figure out what he was going to say because he lifted her into his arms and carried her to the bed. There was no use fighting him.

Judging from the sheer determination in his eyes, she would lose. Paris didn’t know if she wanted to fight anyway.

He dropped her onto the bed unceremoniously. She lay there stunned at first, but then she watched in fascination as Zahn undressed. His gaze never left her face. The look in his eyes said it all: if you try to get away from me, I’ll drag you back.

“Zahn, would you please listen to reason. I’m just trying to be honest with you. I don’t want to be accused of trying to deceive you.”

“As you’re attempting to do right now? Save your breath, Princess. The more you

talk, the more respect I lose for you. I knew you were spoiled, but I never imagined you were a liar.”

She gasped. Again it bothered her that he’d question her honesty. “I am not a liar. You are the most obstinate man who ever lived. When you find out the truth, you’re going to feel pretty stupid. Why is it so hard to believe I’m not her? She’s my tw—” She broke off in the middle of her rant.

Zahn had discarded all his clothes. When he was bare-chested, he was sexy, but standing completely nude, he was nothing short of magnificent -- like Adonis come to life. Coupled with his long black hair cascading to his waist, he was a fine specimen indeed.

Beautiful was not a word she would have generally used to describe a man’s physique, but it seemed to suit him. She looked lower. Oh, dear Lord, he had a third leg dangling between those powerful thighs. His cock was huge!

How in the world would she handle that monster? When she’d felt his erection pressing against her earlier, Paris figured it was big, but this boa constrictor he called a penis was a bit much.

“Do you like what you see, Princess?” he taunted.

Even though he spoke, she couldn’t tear her eyes away from his member. She opened her mouth to speak, but no words came out.

“I’ll take your silence as a yes.”

Before she could respond he moved onto the bed and covered her body with his.

Zahn settled himself between her thighs. It seemed as if he would take her right then

and there, just like that without preparing her for the intrusion of his larger than average cock.

“Zahn, not like this...”

“Do you believe you deserve gentleness after the lies you tried to foist off as the truth?”

“I wasn’t lying!”

“I’ll silence your lies.” He covered her mouth with his once more. This time instead of the hot hungry kiss of before, this was suffocating. It was as if he was deliberately trying to hurt her.

Paris beat at his back, the fight she thought she’d let go of once again renewed. It wasn’t that she didn’t want him, but her honor was at stake.

He didn’t believe her and she really needed him to, then she would be the one he desired most and not her sister. It seemed to incite him further the more she wiggled and writhed beneath him. Her resistance grew weaker by the minute.

Soon she returned his angry kiss, and she clung to him. Zahn reached between her legs and slid his fingers inside her folds. She moaned into his mouth. Damn him.

With just a touch, she was putty in his hands yet again.

Zahn lifted his head with a smug smile on his face. “In this area, you’re honest at least.”

He dropped kisses along her jaw line and neck. A wave of passion made her shake with need for him. Her juices dripped from her, signaling her hunger for his hard

cock.

Paris dug her nails into his flesh.

“Are you ready, Princess?” Grasping his cock, he rubbed it against her damp opening.

Paris shivered, spreading her legs wider for him.

Zahn’s eyes flashed with desire. “Ah yes, you are,” he muttered.

“I do want you,” she found herself admitting. “I’ve never wanted anyone as much. You’re driving me crazy.”

She arched her back and lifted her hips slightly. All her earlier protests went out the window. Paris was ready for him when he captured her lips. She loved the way his lips felt pressed against hers. The weight of his hard frame pressed her into the mattress.

Zahn pushed his cock into her. Discomfort took over. It felt like she was being stretched to the limit. Paris placed her hand against his chest. “Zahn, I think you’re too big for me.” Panic began to fill her.

Zahn groaned, closing his eyes as though savoring the sensation of being inside of her. “You’re perfect for me, and I’ll prove it to you.” With one powerful push, he slid fully into her.

All pleasure disappeared. She was being torn apart. “No!” She pushed at his chest in earnest now.

Zahn on the other hand looked like he was experiencing nirvana. “I couldn’t help myself. You’re so tight. Your pussy clings to my cock like a second skin,” he

groaned.

“Even if I had been gentle there was bound to be some pain as this is your first time. It will get easier. I promise.”

Tears sprang to her eyes. “I don’t... it hurts.”

He watched her, an unreadable expression on his face and then his features softened. To her surprise he planted a kiss on her forehead. “It will be all right, love. I shouldn’t have rushed you. My only excuse was that I was eager for your scrumptious pussy.”

Zahn kissed the corners of her eyes. His tenderness was a side of him she hadn’t expected. Had he called her love? Maybe she’d just imagined it. Paris lay beneath him, adjusting to his impressive size in silence.

She wanted to be angry with him for what he’d just done, but she couldn’t, not when he was displaying this warm, gentle side.

He traced her jaw line so lovingly.

Her lips trembled when he ran his thumb across them.

“Let me make this better for you, London.” He slid his index finger across her clit.

Heat began to build up in the pit of her belly. Soon the pain faded, leaving pleasure in its wake. The sensation of being deliciously stretched was heady. She wiggled her hips, ready for him to move.

A smile tilted his lips. It was the first genuine one she’d seen from him.

“Beautiful. I think you’re ready for me.”

“Yes,” she whispered, ready to be his in every sense of the word.

He slowly moved inside of her.

Paris reveled in his strength and the warm heavy feel of him on top of her. Instinctively she wrapped her legs around his hips and grabbed him to her. A sharp intake of breath caught in her throat. With each thrust, he moved deeper into her, taking Paris to the limits of passion.

Their eyes locked. The dark murky green of his was nearly black. Zahn’s thrusts grew more fierce and possessive.

She held on to him, her nails digging into his flesh.

Zahn grabbed her hands and pushed them above her head, holding them there.

“Mine! You’re all mine!” he growled, branding her.

Paris felt as if she was spiraling into a sea of unfathomable desire. She wanted to touch him, run her fingers through his silky black locks, but he was fully in charge. Lord, she was hot.

He buried his face against her neck, his warm breath tickling her skin. “You’re mine,” he groaned again.

When her climax came, it was a burning inferno. She screamed her release, shaking uncontrollably. She’d had orgasms before through masturbation, but they were nothing like this. “Zahn! Oh, God!”

He continued to drive into her until he stiffened. A warm gust of his come shot up her channel.

“Oh, Princess,” he sighed, finally releasing her wrists. There was that name again.

Paris tried to pretend he didn’t say it, but he had and that changed everything.

The tears she’d allowed herself earlier were now back with a vengeance. She turned her head away. He only wanted her because he believed she was someone else.

Zahn frowned. “What’s wrong, London?”

She didn’t bother answering. The last time she tried to explain, he refused to believe her. There was no point in wasting her breath. It was like banging her head against a brick wall.

When Zahn relaxed his hold on her, she managed to wiggle from beneath him and slide off the bed.

“Where are you going?”

She turned her back to him, wrapping her arms around her body in a protective gesture. “That’s a silly question considering I have nowhere to go.” She expected him to say something, but he didn’t.

The silence was deafening. When the quiet stretched, she finally turned around to look at him. He was studying her in an odd way. “What?” She was suddenly self-conscious. Why was he staring at her like that?

“Where’s your tattoo?”

What a weird question. Why would he think she had one? “What tattoo are you referring to? I don’t have any.”

“The royal tattoo. All members of the royal family have one so that they’re identified properly.”

Paris spread her arms out and twirled around for his benefit. “See? No tattoos.”

He leapt off the bed and grabbed her shoulders. Zahn examined her body thoroughly as if she were an insect under a telescope. Then he backed away from her as if he’d been burned. “Who are you?”

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Chapter

Eight

“Are you finally ready to listen to me?” she asked softly as she took a seat on the edge of the bed.

Zahn took several steps backward, putting as much distance between them as possible. He couldn't trust himself being so close to her. Not after what they'd done together...or what he'd done to her.

He hung his head. “Say what you need to say. I'll listen.”

“As I've been trying to tell you. I'm not London. Twenty years ago, my mom took my sister to see the doctor and left me with a babysitter. They never returned. They'd disappeared without a trace. I was raised in the foster system until I aged out.”

He furrowed his brows in confusion. “Foster system? What is that?”

“It's basically a state run system where children are raised in by appointed guardians. Those guardians usually receive a stipend from the state to care for the foster child. Some of the homes I lived in were okay, some bad, but I survived. I definitely wasn't raised a princess. I can understand why you would mistake me for London because we're identical twins.”

“Twins? As in you share the same face?”

“Yes, aren’t there twins on your planet?”

“I have heard of the concept on other planets but Thibian women are only capable of birthing one child at a time but it seems Earth women can produce more.”

“Yes, the record is ten I believe but that’s with artificial drugs, but there are records of women giving natural birth to identical quintuplets. Anyway, that’s beside, the point. You mistook me for my twin. And you say she ran off despite being engaged to you?”

“Yes.”

“Well, considering how you tend to act first and ask questions later, I can see why. I don’t have a lot of memories of my sister, because we were separated when we were really young. But I always took her lead. She was very spirited. I can’t imagine her wanting to be with someone as strong-willed as you.”

He flinched at her assessment. Zahn could admit how arrogant he’d been when it came to Paris, and to some extent London.

She’d been telling the truth all along. It explained so much— the beauty mark, the shorter hair, and the fire within her that hadn’t been there before. And it also explained the way she excited him like his betrothed never had.

London—no, Paris sat on the bed, her hands folded in her lap.

Shame coursed through his entire being. He’d arrogantly allowed his pride to block him from listening to her when she’d protested. And because of that, he’d defiled this innocent woman. “I... I don’t know what to say... Paris.”

“Is there anything to say? What’s happened is done and there’s nothing we can do

about it.”

Zahn paced the room. The only thing to do was return her to where he’d gotten her, but part of him rebelled against the idea. She was now a part of him. When they’d made love, she touched something within him he didn’t think possible. Having experienced what they’d shared, there was no way he could settle for a lukewarm marriage with London. He just couldn’t see that happening.

He clenched his fists at his sides and took a deep breath. He didn’t want to, but he had to ask. It would be the honorable thing to do.

“Paris, do you wish to return to Earth? The story you told me is uh... quite extraordinary. I never knew the princess was a twin. Everyone knew she was adopted but — it’s amazing how like her in looks you are.”

Paris shrugged one elegant shoulder. “Well, we are identical twins. It happens.”

“Yes, of course. As I said before, twins are not a Thibian phenomenon so it didn’t occur to me that there were two of you. What I’m trying to say is, if you don’t want to go back to Earth, maybe you’d like to see your mother. The queen is a good woman. It is widely known how she loves her children. I’m sure she would want to see you.”

Paris seemed to perk up at the idea. “See my mother?”

“Yes, I can take you to her if you’d like.”

Paris scrunched her nose as she was mulling it over for a moment before nodding.

“Yes. I’d like that. You say I have brothers?”

“Yes. Six of them.”

“That’s incredible.”

Zahn’s body tightened. She was still naked and he wanted her again.

No.

She was off limits to him. He had no right taking her the way he had. From now on he would have to keep his hands to himself.

“So, uh, what will you do about London? Will you go back and search for her?”

He frowned. Was she eager to get him and London together again? He grabbed the blanket from off the bed and tossed it at her. “Cover yourself. I’ll find you something more suitable to wear.”

She crinkled her nose. “You didn’t answer my question.”

“About your sister? Funny you should mention it. When I was on Earth, my DNA tracker picked up two readings, virtually in the same vicinity. You see, I came to Earth in search of London. She left Thibius, I assume to look for you. I had the option of picking from one of the blips on my screen. It seems I picked the wrong twin.”

“So if we go back to New York, she might still be there.”

“We could go back, but we’re already halfway to the Malazian galaxy. The ship needs to be recharged in order to make a trip back to Earth. I’ll need to find the closest charging station once I deliver you to your mother before heading back to Earth to get London.”

Her lids lowered, hiding her expression. “Is that what you want to do?”

“She’s my intended. I feel it’s my duty to go back for her.”

“I see,” she said softly.

Why didn’t she say something else? Would she condemn him to a life without passion? “What do you think about me going to find your sister?” He had to test her to see if she actually cared.

“I’d like to see my sister again, and I’m sure my mother will be happy to have her back.”

He couldn’t leave it at that. He had to know what else was running through her mind. “And what do you think of my marrying the princess?”

Paris wouldn’t look at him directly. “I guess... if that’s what the two of you have to do then... I mean it will be a little awkward considering what happened between the two of us.”

Her answer gave him some hope. Perhaps she wasn’t so indifferent to him after all. Zahn still couldn’t let go. He had to push her further. “As her sister, you’d be expected to participate in the ceremony.”

“I’m not sure if I’ll be there long enough to be a part of your wedding. My mother and sister may have lived on Thibius most of their lives, but my home is on Earth.”

Zahn couldn’t keep the frown off his face. “You’d cut your visit short? I would imagine it would break your mother’s heart to see you leave her so soon considering how you’ve been separated all this time.”

She sighed. “Yes, well, I’m sure arrangements could be made for us to visit each other from time to time. You have a ship, so it stands to reason that the Emperor has

ships as well. I'll visit for special events."

"What could be more special than your sister's wedding?"

"Well... I was never much of a wedding goer."

He didn't like where this conversation was heading. The more they talked the more he realized he was closer to losing her. The possibility of that disturbed him more than he cared to admit. Had he fallen for her and wasn't aware of it?

Paris stood up and walked across the room, the blanket still wrapped tightly around her tempting frame. "Tell me what you know of my mother. How did she and the Emperor come together?"

Zahn wondered if she was changing the subject because she was just as uncomfortable with where this whole thing was headed. If she wanted to ignore the sexual tension between them, he'd play along, for now. He didn't like the idea of her not staying on Thibius.

"I was young when your mother came to Thibius, just getting my first whiskers. Around the time there was a law where slaves were allowed to be bought and sold. From my understanding, your mother was a slave."

Paris gasped. "You mean she used to do hard labor and get whipped for imagined crimes?"

He shook his head. "No, nothing like that. On other planets slaves were and still are mistreated, but not on Thibius. When owning slaves was legal they were mainly used for pleasure, particularly the females. Your mother was purchased for the emperor's harem. They say he only had eyes for her after that. It wasn't long before he got rid of his harem and took your mother as his queen and adopted your sister, who he dotes

on. Your mother is very regal and gracious. I see a lot of her in you.”

Paris smiled.

His heart fluttered. At that moment he would have killed for another one of those smiles.

“I’m excited to finally see her again after all this time. It’s really easy to picture London because all I have to do is look into the mirror and see her. My mom on the other hand, I barely remember what she looks like.”

“She’s tall, and dark with one of the most beautiful skin hues I’ve seen besides yours. Queen Calliope has a smile that lights up the entire room. People are drawn to her.”

“She sounds lovely.”

“She is a most worthy queen.”

“Zahn?”

“Yes, Paris?” He liked the way her name rolled off his tongue.

“Do you think I can have some time alone? I need to think.”

Just as suddenly as his happiness had come when he saw her smile, it left. He’d obviously imagined her despair about him marrying London. He wasn’t going to be the one to tell her it wasn’t likely to happen now.

“Of course. I’ll give you as much privacy as you’d like.” He turned on his heel, leaving her as she requested. Where had these inconvenient feelings come from all of a sudden?

Paris felt like her world was crumbling. When she and Zahn had come together, it had meant something to her. He was her first lover, but there was more to it.

She found herself wanting his company for more than just the sex and the incredible things he did to her body. How could he make love to her like that and then turn around and tell her he was marrying her sister?

Not to mention, the callous brute had the nerve to say she'd have to participate in the ceremony. To hell with that. There was no way she could stand casually and watch Zahn and her sister get married. Was this love she felt for him?

Paris wasn't sure, but one thing she did know, she wouldn't stick around to see the happy celebration. It would be like a kick in the teeth. A thought suddenly occurred to her. Maybe London didn't want to marry Zahn. There was always that possibility.

Even if the pretext of London leaving Thibius was to search for her, she could have had another motive.

Paris snorted, thinking that if she'd been betrothed to Zahn she wouldn't have run away. Why did life have to be so damn unfair? The first man she'd fallen for in a long time and he was marrying her long lost sister.

Chapter

Nine

The moment was finally here. Paris would meet her mother, after all this time.

Before they landed on Thibius, Zahn had contacted the queen to let her know he'd found her. They were waiting for her.

They'd made a detour to Zahn's palace first, however. It was a nice place and Paris could easily see herself living in this luxurious home, but instead it would all be London's someday.

Ever since that conversation in his room, Zahn had treated her with a polite aloofness, and she couldn't stand it. Why was he suddenly keeping his distance from her? She didn't like it one bit. Maybe she'd take matters into her own hands.

She knew they were supposed to leave in moments, but she couldn't go to meet her mother without telling him how she felt. Paris went in search of him. His palace was so large, one could easily get lost in it. She had to finally ask one of the servants for Zahn's whereabouts and was directed to his private study. She knocked on the door hoping he would answer.

"Come in," he called from the other side.

When she walked in, he frowned. Paris took a step back. This wasn't the reception she'd expected. Was she making the mistake of her life by approaching him?

“Yes, Paris. What did you want? We should be leaving shortly.”

“About that. I wanted to talk to you about a few things before we left for the Emperor’s palace.”

“What things?” He wasn’t being very approachable right now. She wondered why she was even bothering.

“I wanted to... to talk about us actually.”

“Us? I wasn’t aware there was an us.”

She wanted to throw something at him and tell him to stop making this so hard for her. “Look, this isn’t easy for me, and I’d appreciate it if you let me finish speaking before you interrupt.”

“All right, speak your mind, Paris.”

“First, I want to know if you really plan on marrying my sister.”

He was silent for a moment. “What does it matter to you? You said yourself that you wouldn’t be there for the ceremony.”

“Of course I won’t be there. Not when I know you’d both be making the biggest mistakes of your lives. You can’t marry my sister when you have feelings for me!” She blinked back the tears threatening to spill.

Zahn stared at her with his mouth agape.

When he didn’t speak she went on. “I have feelings for you, Zahn. I may not be the twin you intended to take back to Thibius, but I’m the twin you want to be with. And

I think if my sister had truly cared for you, she wouldn't have run away from your betrothal or am I reading the situation all wrong?"

He still didn't say anything and she had her answer from his silence.

"It would have been nice if you had at least uttered one word." Paris turned to leave but was halted when two strong hands grabbed her. Zahn had moved so swiftly she didn't hear him approach. He turned her around in his arms and covered her mouth with his. His tongue probed inside her parted lips, tasting her.

She clasped her arms around him and he lifted her, carrying her to a large leather couch. He laid her down without lifting his mouth. The fire that she experienced only with him threatened to consume them both.

It had been a risk coming here and laying her heart on the line, but now she was in his arms where she wanted to stay. She eagerly plucked at his clothes, wanting to feel his naked flesh against hers.

This all seemed like a beautiful dream she didn't want to wake from. "I can't believe this is happening," she muttered against his lips.

In frantic movements they helped each other undress until they both wore nothing but skin. She never wanted something so badly in her life before.

"Ah, Paris, I was afraid you didn't feel the same way about me," he whispered.

"Now I'm never letting you go."

Paris's heart fluttered hearing him say her name in the throes of passion. He knew exactly who she was and there would be no more mistaking her for her sister.

Her pussy throbbed for him. She wanted his cock inside her more than she needed air to breathe. Only he could ease the ache within. Since their last encounter she'd thought of nothing else but making love to him.

She pressed kisses along his collarbone and chest, savoring the slightly salty taste of his skin. Everything about him turned her on.

His erection pressed against her thigh as though pleading for entrance. "Open your legs for me, my love."

Paris didn't think to disobey, she wanted this so bad she could taste it. This time foreplay was thrown out the window. They both had a yearning that needed to be fulfilled and she wouldn't be satisfied until he took her.

Zahn guided his cock inside of her and eased into her passage. She clenched her muscles around him, pulling Zahn deeper.

He gritted his teeth. "Oh, Paris, you're so tight. Uh! This pussy was made just for me."

Paris met each thrust with her own, lifting her hips each time he drove into her. Her cries of pleasure filled the air. Zahn lowered his head to nip at her neck, creating the most titillating sensation. She was going insane for this man.

Zahn groaned. "I want to make this last for you, but I can't hold on much longer."

"Then don't hold back. Give me all you've got." She held him against her, accepting his seed. She clenched her pussy around him, milking his cock of every bit of come he had.

With a gasp of satisfaction, he buried his face against her neck. "I've wanted to make

love to you since the last time, but I didn't dare."

Paris stroked his back. "Why didn't you?"

"I didn't think I had a right to. You weren't London."

She stiffened at the mention of her sister's name.

He kissed her temple. "Hear me out. London was my intended, but with her, it was just a duty thing. It was an honor that the king thought me worthy enough to choose me for his daughter who everyone knows he dearly loves. I felt she was a suitable wife for me. On the night of our betrothal dinner she ran away. She didn't want our union."

"My sister is nuts. How could she not want you?"

"Very easily. I suppose the same way I felt nothing for her besides brotherly feelings. The two of you look almost exactly alike yet I can't keep my hands off you."

Paris grinned. "I'm sure if you would have known London had a twin you would have figured out why you felt these new feelings."

"Probably. I found them disturbing, and didn't want to fall for you, but each time I touched you, I couldn't get enough."

"When you thought I was London, did you intend to do all those things you did to me, to her?"

"Honestly, I planned on it, but now I know I wouldn't have been able to go through with it. I should have listened to my instincts about the union. An accomplished wife is a good asset, but without passion, it would have led to a long boring existence. I

doubt I will ever tire of you.”

“So what happens now? When you contacted my mother this morning did she have an update on London? Has the emperor located her?”

“Unfortunately he hasn’t. At least not yet. He’s still on Earth but according to the queen, he’s closing in on her location. Hopefully he will find her soon.”

Paris sighed in relief but then worry assailed her. “I hope she’s okay. She hasn’t been on Earth in years. What if she’s cold or hungry? What if she gets hurt?”

“Well, we at least know she’s alive or else she wouldn’t have been picked up on the DNA tracker. And what I know about the princess is that she’s very resourceful. I’m certain she will be fine.”

Her twintuition told her that London wasn’t in any prominent danger. It was funny that the feelings she’d shut off so long ago were once again active. She could literally feel her twin. Maybe it was because they had been on the same planet again, even if it was briefly. Or maybe it was because Paris had opened up her heart.

Another concern crossed her mind. She gripped Zahn’s hands. “Do you think my mother and the Emperor will be upset that we’re together now? I’m not sure how things work on your planet but I know on mine, there are cultures that practice arranged marriages and it’s a bit deal to break them. Will you get in trouble?”

Zahn placed his arms around her and placed a light kiss on her forehead. “You have no need to fret. As you have already pointed out, your sister is no keener to wed me as I am her. Besides, I can’t in good conscience go through with the betrothal with the way I feel about you.”

Her heart fluttered with happiness. In her wildest imagining Paris never would have

believed that being abducted by a sexy alien barbarian would result in her falling so madly in love in such a short period of time. But nothing felt more right than being with Zahn. “I feel the same way.”

“It’s a good thing that you do because when I see the queen and the Emperor, I will make my intentions toward you known.”

Paris grinned. “And what are those intentions?” she asked wanted to hear the words.

“I have every intention of making you my bride.”

Her eyes widened in surprise. She hadn’t thought that far along the line, but the idea of being with Zahn for the rest of her life made her happy. “Aren’t you supposed to ask me to marry you?”

“No. I’m not leaving that to chance. You are marrying me. You do want to, don’t you?”

She gave him a gentle kiss on the lips. “I can’t think of a thing that would make me happier... besides finally seeing my mother, sister and brothers. Speaking of which, shouldn’t we have left already?”

“We can leave shortly. Besides, now that you’ll be living on Thibius, you can see your family as much as you’d like.”

Paris hadn’t thought about that. She’d be leaving Earth and all she knew behind. When she gave this some thought, she realized she wasn’t leaving much. She would have to somehow get in contact with Carol to let her know she was okay, but other than that, her future now lay with Zahn.

She looked into his dark green eyes, her emotions overwhelming her. Paris never

knew so much happiness could exist.

“Can I tell you something?” Zahn whispered.

“You can tell me anything.”

“Before I met you, I believed love made men weak, but I’ve never felt stronger.”

She cupped the side of his face. “We’ll be each other’s strength.”

So much good was finally happening in her life. She would finally be reunited with her mother and sister, and she’d found a man who she knew she’d love for the rest of her life.

This was the excitement she’d been looking for.

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If someone would have told Paris, she'd end up on another planet and madly in love with a brutish alien hunk, she would have laughed in their face. Only weeks ago, she was working a mundane job and the most excitement she'd experienced in her week was the new episode of her favorite television show.

But now not only was she in a new world, she was going to be reunited with her mother. She stared at the monitor and beheld a large white palace that was bigger than any building she'd ever seen in person. This was where her mother had been for the past twenty years.

Paris was certain in a place like this, her mother and sister had lived in luxury compared to what she'd experience yet she felt no resentment, only happiness that they had a good life. That was one of the worries that had plagued her since they'd disappeared.

Paris was thankful to have Zahn by her side.

She took a deep breath as he landed his personal hovercraft. Her heart sped up and nerves hit Paris, making her hands shake. Zahn helped her out of the vehicle and gave her hand a reassuring squeeze.

"You have no need to be nervous, Paris. You will be treated like a princess."

"I don't care about being treated like a princess. I just hope my mother likes me."

He smiled down at her. "She won't like you. She'll love you."

His word gave her some comfort but as they walked toward the castle, her anxiety rose once again when they passed through a row of guards.

Each soldier they walked by they crossed their forearms over their chests in salute, that reminded Paris that Zahn held a high ranking military position. If she remained on this planet, her life would change drastically. She looked up at him and all of her doubts melted away.

Even though this was a new adventure in her life, Paris knew everything would be okay as long as Zahn was by her side.

They entered the palace to find a man in a gold uniform standing by the door. “General Zahn,” he lowered his head in reverence. “And the esteemed, daughter of our Queen Calliope. Allow me to escort you to the throne room where the queen and princes await.”

“Thank you, Kalis,” Zahn responded. He gave Paris’s hand another squeeze.

Paris had been waiting for this moment all her life and yet she’d never been more frightened? What would she say to her mother whom she hadn’t seen since she was child?

Kalis halted at the door or the throne room after leading them down a grand hall decorated in colorful tapestries. “You may go in.”

Paris released Zahn’s hand. “I think, I need to go in by myself.”

He nodded. “As you wish. Just know that I’ll be here if you need me.” He bent down to give a light kiss on the lips.

Paris pulled away with a smile, and her heart filled with love for this beautiful man. “I know.”

She took a deep breath and squared her shoulders before heading into the throne room.

Standing in the center of the room was her mother. She looked like an older version of herself yet her appearance was still youthful. One would not assume that this woman had children in their twenties. She was draped in a beautiful dress made of a shimmering fabrics of colors she'd never seen before. It was a mixture of red, yellow, purple and pink, yet somehow it worked. Her hair was piled on top of her head and woven with golden thread and colorful jewels.

Her bearing was regal and her back straight. She was the epitome of what a queen should look like. Yet all Paris could see was her mother.

The queen stared at her with glistening eyes. "Paris?"

Paris nodded.

"You're so beautiful. I thought I'd lost you but you're here. Are you real?"

"Are you?"

"Very much so." Queen Calliope held her arms out.

With tears streaming down her face, Paris ran into her mother's embrace. "I missed you so much, Mom."

"I've missed you too. Welcome home, baby."

The Scientist's Woman: Book Three of the Thibian Chronicles coming soon