

Indentured Companion

Book one of the
Indentured Servitude series



A Science fiction
romance by

Millie Lowelle

Illustrated by
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Chapter 1

The Blue door

Valerie

My name is Valerie Stone. I am 27 years of age. My parents were wealthy members of the trade caste, but after my mother died my father made some...unfortunate choices. Namely about our finances. Now my sister and I have to make a difficult choice. Do we allow Father's bankruptcy to leave us become casteless and homeless in the under slums of our home, colony station Vega 4? Or do we sign up to be indentured servants until we can earn enough to make our way once our term is over?

Oh. Maybe I should go back a step.

Terran society in the 23rd century relies upon a caste system. Even though our colonies span across many planets now, and we are part of the galactic community governed by the Theskian Council, we unfortunately have to live the same way all the other races do. By a caste system. This was non-negotiable for anyone who lived inside of Terran controlled space. In essence, as long as you had a caste, you were fine. It meant you had a trade or skill, and therefore a means to earn Xan. Money. You were born into the caste of your wealthiest parent. So as you can imagine, marrying up was big on the list of priorities in Terran space. Regardless of gender or species. Marriage outside of species was not illegal, but not encouraged unless one or both of you had existing children to continue your legacy and inherit your caste.

This system has been in place for thousands of years to create a level playing field in communal space. So the Theskian Council tells us. Often.

As long as you are not casteless you are fine. If, oh I don't know, your heartbroken father turns to drink and cards and pisses away your family's fortune, then it's not such a safe bet.

I thought I would be taking over my father's precious stones business one day. He trained me my whole life to prepare me for that very purpose. To take over our registered and legally bought mining company Stone Inc. We mainly mine precious metals and minerals from asteroids and moons. I was going to take over operations. Negotiate and deal with jewellers. One day I would get married...but I was in no rush.

If only I had a husband. Not because I was weak and needed protecting, but his caste would have protected me and my sister from facing destitution. Father has ruined the Stone legacy. There is nothing left to inherit.

I hope you understand that I'm angry. I feel betrayed. He did this under my nose and stole my future from me. Now I'm walking my sister with me into the Vega 4 indentured servitude registration centre. It is basically legalised slavery via a legal document stating how long the term of 'employment' will be for, and what payment will be given upon completion of the agreed term.

Only a week ago I used to look down my nose at this place. Thinking it was abhorrent, and only the stupid and the desperate foolishly ended up here. Of course, I was right. Cassie and I *are* desperate.

"Watch where you're walking." A gruff looking Prelka stormed past me and nearly knocked me over. He was over 7ft tall, wide as a house, green with purple bands, and his left head continued to sneer at me through his sharp teeth while the right focused on where they were going.

"Are you okay Val?" Cassie asked me and gave my hand a squeeze. I smiled at her and nodded to reassure her. The dull metal streets of the slums were loud, humid and full of unsavoury types like that Prelka. Most ignored the little humans, and the only other humans I saw were casteless and begging for Xan and ration pouches. It made me drag Cassie to the indentured servitude registration centre all the faster. It was too easy to see us dressed in rags, bones showing through our skin

and suffering in the dark. That was the future father left for us. The future we hoped to avoid as we walked into the Indentured Servitude Centre. ISC for short.

I walked us inside and ignored the nauseous butterflies swarming in my stomach as we walked hand in hand to the main reception.

“Here to register or browse today?” A dainty Abrian with a long white neck, a bulbous head, and a plume of blue feathers framing their face peered down from a raised desk.

“To register, please.” It felt wrong to even say the words. The Abrian examined us and rolled her white and yellow eyes.

“Of course. More Terrans. Go through the blue door and wait to be called. Fill in these while you wait.” She leaned over the desk to offer us both a metal clipboard with an attached tablet and stylus to write with. “Read carefully before you register. Once you sign you commit to indentured servitude. List all your debts fully or risk voiding your future contract. Once you co-sign your indentured servitude with your master, it is binding for the full term. Voiding the contract will blacklist you from making another, and you will be casteless with the full debt of the contract to pay.”

She didn’t pull her punches. We were already bloody nervous, without hearing all that too.

“Yes, thank you.” I tugged Cassie with me towards the blue door. She resisted me just before the blue door, so I turned to look at her curiously. Cassie was a delicate soul. Her blue eyes welled up and she begged me with those tear orbs not to do this. “What other choice do we have? If you have a better plan, tell me.” I waited and she couldn’t give me any alternative. “Come here.” I pulled my sweet sister into my arms and hugged her fiercely. “Father’s debt is his own. We are left with nothing to inherit, but that includes his debt. At least our caste protects us in that regard. That changes if we go down into poverty with him, which at this rate, is any day now.” I leaned back and stroked her cute freckly face. Her messy short blonde hair reminded me of mother’s golden locks. She had her looks and her gentle heart. I inherited our Father’s brown hair, brown eyes and business sense. If father hadn’t become a gambling drunk,

he would never have allowed this to happen to us. “We only need to work for a year. Maybe two. That should give us enough Xan upon completion to support us as we start up our own business. Stone Inc revamped, or 2.0 or something. Maybe we will work for another mining operation for a while and work our way up?” Cassie didn’t seem reassured.

“But you hear stories Val. Of what Indentured servants have to *do* under contract.” She wasn’t wrong there. I’d heard the rumours too. I got goosebumps thinking about the stories of being beaten, forced to do degrading menial labour, the subject of humiliation...and then there were the stories of people from rich castes purchasing indentured servants to be their *companions*...

We all knew what that was code for.

“We have to agree to the contract. We can’t leave the centre until we have agreed to one. Read the contract really carefully. Especially the fine print.” I took her hand and wore a brave smile for Cassie. On the inside I was just as terrified as my sister, but she didn’t need to know that. “Come on Cassie. It’s only a year or two. We will look back at this moment one day over drinks and laugh...”

Nope. Neither of us were convinced of that. Regardless, I led the way through the blue door and our uncertain future.

Romance Author



Chapter 2

Cassie's contract

Valerie

We sat in silence in a long corridor with blue chairs and a blue marble floor. Five others sat in the corridor too, and they were all human. That explained the receptionist's 'more Terrans' comment. A man old enough to be our grandfather sat in rags at the far end and looked very pale. A man in his 40s with a muscular frame beneath his jeans and tank top had an anxious sweat across his brow. The other three were women in their early twenties at the most. They were pretty and huddled together for support. No doubt they feared the same rumours we did.

We sat there and filled out the registration forms in laboured silence. We only spoke when I wanted to check how Cassie had answered the finance questions. She always had a better grip on that shitshow than I did. I can't remember how many sleepless nights she's had over the state of the company finances because of Dad.

30 minutes later and we were done. 3 hours later, and we were the only ones left in the waiting room. The old man had been dragged out kicking and screaming. He was blacklisted for voiding a contract, the security Sacrons said. Big aliens that I've seen only in jobs where their height, four arms and brute strength was a virtue. Security, peace enforcement, hard labour and of course, as criminal elements. One particularly nasty loan shark called Tallen always came around looking to get my Dad to 'invest'. Part of me wonders if the yellow Sacron had all four hands involved in where my father ended up financially.

The strong young man went next, and seemed stoic as he entered and left the processing room. Cassie said 'that's a good sign, right'? The pretty young women nervously went one at a

time and hugged each other goodbye, before hurrying to the other end of the corridor. They were all at various stages of weeping, so I didn't know if *that* was a good sign. For once, I was pleased to be rather plain and far from curvy. I really didn't want to be someone's *companion*. I'd take hard labour over that.

“Miss Stone and Miss Stone please?” Cassie had to rouse me from my musings to signal we'd been called at last. A female Sacron, something I'd never seen before, waved at us with her two left hands as she leaned out of the doorway. She had lovely blue skin with white mottling, big blue eyes, white reptilian like frills on either side of her head, and a bright smile. Her frills reminded me of hair, but they could move like a viper could their cowl, with the shape of a frill lizard's signature appearance. Her dress was tailored to compliment her four arms and tall figure. “This way please.” I held Cassie's hand and we anxiously followed her into the processing room. We both sat on the other side of a white metal desk and I held my sister's hand between us. “Good afternoon. My name is Yalla. I am your processing agent today. I've read your applications and your registration has been approved for indentured service.” Her frill widened as she smiled at us. Oddly, I was relieved to hear we were accepted. I didn't want us to be dragged out like the old man and left to beg on the street. “Firstly, let me tell you that ten years ago, I was sat where you were.” Yalla began her peppy speech. Cassie must have appreciated it as she lifted her blue eyes up from her lap curiously. “I was casteless, desperate, and without a Xan to my name. I had a horrible experience during my registration and contract matching.” I paled. How was this supposed to be a reassuring tale? “I did 3 years of indentured service and earned enough money on completion to apply for a basic worker caste licence. I ended up employed right back here, and ever since I've been determined to improve on the service we provide, and the standard of contract matching. So what I'm trying to say?” She seemingly got to the point and smiled even brighter. “Is of all the processing agents you *could* have had, I'm the kindest and will take good care of you. To the best of my ability, that is.”

“Thank you.” Cassie answered right away, and I added my thanks afterwards.

“Now, having read your files-” She half turned so her lower hands could type on her computer keyboard and her upper hands could review our tablets. “-Cassie Stone is the youngest at 21 Terran years and two weeks, which *just* makes her legally old enough for indentured servitude.”

“Lucky me.” Cassie chuckled anxiously and squeezed my hand. She was right. Had father done this to us any earlier than her 21st birthday, and I would have been forced to go down into the slums with her. No one would take on an indentured servant *and* their dependant, and I wasn’t leaving Cassie to fend for herself. Not my sweet Cassie.

“Indeed.” She smiled obliviously. “And you are the eldest, Valerie Stone. 27 Terran years and 8 months.” I nodded. “Both of you are trading castes. Precious metals and minerals?”

“And gems, yes.” I answered, taking charge of the conversation. “We still have our caste, but not for much longer due to the unfortunate choices of our father.” There was no point pulling our punches. “Right now we don’t have his debt, but we’ve seen his finances.” Cassie tensed beside me. “He’s about to be declared as bankrupt, and then we will be dragged into it. But I checked, debt can’t be transferred to someone in Indentured servitude.”

“That is correct.” She smiled kindly.

“We don’t have his debt if we do this *now*. We just don’t have anything else either.”

“That’s good.” Yalla nodded and her frill flexed at either side of her head. “It’s a smart decision to enter into a contract now. You’re more appealing without a debt to pay in exchange for your servitude. Potential masters only need to be able to afford to house and keep you, and the pay-out upon completion. Had you waited until after your caste was removed with your father’s inability to pay off his debts, it would have been much harder for me to get you a master, who would have had to take on that debt as well.”

I don’t know why, but it was embarrassing to hear her say that out loud. It was the truth, but it made it clear that she understood just how desperate we were. “Time is therefore of the essence. So allow me to be frank with you.” I raised a brow

and braced myself. From all my time negotiating alongside my father at work, I knew that wouldn't bode well. "You aren't allowed to leave here until you make a contract now you are registered. You have no Xan to buy any food, so you need to form a contract ASAP. You are both young and academically accomplished, with no debt, so you are valuable goods." I did *not* like being referred to as 'goods'. "But you are also on a timer. The moment your father files for bankruptcy, according to the account you have given us here-" She waves the tablets and our application forms in her lower right hand. "-you will have an unreasonable amount of debt to your names." Yalla wasn't holding her punches either. "You need a contract right now."

"Agreed." I nodded and Cassie gulped.

"Therefore, it's not feasible in the time frame we have to get you both signed to the same master." Yalla frowned and her frill flattened to her neck. "I know as siblings in these uncertain times, you'd prefer to be together. I can see you've put that as a preference on your registration forms. Unfortunately, you are not the kind of indentured servants a master who buys multiple contracts looks for. Neither of you would be any good at physically mining or enforcement. They also wouldn't buy two contracts on their own. You understand, there's a discount when large numbers of contracts are signed at once."

Cassie was looking at me. I didn't turn to catch her desperate gaze, but I shared her worry. "That being said? As *individual* candidates, I *have* found masters for you both. Good ones!" She tried to reassure us from that devastating blow. "Cassie? How are your math skills?"

"Excellent." I answered for my sister. "She has graduated top of her class with a degree in financial accounting." I spoke with pride and squeezed her hand.

"That's right." She added. "I was going to be in charge of the company's finances."

"Well?" Yalla cleared her throat and checked her screen, nodded, and then smiled at Cassie. "I have a contract here where you would be the accountant of an independent business. Trade and transport. Captain Unthulo is looking for an accountant for a period of 1 year. Full board on his ship with your own private

quarters. Six figures upon contract completion.” She slid a tablet across the table towards Cassie. I waited anxiously as she read the entire contract, small print included. The smile on her face said it all and lifted a weight off my shoulders.

“It’s perfect Val.”

“Then sign it.” I urged her with a smile of my own.

“Excellent.” Yalla clapped her upper hands and then accepted the signed contract. “Congratulations. Please proceed to the collection area at the end of the corridor. Your master is waiting for you.”

“...oh.” Cassie and I looked at each other anxiously. “Right now? Can’t we go together?”

“I’m afraid not.” Yalla stood and walked over to the door to open it for Cassie. “Your master has already signed his side of the contract. The moment *you* did, you became his property. Your sister and I still need to discuss her contract.”

“Val.” We both stood and I pulled her into a fierce hug. My heart was breaking, but we had to do this to survive.

“We will be together again. Work hard, keep your head down, and I’ll see you in one year to get our lives right back on track. I love you.”

“I’m scared.” She whispers to my ear, and I hold her even tighter.

“I love you. Be strong for me baby girl.” I gave her forehead a firm kiss, before standing back to make her go. Her blue eyes watered with tears, but she blinked them away and steadied her breathing. It was unspoken, but we both knew that it wouldn’t do for her new master to see her crying when they first met.

“I love you too Val. One year.”

“One year.”

Just like that, my sister was gone. I felt like I’d been stabbed. Like something had been ripped out of me without my consent, and I wanted it back badly. I even took a step towards the door, but Yalla shut it and gave me a moment to calm myself. The reality of what we’ve had to do hit me hard, and I

did cry. Yalla brought over a box of tissues for me as I worked through my grief.

“Captain Unthulo has an excellent master record with us. All of his indentured servants complete their term safely and receive their pay-out. You’ll see your sister in a year.”

“T-thank you.” I accepted the tissues and dried my face. My breathing took longer to steady, but I managed it. “What about me?” I cleared my throat. “What contract do you have for me?”



Chapter 3

The contract

Valerie

“Now for *you*, I have a very special opportunity.” Yalla stood and waved with her two right hands for me to rise as well. “I have a client that would make a great master, but so far I haven’t been able to find a *satisfactory* indentured servant for him.” She headed for the door, so I took the hint and followed her. We didn’t go down the corridor after Cassie, but instead across the corridor and into another room. This one had green carpet, but otherwise matched the previous office of the processing room exactly. Why the change of location? When prompted I took the seat facing the desk, but Yalla didn’t sit on the other side. Instead she picked up the chair with one hand and brought it around to sit with me. “Tell me Miss Stone. What do you know about the Korvis?”

My heart sank.

In my mind I saw the images of the Korvis that were popular in the various horror films they featured in. Tall and shrouded completely in long green fabric, where only their terrible dark magenta eyes were visible. In the films the fabric around the mouth was always stained red with blood, and their eyes would glow as they shrieked like banshees.

“I...” I struggled to find the words as I stared at her wary smile. Even *she* knew this was about to be a hard sell. “I know what most people know about them, I think. For a long time the Korvis weren’t allowed into Theskian space. They eat people.”

“I’ll stop you right there.” She chuckled nervously and shook her head. Her lovely frills were flat to her neck. “The Korvis do not *eat* people. They feed on proteins and particulates produced naturally in the blood of most sapient species.” I gave

her a deadpan look. How was that any different to what I just said? So they were bloodsuckers rather than flesh eaters? The outcome was the same. “You were right about the Korvis not being allowed into Theskian space. Because the Council prohibited them feeding off of sentient and sapient species. The Korvis, therefore, remained within their own territories. Until last month.”

“I remember their freedom of travel into Theskian space and permission to trade being passed.” I shuddered. I could remember father’s voice clearly as he stated how ludicrous he thought it was that ‘space vampires’ were now part of the Theskian races. “It was in the news.” I folded my arms and didn’t like where I thought this was going.

“Yes, that’s right.” Yalla folded her lower arms and gestured with her upper hands. “They were granted admittance because they have developed technology that safely boosts the blood supply of their feeding companion-” *Prey*. “-and outlined strict care plans for anyone who *volunteered* to be one. They co-signed laws making it illegal to feed from anyone without consent.”

I knew where this was going. I could feel it in my bones. “As you can imagine? Not many Theskian races have volunteered to be feeding companions.”

“Yes, I *can* imagine.” I folded my arms tighter, bracing myself for the inevitable.

“So?” Here it was. Her voice raised, her smile was nervous, and she prepared to drop the final pitch at me. “As the Korvis *are* eager to fully integrate with our galactic society, they have reached out to various channels to try facilitate new feeding companions. No one has volunteered, but a few have negotiated business arrangements. Payment for their blood.” Yalla slowly reached over to touch my shoulder. “They understand why people are hesitant to become feeding companions, but at the same time, they need feeding companions, or they aren’t allowed to leave the Hive. Their home. Which is why key individuals have reached out to Indentured Servitude Centres, like this one.”

“You want me to be a feeding companion?” My voice was barely above a whisper.

“You would be well cared for. Your health would be paramount, and you would suffer no long lasting effects from being the feeding companion of a Korvis. Not only that? But the pay my client is offering is *really* good.” Yalla thought she was going to win me over by making me focus on the pay-day at the end of the contract term. When I didn’t jump aboard or do anything more than stare at her, pale as a ghost and more than a little afraid of my options, Yalla rubbed my shoulder and leaned closer to me. “Trust me when I say that this contract is your best option. A young woman who needs to become indentured fast, *usually* leads to becoming a *different* kind of companion.”

I leaned back from her, feeling sick at the implication. It would seem the rumours *were* true. Some people *did* become *that* kind of companion. My mind thought back to the three women from the waiting room this morning and my stomach turned. Is that what happened to them? Are they being used for their bodies right now? Is that the alternative that faced me if I didn’t agree? “I can’t say much more about the client, other than you would live a very comfortable existence. It’s a one year contract, so you’d be done the same time your sister is.” I chewed my lips and knew she was right. What were my options here really? Allow someone to use my body? Or my blood? Both terrified me, but I knew which one would still allow me to sleep safely at night.

“The treatment you mentioned?” I cleared my throat. “To boost blood supply. It’s safe?”

“Yes.” She beamed, clearly relieved I was considering it. “It’s been thoroughly tested. Their admission into Theskian territories depended on it.”

“So I would come out of it unharmed?” I had to be sure that at the end of the year I would still be able to live my life. To be there for Cassie when we both finished our indentured servitude. I didn’t want to be a husk because my life had been sucked out through my veins.

“Absolutely.” Yalla giddily got up and marched over to another door at the back of the room. She held the handle and

beamed at me with her frill wide at either side of her neck. “Please come through. He would like to meet you before the contract is agreed.”

“M-meet me?” The hairs on the back of my neck stood on end. My brown eyes widened as I darted them from Yalla to the door handle she still held. “He’s...?” I nodded to the door and to her credit, the lovely Sacron bobbed her head with a confident smile.

“Yes. As you can understand, the client wanted to meet any prospective feeding companion before agreeing to the contract. Right this way Miss Stone.” She turned the handle and opened the door. My heart raced and I wanted to ask her to wait, but it was too late. She swung it open and held it close to her so I could see into the room.

There, sat directly opposite me on the other side of the adjoining room, was a Korvis.

Romance Author



Chapter 4

The Korvis

Valerie

He sat up a little straighter and stared right back at me. He was tall and was enwrapped in the most beautiful fabric I have ever seen. He was covered from head to toe in an evergreen robe, and wore a headdress that veiled his face. It was far more elegant than anything I'd seen in the horror films about the Korvis. Silver swirls were effortlessly stitched into the fabric, which seemed to both hug his tall frame like a second skin, and billow down around him. His face was covered, apart from one rectangle over his lilac eyes. On top of the head wrap, he wore something that was halfway between a crown and a circlet. It had a distinct M shape and looked like lots of thin golden peaks were meshed intricately together with clusters of emeralds throughout.

Suddenly, he lifted a gloved hand and beckoned me to come closer. I gulped and looked to Yalla. I don't know why. Was I hoping she'd call this off? Or that she'd say I didn't have to go towards the mysterious blood-sucking alien? All four of her hands ushered me like one would a nervous child going to school for the first time to go into the room. I had no choice. I was going to have to go in there. I couldn't believe this was really happening as I stiffly got to my feet. They felt like lead as I forced them to take one step after the other. A chill went down my spine once I crossed the threshold, and Yalla shut the door behind us. At least she wasn't going to leave us alone. "Here." She calmly retrieved another chair and placed it directly in front of the Korvis. I received the message loud and clear and lowered into it.

He didn't take those lilac eyes off me. Not for a second. He tracked my journey across the room and into the chair. He

turned in his seat and stared at me intently. What was he thinking I wonder? Did I look tasty? Or did I look pale and unpalatable due to stress? “Until the contract is signed I can’t use the client’s name, as he will require you to sign a confidentiality agreement as part of the contract today.” Yalla sounded way too giddy as she moved to sit behind the desk at the other side of the room. She might as well be at the other side of the station. I was trapped in those lilac eyes. Diamond shaped pupils swept over me, appraising me, and he cleared his throat to signal he was finally about to speak.

“Do not be afraid Human.” His voice was a *lot* deeper than I’d been expecting. His evergreen and silver robe was so delicate, and his body language so regal, that I’d been expecting a voice to match. Something soft and elegant maybe? His voice was gravelly and dark, but he was speaking quietly. It gave me goosebumps. “What is your name?”

“Valerie Stone.” I regretted how meekly I answered him. My pulse was racing and the lizard part of my brain recognised this beautiful creature as a deadly predator. I wanted to run away screaming. Through iron will alone I gripped my knees through my trousers and forced myself to stay put. I had to keep reminding myself of my situation and how the alternatives were not options. I was not going to end up casteless on the streets of the underslums. I was not going to end up as a legal sex slave. “I-I’d ask for your name, but I’ll have to wait until we sign the contract.”

“You mean *if* we sign the contract?” He countered, and suddenly my future wasn’t so secure. The Korvis folded his arms and inclined his head curiously. “I must first be sure that you are a suitable candidate. All the others this centre has brought forth have been unsatisfactory.” I took a deep breath and exhaled slowly.

“May I ask what you are looking for in a...feeding companion?” My voice lifted at the end, showing I was uncertain about the title. He nodded gracefully and gestured with his green gloved hands.

“You may. As I assume you are aware by this point, I am a member of the Korvis species. We are symbiotic by nature, and require a feeding companion to sustain us. My people

cannot leave the safety of the Hive unless we are registered as having one. My *work* requires that I live in Theskian space, and therefore I have reached out through *various* channels to secure a feeding companion. Thus far, I have been unsuccessful.” Don’t be picky then, I thought. I nervously tucked my long brown hair behind my ears and his lilac eyes followed the movement of my hands. They also looked at my neck now more of it was exposed... “The one who becomes my feeding partner will need to be with me at all times.” He placed one hand on top of the other on his lap. “They will live with me and feed me three times a day. I will be responsible for their wellbeing and spend more time with them than I do with anyone else. Therefore, the character of a feeding companion is just as important as their willingness to share their blood with me.”

I understood what he was saying. I did. But my brain was still struggling to wrap itself around the fact he was a glorified vampire from across the galaxy, and I was *putting myself* on his menu. And he was being picky! “What I need to know, Miss Stone, is your character. Tell me about yourself.” Just like that, the spotlight was back on me.

Romance Author



Chapter 5

Relax

Valerie

“...” I couldn’t find my voice. Those lilac eyes pierced me and I fidgeted in my chair under his stare. I nodded to him and cleared my throat, stalling for time, but then I couldn’t put it off any longer. I took a deep breath and went for it. “I am the eldest child of a trading caste family. Miners, specifically.” I decided to go at this like I was presenting my resume to a potential trading partner. I’d had to do so before, when father had been ill, and I’d had to take his place in negotiations. “I am academically accomplished and have good business sense. I graduated with a degree in business and economics with a minor in event planning.” The Korvis sat back and folded his arms to listen for the long haul. “I *was* going to take over my father’s mining business, but that is no longer an option. To be frank, *this* is my only option.” I waved my hand between my chest and the green-clad alien. My confidence grew with each second he didn’t behave like the bloodsucking monster his people were portrayed as in the movies. “I have a younger sister who has also had to take on an indentured contract. The only thing I want is to have earned enough money at the end of my contract term to re-join her and to start our lives over.” I looked off to one side with a sad smile. “Our future has been taken from us, but I’m sure if we can just hold on for now, get some Xan in our accounts, and we can get the real chance we deserve. We’ll have to start small of course.” I held my chin out of habit when musing aloud. “We’ll probably have to join someone else’s operation for a while first, but then we can get promoted up the ranks until one day we have enough capital to branch out on our own. Make a newer, bigger and better Stone Inc.” My smile grew warmer as I imagined it. My own fleet of ships, mining sites, and the high octane back and forth with trading partners to

get the best harvesting and selling prices. Fine clothes, fancy wine, and a home on a planet with breathable air. That was the dream.

Maybe, just maybe, there was a secret desire to settle down one day too. To find a man who didn't piss me off or slow me down. One who was prepared to love me and take on the role of child carer. Cassie would have a husband and children that she would dote on, and they would live on the same planet. Maybe even next door? With fire in my eyes and a strong reminder of what I was still fighting for, I fixed my brown gaze on the Korvis once more. "Who I am, is a woman who isn't going to accept defeat. I am not someone who got herself into this position, but I'll sure as hell get myself out of it. I have a dream and a goal, and that's all that's important to me." I raised a brow at him, far more confident than I had any right to be now that I was in the swing of things. "So I'll let you drink my blood." His eyes widened. "I'll take the tested treatment to keep my blood levels up." I leaned forward. "And I'll keep my mouth *shut*. Whoever you are, you want me to sign a confidentiality agreement? That means you're someone important, but quite frankly? I don't care." I flung my right hand up and started counting off my fingers. "I'm not interested in politics. I don't care about fame. Sure, I'm driven and ambitious, but I'm not a fool. My father was a gambler, and look where that got him? And me? I won't be taking *any* risks. Sir? I just want to complete my contract with you, earn my completion pay-out, and get on with my life with my sister." I waved the same hand to display my case. "You want me to be quiet, I'll be quiet. The only thing I need to know is that I'll come out the other end of this healthy and financially stable."

There. I made my case. I waved my hand and nodded to indicate that the ball was back in his court. He stared at me for a moment, his lilac eyes narrowed as he calculated his next move. I hid it well, but my nerves returned in the silence. I never did do well with quiet. I naturally wanted to fill it by speaking, but had nothing else to say. This guy seemed comfortable with the silence and held me on the edge of anxiety for way too long, before he chuckled once and nodded.

"Very well." My tense shoulders relaxed. "Then there is only one more thing I need to know." I leaned forward and

nodded for him to continue. He looked over his shoulder at Yalla, who was watching us on tender hooks. “It’s all well and good making these assurances that she will be a suitable feeding companion, but I’m not signing a contract unless I’m sure she’s capable of doing her part.” Yalla’s eyes widened and she stood quickly with an orange blush on her cheeks.

“I’m very sorry sir, but this is not a licenced feeding site. You can’t do that on these premises.”

“Unless I am confident that feeding from Miss Stone is something she *is* capable of allowing, I am not becoming legally responsible for her for a whole year. That is non-negotiable.” He shook his head, and the long hood and face covering of his green robe tousled with the movement. As they continued to argue *about* me, I gripped my knees tightly and looked down at my white knuckles. He wanted to feed on me. Right now. He wanted to bite me and drink my blood. The thought terrified me *almost* as much as walking out of here without a contract. If he didn’t take me on, Yalla made it clear that the other contracts available to me in a hurry would be to become the *other* kind of companion.

I lifted my brown eyes and slowly stood. I am *not* going to be someone’s concubine. I’m proud, I have far too much self worth. My rekindled dream of reuniting with Cassie in a year to pick up where we left off was at the forefront of my mind.

“Yalla, get out.” I finally spoke, and the lovely Sacron gaped her mouth and frills at her neck. “You have stated your company’s policy. Now leave the room. I would like to *discuss* more details of the contract with...this gentleman.” I didn’t know his name so I hoped that was polite enough. I marched over to her and to everyone’s surprise, I started to shoo her out of the room.

“You mustn’t, Miss Stone!”

“Mustn’t what? You heard me. We’re going to talk.” We all knew damn well we weren’t going to talk, but I wasn’t letting something like whether the site allowed Korvis feeding to happen on the premises or not hold me back. He made it clear that this was the last hurdle. It’s got to happen, no matter how

much the thought of him biting me sent goosebumps across my skin. “In private. With you on the other side of this door.”

“BUT!” I shoved her and her four arms through the door, shut it, and was grateful to find a lock on the door. I turned it and it clicked into place. Just like that...we were alone. I turned slowly to find the predator hadn’t moved an inch. He hadn’t pounced the moment the door was shut. Instead, he waited and watched as I composed myself.

“Let’s do this before Yalla and her guards come in here and stop us.”

“Agreed.” He elegantly waved his right gloved hand to the desk to his right. “I suggest to get the best angle and to be comfortable with the time frame we have, you sit in an elevated position.” His hand lowered to pat the desk twice. I nodded and forced my feet to move one after the other to the desk. Those lilac eyes with diamond-shaped pupils never stopped watching me as I pushed my hands down onto the cold polished surface and dropped my backside onto the desk. “Now, the more you relax, the less this will sting.” I nervously ran my hands over one another as I told myself to chill out and let the space vampire bite me. I didn’t notice one of his hands move toward mine, and I lifted both hands up to shove my long brown hair behind my ears and behind me. Dutifully I shifted on the spot and offered the left side of my neck to him. *Don’t tense. Relax.*

Romance Author



Chapter 6

The first feed

Valerie

When he didn't move I raised a brow and looked down at him. What was he waiting for? My gaze must have conveyed this question, as he decisively cleared his throat and placed his hands on either side of my thighs on the desk. He braced his weight on his gloved palms and rose to his feet. "I will not carry out a full feed Miss Stone. Normally, such a thing is done in the comfort of one's home, or in a licenced feeding site." I nodded, listening of course, but also wary of when Yalla and the other Sacrons working here would bust in the door. "If you are capable of allowing the feed, and your blood is palatable, we will both immediately sign those contracts. Yours also contains the confidentiality agreement." He nodded to the tablets splayed on the desk behind me. "I have Regen-pills on me, which you *must* take. You will feel weak immediately after a feed, and the medication will allow you to recover, and do so quickly." He tentatively brought his right hand to my neck and felt at my quickening pulse. His diamond-shaped pupils dilated and I could almost feel his hunger as he looked at my neck. "I will then take you into my custody, and your welfare will be my responsibility. We will immediately leave for the departure port and use a shuttle to get to my cruiser. Any questions?"

"No." I took a deep breath and opened and closed my hands on my lap. The sound of someone trying to open the door against the lock made us both look over to it with alarm.

"It must be now." His gravelly voice was even gruffer when in a rush. He cupped my neck with his left hand and the right gently coaxed my head to lean over towards that side. With my throbbing jugular exposed I strained my eyes to watch him. "You have not yet signed the confidentiality agreement, so you

can't watch. Close your eyes Miss Stone." He urged me, and reluctantly I did so. Somehow, not being able to see him bite me made the experience more nerve-wracking. He must have lowered or removed his face covering, as I felt the sharp press of *four* fangs. Two sets of two on his upper row of teeth. I swallowed thickly as his bottom lip and tongue pressed to my throat, before he brought his jaws together and pierced my flesh.

"Ah!" I yelped and instinctively flung my fists up to take handfuls of the green and silver fabric. I wanted to tear him off me and flee for safety. It hurt! I wouldn't describe this as stinging at all! It was like four molten tiny knives had pierced my neck. I shook and gripped him for fear of flailing with his fangs still in my neck, as it could cause him to rip my throat open. I could feel his flat tongue and his bottom lip massage and coax my blood to flow quickly into his mouth. I could hear him swallowing it down.

I felt cold, and my fingers and toes started to tingle. He's taking too much! "I-I a." I wanted to beg him to stop, but I was afraid. Even the tiniest movement required for for me to speak whilst he fed from me, caused an inferno of agony. I just couldn't do it.

Tears slid down my face. If I survive this, I'll have to do this for a whole year. Three times a day. Can I really go through *this* every time the Korvis gets hungry? In the background the door was being rammed with something. Part of me started to hope they would hurry up and save me for foolishly letting this space vampire bite me.

Finally, he carefully eased his fangs out of my neck and lapped at the wound. I must taste very 'palatable', if he wanted every last drop he could get. He hummed with satisfaction and his face covering was back in position by the time he finally released my neck. "You were delicious. Apologies, but in the end I fed from you fully, so you will feel quite drained. Here, take this. Quickly." He retrieved a plain silver fabric purse from a pocket from the right side of his robe. I watched with blurred vision and heavy bones as he opened it to show a long line of red pills. He took out one, cast his lilac eyes over me, and then retrieved a second. "I'll get you some water. Hurry." He

unceremoniously pushed each pill past my numb blue lips and marched around the office to retrieve a cup and use the water cooler.

His face.

It was hidden behind the green and silver covering, but *my blood* had transferred to it where his mouth was. *That's* where the horror movies got that image from. It was a haunting sight. If I had any energy to be afraid, I would be screaming and running for the door. Speaking of which, the Sacron security guards from earlier finally bust the door open and had guns raised in all four hands. Again, if I had the energy to be afraid, I would be worried about getting shot. Currently though, I was struggling to stay conscious. The Korvis only afforded them a sideways glance through his veil and brought the cup of water over to me. "Here you go." He pressed the rim of the cup to my lips and poured the water into my mouth. I spluttered, not wanting to even exert myself with swallowing, but I had no choice. "Show me you've taken the Regen-pills?" He asked me like I was a naughty child. I opened my mouth. It was easier than trying to speak. My neck was so sore I wanted to cry. "Good."

"Sir!" Yalla forced her way in between the guards, who were waiting on her orders, and came to fuss over me. "She's as pale as snow!"

"Miss Stone is perfectly fine. She has taken the necessary Regen-pills. All she needs is some rest." He spoke dismissively. Rest though? That sounded good. My eyes drooped and I could have happily curled up on the desk to have a nap. "But first we need to sign our contracts. And...." He moved the stylus quickly over one of the tablets. "Here is mine."

"Wait, she can't-"

"Here is yours Miss Stone." He offered it to me and I hazily tried to focus on it. "Please sign it."

"She's in no state now to be-"

"Miss Stone has already given me verbal consent. This is simply a formality. Move aside." He growled. He *actually*

growled, and Yalla stumbled back to the safety of her guards. He still ignored all the guns trained on him, and pressed the stylus into my hand. “You will wish to sleep soon. You need to sign it now.” As if to prove the point my head lolled once. I shook it and blinked a bit more focus into my vision. “Now, Miss Stone.”

I gave that bloody veil over his mouth one last wary stare, before I sluggishly signed the contract. It must have been the blood loss and how tired I felt, but I just wanted to do whatever I had to so I could get some sleep. To dream myself away from this nightmare. “Perfect.”

If the Korvis that now owned me hadn't caught me, I would have slumped face first off the desk and planted my nose into the floor. Two misleadingly strong arms wrapped around me and with some uncomfortable jostling, I was lifted into the bridal position. “I suggest to prevent a public relations *misunderstanding*, a taxi cab is summoned. Otherwise, the inhabitants of this starbase will see me with my veil bloodied and a pale human in my arms, and make an *incorrect* assumption.”

My eyes were shut, so I had no idea why it took so long for Yalla to acknowledge that instruction. I was so tired, and so sore, I subconsciously nestled into my new master's chest and started to surrender to slumber. My perception of reality started to blur and skip through time as I dozed in and out of consciousness. We were walking for a while and the mild jostling of it made my neck throb in protest. At some point, the taxi must have arrived as the Korvis awkwardly slid inside to hold me on his lap. The process of lowering me hurt and I groaned to portray my discomfort since words were too difficult to form. “*Hush little flower. Rest. I am here.*” He growled something at me and if I wasn't half asleep it would have creeped me out. I lolled against his chest, tipping back out of consciousness for Lord knows how long, when I was being lowered to lay on something soft. I couldn't even open my eyes, but I groaned again and my fingers twitched as I felt my boots being removed. “*We are home now. Sleep and be well.*” I became aware of something warm pressing down on me, a blanket I think, and I couldn't hook my fingers into consciousness any longer. I fell into a deep dreamless sleep. I

didn't even have the energy to dream. A good job too, as after allowing the Korvis to feed on me, I'm sure I would have had nightmares.

Romance Author



Chapter 7

Introductions

Valerie

I awoke with the distinct feeling like I've been dragged ass first through a heavy drinking session. Then in a shuttle crash. Possibly on some powerful pain medication. Either way, I feel like hell. I groaned and my hands curled against the bedsheet beneath me. It was soft and fine. I smelled a fresh scent from the warm duvet I snuggled beneath. It was odd, because my bedding has always smelled of the chemicals used to clean them and keep them sterile between washes. Yet this smell reminded me of freshly picked flowers.

Or, were there actual flowers in my room? I managed to force my eyes open and orientated myself. I was laid on my front, my right cheek cushioned by a plump pillow, and facing a bedside table. It was quaint, wooden which was a real novelty, and had a vase of flowers I didn't recognise. Like blue roses, thick and waxy, but the petals were open, drooped, and pointed like a lily. The stems were brown and the smell was divine. I started to lift my head to get a better look at them. Pain shot through my neck and I winced.

"Ouch." I sluggishly reeled my left hand back towards me and touched at my neck.

"Are you sore?" I tensed stiff. "I gave you two Regen-pills so you shouldn't be...perhaps three next time?"

Holy crap. My memories slammed into the side of my skull without mercy. His gravelly voice brought it all back to me. Father's debts. Walking with Cassie into the Indentured Services Centre. And oh of course? Deciding I would rather allow a Korvis to use my blood for food than allow many others to use my body for sex. Being vampire food for a year did mean

he had to keep me alive, after all. Goodness, how did I end up being in such a desperate position? Oh yes. My gambling father. Bastard. “Miss Stone?”

Ooooooo, the space vampire is sitting on my bed. Hang on? This isn't my bed?

I sat up and braced myself against the headboard. At least all my clothes were accounted for. A quick toe wriggle confirmed he had at least taken off my shoes before putting me in bed. I lifted my gaze to look at the Korvis. He was dressed as mysteriously as the day before. Today his veiled robe was a deep purple colour, which complimented his piercing lilac eyes. “Good morning Miss Stone.”

“Valerie.” I corrected him and cleared my throat. There was a dull ache to my neck but not as bad as it should be. Considering he went full on vampire on me yesterday. “You drank my blood. I think we can be on first name terms.” I laugh, trying to lighten the mood.

“...in my culture that is a very intimate request.” His diamond shaped pupils darted away from me briefly. I can't see his face, but if it were possible to tell from someone's tone of voice, I would guess he is blushing. Whatever that looks like for his race beneath his headdress. “We are known by our titles and tribe names to most. We share our chosen names with only our inner circle of intimate relationships.”

“Oh, sorry.” I shrugged. “You are the first Korvis I've ever met, and I'm afraid I don't know anything about your culture. I'm sorry. I didn't meant to offend you.”

“That's quite alright.” He chuckled, and again I'm struck by how deep and gravelly his voice is. It doesn't match his delicate attire or genteel manner at all.

“I understand that I'm not to call you by your chosen name. What shall I call you?” Because I doubt very much he will like me calling him a space vampire.

“I am the Dynast.” He spoke with rumbling pride and lifted his chin. “You have signed the confidentiality agreement, so you cannot discuss me or anything you observe whilst in my care with others, unless I permit it.” I nod. “Having signed it,

however, I can now tell you all about myself.” He sounds pretty happy about that. Huh. “I am the Korvis Dynast.”

Nope. I’m drawing a blank. Did he miss the part where I told him I don’t know anything about his culture?

“...sorry? What does that mean?” I shuffled to a more comfortable position against the headboard, fussing my hand at my sore neck where he bit me.

“It means I am a member of the Korvis Hive hierarchy, and it is my duty to represent my people to the Theskian empire.” His diamond pupils dart to my hand at my neck, so I quickly lower both my hands to rest on my lap.

“I had you pegged as a politician.” I chuckled, again trying to lighten the mood.

“Politician?” He inclines his head and his purple headdress flutters with the movement.

“Terrans, humans from Earth, are governed by a a group of people in each country called politicians. They make up that country’s government. They make the laws and deal with legal matters. Usually each government has a president who leads them. The President of each country sits on the Terran council. They make the laws that all of Earth has to follow, and deals with any issues between different countries.” I begin trying to bridge our understanding gap. “The Terran council is lead by the Earth First minister. He or she represents my entire race on the Theskian council.” I take a pause and nod to him. “So when you say you are the Korvis Dynast, which of those roles is similar to yours?” I needed a point of reference here. The Dynast raises his head and nods, showing he has understood me.

“I am like the First minister of your people.” Holy crap! No wonder I had to sign the non-disclosure. His chest puffs out with pride and he nods at me. “Your explanation of how your people are governed was useful, thank you. Allow me to return the favour.” I tense and watch as he gets up and lowers to sit *right* beside me. “You have also told me that you know nothing about my culture, so allow me to educate you. We will be together every day for a year, so I think it’s important that we understand each other.” He bowed his head and I forced a smile to my face. He’s being very polite, but I can’t stop looking at his

veil over his mouth and remembering it smeared with my blood after he bit me yesterday. “My people are the Korvis. We are ruled by Queens. Our hierarchy is a Matriarchy.” I incline my head, genuinely interested about a species most Theskians know nothing about, outside of horror films of course. “Most Korvians are male. Oh, *I* am male.” He added in as if I couldn’t tell. Then again, having a low voice was really all I based that deduction on, which was foolish of me now I think about it. Other than lilac eyes and white skin surrounding them, I couldn’t see anything about him. Turns out I guessed right, at least. Man, that would have been embarrassing if the Dynast had turned out to be a female, or without gender, and I’d wrongly assumed he was a dude. Some species were mono-gendered, after all. “Our Queens each rule a Hive, like your presidents do, and they have advisors, like your politicians, that make up a government.”

I am really appreciating the parallels he’s drawing. I don’t think I would have followed if he didn’t keep referring back my explanation. He wasn’t exactly speaking slowly for me to keep up. “The Hive collective has a throne for each Queen and they rule over all of Korvian kind. Like your Terran council.” He gestured with his gloved hands and made a strange purring noise. I was about to look for where the cat was that snuck into my room, when I realised it was coming from the Dynast. I have no idea if that’s a good or a bad thing, but space Dracula here was purring *whilst* talking. “I have been appointed the great honour of representing the Hive council as their appointed Dynast. I have been given this vital role as a reward for my work in getting travel and trade rights for the Korvis in Theskian space.”

“Oh that was you?” I engage him politely. It was odd, really, because I know he’s no less hazardous for my health as he was *before* he started chatting away to me. All the same, I feel myself starting to relax as he natters away. “I read about that in the news.”

“You did? Was it widely published?” He leans towards me and his lilac eyes almost seem to sparkle. I nod, which he seems very pleased with, and his purring becomes more like a buzzing noise. “Good. *Good.*” The Dynast fist bumps the air to one side with victory. “A great achievement for my people. You

see, a long time ago, the Korvis were prominent members of the galaxy. Many of us behaved then as we do now. But...there were certain Hives, I am not proud to admit, that rather...*abused* their feeding companions.” The buzzing noise stopped and he sighed. He seemed really sad all of a sudden, but *my* heart was starting to rattle with nerves. What did abusing a feeding companion look like? Man, I hope I never find out first hand. “They treated their companions very badly, and as a consequence the Theskian empire waged war on the Korvis. They expelled us back to our originator sector of space and ‘liberated’ every sentient race from our control.”

I’m not going to lie? But that sounds like the right move to me... “Only, they did so with extreme prejudice. *All* Korvis were labelled as monsters and we were all left to starve. Had our scientists not been fortunate in creating Synth-Red, a blood alternative, shortly before the mass expulsion, it would have been genocide.” I nearly wet myself when he placed gloved hand over mine on my lap. How I didn’t scream for help I’ll never know. “But many of the Korvis, even back then, treasured and cared for our feeding companions. We owe our very lives to them. You and I will live in true symbiosis. We use the word *companion* not by chance, Miss Stone. You and I will know each other very well and spend more time together, than with anyone else.” Oh...the space vampire wants to be my friend? Erm...kinda creepy... “I have been given this honour as the Dynast to the Korvian collective, to represent my people and to carry out a crucial mission.”

“Which is?” I had to ask. He’s built up this entire speech towards this moment, I can tell.

“We have been using Synth-Red for over a century now. Most living Korvians have never been off the Hive, for without a feeding companion, the risk of being without sustenance is too high. What if something happened to our transport ships? Or what if we ran out of Synth-Red?” I imagine something like the Korvis horror films would happen. They’d go nuts and chow down on the nearest neck. “My people are surviving, but we won’t do so for much longer. Our population is in decline. We can’t keep up with the demand for Synth-Red to sustain our current numbers, as well as other factors limiting our birth rate. The Queens are already having to adhere to population control

in their own hives.” He rubbed the back of my knuckles and I saw great sadness in his lilac eyes. “We *need* feeding companions once more. Our survival depends on it. We now have the right of trade, so we can make arrangements such as the one you and I have made, but so few have agreed to form a symbiotic companionship...No.” He nodded firmly and patted the back of my hand. “I must become a member of the Theskian council. The Korvis must be admitted as full members, and the empire must be re-educated on my people. We are not monsters, Miss Stone.”

I flinched when he leaned suddenly into my personal space and looked me right in my eyes. “I can tell from how tense you are and how fast your heart is beating that you don’t yet believe otherwise.” Oh shit. I swallow thickly and subconsciously I press myself against the headboard to get as far from the Korvis as I can. If he was trying to convince me he wasn’t a monster? He probably shouldn’t be talking about my heart beat. How can he tell how fast it’s beating anyway? “But don’t worry.” He spoke softly, creeping me the hell out. “I am going to take excellent care of you Miss Stone. You will be the first to see what a companionship with a Korvian is like, *really* like, and through you we will educate others.” He finally leaned back and that happy buzzing noise resumed in his chest. “I am looking forward to getting to know you Miss Stone. You are a fierce survivor and determined to succeed in your goals. Your interview yesterday told me that. You are exactly the kind of person I can both respect and work with.”

“And feed off?” Damn my rebellious mouth.

“Ah, yes.” He chuckled and nodded. “Speaking of which, you are slightly malnourished. I could tell from your blood.” He stood, his purple robe billowing around him. He folded his arms over his chest and nodded to her. “I’m not sure *why* you’ve been rationing yourself, but I assume it has to do with your father’s debts? The reason you gave me for entering into indentured service? I will rectify that Miss Stone. Please make use of your bathroom and join me in the dining room. There, you will have a hearty meal. We need to build up your stamina so I can feed off you three times a day. For now, I am supplementing with Synth-Red.”

Just like that, my new master sauntered out of my bedroom and left me to pick my jaw up off the damn floor. Well *excuse me* for not being in peak performance for you to drain me of my blood as per your dietary needs? In my head I'm going to call him Dracula, and I do *not* like that he thinks I'm key to his plan to 're-educating the empire' on the Korvians. I just want to serve my contract, survive it, earn my payout at the end, and get me and Cassie's lives back on track. I signed up to be fed on, not to be used for a political take over move. Shit.

Romance Author



Chapter 8

She has potential

Vrajan

I smooth my hands down my purple chiffon gown and check myself in the mirror facing the dining room table. My headdress is perfectly in place, but I tug and fuss with it anyway. I've forgone my crown, as we are not out in public. I am the Dynast, and when I am off my private cruiser, I wear my crown to indicate my station. I wear Royal green in public, of course. On my own ship, my own home, I often wear softer colours.

I have had very little interaction with other races, in person at least, but Valerie Stone looks me right in my eyes. Normally, I've found that everyone avoids my eyeline all together. I wonder if it's my diamond shaped pupils? It isn't the colour of my irises, as plenty of other races have eye colours like mine, but I don't know of any with pupils like mine. Or, perhaps, it's because I'm a Korvis. I am not a fool. I know that most of the Theskian races believe that my people are heinous monsters that would eat their offspring and cackle about it. In the first 24 hours of entering Theskian-controlled space, I was subjected to their prejudice. Both online in their popular streaming of my people as monsters, but also in person.

The receptionist at the customs desk to enter the Vega 4 base literally did a double take and screeched at my presence. Before I had uttered a single word, she pressed her panic button under the desk and fled. Sacron security officers arrived, weapons raised, and threatened me. I had to return to my cruiser and await further confirmation that I was both allowed to enter the Theskian starbase, and that my official papers had to be on my person at all times. Apparently, I have to present them before even saying hello to avoid a *misunderstanding* like that again...

I walk around the dinner table, making sure that everything is perfect. One dinner place is set for Valerie. A silver plate with a range of eating utensils that came in a set with the crockery. A jug of water with ice cubes floating in the top is placed beside an empty glass, and a vase of Jalap Scokes to feminise the table. My Queen says females like flowers. I stroke my fingertips along the waxy blue petal, and then along the matching blue table cloth to ensure there are no creases. Everything looks perfect, so I walk out of the dining room to the adjoining kitchen area. I hope Valerie likes the facilities. With my mission in mind, my Queen made sure to have a vessel purchased that was originally made for a luxury diplomat of another race. It therefore has all the correct amenities for a species that ingests solid food and excretes waste as most Theskian races do. All we had to do then, was adapt the bedroom meant for me, and install a cool room for my Synth-Red stores. It was easier to adapt a Theskian vessel to a Korvis, than a Korvis ship to a Theskian. Or a Terran, in Valerie's case.

I press a hand to my stomach, the sensation of nervous Xiqals fluttering their tiny wings in my gut is a testament to my mood. I navigate the polished dark wood and titanium kitchen to collect the plates of food I have prepared for Valerie. Basic things I felt I could prepare. A bowl of fruit from Earth. Sandwiches were simple. It was more like stacking flat ingredients together, than cooking. I hope it's palatable for her. Ham was common on the suggested ingredient list, so I made ham sandwiches. I place the bowl and plate on the table on either side of her silver plate, and lower to sit in the chair opposite her place setting.

This must go well. I have been docked with the Vega 4 Theskian starbase for 4 months, trying to find a suitable feeding companion. At first I put out an advert to advertise the role, like one would a job opportunity. No one applied. Then I reached out to the Theskian council for support. The only reply I received was a reminder of the agreement for freedom of travel, trade, and work. They were not *obligated* to supply me any assistance to secure myself a feeding companion, though if I did so legally, they would allow the registration. This brought me to the Indentured Servitude Centre. Even then, the 5 potential feeding companions they matched me with were disasters. The first, a

Sacron, thought I was going to attach him with an IV, and outright refused when he realised the feed had to be carried out naturally. Korvis are symbiotic, and our secretions help the recovery process. To administer our secretions, we have to actually bite our feeding companion. The second was simply impossible. A human female, like Valerie, but unlike Valerie, she started making a whole host of demands. My Queen has approved a certain amount of funds to secure a feeding companion and cover the fees required by the Indentured Services centre, and this human's demands were outlandish. The second potential match opened up our first ever conversation by saying 'If you expect me to let you put your *anything* on me, I'm going to need 3 figures per bite in my bank account buddy.' She was obnoxious, and I turned her down. Feeding companions are *companions*, and I couldn't stand her presence after only 5 minutes. I couldn't have her company for a whole year. The third potential feeding companion fainted at the sight of me. A Prelka, from the look of her two heads. One continued to scream even after the other one had passed out. The fourth seemed promising, as he was very willing, but he wasn't healthy enough to become my feeding companion. The human male had yellow teeth, overgrown nails, matted grey hair, and I could see his skeleton through his skin. I told the Indentured Servitude handler that this man required medical attention and wouldn't survive a single feeding. He wept, desperate not to return to the streets. If I could have taken him, I would have, but I would have been his executioner if I had. Valerie is a little bit malnourished due to rationing, but not in any way she may have noticed. Easily rectified with a balanced diet.

I interlock my gloved fingers together on my lap and wait for my feeding companion, smiling behind my veil. Yes, she has potential. She's not easily scared. She made her case for being professional about this arrangement well. She would do well in politics, I think, with nerves of steel and a passion to achieve her goal like that. When she hopped up onto the table and offered her neck to me without hesitation? I knew she was the one. I smile wider, recalling how she clung to me during the feeding. She gripped me tightly, but didn't push me away. She didn't scream. She signed her contract even after the feed, and holding her as she slept in my arms was wonderful.

It is a privilege to have a feeding companion. It has been a century since my people have been in the position to have one, so I will cherish this opportunity as the gift it truly is. It is my duty as the Dynast to ensure that one day, my people can thrive and have feeding companions once more. To have that divine experience Valerie gave me yesterday. Biting her was beyond compare to anything I've ever experienced. Sinking my fangs into her neck wasn't especially anything to shout about, but from the first warm wet hit of her blood on my tongue, I thought for sure I had moaned from the intensity of it. I tasted her warm sweet taste not just on my tongue, but throughout my very being. She warmed my veins and my bones hummed with pleasure. Feeding isn't just about putting fuel into a body, like it seems to be for the Theskian races. It's an intimate act of sharing your life with another. Being trusted with the vulnerability of your partner, and sharing your bodies.

I swallow thickly, my phyrodox glands in my neck secreting in anticipation of my next feed. I lick at my fangs and lips and resist the urge to groan as I think about her blood. I especially can't afford for Valerie to walk into the dining room and find me drooling and licking my chops hungrily.

I am not so foolish as to forget how tensely she sat as I moved to sit beside her earlier as she awoke in her new bed. How fast her heart thundered in her chest or how her round Terran pupils dilated to take in as much light and information as possible about the monster looking right at her. It was sobering, seeing her react to me like she is the prey and I am a predator. She does not understand how sacred our relationship is. She is not just food to me. She is my feeding *companion*, and I will show her that I am the last person she need ever fear again. She will not regret becoming mine, even if it's only for a year. Who knows? Perhaps we'll get along so well, she'll want to renew her contract with me? That would be convenient, and it would go a long way to show other Theskian races that there is nothing to fear about becoming the feeding companion of a Korvis. That is my end goal, after all. Not just to secure my own feeding companion long term, but to liberate my people in the same way.

I stop musing over how I'll win her over and do my duty as the Dynast, when Valerie peers in through the doorway to

look at me. She's not looking anywhere near as pale as she once did, and I try not to notice the bruising at her neck.

“Good morning again, Miss Stone. Please?” I wave one of my gloved hands to the chair nearest to her. “Take a seat. You need sustenance, and I would like to keep you company as you feed. Would that be alright?”

Romance Author



Chapter 9

Shoot me now.

Valerie

Well. Breakfast with a space vampire. Let's tick that one off the list.

"Sure." I shrug as I peer more into the fancy looking dining room. I hug the towel to my body and lean in so he can clearly see my head, my long damp brown hair, bruised neck and shoulders. The start of the towel is visible, and I hold it like a vice around me. "But erm, I'd like to get dressed first, if that's okay. I couldn't find any fresh clothes so...?"

"Oh!" His diamond-shaped pupils became dilated, and he jumped up from his chair in a flutter of purple chiffon. "Forgive me. I had not anticipated that you would have a shower. Did you find the facilities to your liking?" He comes right at me and I instinctively back the hell up. The Dynast is moving like a man on a mission, and I'm relieved when he passes me to head down the short corridor back to my bedroom.

"Y-yeah. Nice shower." Nicer than any shower I've ever used. This guy is *loaded*. There is no doubt in my mind that the Dynast can pay the completion fee on my contract. Seriously. I feel like this is his luxury cruiser. I've never seen so much polished dark wood with golden trimmings in my life. I'm merchant and mining caste, and I've never seen so much luxury for the sake of luxury. Not even my Dad's ship was so fancy, though, it was a mining vessel, so that kind of made sense. I can't see any metal, for a start. I can't feel or hear the engine working. Not even the hum of machinery. The corridor has polished wooden floors, and my bedroom has thick and soft brown and cream chequered carpet. My bed is a king-sized bed with a thick cream duvet and a brown silk sheet on top of that. There are blue flowers in vases everywhere there's a surface,

and the bathroom is an ensuite. It was fit for someone *way* richer than me. It was a white marble wet room, with a walk-in shower with crosswater shower heads built into the ceiling that lit up blue when activated. The towels were thick and white, softer than anything I've ever rubbed up against my naked body before, and there was what I assumed to be a bathtub as well. It was more like a bath and a chair had a baby. You literally sat in it and a curved glass screen sealed you in, before water filled the container for you to bask in. I put a mental note to one side to try it later on, but right now I thought it was better to have a quick shower and find my...master.

“Here.” He pressed his hand to a circular gold frame, which I thought was missing a picture, but it was in fact a control panel. Once pressed it sank into the wall, and then a built-in wardrobe was revealed by a secret door. “Please, wear whatever you like.” I smile and try not to duck my head down to protect my neck as I walk past him and into the walk-in wardrobe. “I will return to the dining room and wait for you there, Miss Stone.” He slips away and I release the breath I was holding. At first I nod, impressed, at the wide range of clothing here. I can tell some are meant for Sacrons, with the four sleeves, most look like I'd be able to wear them easily. I make a beeline for the underwear drawer and find 6 different sizes available for underpants and bras. That made sense, really. I think I would have been creeped out had he known my size before even meeting me. As I'm going to be here for a year, I'll let him know my size, or ask if I can order my own clothes.

I scoff, shimmying into a set of nude underpants and looking for a bra. Before my dad gambled and drank away our money, if I wanted to buy clothes, I just...could. It's going to take some getting used to, having to clear things I would normally do on a day-to-day, with my new *master*. Lord, this is going to get old fast, but it beats the hell out of being casteless and destitute in the slums.

“Huh?” I find a range of bras alright, but they are all strapless. I shrug, finding one that fits, and clasp it into place at my back. I absently adjust my breasts into the cups of the bra as I walk along the railings of clothes. I am not a dress kind of girl, but I happily find a set of billowing blue chiffon wide legged trousers. In fact, there seem to be a lot of chiffon *everything*

here. I think absently to the two outfits I've seen the Dynast wearing, and that makes sense too. I wonder if chiffon is something they have easily wherever they're from? And it therefore felt normal to buy chiffon, or our version of it, when he bought a wardrobe for his feeding companion?

I shudder, accepting it's going to take *quite* a while before thinking of myself as a feeding companion *doesn't* make my skin crawl. I subconsciously rub at my sore neck, and note it isn't as sore as it was when I first woke up. I had to press down to find any ache at all. I can see in a mirror though, it's still discoloured from the rest of my neck. Whatever is in those Regen pills, they're strong stuff. I hum curiously when I realise that of all the dresses I've slid along the railing in search for a top, they've been differing sizes, colours, and styles...bar *one* particular feature. I confirm my suspicions when I find some blouses and shirts, and find they *too* have this same feature.

They are all shoulderless.

As in, my neck and shoulders will always be 'accessible' for space Dracula to grab a quick bite. Ah. There's that shudder again. I am going to have to get used to this. I have a whole year of this ahead of me. I guess having me in shoulderless outfits is just...practical? It's not like he's getting his jollies off or anything. I'm just food with a personality he has to be nice to, I guess. I would feel very differently about this if he was dressing me up for his preference or as eye candy. In the end I grab a long sleeved shoulderless black T shirt, since my blue chiffon pants are wide and floaty, and look around for shoes...only to come up empty. Ah well. No shoes for me.

I brush out my long brown hair, having towel dried it as much as I can and brush it backward to rest between my shoulder blades. I *almost* bring my long hair forward to cover my neck, but then that would be rather obvious, wouldn't it? Instead I marched back toward the dining area to find the Dynast sitting as he was the first time. Gracefully in his purple headdress and robe, his lilac eyes and diamond pupils locking onto me the second I enter the room.

"Ah, you suit that colour. The blue." He nods down to my trousers as I approach the table. "It's the same colour as the

Jalap Skokes.” He waves a gloved hand at the blue roses with drooping petals in the vase on the table.

“Thank you.” I answer politely and take my seat at the table. “May I?” I point to the water jug with mostly melted ice cubes in it. “I’m really thirsty.”

“Please do.” He nods and his lilac eyes curve like he’s smiling. “In fact, please help yourself to the sustenance on the table. I prepared it, so it’s very simple.” I spot the sandwiches and a quick inspection shows they are buttered and have ham in the middle. Yummy. I put two on my plate and take a bunch of grapes from the fruit bowl. I spot an apple, and smile. It’s red and shiny. Mum’s favourite. I pluck up the red apple, so shiny I can see my distorted reflection in it’s skin, and before I know it I’m tearing up and chewing my lips.

“An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” I swallow thickly as I hear what she would always say before taking a bite. Quickly followed by- *“And I’m allergic to putting Xan in anyone else’s pockets, so eat up!”*

Movement made me flinch as a waterfall of purple chiffon landed beside me.

“What is wrong, Miss Stone? Are you hurt? Are you unwell? Have I offended you?”

“N-no.” I shuffle back in my seat as his gloved hand reaches for me, halting that movement. “I’m fine.” I smile and blink away the tears that had welled up there. “Red apples just make me think of my mother and I hadn’t expected it.” I shrug and see his hand come for the apple.

“Then I shall remove it.”

“No, don’t.” I chuckle and his diamond pupils snap over to my face. “It was nice to think of her. It’s been a while.” I make a show of biting the apple and he seems confused.

“You have not thought of your mother for a while?”

“No.” I swallow and try to act like it’s totally normal to be talking to space Dracula, who is still down on one knee beside my chair and giving my apple wary glances. “She died last year.”

“I am so sorry.” His lilac eyes are sincere, as is his deep growly voice. “You said your father made poor choices after your mother’s passing. Has this been a difficult year for you, then?”

“Ha.” I laugh and bite my apple. Has this been a difficult year? That’s an understatement. “Yeah.” Between dragging my father off the bathroom floor in a pool of his own sick, getting the call to collect him from another casino he’s been banned from, fighting off debt collectors, loan sharks, and trying to hide as much of this as possible from Cassie, it’s been one *hell* of a year. “Like I told you yesterday? I don’t have any other options. It’s why I’m here.” Not when the only realistic future waiting for me and Cassie was being made casteless and tossed to the slums to rot. I’ve lost track of the hours I’ve argued with my Dad over the impact he was having. Not just on himself and the business, but his daughters too. I know he loves us, but he couldn’t stop either. I bite the apple with a tad more malice than required and another tear slides down my cheek.

A cool leather clad hand rests on my forearm on the arm rest of the chair. I flinch, and stop mid angry chew to look down at him.

“I am sorry you have found yourself with no other option than to turn to indentured servitude, but please let me reassure you, that you will not regret coming into my custody.” He stood tall, his hand sliding down my forearm and lift my hand to pat in both of his gloved ones. “I swear to you that your worries are over now, Miss Stone. I will take excellent care of you. Your days of worrying about your future are over.” I smile, knowing that at least for the next year, that may be true. I just need to survive being fed on by the big guy. I appreciate that he’s being gentle with me the rest of the time, though. A very real part of me feared I was going to end up living in a cage and brought out for him to bite and drink my blood, to then return to the cage. A luxury cruiser is a welcome surprise.

“Is this my home for the next year?” My hand slips from his as he returns to his seat.

“Yes, and as long as you do not enter *my* room without first knocking, you may come and go as you wish.” Another

good sign. No locked doors. I take a few more bites of my apple, before really getting into questioning my new master.

“So what will my average day look like as your feeding companion?” His diamond pupils dilate again and he clears his throat, averting his gaze bashfully.

“Well.” He takes a moment to compose himself. “Yes, I suppose that is a reasonable question.” The Dynast chuckles and gestures with his purple gloved hands. “You will rise each morning, shower, if you please, and freshen up. You should hydrate and take some Regen pills, and then I will have my morning feed. Our records show it’s best to let you recover and have your breakfast, not the other way around.” I nod, seeing that would make sense. I feel sick just thinking about him biting me again. I can’t imagine that a full stomach is a good idea before the act itself. “When it’s lunch time you will hydrate and take Regen pills. I will have my mid-day feed, and once you have recovered, you will have your mid-day meal. The same occurs again in the evening.” I nod, understanding the feeding part of being his feeding companion.

“What else?”

“Hm?”

“I mean, when I’m not being fed on, or recovering, what else will I be doing?”

“Oh?” The Dynast sits up a little straighter and seems happy with my question. “Why, that depends on my duties for the day. If I am attending a council meeting or debate, you will accompany me as far as you are able, and then wait for me if they have a waiting room. Or you will accompany me as I attend social gatherings, which are just as vital politically as the debates.” The Dynast chuckles behind one of his gloved hands at me. It’s so strange how graceful he acts, yet how growly his voice is. Like a snarling beast shrouded in fine chiffon and a master at eloquence. I bet he’d be a master at the negotiations table when broaching new favourable trade deals. “I...when you are settled, should welcome a tour of the Vega 4 starbase.” He seems less sure of himself and a tad nervous as he says this. “I have never been out of the Hive, before brokering the Freedom of Movement Act for the Korvis. I have had very limited access

to the Theskian empire even since then. Now that you are my feeding companion, I will be allowed to explore and visit the sites. You, being a resident, would be in the best position to show me, wouldn't you? The wonders of your home?"

I swallow the last bite of my apple and smile with a grimace.

"I can show you the best places to score the best deal on workers, which jewellers are legit to sell your gems and precious ores to, and of course, the top notch ship merchants to get your upgrades from, but erm, wonders?" I trained my whole life to become the leader of my father's mining company. I've never been interested in *wonders* or site seeing.

"Well?" He taps his mouth through the veil, immediately drawing my attention there. "Then I suppose it will be an adventure for both of us." He chuckles and claps his gloved hands twice. "We will discover the wonders of Vega 4 together. How fun!"

Good Lord.

Space Dracula is an optimist. Shoot me now.

Romance Author



Chapter 10

Day 2

Valerie

Yesterday the Dynast waited for me to finish my ham sandwiches and fruit, before opening up a laptop for me to order whatever food I'd like to have delivered. I was also able to bring up the wardrobe situation, and he *did* make a point of asking me to get shoulderless 'garments'.

"For ease of feeding, especially if we are not in the comfort of my cruiser and need to make use of an approve feeding site, can you please have shoulderless attire? It makes the process less...messy."

Uh huh? I wanted to bring up how messy a blood smeared veil looked, but I thought it best not to sass space Dracula on day 2. It was his work laptop and synced to his eyes which had to be scanned to unlock it, so I couldn't just use it without his permission or presence. When I brought up asking to use it to keep in touch with my sister, he became apologetic and awkward.

"Well, perhaps once we've been together for a while and I can...be confident in what you report to others, then yes, absolutely, but for now let's just...become comfortable together. Alright?"

Translation? I'm worried you're going to tell your sister, and anyone who will listen online, that space Dracula is as terrifying as the movies say the Korvis are. That I want to be rescued, and the Theskian empire should sharpen their high tech pitch forks and carry out another war with the Korvian Hive. He doesn't know this about me yet, but he could have been more to the point with his reasons. I wouldn't have been offended. Only, that kind of was his point, wasn't it? We don't know or trust

each other yet so...yeah fair point. Still, I *really* wanted to talk to Cassie and make sure she's alright.

All I know is she's the accountant for Captain Unthulo. Oh, and he has a good track record for successful indentured servants finishing their term and getting their pay out at the end. But is she being kept in a nice soft bedroom like I am? Or the freezing cargo hold of his ship? What kind of business did Captain Unthulo run? Was he a travelling merchant? Did he transport goods as a courier? Was he a dastardly space pirate who had my sister whipped as she counted his ill-gotten-loot? Okay, my imagination may be tormenting me with that last one, but still? All my worries would have been dispelled with one quick call. But space Dracula wasn't going to allow it until he could trust me.

So damn it, I was going to make the growly vampire in a glorified dress trust me.

On the first day on his ship, he let me recover, like, fully recover. He was a little bit of a nag, actually. Pestering me about how much I'd drank and tracking on some sort of notebook my meals. He even tutted at me if I didn't finish my plate, so before I knew it, I was clearing them just so he would nod and tick his notebook happily. The Dynast hovered around me, staring at me with those big lilac eyes that caught the light source of any room he was in, and his deep black diamond pupils swallowed up the light and my soul. Well, maybe not that last one, but I did feel like a deer in headlights when he stared at me. I found myself trying to see through his chiffon veil when he spoke. I can make out the outline of his face beneath, and the impression of his mouth as his lips moved, but I couldn't tell you much about his appearance.

Without his crown on, I can see his head seems a humanoid shape. The skin around his eyes is alabaster white and the skin in the corners of his eyes, like his tear ducts, are black. His sclera are bone white. I didn't notice at first because his irises are so huge! I only spotted his too pale sclera when he looked far off to the right at the sound of a call coming through in his bedroom. The Dynast is 7ft tall, draped in fine chiffon, and wears a full headdress with only a rectangle visible over his eyes and the top of the bridge of his nose. If it is in fact a nose.

His voice is growly. Erm...and he fusses over the flowers about the ship, talking to them as he waters them, like they can actually hear him. It's creepy. Space Dracula has a flower fixation.

Other than that? I have no bloody clue what a Korvis looks like, nevermind this one. This one who wished me goodnight last night, with a very quick verbal grenade, before slipping away.

“Rest well Miss Stone. Tomorrow we shall begin a healthy feeding schedule together, now you've had lots of fluids and Regen pills to prepare your body with excess blood. Good night.”

Mother fucker. Space Dracula did a drive-by-dread-grenade and ran off.

Let's just say, I laid in bed last night for *quite* a while thinking about the 'healthy feeding schedule' starting the next day. How I managed to get any sleep, and not have nightmares about being eaten alive, I'll never know. When I awoke it was to a knock at my bedroom door greeting me in that chipper growly voice.

“Good morning Miss Stone.”

“Is it?” I grumble, swinging my legs out of bed and rubbing my hands up and down my face.

“Indeed!” Oh, Space Dracula sounds giddy to get his fangs in me. “Now please make use of the shower and the facilities. Take two Regen pills, and don't worry if you feel a tad bloated. That will soon pass once I've fed off you.” Come to think of it, I did feel a bit bloated. Not swollen, per say, but uncomfortable. I checked my digits to make sure, and everything looked normal. “I would like to return in 30 minutes for the feed. Then you will need to take two more Regen pills and rest. How about afterward, you and I go and dock on the Vega 4 starbase and go site seeing? How does that sound?”

“Peachy.” He can't tell, but I have a sarcastic smile on my face as I get my ass out of bed. It *sounds* awful. I don't care how much he's treating this like a spa treatment, let's not paint a worm and call it a snake. It's still a worm. He is still a space

vampire about to bite my neck and drink my blood. Three times a day. For a year. And I signed up for this shit. “I’m heading to the shower now.”

“Wonderful. I will return in 28 minutes.” I full on glare at the door. Oh, so the timer started from the moment he woke me up, did it? I think less than pleasant things about my master, but then again, first thing in a morning pre-coffee, I think nasty things about anyone in close proximity. Even Cassie has been known to forget this rule and flee from the sarcasm tsunami that comes her way as a consequence. Normally to return with a cup of coffee like a sacrificial offering. Oh, and that reminds me, whilst I’m on an internal rant and stripping out of my sleeping clothes to get in the shower. I have to go a whole year without caffeine or alcohol!

No joke.

“Why can’t I order coffee?”

“Because that particular stimulant can give me indigestion.”

“So I can’t have coffee?”

“Afraid not.”

“...what about wine?”

“Do you mean Ethanol? No, no Alcohol. It makes me nauseous.”

“...”

I’m pretty sure I would have still signed the contract even if he had told me beforehand that I had to treat my body like a hippie temple so his food source was clean, but I grumbled to myself how I keep getting shafted in this deal. Still, I remind myself as I lather my body with fancy soap in the luxury walk in shower. “My life could be so much worse right now.” I run my hands back through my hair to rinse out the shampoo. “I could be casteless, on the street, starving and begging for rations, and fighting off other casteless for the clothes on my back. Or being attacked. Or trafficked.” Yeah, let’s be real here? I could have had much worse Indentured contracts than this one. Once you get over the whole, neck

biting and blood drinking part, I am being pampered by the Dynast. Yalla made it clear that most young women in my desperate position who needed a quick escape from destitution ended up as sexual companions. I much prefer being a pampered blood bank, than a sex slave, thank you very much. “At least the Dynast is polite.”

He has his own end game though. This is as much about feeding his needs with the real deal, rather than a synthetic substitute, as it is a political move for his people. Going to sight see later will be more about other people seeing *us* together, than it is about us seeing the sights of Vega 4. I am *not* an idiot, but I’m in no position to say no...so...better get this over with.

I brush my hair and deftly weave it into a basic, but practical, four strand plait. I use a hair tie I found in a dresser table with the hair brush to tie off the end. He said that we were going out later, so I put on nude underpants, strapless bra, black chiffon trousers that flare out to the ankles, and a shoulderless long sleeved green thin sweater. I will be asking for shoes before we leave though, as I still haven’t found where they are being hidden. Surely, if he stocked out a wardrobe with different kinds of clothes and different sizes, he had to have bought some shoes? Come on. I chug back the two Regen pills and some water, and at what I expect to be exactly 28 minutes since he said he would, I hear a knock at the bedroom door.

“Miss Stone? Are you ready for me?” As ready as I’m ever going to be. I clear my throat and hurry to make the bed. I have no idea why, but I feel like I should have a neat bed when I’m fed on like a portable juice box. “Miss Stone?”

“Yeah, ready.” I call out and turn to face the door as it opens. The Dynast stands there in a long flowing blue chiffon headdress, but something is off. His robe has a wrap around belt around it, rather than the usual all in one piece he normally wears. It also seems like there are less layers beneath it as well, sitting more snugly to his form. I can also see the tips of long black hair sticking out from the hem of his headdress.

“Miss Stone.” He sounds just as weary as I feel. “I have only fed on you once, and it was in a hurry in the Indentured Services office.”

“Yeah?” I remember, Dracula, I was there. I fold my arms and raise a brow, unsure why he was bringing that up now?

“Do you remember that I said you couldn’t watch me, because you hadn’t signed the confidentiality agreement yet?” I nod, vividly remembering how freaky it was with my eyes shut as he bit me. “Well?” He closed the door behind him and took a tentative step towards me. “You have now. So...I should like... that is, if you promise not to, well, react *unpleasantly*...” He seems nervous. I’m not used to seeing him look nervous. Not that I know him very well. He waves a gloved hand up and down his body and clears his throat. “Well, that is, traditionally, unless out of the home and in a feeding approved facility... the...well, Korvis would be...” He brings a hand to his chest and I see he’s shaking. “...exposed. Without one’s...veil. Or robe.”

“Oh.” I lower my arms and realise what he’s saying. “You mean you’re asking if you can take off your robe and headdress?” He nods once. “As long as I promise not to freak out?” He chuckles at my lack of subtlety, but nods again regardless. “Erm, okay.”

“You give consent?” He sounds anxious. “For me to unveil myself for the feeding?”

“Yeah. I mean, you’re not going to be naked, are you?” I back track quickly. I am super curious what he looks like under there, but I’m not prepared for a face full of space Dracula wang. Whatever that might look like. I also want to keep this about feeding, and not sexual, as the whole point of me agreeing to this was because the alternative was a sex slave and I don’t want that.

“Oh, goodness, no!” He squeaks and I bit my lips to try and contain how amusing that was. “I am wearing shorts beneath. To cover my...” I raise a brow. “...modesty...”

“Modesty huh?” I snort. Good lord. Space Dracula is shy of his man-parts. I smile, pleased that he has no intention of sharing his *modesty* with me. If my clothes can stay on and my *modesty* is also ‘secure’, and he doesn’t attack me, I’m good. “Can I stay dressed like this?”

“Yes. Your attire is ideal. I shall endeavour to be as neat as possible.” He nods and takes another step towards me. “Are you ready Miss Stone?”

“Yup.” I flip my braid away from the left side of my neck and demand my heart get out of my stomach and calm the hell down. “I’m ready.”

“In that case?” He takes a big breath and reaches for his headdress with both hands. “So am I.”

Romance Author



Chapter 11

The unveiling

Vrajan.

I am nervous as I shrug off my robe. I have not shown my body to another since I was a boy living with my Queen. The chiffon slides down my arms, and I wait for her reaction to me. Like all Korvis, my skin is alabaster white, with black stripes spiralling around my limbs to hug my outer arms, back, torso and thighs. My elbows to my fingertips are black, as are my knees to my feet. My hair is long and black from a central parting framing my face. The upper half is white, and the lower half is black, as is my neck. My ears are pointed, white, and stick out of my hair. My groin is also black, but I have hidden my modesty with a pair of silk black shorts.

I smile, seeing that she is tense, but she still looks me right in my lilac eyes. My black diamond pupils dilate and the sound of her quickening heart beat calls to me.

“...holy...fuck.” Valerie gulps, eyes wide and having a clear prey response to my appearance. I make no sudden moves and wait for her to get used to me. Once she is, I’ll approach. Perhaps we will talk for a little while before I feed from her? Just to be sure she is comfortable with me.

“Am I what you were expecting?” I ask nervously, my voice rumbling more clearly without a veil covering my mouth.

“No, good God, you are *not* what I was expecting.” I raise a brow, unsure why she’s looking at me like she’s been cheated in some way. “I’m not going to lie? I was expecting you to look more like space Dracula, than...” She waves her hand up and down to indicate my whole body. “Jeez. All you need are a pair of horns and you’d look like you crawled your ass out of hell.” I grip my hands into fists down by my sides. I understood

that reference. Hell is where Terrans believe demons and devils reside. She thinks I look monstrous. I drop down and grab my blue robe, turning my back to her as I hurry to put it back on.

This was a mistake. It's only the third day. I shouldn't have unveiled myself for her. She thinks I look hideous. Oh no. Now I'm crying. How humiliating... "Dynast?" Her voice is right behind me and I panic, clutching the robe in place over my chest.

"I will not feed from you this morning. Help yourself to breakfast." I am ashamed to say my voice wobbled and I raised my chin bitterly, before marching out of her room to hide in mine. Once in my sanctuary I lock the door and slide down to my knees with my hands braced on the door.

That was not my finest moment. Damn it. I prepared for this. Theskians see my people as monsters. Of course even brave little Valerie would look upon me and see the same beast as everyone else did. I hang my head forward and press my forehead to the door, clenching my fists and my eyes shut as I cry. Am I truly hideous? Are my markings truly that terrifying? I spoke softly to her and hid my fangs, I think. I...have a year of this.

After a moment of indulging self-pity I sit back and kneel. I rub my hands on my face and chastise myself. That was hardly becoming behaviour for a Dynast. The opinion of one Terran shouldn't shatter me so. I can simply feed from her like I did before. Moving my veil to one side for the bite, and replacing it. I'll just have to stock up on plenty of spares. I sigh and intend to apologise to Valerie for exposing her to what must be an unsettling experience with my body, when she knocks on my door.

"Erm, Dynast?"

"Just a moment." I drag myself up to stand and pull my blue robe closer over my chest. "I just need a few minutes to get dressed and I'll be with you Miss Stone."

"Don't do that." She swears under her breath and I regard the door curiously. Did she tell me *not* to get dressed? "I reacted badly back there. I'm sorry. Your species is very different from mine and I shouldn't have said what I did." No,

she shouldn't have, but it doesn't change how she feels about me. She thinks I'm a hellish monster. "Can I please come in so I'm not talking through a door?" I look over my shoulder towards my wardrobe, thinking about getting one of my headdresses out. "Please?" I sweep my lilac eyes back to the door.

"...I'm not dressed." I grumble and wait to give her one last chance to change her mind.

"Great, now can I come in?" I rub my hand across my dark mouth and hesitate for another moment, before I press the door release. I quickly tug up my blue robe to hide below my eyes, another 'not my finest moment' decision for the records, but I felt better by covering up a little more. "Right." Valerie looks me in the eye, and has her hands up in surrender. "Look, I've never met a Korvis before, and I have no idea what I *thought* you were going to look like, but you surprised me and I reacted badly. Very badly. I was wrong, and I'm sorry. I shouldn't have freaked out at you like that." She put her hands on her hips and smiled awkwardly. "Especially after making a big deal about the fact Korvis don't *unveil* themselves for just anyone...yeah. Not my finest moment." I raise a brow, having just thought something very similar about myself. "Do you accept my apology?"

"I do." I slowly lower my robe and watch her gaze dart to my dark mouth. "Am I truly *off putting*?" She chuckles and pushes her brown hair back over her shoulders.

"Come on Dynast." She walks into my bedroom and sits on the edge of my bed. As per my preference, everything in here is red. From the bedding to the lighting, and the framed mirror on the wall. The red filtered spotlights make her seem paler and her hair darker. I blush at the sight of her on my bed and tapping the space next to her. "I'm really bloated, and hungry, so let's get you fed so I can rest and have some breakfast too." I feel my pheromone glands secrete into my mouth and I gulp with anticipation.

"If you're sure." I lower my robe to my shoulders. "Once we begin a healthy feeding schedule, it wouldn't be fair to stop." I let the chiffon slip to my elbows. Her eyes drop to the stripes on my chest.

“Come on.” She is tense and I hear her heart racing, but not as quickly as it was in earlier. I hum curiously and let my robe fall the rest of the way to the floor. I watch her with a raised brow to see if she ‘freaks out’ again. She doesn’t, so I slowly approach her. The bed shifts and she slides toward me as I lower my weight into the mattress. I’m on her left and I can see her jugular throbbing.

“Relax.” I whisper and slowly trace the back of my fingers across her neck to move a few wisps of her hair out of the way. “If you relax, it stings less.”

“Oh, I don’t know?” She chuckles nervously. “You said that last time and it *really* hurt.” Guilt rises in me for a moment, but I squash that down. It can’t be helped.

“It will hurt more if you are tense, and if I go slowly it draws it out. It’s better for you if you relax and if I am swift.” I wait as she takes a few steadying breaths. Once she clears her throat and nods that she’s ready I smile. I can tell she’s still afraid of me. More so now she knows how the bite feels and my true appearance. Yet, she’s still going through with our contract. Brave girl. I move to turn on the bed to face her and use my left hand to hold the back of her head. “Relax Miss Stone.” I whisper and hold her left shoulder with my right hand. I’m ready to cradle her as I feed and support her if she passes out again. I aim for the pulsing I can see beneath the surface and pierce my four fangs firmly into her neck. She cries out and grips my sides, anchoring herself to me as I feed. I massage her artery with my tongue to speed up the feed. My priority is making this feed quick to reduce how long she suffers for. A shame, as her blood is delightful. Like warmth caressing me from the inside with each sweet gulp. I can feel her pulse as I feed and instinctively know to stop when it reaches a certain point. I finally allow my phyrodox gland to pump into her to aid the healing process and blood replenishment for the next feed. I withdraw my fangs from her throat and lap at her wounds. Again, to help them seal over. I lick every smear I can find and then suck my lips into my mouth to savour her taste.

She slumps back, but I am still holding her so she doesn’t fall. I press my lips to her neck to feel her pulse and check it isn’t too low. Content she is stable, I take great care to

lower her to rest on my bed. I only leave her to retrieve some Regen pills. She's unconscious, but it's important to get the Regen in her, so I twist the capsules open to empty the powder into the palm of my left hand. I lick my finger and dab the pad into the powder. Then I use another finger to part her lips and dip the first into her mouth. I take my time to rub the Regen powder against her gums so it absorbs into her blood stream. "Don't worry Miss Stone. I'll take excellent care of you." I whisper and smile at her. "You let me feed off you, even though you think I'm monstrous. One day, hopefully you'll be so used to my appearance, you won't mind it." I rub the last of the powder to her gums and tug at her lips with my thumb and finger. "...softer than I was expecting..." I bring my hand up to my own lips and dart my tongue out to taste her saliva. It has the same sweetness as her blood, but not as intense. Still? She would probably be quite pleasant to kiss too...

Romance Author



Chapter 12

Security

Valerie.

I thought being the food source for a Korvis was a pain in the neck. It is, literally, but at least the pain eventually passes. At least I'm a well pampered blood bag. For the last three weeks as the Dynast's feeding companion, we've fallen into a good rhythm. The sound of 'Good morning Miss Stone' wakes me bright and early each morning. I shower and dress into something shoulderless so my neck is exposed, walk to the Dynast's bedroom, where he is waiting for me with his clothes off. Oh, but with silk shorts on, thank God. I wouldn't say I'm *used* to his appearance, but I don't feel the urge to scream and run away like I did the first time I saw his true appearance. No wonder the Korvis cover up in public. They look like black and white striped demons. All the Dynast needs is a pair of horns, maybe some bat wings. I've found it helps to focus on his lilac eyes. They are always gentle and patient, and I anchor my sanity there.

I sit on his bed, he tells me to relax, and he feeds on me. He does the same at lunch and dinner time. I nap after every feed, and the time it takes me to come around is getting shorter. In the beginning I would be out cold for at least an hour, sometimes two. Now I'm only out for about 10 minutes. The Dynast says that's because my body is getting used to our symbiotic biochemistry. He also assures me that it's not permanent change, because of the measures he is taking. Whatever that means. Once I come to, I'm hungry, and the Dynast keeps me company and ensures I eat a healthy meal. My neck tends to stop aching in time for the next feed, and that's a 'healthy feeding schedule' for a Korvis and his feeding companion.

I'm used to having space Dracula nom on my neck three times a day now. I'm fine with it. What I am *not* fine with, is my experience as his feeding companion when we are *not* on his cruiser. Every time we dock with the main starbase we have to go through customs. I've done this hundreds of times before becoming an indentured servant, but now I'm the feeding companion to the Dynast, it's honestly infuriating. Before, I would just let them scan my eye for my ID, ask me to enter my security code, and off I would go through the checkpoint. Now? Fuck me. It's like they're trying their best to refuse us entry.

Today we're going to lunch with a Sacron reporter who the Dynast has been approved to give an interview. Good press. It's a lunch time appointment, but we set off three hours earlier than the meeting time, *just* to make sure we passed through customs in time. I get it. Theskians are scared of the Korvians. I still am, to a certain degree, but this one is contractually obligated to keep me healthy, and I'm confident that if he didn't, the Indentured Servitude Services would black list their species from forming contracts. He was desperate to pave the way for the Korvis in returning to Theskian space, so he wouldn't risk my neck. So to speak.

The Dynast...also happens to be a bit of a cinnamon roll. He isn't naive or stupid, but he's...well, nice? Is that the right word? He fusses over me like he cares about my discomfort, and always frowns when I tell him my neck is hurting after the feed. Space Dracula has a dream in his heart that he's going to be the one to win over the heart of the Theskian empire.

Said Theskian empire are currently being assholes about letting us through security.

"My papers are correct." The Dynast politely bows, dressed in the same fine green chiffon that he always wears when we leave his ship. Strange how he only wears green in public? And that fancy M shaped crown encrusted with jewels too. On the cruiser he wears all sorts of bright and pastel colours, and forgoes the crown. I wonder if it's ceremonial with his title to dress this way when in public? "As they were yesterday when you processed me." I fold my arms with a huff over my green dress. The Dynast flustered rather comically when he saw me match him today. I didn't do it consciously, but

I chose the outfit for its design, not its colour. It's long, elasticated around my chest and upper biceps, so another shoulderless outfit. The sleeves are green and semi-transparent. I particularly decided to wear this outfit, as it came with an optional fabric collar with a fake diamond in the middle to match the one roused at my cleavage in the dress.

One thing I learned after the first week of travelling to the base with the Dynast, was how jittery everyone got if they saw evidence of where he's fed on me. He is 'required' to feed before he's allowed to board the base. That means my neck is usually throbbing, bruised, and with four connected puncture marks. In the second week I started to wear fashion scarfs and other accessories I could cover my neck with, but remove if he needed to feed. Like the same principle of his veil. Hiding the vampiric evidence from the Theskian races. I got *less* stares, so I make sure to hide my bite mark when in public now. "I promise you nothing has changed regarding my clearance since then, sir." I glance up at the Dynast, who keeps bowing and speaking softly with his deep growly voice. He's changing his mannerisms to be as non-threatening as possible.

He also has a ton more patience than *I* do.

"I understand that, Dynast, but I have to follow procedure and check your clearance. I'm just doing my job."

I stare at my fellow human being who is being an ass about our passage through customs. I remember the officer too. Short brown hair, blue eyes, broad shoulders, freckles and tall. Not as tall as the Dynast, of course. Not many people are 7ft tall, and that's not including his crown.

"Of course. I understand." I chew the inside of my cheek and look up. I count to ten. I think about my breathing. I try to stay calm.

"How long since you last...fed?" I close my eyes. Deep breaths.

"Shortly before we arrived...so I would say two hours ago?" Good lord, is that how long we've been standing here?! I look off to one side and see so many people staring at us at the security desk, it's making my skin itch. Every time we come to the base, we are escorted out of the normal line for a security

check by the customs personnel. Every single time! I recognise the staff too.

“Is that correct ma’am?” I lick my lips and snap my intense brown stare on the guy, and he flinches. “M-ma’am?”

“Okay.” I step up to bat and place my hands on the security counter. I’ve had enough of this bullshit. “Now you listen to *me*.”

“Miss Stone?” The Dynast’s tone is firmer than usual, like he’s warning me to play nice. I lock my angry stare up at his lilac eyes and chew my lips together. I am his indentured servant. I *really* shouldn’t undermine him, even if I want to smack the stupid out of this guy. I clear my throat and turn to smile angrily at the officer.

“Yes, sir, that is correct.” I take my hands off the desk and put them on my hips.

“...right...” I chew my tongue at his dubious tone. “Can I see your feeding contract?”

“Of course.” The Dynast places his tablet on the counter.

“It’s the same contract that you saw yesterday. FYI.” I sass the guard.

“Miss Stone? Are you alright?” No, not really. When I was practically running my father’s business, I didn’t take shit from anyone. Having to keep quiet and take this crap was making my jaw ache. Oh, and my throbbing neck doesn’t have me in the best of moods either.

“Ma’am, if you are in distress then you can be escorted to a medical centre, and the Korvian will be detained whilst you receive treatment.” What did he just say?!

You know what? Fuck it.

“One?”

“Miss Stone?”

“No.” I hold up a finger at the Dynast. This *racist fucker* is going to get it. “No. *One*, Officer...” I lean forward and make a point of reading his name badge. “Princeton Grovner, my

contract with the Dynast is the same as it's always been, and we registered it with the central database, so you don't *need* to keep asking to see it *every time* we come to the base. You can just click and search on your system. Two? Same goes for his clearance paperwork." I throw a thumb up at the Dynast. He places a hand on my shoulder to try and stop my rant, but I have reached my limit. "Three, this is next level *discrimination* that you keep putting the Dynast through, because of his species, and I *will* be logging a complaint."

"Would you like me to get my manager?" Princeton blinks slowly, unphased.

"No, sweetheart, because we're about to have an interview, and if this prejudicial treatment doesn't stop, right now, I'm name dropping *all* you mother fuckers."

"Miss Stone!" The Dynast tries to pry me back from the desk, but I glare at him with my nostrils flared, and his hands pause in the air. "Please don't make threats." He begs me with his lilac eyes.

"He's right. You shouldn't threaten an officer. What time was that interview?" Princeton smirks, and I know what he's thinking. He's going to purposefully stop us going through for hours so we don't make it.

Ha! He wishes.

"Well, in about 30 minutes." The Dynast sighs, also connecting the dots together for what the guard will now do. He rubs his temples, but hasn't noticed my smirk. "And if you don't let us through, we'll call her *here*." I put both my hands on the desk. "And she'll interview us, *here*." The Dynast looks at me almost as shocked as Princeton does. "And I mean *right here*. In front of you. Where I can name *and* shame you." I fold my arms on the counter and smirk at him. "The Dynast's paper work is legit. His clearance is top notch. As is my contract. I am *willingly* his feeding companion, and since *he* is *way* too nice to call you out on this racist shit, I'll do it. I'm a resident, merchant class, so believe me when I tell you that I have *crushed* bigger dicks than you with far less fucking effort to part them with millions. So?" I smirk and shrug arrogantly at the pale guard. "Your move asshole."

“...” I feel the Dynast staring at me, but I’m in the zone right now. This is the part of hostile negotiations where if I blink too soon, the opposition will see that as weakness and resist me. Not going to happen.

“Call the reporter.” I speak to the Dynast without breaking my smug stare. This is all about confidence.

“Very well.”

“No.” Princeton huffs with humiliation and defeat. “... your paperwork is all in order.”

“Is it? Really? You sure?” I ooze with sarcasm and push off from the desk. “Funny that, isn’t it?” I am high with adrenaline and victory. I grab the Dynast’s hand and lead the way, swaggering towards the door with my chin high. “Spread the word to your colleagues, won’t you Princeton? There’s a dear.”

Only once we are through the security gate and in the main entrance to the starbase, does the Dynast speak to me.

“Miss Stone, that was—”

“Risky? I know, but I’ve squared up to bigger fish than that. All you need is the right kind of leverage.” Am I in trouble?

“...the right kind of leverage...hmm...” He keeps me on the edge for a while before he chuckles and leans down to speak to me softly. “It was certainly risky. I’m trying to show the Theskian empire that my people will follow their rules and not cause conflict.”

“But surely not by letting them walk all over you?” I counter with a frown.

“I prefer to make *my* stand in parliament.” His lilac eyes are bright as he teeters with amusement. “Still, your actions will hopefully mean our entry to the base is less tiresome moving forward.” Oh good. I’m not in trouble. I feel his hand squeeze mine and I realise what I’m doing.

“Oh, sorry.” I try to take my hand back, but he holds me firm and shakes his head.

“No no, quite alright. In fact, in my culture, this is quite normal behaviour. For a Korvian and his feeding partner to be touching like this in public.” Okay? It seems he’s taking my hand hostage, as he tugs me forward to walk with him. “It will also do the Theskians good to see we are comfortable with one another.” Ah, yes there we go. Of course. That’s why we are here, after all. To represent how sweet and cuddly the blood sucking space vampires are. “We should make that interview in no time now.”

“Good.”

“And then a quick bite, for us both, and then we can go shopping if you like? I’ll buy you a treat to mark this victorious moment. What would you like?”

I snort. A quick bite for us both, huh? That’s one way to put it.

“Sure. Since I’ve been *such* a team player, how about I’m allowed a phone or laptop so I can *finally* check in with my sister?” He looks at me warily. “Come on? I just want to make sure Cassie is okay?” I chuckle and nod back over my shoulder. “I think I just proved I’m on ‘team Korvis’. Please? I could use your computer if you prefer?”

“I think I would, to start with.” A compromise? I’ll take that.

“Great! Thank you.” I smile, looking forward to catching up with Cassie and finding out how Captain Unthulo is treating her.

“You are welcome.” His voice is deeper and louder, as it is when we’re on the ship and he’s relaxed. “Team Korvis?” He brings his other hand around for a high five. How could I not chuckle at that? Space Dracula wants to high five me with cheerleader like pep? He’d be cute, if he didn’t look like a demon, or drink my blood three times a day.

“Team Korvis.” I return the high five and his lilac eyes shine with joy.

Romance Author



Chapter 13

The interview

Vrajan.

We walked hand in hand into a Cafe and were escorted to the roof. It's their VIP area, apparently, but I see through the deception. The truth is, no business owner or merchant wants their customers to see a Korvis and go in the other direction. I am used to this sort of treatment, as they are not only afraid of me, but fear for their business. Everyone has a livelihood to make, after all, so I don't let on that I know this 'VIP floor', is nonsense. For a start, the roof is vacant of any furnishings apart from a single table and three chairs. It's not insulated, there are no staff up here, or any sign that this was anything other than a roof before today. Again, I don't react, but I see Valerie putting 2 and 2 together. She's very smart, my companion, but she's a tad rambunctious when she feels unjustly treated. I'm touched this has extended to my mistreatment, but the last thing we need is her laying into the cafe owner in front of the reporter.

"Good morning." I greeted the Sacron woman sitting at the single table. I keep my voice as soft as I can make it and bow my head to her. The light catches my crown, and my green chiffon robes and headdress flutter from the movement. I still hold Valerie's hand, so I walk her away from the nervous cafe owner she's glaring at, over to the table. "Greetings. I am the Dynast, and this is my dear friend and feeding companion, Miss Stone." She doesn't comment on the 'dear friend' comment, thankfully, and knows the plan. We need to represent a fulfilling and *safe* relationship between a Korvis and a Theskian species.

"Good day." The Sacron stands. She has lovely pink skin with brilliant green eyes, and a fitted black suit dress. Her four arms are all wrapped around a clipboard, no doubt with her interview questions ready to deploy. Her frills flex nervously,

but she smiles politely at me. “My name is Xeya, and can I just say, thank you for accepting my request for this interview? My paper is delighted to have this exclusive interview with yourself.”

“And I am delighted to give you the interview, Miss Xeya.” I bow my head again, and turn to pull out a chair for Valerie. She thanks me and sits, and I notice her rubbing her arms. “Are you cold?” I whisper to her. Had we been inside the cafe, she would have been warm enough in her shoulderless green dress. The fashion collar that came with the dress helps to hide the evidence of my last feeding, but does nothing to warm her.

“I’ll be fine.” She puts on a brave smile...but I know it’s not real. She’s cold. I can see goosebumps on her arms beneath her semi-transparent sleeves.

“Excuse me, just a moment.” I reassure Miss Xeya that I’m not leaving, and turn to wave at the nervous cafe owner by the roof access. He doesn’t move at first, so I walk over to him slowly. “My companion is cold. We were not anticipating being on the roof. Might you send someone to purchase a shrug or coat for her? You can bill the expense to my bill, and I will consider a larger tip for your assistance?”

“Erm...sure.” He nods and uses this quest as an excuse to leave us to it. I return to the table and find the ladies were chatting over the menu. At least it’s an electronic tablet, so we don’t have to hope a server will come back up.

“Is everything alright?” Xeya asks, and I nod that it is. I lower to sit in the chair beside Valerie, cross one leg over the other, and lower my left arm around her shoulders. I lean closer to whisper through my veil near her ear.

“I didn’t know we were going to be exposed like this. I’ve requested a shrug or coat for you. In the meant time, I’d order a hot drink.” I rub her arm and she smiles up at me.

“Already ahead of you.”

“Not coffee, though?” I worry for a moment. The last thing I need is for her to taste bitter and make me nauseous.

“No.” She rolls her eyes at me. “Hot chocolate. With marshmallows.” I smile. I can deal with the extra sugar.

“I’ve ordered a cappuccino.” Xeya offers to the conversation, drawing our attention to her. “What would you...” Her mouth hangs open for a minute, before she realises she was about to ask a Korvis would they would like to *drink*, and flusters. “I mean...erm...”

“I am quite fine, thank you.” I politely reply, and beside me Valerie is chewing her lips not to laugh. “So Miss Xeya? Shall we begin?”

“Yes, we shall.” She answers gratefully and flexes her frills. She sits back in her chair, places a recording orb in the middle of the table, and holds her clipboard ready. “For the record, this is an exclusive interview by reporter Xeya Jun’up’olo of the Galactic Herald, with The Dynast of the Korvian Hive, and his feeding companion, Valerie Stone.” She tensed beside me and threw me a concerned look. It seems she thought she would just sit there during this interview, and not participate. I would have preferred that as well, but suspected that she would be questioned as well. After all? The Theskian empire will likely be curious about her thoughts on being my feeding companion. Possibly more so than anything I have to say. “Do you consent to proceed with the interview, whilst being recorded, to ensure the record is correct?”

“I do.” I answer, and then look down at Valerie. I worry she will not give consent. It would look suspicious if she declined. Like she either had something to hide, or was afraid to speak freely. I nod to her with encouragement, and she grumbles something under her breath.

“...fine...yes I give consent.”

I rub her arm, hoping she feels warmth and my approval, and look at Xeya to proceed. The pink Sacron smiles and holds her clipboard like she’s anxious she’ll forget one of her questions. I start to suspect she isn’t the most *seasoned* of reporters the Galactic Herald has. Perhaps she was the one who drew the short straw? Or one of the few willing to interview me?

“Great. Let’s begin. Dynast?” I nod. “You are the first Korvian in Theskian space for a century.” She’s reading from her clipboard and not making any attempt at eye contact. “I think one of the first things our readers would like to know, is why now? Why has the Hive reached out to rejoin the empire after a century of isolation?” Isolation she says? More like exile.

“Time, is in fact, the answer to that question. Enough time has passed that the Hive is optimistic that rekindling an old friendship with the empire will be successful. We have much to offer in advanced technology, especially in the medical field. We are more than willing to share these advancements with the empire.”

“In exchange for feeding companions?” Xeya nodded at Valerie.

“Willing feeding companions, who know exactly what kind of symbiotic relationship they are entering into, yes.” I see out of the corner of my lilac eyes a smirk on Valerie’s face. “We wish to have a strong relationship with the Theskian Empire. Re-establish trade routes and the sharing of knowledge with one another. One day, we should like to be full members again.”

“Is that why you’re here on the Starbase? To petition for membership to the Theskian council?”

“One day that will be my purpose, I hope.” I chuckle suavely and rub Valerie’s arm. “For now, I simply wish to establish a meaningful dialogue between the Hive and the Empire. I wish to show that my people are not as we are wrongfully portrayed in popular culture. It was a minority of Korvians who caused the rift to form between our people, and the majority of us even a century ago, were horrified by their behaviour. Yet, we’ve all been given the same treatment.”

“You are referring to the war that led to the Hive being forced back to their native quadrant, their feeding *companions* released, and the Korvians being denied access to Theskian territories.”

“Yes. I am.” I nod firmly. “The actions of that *one* tribe of Korvians was abhorrent, and they deserved the punishment they received. Both by the empire, and by the Hive once the

Theskians left our space. That tribe no longer exists, but the rest of us do.”

“Since you’ve brought it up?” Xeya clears her throat and her gaze is wary. She’s clearly about to ask me something she thinks will risk angering me. “What makes you and your people *different* from the Korvians that used to kidnap and drain Theskian species to death?” Beside me Valerie tenses, but I don’t hesitate. I chuckle and press my right hand to my chest.

“Like I have already said, a minority of our people behaved atrociously, and deserved the fate that befell them. The *vast* majority of the Korvians, myself included, revere our feeding companions. It is a privilege and an honour to have a feeding companion. We put our lives in their hands, and owe our continued existence to them. We share our lives with them. Not just physically, but emotionally as well. We live together. We work together.” I gesture between myself and Valerie. “There is a reason we use the term feeding *companion*. Miss Stone is my companion in every way. I care deeply for her wellbeing, and consider her my friend. With time, she will become my truest friend, as she will know me better than anyone else. As I will know her the best as well.” I turn to look down at Valerie, and my lilac eyes lock onto her wide brown ones. “Our bond is new, but it is already blossoming into a deep connection that I shall never take for granted. I trust her with my life, and the future of my people.”

“That’s a profound answer.” Xeya comments, and reaches over to tap the recording orb to pause it. I wonder why, but then a quivering waiter walks over with a tray in his hands and some black fabric slung over his left arm.

“One cappuccino.” He places it down before Xeya. “One hot chocolate.” He walks around the table to avoid me, and places the tall mug, brimming with fluffy marshmallows, in front of Valerie. “A-and a shrug?”

“Ah, perfect, thank you.” I nod firmly and prompt him to hand it to me, but instead he gives it to Valerie.

“H-here, ma’am.” Xeya watches this exchange with keen eyes, but I pay the slight no heed. Valerie however? Ah...

no such luck there. She glares up at the waiter and yanks the shrug from him.

“Is there a reason you gave that to me and not the Dynast?”

“W-well it’s for you, right? He asked me to buy it for you, so-”

“It’s alright.” I chuckle and try to smooth things over. “All that matters is that you are warm now.” Valerie looks like she’d begin growling at the waiter any moment, so he backs off. I chuckle and coax her to stop glaring at the poor boy, by wrapping her up in the black shrug. “We’ll make sure to come prepared with a coat or such for any future outings like this one.” She huffs and turns to look up at my lilac eyes.

“He was an asshole.”

“Miss Stone, he is entitled to feel comfortable.” I tuck her in and coax her hands to palm on the warm mug of hot chocolate. Unbeknownst to us, Xeya has reached over and tapped the recording orb again. “Is that better?”

“Yeah, thanks.” I rub her shoulders, and fuss over her. I cup her cheek to test her warmth, and it’s getting better. “Wow, they stuffed this thing with marshmallows.” We both look at the mug she’s cradling in her hands, and I chuckle at her with a raised brow.

“Don’t pretend you’re not pleased.” I tease her. “You like little sugary treats like this one.”

“Yeah, but you’ll get hyperactive after you feed on me if I have them all.”

“I think I can live with that.” I shrug. “I’ll just do some exercise to work it off. You deserve the treat for being my champion twice in one day.”

“Oh, yeah, that’s me.” She giggles up at me. “Valerie the champion. On a mission to smack the stupid out of bigoted assholes.”

“Miss Stone?” I whisper and smile behind my veil. “Must you be so crass?”

“I’m Merchant Caste. We’re not built dainty and delicate. I’ll call a spade a spade, and an asshole an asshole.” She smirks and lifts her mug to sip her drink. I watch her and she sighs with relief at the taste. She also covers her upper lip with melted marshmallows. “Ah crap.” She swipes a napkin from the saucer her mug arrived on, and wipes at her mouth.

“You’ve missed a bit.” I point to the right corner of her mouth.

“Here?” She tries again, and ends up smearing it, but not wiping it up. I shake my head with a chuckle at her sour pout. “Here?”

“No.” I roll my lilac eyes and take the napkin from her. I fold it over, and make swift work of getting the white gloopy smudge from the corner of her mouth. “There.” I offer it back to her and she nods her thanks to me. Since Xeya hasn’t resumed the interview yet, I take the moment to speak to Valerie about our plans later. “Once done here, and we’ve visited a feeding site, what would you like to do?”

“Give Cassie a call.” She answers right away. “But before that, we could go and see one of those ‘sights’ you were talking about yesterday.”

“Wonderful.” I cup my hands on my lap, now she no longer needs my arms around her for warmth. “The water fountain that surrounds one of the tallest skyscrapers on the starbase isn’t far? Or would you prefer an art gallery?”

“Sure, either is fine, but if I could go shopping for some more shoes, that would be great.”

“What’s wrong with the ones I ordered for you?”

“They aren’t wide enough. Like I said? We Merchant Caste girls aren’t built as ‘dainty’. I have wide feet.”

“Then, we shall go shopping as a priority. If we have time to sight see afterward, then we will make the decision then.” I enjoy the way she smiles. Like she wasn’t expecting me to put her first, and is happy that I have. Of course I will. Valerie is my companion. I want her to be comfortable in every way. There is no rush to see-

“Hang on, is that on?” Valerie suddenly looks embarrassed and points to the table. I turn my head, my headdress fluttering as I do, and see that there is indeed a red light on the recording orb. “You didn’t say you turned the recorder back on?!”

“No you did not.” I narrow my lilac eyes on Xeya, displeased at this deception, and my voice is deeper than I usually allow. The Sacron shrinks into her chair and chuckles nervously.



“You gave your consent for me to record you, and I only paused it while the waiter brought our drinks. He hadn’t given consent, after all. I turned it back on as soon as he left.”

“And is there a reason why you didn’t tell us you’d turned it back on?” Valerie snarled, and I place a hand on her shoulder to calm her.

“Yes, actually.” Xeya clears her throat bravely. “Forgive me if you are displeased, but I could tell you were acting naturally together, and wanted to capture that for my report. When my readers hear you two together, and the fact you didn’t *realise* you were being recorded, under the terms of consent—” She covers herself. “-they’ll realise that you’re telling the truth. About Miss Stone being a willing companion, and that you’re taking care of her.” I raise a brow and see the merit in her deception. Valerie however, does not. She folds her arms and glares at Xeya.

“It’s still sneaky.”

“Yes it was, however, we have nothing to be ashamed of, so why don’t we continue the interview to it’s completion?” I take one of Valerie’s hands in both of mine on my lap.

“Right.” Xeya is flustered, knowing she’s walking on thin ice, and clearly agrees to finish the interview. *Quickly...* “Miss Stone?” I tense. She’s directly addressing Valerie?

“Yes?” Her tone is stern, displeased at the Sacron’s eavesdropping on us.

“My readers and I are all very interested in your opinion about being a feeding companion to a Korvis. What is it like? And arguably even more interestingly, how did you become the Dynast’s feeding companion.” My diamond shaped pupils widen with worry. We didn’t agree on Xeya asking Valerie questions, nor would I have approved the last one. It’s rather personal for her, after all. I look at Miss Stone, curious to see how she’s going to react. I find her looking up at me for a moment, like she’s waiting to see how *I* will react. Her hesitation is starting to look like she’s reluctant to answer the question. She is, of course, but Xeya and her readers may fill in the blanks with something far more sordid than the truth. All my hard work will mean for nothing, if she comes as being acquired by nefarious means.

“That is a very persona-”

“It’s okay.” Valerie sat forward and locked her brown eyes on Xeya. “As you are no doubt aware, for a vast variety of reasons, a person of any caste or lack of caste, can sign up for indentured servitude.” Valerie makes a point of moving one of my hands to her lap to cup in both of hers. “My reasons for entering the Indentured Servitude Centre are private, and as you can see from my hesitation, very sensitive in nature. What I want to make clear, is I signed up for indentured servitude before even meeting the Dynast. Then I was told all about him, and what being his feeding companion would mean. Once I agreed, I then met him.” I give her hand a grateful squeeze. She really is on team Korvis after all. Thank the stars.

“Due to the intimate nature of a Korvis and his feeding companion, it was important to me that we met and made sure we would enjoy each other’s company, before agreeing to take her on. We clearly had good chemistry. I could tell right away she and I would get along famously. We signed the contracts and the rest is history.” I skipped over the part where I tested her by feeding on her first.

“That explains how you came to be the Dynast’s feeding companion.” Xeya surmised. “But I also asked you what it’s like *being* a feeding companion to the Dynast.” I don’t know why, but I’m suddenly feeling more nervous now than ever. I want to know the answer to the question, but I fear her answer as well. I

treat her well, of course, but she professes how much it hurts to be bitten by me. Will she advertise that fact? It would put a lot of people off becoming feeding companions. I hide my worried frown behind my veil and wait to see what Valerie says next. I hope the way she squeezes my hand is to reassure me she's not about to leave me high and dry.

“It took some getting used to. I'm not going to pretend it wasn't a big change from my life before. It is. I have to make sure I'm healthy and take care of myself. I have to exercise and diet well. Make sure I get a good amount of sleep, and I *do* miss coffee.” Xeya listens politely to Valerie, and I hope neither of them realise how anxious I am from how stiffly I sit. “It's not something you can do, if you can't commit to being healthy. The Dynast is relying on me. Like he said earlier? His life depends on me.”

“And what about the *experience* of being a feeding partner?” I know what Xeya is trying to ask, but if Valerie has realised or not, she continues innocently with the conversation.

“The Dynast pampers me, honestly. I live in luxury compared to my life before. He's kind to me, and he trusts me. He's right.” Valerie shrugs. “We spend so much time in each other's company, it's important to make sure you click before agreeing to this arrangement. We do, by the way. Click.”

“I'm glad you two get on.” Xeya shifts in her chair, and I raise a brow. She's gearing up for another go at her real target. I can see it in her eyes. “So far, from what you describe, the Dynast takes care of you and cares *for* you. You two live together and clearly you get along.”

“Indeed.” I answer, trying to get the pink Sacron's attention again, but she's focusing only on Valerie.

“But you must understand, that the part of this arrangement that my readers will be keenly interested in, is the *feeding* part of the arrangement.” I narrow my diamond pupils on her. There it is. The only thing anyone ever asks when it comes to Korvis relations.

“What about it?” I look at Valerie. She sips her hot chocolate and hasn't broken a sweat. She seems perfectly at ease.

“Well?” Xeya flashes me a nervous glance, before focusing intently on her prize. “How often do you *feed* him?”

“Three times a day, and with a regime of Regen pills, I recover from each feeding with ease. The Dynast gives me excellent after care, so I feel very safe.” She’s amazing. Valerie is doing an excellent job. She’s not a woman who easily flusters. Whether she’s snarling down the gaze of a bigoted security officer, or dealing with an intrusive reporter. She’s cool as ice. Once again, I think she would be rather formidable in a debate. “It’s specified in the contract that he has to take excellent care of me, so anyone considering a feeding companionship with a Korvis can be reassured of that.” I could kiss her. She’s advocating becoming a feeding companion far better than I could have managed on my own. She blushes, spotting my adoration in my lilac eyes for her, and she shrugs at Xeya.

“So it’s perfectly safe?”

“Yes.”

“Well?” Xeya finally regarded me again. “Perhaps you would demonstrate that? I have a visual recorder with me? I could-”

“I’m sorry?” I lean forward in my seat, chuckling, like I couldn’t possibly have heard her say what I thought she did. “What do you mean *demonstrate*?”

“A feeding. You could show our readers once and for all that what we think of as a Korvis feeding on one of us, is far from the truth. You could show *how* you feed and-”

“Miss Xeya, you were not to know, so I am not offended.” I keep my voice quiet and push down my outrage at the highly inappropriate request. I have my right hand on table, and centre myself before continuing. “But as I said earlier? The relationship between a Korvis and his feeding partner, is a precious and intimate one. We revere our feeding partner, and the experience of joining bodies, as we sustain one another. We therefore don’t *feed* in public. Or with any sort of audience. It’s private.”

“I see. I wasn’t aware.” I bet she was. The frustration in her eyes shows she was hoping to get an exclusive on *that* as

well. “I hope you aren’t offended?”

“No, of course not. Like I said, you weren’t to know.” I chuckle and slide my hand back over to my lap. “It’s been a century since my people interacted with yours. I *can* tell you, however, that what has been portrayed in popular fiction is not an accurate representation of a Korvis feeding.”

“I can attest to that.” Valerie joins in. “It’s nothing like in the movies.”

“Understood.” Xeya smiles, but she’s visibly disappointed not to get to record a Korvis feeding. “Miss Stone? If you could sum up your experience as the feeding companion to the Dynast for my readers? What would you say?”

“I would say...” I watch Valerie as she looks off to one side in thought. She chews her bottom lip, and I recall the taste of her saliva when I licked my finger after my first natural feed with her. “The Dynast is a gentleman. His diet is different, but on the inside he’s just like any other Theskian race. He just wants respect and equality for his people. Just like we do. I don’t see what’s wrong with that.” She shrugs, and I swallow the lump in my throat. I couldn’t have put that better myself.

“Thank you for your time. Both of you. Miss Stone. Dynast to the Hive.” Xeya signalled her departure, took the recorder with her, and we all stood to politely bid our goodbyes. Valerie finished her hot chocolate and once I was sure Xeya was gone, I couldn’t wait a moment longer.

“Miss Stone?”

“Yeah?” She puts her mug down on the table and wraps herself up tighter in the black shrug. I check the roof access again, just to check again we are alone, and then I cup her shoulders with both hands.

“I did not know the reporter would question you like that. Your answers were therefore not rehearsed, and honest.” I pat her shoulders, and then lean down to speak by her ear through my veil. “I have never been so humbled. What you just did for me, and for my people, deserves gratitude I do not know how to put into words.” I slowly tip my head to look her right in the eyes. She’s surprised by my gratitude, but she deserves it

and more. “Miss Stone?” I gulp. “When we are alone...would you...” I’m about to do something I can’t take back. I don’t know how else to show her just how much her words and actions today have meant to me. It is the most precious thing I have to give her. “...call me Vrajan?”

“...” Her round pupils widen and she gasps. “But you said that in your culture calling you by your name is intimate?”

“Yes. It is. Valerie.” If I wasn’t wearing my veil, she would see my heartfelt smile. “Well?” I cup the back of my neck and chuckle nervously. She can’t tell, but I’m blushing as deeply as she is. I release her shoulder, and close my eyes with embarrassment at the rumble that breaks through the awkwardness of the moment. Valerie looked down at my stomach and chuckled.

“Hungry?”

“Yes, a tad.” I cup my hands together over my rebellious navel. “Could we swing by a feeding site? Oh, and of course, then I’ll take you to buy shoes?”

“Sure.” Valerie smiles and offers me her hand. “Let’s go.” I beam with joy and gladly thread my fingers with hers. “Vrajan.” She tries my name on for size and my heart flutters in my chest. Oh goodness. I...rather like how my name sounds on her lips.

What have I done?

Romance Author



Chapter 14

The Anti-K

Valerie

So his name is Vrajan. He says it like a purr with his deep voice. Melodic and exotic, and the n is drawn out a tad longer. I keep saying it over and over in my mind, and the urge to say it out loud plays on me. I mean, it's just a name, but I'm the only one other than his Queen who knows it. Vrajan. When he looked me in my eyes and told me he would like me to call him by his name, a shiver went up my spine. It was a pleasant shiver. Right now I'm holding his gloved hand in mine as we walk through the streets towards a feeding site, and I'm feeling all giggly inside. What the hell? Knowing his name is intimate in the Korvis culture, but not mine. Yet, I'm still buzzing from the precious gift of knowing it. Man, he must have been really impressed with my answers in the interview. I wanted to be honest, but at the same time, I was conscious that I could doom his entire mission if I painted the Korvis in the wrong light.

Part of me wanted to answer the question about the feeding process. It really isn't like the horror films portray. He doesn't chase me down and terrify me. There is no wrapping his jaws around my throat, savaging me until blood sprays from my mouth. He doesn't rip out a chunk of my neck when he's done. It's painful, sure, but he's very quick. He spends more time tending to me afterwards than he did feeding from me. I didn't answer that question, as Vrajan got in there first. Feeding was even more intimate than knowing his name, and even *I* wanted to clock the pink Sacron when she suggested he feed on me and let her film it. Hard pass! Sneaky bitch even snatched herself a private conversation. I chew my lips and blush as I think about what she captured. I think about the sparkle in his lilac eyes and how close we were when he used a napkin to wipe

marshmallow smear from my mouth. Talking about how crass I am and laughing over shoes...

My mind brought up the memory of him wrapping me in the black shrug. Vrajan is always so tender and caring. It's really weird. I'm the eldest Stone, and I have always had to look after Cassie while my parents worked, and during this last year, my drunkard father. Before entering this contract with the Dynast, I can't actually remember the last time anyone took care of *me*. I sure as hell never enjoyed bubble baths and such soft bedding. Fine clothes and finer dining. I'm Merchant Caste, and I'm used to wearing cotton and leather. Coming home from inspecting the mining vessels with my father with grease smeared on my cheek. Even my hair is softer now it's being properly treated.

I look up at Vrajan as we arrive at the same feeding site we always use. There aren't many, as you can imagine. I don't know what the building was before it was repurposed, but it's a small metal box in essence. It's the size of an apartment, has no windows, only one door, and it's locked with a security code. We've used it plenty of times...but it's never been covered in graffiti before.

"Ah. I wondered when this would happen." Vrajan sighed and stared at red spray paint. It looks like a pair of fangs has been drawn in a circle, and then a cross through it.

"What does it mean?"

"It means the Anti-K movement found this feeding site." He lifts my hand he's holding to cup in both of his. Looking me in the eye, I can tell he's frowning behind his veil. "I'm very sorry Miss Stone, but I do not trust that this feeding site is secure. We should leave for my cruiser and feed there instead. I'll report this accordingly once we are home." He coaxed me into walking again, and I can tell we are heading for the nearest space port. "And if you like, I can order you any shoes you like to be delivered to our ship? If you would prefer to wait to try them on, then we can make that a priority next time? Y-you understand that we need to leave, yes?"

"I don't mind, of course, but who are the Anti-K movement?" If anything he increases our pace. With his longer strides, I'm nearly jogging to keep up. Woah, he's spooked. My

belly erupts with nervous butterflies and I suddenly want nothing more than to get back to the star cruiser as well. We march together and only slow when we reach the very public, highly patrolled transport terminal. I have to grin when we have far less problems going through exit customs this time. We barely exchange two words as we are processed and ushered through to the docks. “Dynast?” I ask tentatively once we walk through the last security door to the cruiser. Vrajan exhales with relief once we are secure on his ship, but doesn’t stop our pace. “Vrajan?” He looks at me at last and must have realised that I’m anxious about what just happened. He sighs and we slow our pace towards the command room. It hasn’t escaped my notice, that we are still escaping, and he is still holding my hand. “Vrajan? What just happened?”

“I’m really sorry. That was...I had hoped...” He huffed and dropped to sit in the chair facing the controls. He still held my left hand, and with his right he tapped a few buttons and initiated the disengage sequence. “I’m so sorry, Valerie.” He finally looked me in the eye and tugged on my hand so I came closer. “There are individuals who strongly believe that all of my people are monsters, and should never be allowed into Theskian space. They are angry, in fact, that I am here at all.”

“Wait?” I raise a brow and open my mouth in shock and anger. “You mean Anti-K stands for Anti Korvis? Like, there’s a group against your entire species?”

“Yes, and they lobby daily, legally, to the Theskian council. Demanding for the safety of all civilised life everywhere, that I and all of my kind are banished. Some even call for our extermination.”

“Mother fuckers.” I am outraged on his behalf. “And that red spray paint was, what? Their calling card?” I hold his hand tighter, and he’s visibly relaxing now that our cruiser is flying away from the dock into our position orbiting the station. “Yes. In other words, those bastards think it’s okay to use terror tactics on you?”

“Exactly, yes.” Vrajan entered the final command register we were locked in orbit, and he then rose to his feet. “I have come face to face with their symbol before. On the walls outside of Theskian Parliament, and on random doorways

around the base. Never so brazenly on a feeding site, though.” His deep voice was sad, and that pissed me off almost as much as what he said next. “I am very sorry you had to see that. Having you with me and seeing the Anti-K’s hateful image on the feeding site, made me worry they might be nearby. And that terrified me. Thinking of you being targeted because of me...I panicked.” His lilac eyes lowered with shame. “I’ve been pelted with eggs, coins, screeched at with vile abuse, and never once have I lost my composure.” He cupped both my hands to his chest. “But the thought of the Anti-K movement targeting *you* just...I...”

“Hey?” I move closer to him and look up into his eyes. “One, I’m okay. Two, hopefully after the interview we did today you’ve drummed up some more support. Three, and most importantly, if those bigoted assholes *were* nearby and came at me, I’d kick them in the balls. Speciest bastards.” He chuckled and a twinkle returned to his eyes.

“Well, none the less, I can breathe easily now that we’re home.” He leans down and closes his eyes to rest his brow to mine. I smile, glad he’s feeling better, and then I realise how intimate this gesture is. My hands are on his green chiffon clad chest with his hands cupping them there. His brow pressed to mine. I stare at his veiled face, only his eyes visible, and as they open I become trapped in his diamond pupils. “Safe and sound.”

Romance Author



Chapter 15

Pain

Valerie.

The rumble of his stomach broke the tenderness of *whatever* was happening between us, and I welcome the distraction.

“You still need to feed.”

“I *am* rather hungry.” He chuckles and releases me to bashfully fuss his gloved hands together. I roll my eyes at how flustered he is about biting my neck.

“And *I’m* rather bloated.” I hold my stomach. I don’t feel bigger, per se, but I feel uncomfortable. It’s always the same when we’re due a feed.

“Indeed.” He agrees with me and rubs the sides of his neck. “My pheromone glands are swollen in readiness.” I nod with curiosity and we both walk towards my bedroom. I don the position and sit on the edge of the bed. He walks over to a set of drawers to my left to get some Regen pills for me. As he walks over with two in one palm and a glass of water in the other, he watches as I reach behind my neck. I undo the fashion collar the dress came with. I wince from both the movement and the tug of the fabric on my bruised neck. Vrajan’s eyes fixate on my bruised bite wound. “You are still in discomfort?”

“Yes.” I hiss as I tentatively bring my fingers to ghost over the four swollen puncture wounds. “The longer it has been since you’ve fed on me, the more I seem to recover, but I haven’t been pain or discomfort free since before I met you.” I chuckle, but realise that my words have hurt him. Vrajan drops his gaze to the floor and sinks down into his frame. “N-no, I mean, that I’m *used* to it, so don’t worry.” Shit. Me and my big mouth.

“You are used to being in pain...” He closes his eyes, and I kick myself. Fuck. I feel like I’ve just kicked a puppy on his birthday. I mean, it *does* hurt. A lot. And since I can’t use pain meds because it would make Vrajan sick, I’m always aching or stinging.

“It’s alright.” He lifts his eyes to look at me. I smile and sweep my long brown hair away from the left side of my neck. “I knew what I signed up for, and I know you can’t help it.” His eyes widen a fraction. “You aren’t hurting me on purpose, Vrajan. It’s part of the feeding process. It hurts, okay, but with the Regen pills I recover, and you’re taking great care of me, so don’t worry about it.” Why does he seem close to tears? “Hey.” I get up off the bed and walk up to him. “I’m sorry. I didn’t meant to upset you.” He can’t help it, damn it. He feeds by biting me and drinking a few mouthfuls of my blood. I feel horrible, because he’s really upset. “I’m alright.” I pry his fingers open to retrieve the Regen Pills. “See?” I pop them in my mouth, hold his hand around the glass of water, and drink from it to swallow the pills. “Come on Vrajan.”

“I hate that I cause you pain.” I frown. He hates the fact he’s hurting me. He’s so sensitive and I just stomped on his heart. Fuck. “I wish...I wish I didn’t have to.”

“I know.” I smile, and impulsively reach for his crown. It lifts away easily, and I toss it to land high up the bed by the pillows. “So no more moping, and bite me already. When I come to, we’re going online to shoe shop, and you said I could call my sister.” I tug at his veil, and he finally gets with the program.

“Not before you rest and eat something.” He is smiling when he removes his veil and headdress. They flutter over to a chair beside his crimson bed. His lilac eyes are still teary, and I see glistening evidence on his white and black cheeks were some have escaped. “I shall try to be quick.” He places the glass down on the floor, and as he rises I instinctively cup his cheeks to wipe away his tears.

We both gasp.

I’ve never *touch*ed him before. Not his bare skin. His mouth on my neck doesn’t count. His skin feels like, well, skin.

Smooth and with no definition or ridge where the white of his cheekbones turn black towards his jaw. I blush, realising I've totally grabbed his face, and try to chuckle it off.

"H-hey. I'm premium vintage. You don't want to make me taste salty by getting your tears on my neck before you bite me." My grin is awkward, but his is breath-taking.

"You are the most amazing and warm blossom of sunshine on my tongue. I would never wish to sour your taste, Valerie. I am addicted to it."

Ho-ly-fuck. I have no idea why, but that sounded kinda like he was flirting with me? His lilac eyes are deadly serious, but there's a hunger there. I think I might have been turned on by that line, if I wasn't fully aware of the world of hurt I'm about to experience.

"Alright Shakespeare. Come here." I offer my neck to him, and he swoons his head towards my jugular. I tense, bracing myself, but he turns with me so *he* can sit on the bed. "What are you doing?"

"There is a position I should like us to try. It may help to lessen the bruising and longer lasting pain from the feed." Vrajan crooks his fingers around my knees and tugs. "It's worth a try? No?"

"Sure." I'll do anything to try and reduce this literal pain in the neck." I try to turn to slide across his lap, but his hands on my knees stop me. "What?"

"I need you to face me, Valerie. It makes for better penetration." I chew my lips together and put my hands on my hips. Does he have *any* idea how that sounds? I search his shy smile and have to wonder...because I'm not sure how to handle Vrajan flirting with me. Space Dracula is so tender and bashful, so if he was trying to flirt with me, I imagine this is how it would look. At the same time, he's so tender and bashful, it might be *me* reading too much into this. Yeah, that has to be it. I'm over thinking it.

"Alright." I shrug and try to look casual as I kneel at either side of his thighs on the bed, and lower to straddle his lap. "So how does this help?"

“Well, come closer first.” He giggled, and his hands on my back felt warm. He slides me towards him and my hands instinctively land on his shoulders. I’m not blushing. Nope. Not even when he has me practically sat on his crotch. “This is considered a natural feeding position.”

“Is it?” Because it looks like I’m a cowgirl about to yell ‘yee haw’.

“Yes.” He smiles and it looks innocent enough, which makes me want to take a mental cold shower to calm the hell down. What’s wrong with me? I don’t think of Vrajan *like that*. No matter how kind and doting he is. I mean, I’ve never had a man in my life who has fussed over me like he does. Not even my own father. Is that it? Am I getting a bit caught up in the pampering and charm of the Dynast? Thinking about his fangs in my neck helps to sober me from the rabbit hole I nearly flustered down. “Relax. It will sting less if you...do...” He frowns and drops his gaze. “...*well*...less than it could I suppose.”

“Good.” I am all for any reduction to the ache and pain. The bite itself always hurts like hell, but it’s momentary. If this will make it hurt less in between feeds, I’ll suck up my pride and swing a lasso if I have to. I tip my head to the right and bite my tongue to hide the wince of discomfort that causes. I really don’t like the sadness in his lilac eyes. It really bothers me. “Come on, Vrajan.” I tentatively comb the fingers of my left hand in his long hair at the back of his head. White to his pointed ears, where it fades to black.

“I wish I didn’t have to do this.” He whispers as he allows me to reel him to my neck. I feel his black lips against my throat, ghosting over the bruised bite wound. “I hate hurting you.” I close my eyes and damn, I wish he didn’t have to hurt me either. There’s no way around it. He needs to feed, and I signed a contract to be his feeding companion. We’re only a month in, and I have another 11 before the contract is over. I need to suck it up and get on with this.

“I know. You wouldn’t hurt me if you didn’t have to.” He inhales sharply and would have retreated, if I didn’t hold him in place with my hand at the back of his head. “Seriously? Do I have to start begging for you to bite me huh? Jeez. Nom on

me already so I can have a nap, have some lunch, and call my sister. Make with the feed already.” I try to make light of it, chuckling and teasing him. Normally he finds my bluntness amusing, but I can feel his lips on my neck. He’s frowning. Why? Because I told him I’m in pain all the time? Didn’t he know that was going to happen?

“I am sorry.” He whispers softly and finally bites me. Oddly I wasn’t expecting it, as he still seemed reluctant to bite me. I was therefore relaxed when he sank his fangs into me. I gasped and fisted at his hair in my left hand, and my right gripped his shoulder for support. Both his hands held me close. Cupping the back of *my* head, and my back. I’m used to this sort of hold, as I start to become dizzy as he feeds from me. The pain is white hot, and the blood loss made me start to fade from consciousness. His tongue works at my neck to work my blood into his mouth faster, but the pressure of it hurts my bruised neck. I wince and whimper, begging for time to speed up so it’s over and I can pass out.

Only...I didn’t.

He carefully held my lax body in his embrace and extracted his fangs from my neck. Like a kitten he lapped at my neck to clean the wound and promote the healing process. At least, that’s what he tells me. Normally I’m out cold moments later. I wasn’t worried therefore, when he carefully lowered me to lay on my bed, and I was not unconscious. I’ve seen his blood smeared mouth and chin many times now. My eyelids are droopy and my neck is screaming at me in pain. I keep waiting to pass out so I can check out of the worst of the pain. I normally do, but as the seconds tick on, I realise I’m not going to faint. Shit. “Valerie?” Vrajan snuggles up next to me and looks me in my brown eyes with alarm. “Are you...still awake?”

“Y...eh...” I hiss through my teeth. Talking hurts like hell. Why the hell am I still awake?! I don’t want to experience the forest fire of pain hurtling through my body. I feel like I’m dying.

“Hold on.” I turn my eyes to see he has powder on his finger. “I’m going to rub Regen into your gums. It will help you recover faster. Don’t resist.” I tremble and tears slide down my

cheeks. “Oh Valerie, I’m sorry.” He chewed his bloody lips, fangs peeking from within, and slides a finger into my mouth to rub gently along my gums. I find myself staring into his lilac eyes, once more my anchor, as he works more Regen powder along my upper and lower gums in turn. “Th-the fact you are awake is a good sign.” It is? “Your body is getting used to the feeding process. We are getting closer to true symbiosis.” Oh no. Does that mean I will feel like this after every feed? Instead of sleeping through the worst of it, I’m going to be racked with pain like my veins are on fire and my neck has a gaping wound in it every time? Three times a day for the next 11 months? He must see the horror in my eyes and starts to cry. “I’m so sorry. I-I wish...I...” Vrajan closes his eyes and lowers to lay next to me. “I’m right here. If you need anything, just let me kn-”

“...out...” Deep down I know he’s beating himself up over how much pain I’m in, and he can’t help it, but I want him to go away. I want to be alone in my agony and freely cry without feeling guilty for upsetting him.

Only, now I’ve hurt him anyway.

“...y-yes. Of course. I...I’ll get out.” I daren’t move to watch him flee from the bedroom in floods of tears. I feel my heart clench under the clawing pain of the feed. He keeps apologising even as he walks out of my room. Like he’s in a loop of misery.

No offence Space Dracula, but my pain is worse than yours. I can barely breathe through mine, without having to deal with yours as well.

Romance Author



Chapter 16

My Queen.

Vrajan.

I run to my office and collapse into my chair. I cage my head to the desk and weep for Valerie. She is so brave and has such a high pain threshold. I thought she could manage the pain of the feed, but today we have found her limit. I tried so hard to be gentle and quick, but it made no difference. She is being tormented right now because I fed from her, and she doesn't even want me near her. She ordered me out of her room. I wanted to...hold her. Distract her? Something. *Anything*. But now she doesn't want me with her.

Why would she want the monster that gives her such pain by her side? And I am a monster. Not because I'm a Korvis or because this is my natural feeding cycle. But because of the pain she is suffering. Every time she said she knew I couldn't help it, and I wouldn't hurt her if I could, it felt like my heart was being crushed under the weight of my guilt.

Before I can think it through, I'm scrambling my hands over my keyboard to make an encrypted call out of Theskian space and to the Hive. The door to the office auto-locked behind me, and it's sound proof in here. If I was calling anyone else, I would have replaced my headdress and veil. When the screen lights up to show the bright pink eyes of my mother, I feel a modicum of relief. "M-My Queen." I sniffle and bow my head to her. I called her private chambers, so I know this is a private conversation. She is visibly alarmed at my lack of facial coverings, and the obvious state of grief I'm in.

"Vrajan?" My mother sits forward at her desk and hurries to remove her vivid yellow headdress as well. Her crown wasn't on, so she must have been alone in her chambers already when I called. Her long white and black hair is tamed into two

long braids, one over each shoulder, and make for defined ridges upon her head. “What has happened? Son?” I cup my mouth and swallow a lump in my throat. “Is it the Theskian council? Has your access to Theskian space been revoked? Have the Anti-K hurt you or your feeding companion? Son, do you need to come home? I’ll bring the whole Hive to get you if you are in danger.” My mother’s diamond pupils are sharpened to near slits and her fangs are visible through the sneer of her thin black lips.

“N-no mother.” I take a handkerchief from my desk draw and try to make myself more presentable. Djeviana is my mother, but she is also my Queen. Calling her in this state has worried her, and my guilt compounds further. “My papers have not been revoked. The Anti-K movement work from the shadows and vandalised a feeding station on the base today, but Miss Stone and I simply returned home to feed instead.”

“...?” My mother looks me up and down and raises a brow. “Are you hurt? Ill?”

“No. But my feeding companion is. She hurts.” I rub my mouth and exhale choppily. I swing my hand from my face when I speak again. “My Queen, Miss Stone is in a lot of pain. Not just during the feed, but all the time.”

“She will likely have some bruising, but the Regen pills boost her recovery and blood replenishment.” My mother folds her arms and narrows her pink eyes on me. “Our trials were extensive. They had to be, for this venture to be approved by the Theskian Council. Any *lingering* effects between each feed is within acceptable parameters.”

“Not to me, they are not.” I avert my eyes and fresh tears well in them. “Her body recovers, of course, and the Regen pills perform as they should, but her pain is...harrowing. It’s getting worse. She is achieving symbiosis with me.” I wipe my black hand across my face and whimper. “She’s awake now. For all of it. The bite, the feed, and the immediate pain and shock her body is in from the feed. With no reprieve.” My mother frowns in sympathy for me.

“That can’t be easy for either of you.”

“No, it isn’t, and she keeps saying she understands that I can’t *help* it.” My expression hardens. “Yet, the pain is so bad,

she told me to get out of her room. She has never *once* rejected my presence, but as the pain gets more intense and prolonged, the more she tenses and shies from me when it's time to feed. Now she doesn't want me near her." I close my eyes, and need a moment to pick myself up off the floor and proceed.

"We are still experimenting with chemicals that could provide a safe topical anaesthetic after the feed, that doesn't harm the Korvis."

"And?" I shrug. "Any success?" I already know the development team in charge of that project have utterly failed. I keep tabs on them specifically so I can give Valerie *something* to help her.

"Not *yet*, but-

"Mother." I speak softly and bare my heart to her. "With no other alternative to offer, I see no other course of action. I need to tell her I can stop her pain. I need to-

"No." My mother answers as my Queen. "Your blockers must remain in place, as per our agreement with the Theskian council when they approved the feeding companion contract."

"Yes, but we made sure that there was a clause that said if the feeding companion gave legal consent, that-

"Vrajan, no." I chew my lips together at my Queen's sharp tone. "You know *exactly* why you have your secondary ducts blocked, and what would happen to your feeding companion if you removed the blockers."

"I do." I lift my head and hope my mother can see the conviction in my eyes. "Which is why I will explain it *all* to her, and let it be *her* choice." It must be her decision. If she chooses the pain, then I will do my best to bear seeing her suffer as she is. Knowing she has chosen to do so. Seeing her shake in torment, pale and afraid because of me, when she *could* choose another path, makes me sick to my stomach. Like I've denied her the chance to be pain free.

"You think after one month the Terran will agree to let you fully envenomate her?"

“She might. She might not. But I want it to be her choice, not mine.”

“And what of the consequences that will come from even the first true bite?” My mother’s tone is strained. Like she wants to simply forbid me as my Queen, but as my Mother she needs me to understand what I’m asking. I do. Completely.

“If she accepts them, then-”

“What of you, son?” My mother leans toward her screen and holds me in her pink stare. “If you gave her this choice, and she makes it, are *you* prepared for full symbiosis with this Terran?”

“...yes.” I lick at my lips, tasting her blood and my tears mixed together there.

“Permanently?” My mother’s voice lifts at the end with surprise. “You’ve only known this woman a month. You’re truly prepared to make her your-”

“Yes. Gladly, if it would end her suffering.” Thankfully, my mother can’t tell how my stomach flutters nervously at that prospect. “Do I have permission to offer Miss Stone the choice?”

“...no.” I close my eyes and my heart breaks further. “Not yet.” I gasp and look at my mother with shock. She’s smiling sadly at me, like she wishes she could reach over and comfort me. “A month is too soon to risk it all like that, son. You are the Dynast to our people. Your mission is vital to our survival. As your Queen, you need to put that duty first. Even over your own happiness and the comfort of your feeding partner.” My duty weighs heavily on my heart. For the first time in my life, I didn’t even think about my mission or my role in the Hive. I only thought of Valerie. “However, I am not saying you will *never* have my consent to give your feeding companion the choice to have your blockers removed.”

“She suffers so much.” I run a hand back through my white and black hair. “I fear she will reject me completely if this continues with no reprieve.” Not just the feeding process. But my presence as well. The thought of not holding her hand in mine and laughing with her turns my veins cold. “I don’t want

her to think of me as the monster that hurts her terribly three times a day. She's my friend, but she will not remain so if she is forced to suffer as she is with no reprieve."

"Truly?" My mother's seriously concerned tone draws my attention back to the screen. "You think if you don't give her the choice to have your blockers removed, she will withdraw her consent to feed from her entirely?"

"Yes." I lie, and I've never lied to my mother. "I do."

"...I see." My mother was thinking as my Queen again as she mulled over the ramifications of the first feeding companion in a century rejecting the Dynast, and how the Theskian Empire would take that. I quickly work that angle.

"If anything, they'd use the failed companionship as an excuse to revoke Korvis presence in Theskian space. My mission will utterly fail, if this companionship does." I swallow the lump in my throat and wait for my mother's verdict. I can see she is conflicted over my request. My mother wants to say no. It's too soon. She likely worries how willing I am to go through with this for Valerie, after only a month of living with her. My Queen feels the burden of our people, desperate and unable to be sustained long term for much longer on Regen and synthetic blood. She has read my reports, so she knows how well Valerie and I are getting along. If she decides it hurts too much to go through any more feeds, I won't be allowed in Theskian space. The chances of another agreeing to become a feeding companion once the Anti-K movement realise what happened, is worryingly slim. "My Queen?"

"Fine, but!" She holds up a yellow silk clad finger to the screen to stop me from interrupting. "You must explain it *all* to her, everything, and she *must* sign a waver so we have on file her full consent. If she declines, she must sign an agreement not to discuss the nature of a Korvian feeding with anyone else."

"Yes, my Queen." I bow my head to her and purse my lips to suppress the smile lurking beneath. I'm a jumble of anxiety for how Valerie will react to what I've been withholding from her. I'm nervous about how she will wish to proceed. Will she be angry with me? Will she be upset? Will she forgive me and understand the need for secrecy? Will she...say yes?

Romance Author



Chapter 17

The Amendment

Valerie.

The sound of knocking at my bedroom door makes me wake and wince. I was in so much pain last night from the last feed, that I only managed to weather the pain long enough to use the toilet. The rest of the time I remained bundled up in bed as a throbbing mass of misery. I was certainly not about to call my sister in that state. All I would have done is worried her. I made sure to pop all my Regen pills to help my recovery, since it was the only medication I could take. Even so, I'm waking up to the usual gripping ache in my neck.

“Miss Stone?” I hear Vrajan’s voice through the door and he sounds apprehensive. I hiss through my teeth and push my hands down into the mattress to sit up in bed. I look at the door and sigh. Here we go again. Sweet and sensitive space Dracula is going to have to feed on me to survive, and I’m going to have to let him, and then we’re both going to feel like shit about it. Especially now that I don’t even get the reprieve of being unconscious through the worst of the pain. God, even crying into my pillow *hurt*. Honestly, I feel a little sick with dread that I’m about to go through it all again. I experimentally stretch and feel heavy and lethargic. My neck is bruised and sore to touch, but I *have* recovered a lot from last night’s feed. As I usually do. Only, knowing the full brunt of what I’m going to experience is making me reluctant to answer Vrajan when he calls out to me again. “Miss Stone?” Especially from his nervous tone and the fact he isn’t calling me Valerie anymore. “Are you awake?” I gulp, agitating my sore neck, and sigh. I can’t put this off forever. I slide my legs over the edge of the mattress and stand. I stall a tad longer as I brush my hair and tie it into a low ponytail over my right shoulder, and eye the

bedroom door. “I...have left you for as long as I can Miss Stone. I can hear your heart beat. I know you’re awake. Please may I come in?” I steel myself with a deep breath and walk over to the bedroom door. I press the button and look up into his lilac eyes.

Vrajan is wearing another of his long chiffon robes, blue today, and has forgone his Dynast crown. His chiffon hood and veil are firmly in place, and he’s holding two silver tablets to his chest with folded arms. “G...good morning.” I searched his diamond-shaped pupils, and I can’t recall ever seeing him this nervous. He’s even hunching slightly like he does with strangers to make himself seem smaller. He’s speaking softly and with a higher pitch than usual. He doesn’t usually do that with *me*? Man, he’s pulling out all his non-threatening techniques here. He’s even struggling to look me in the eye. “M-Miss Stone? May I come in?”

“Yeah. It *is* feeding time.” I sigh. Fuck, I’m not emotionally ready to go through that living nightmare of pain all over again. Not so soon. Yet, there’s no avoiding it. I don’t want Vrajan to starve, and I’m contractually obligated to let him feed off me as his feeding companion. “I just need to use the bathroom first.”

“Of course.” He seems to sink into his frame even more and nods at me with encouragement. “I will wait. Please, take your time.” He doesn’t move from the doorway even as I walk away to head to my ensuite. I relieve myself, take a longer shower than usual to stall just a little longer, and emerge with my brown hair in a damp braid down my back, and my body wrapped in a towel. I dried myself in the bathroom just to put off this moment a little longer, and contemplate fussing over my wardrobe for the day as well.

I check myself as I catch Vrajan’s eyes. He’s still stood outside my open doorway. He’s hugging those tablets to his chest and his eyes have a shimmer like he’s become tearful. As soon as I catch his gaze he turns his head and looks down towards the ground. I hate seeing him like that. I can tell he hates seeing *me* like this too.

“I wish I didn’t have to do this. I hate hurting you.”

I pinch the brow of my nose and check myself for a moment. This would be so much easier for me to handle if he was professional about this. Instead the urge to comfort *him* and tell *him* it's okay is giving me conflicted feelings. I want to go to him and tell him it's okay, like I did last night. I also want to cover up my neck and protect myself. I frown and walk into my walk-in wardrobe *without* stalling. I decide I want to be comfortable since I'm going to be wallowing in bed in a pit of agony, awake to it all once he's finished. I therefore put on comfy white underpants, grey sweatpants, and a shoulderless black top. No bra. No socks. Once he's finished feeding I'm going to *try* and *pray* I can pass out, or sleep my way through the brunt of my recovery. At least to lunch time. I find Vrajan is *still* hovering outside the door and waiting for me. "M-may I come in?"

"In here?" I raise a brow at him. Normally we go to his room for the feed. He carries me back to my bed to rest afterwards. Then again, I suppose that if I'm already on my own bed, we cut out the painful jostling I'd receive in transit.

"Yes." That soft wispy voice he's using is really annoying me. He edges into the room slowly and hesitates before sitting on the far right corner of the bottom of my bed. I eye him and see he's on the very edge, like he's going to leap away at a moment's notice, and is really uncomfortable in here. His arms are still folded over his chest with those tablets as his cargo, and he doesn't look at me. Vrajan is just...sitting there. Tense and silent.

Now he's pissing me off.

"Look, if you're freaking out because I told you to get out of my room last night, cut it out." I'm afraid I don't do subtle at the best of times, and right now I'm stressed, anxious, and quite frankly getting pissed off too. "It clearly upset you to see me in pain, and I didn't have the energy to keep reassuring you *and* deal with my recovery. I'm not refusing to feed you or anything, so stop acting like you're afraid I'm going to go back on our contract." Vrajan finally turns his head to look at me and sees I'm giving him my 'cut that shit out' glare. My hands are on my hips and my head is cocked to the right. This is showing off my bruised neck, but I don't give a fuck at this stage. "I am

not going to apologise because I needed some time to deal with my new reality, but I'm not going to break the deal. So stop pussy-footing around me like I'm some sort of injured animal." Of which, I totally am. "Sit up straight, talk to me normally, and look at me *damn it*." He hesitated for a moment, and then slowly lifted up in his frame. His back was straight, he raised his chin, and he looked me right in the eye.

"I apologise." His deep gravely voice was back. Good. That whispery shit was freaking me out. "I was...not sure how you would react when you saw me again after last night. We have never...parted like that before." I fold my arms subconsciously and my heart rate raises a little. He's not wrong. Before last night I've never been afraid of the feed before. Not during our companionship, at least. He scared me for a short spell when we first met, but then he turned out to be a 7ft cinnamon roll, so I parked that ignorant wariness to the back bench of my mind. Now though? Shit me, I can feel the adrenaline coursing through my body and putting me on edge even now. I'm trying so hard not to think about his fangs in my neck and the mind splitting terror of feeling like I'm dying when he feeds...but I'm only human. No matter how practical and badass I consider myself, I *am* afraid. Not of Vrajan, of course...but the pain. "Miss Stone?" I blink and realise I've stared off to one side as my fear drew me into my mind, and hope he hasn't noticed the reason for my sudden distraction. "Could we talk for a while first?"

First.

Meaning, afterward he would need to feed, but first we'll talk. I gulp, my nerves already on edge, and wondering if I want that. Talking first put off the agony, but it also allowed me to think about it and become more anxious. Should I ask him to just get on with it? "There is something I would like to discuss with you." He clears his throat and shifts his arms to hold a tablet in each hand.

"What do you want to talk about?"

"An amendment to our contract."

"An...amendment?" I don't know why, but my stomach has twisted into a worried knot at the sound of that. "D-do you

want to change the duration or the pay out?” Shit, I can’t afford for him to decide he doesn’t want to keep me on for my contract. “Because I refuse to agree to a reduction in either.” I fold my arms defiantly. I *cannot* afford for him to ask to terminate the contract early. He won’t pay out the full amount we agreed if we do. Not to mention, if I go home now, my father’s imminent bankruptcy will pull me down into destitution with him. If he becomes casteless now while I’m protected under contract, my caste is protected under the terms indentured servitude contract. Even if he pays out the full amount now, my father’s debtors would be able to petition for it to be used to pay off *some* of what he owes, and then I’m in the same position as I was before. On the verge of living in the perilous streets with the other casteless. “Look, there’s no need for an amendment. Come on. Let’s do this.” At the risk of being homeless and casteless I find the resolve to march over and straddle Vrajan’s lap. The pain of his feed still fills me with dread, but it’s only for a year. 11 more months. I *will* survive this. I *will not* become casteless.

“Oh -w-wait?!” He flusters as I grab his hood with both hands. “M-Miss Stone I want to-” I throw his hood back and yank his veil down. His white and black face doesn’t scare me, even if his four fangs I see between his black lips do. “Wait?! N-no stop!” I hold his shoulders and bump my bruised neck against his mouth.

He squealed.

Vrajan’s closed mouth bounced away from me like he was repelled from my jugular and he landed on his back on the bed. He moved the two tablets up to make a protective barrier in front of his lower face and stared up at me like I’ve gone mad. I’m still straddling his lap and I look at *him* like he’s the crazy one.

“What the hell? You need to feed Vrajan.” He seems to sink into my mattress and his diamond pupils are thin and panicked.

“I-yes, but I want to talk to you about an amendment *before* we...please? It is important.” I glower down at him, sitting up on his lap and folding my arms again with frustration.

“I’m not signing *anything* that changes the duration of this contract, or the payment.”

“W-well I’m glad to hear that.” He blurts out from behind the two tablets and nods at me. “The amendment I would like to propose does not change the duration of the contract, or the financial compensation at its completion.” I narrow my eyes on him suspiciously.

“Does it change the number of times you feed off me?”

“No, alas, I cannot reduce my feeds without making myself ill.” He slowly parts the two tablets to look up at me. His long hair is splayed around his head, white from the roots to his pointed ears, where it fades to midnight black. His face does the same below his cheek bones, and his lips speak with as little a gap as possible to try and hide his fangs from me. “Miss Stone? I should like to discuss a rather *delicate* matter with you.”

“Sure.” I huff and wait for him to get on with it.

“Well?” He chuckles nervously and nods down his body to where I’m sitting on him. “Could you sit beside me while we talk?”

“No.” I answer defiantly.

“N-no?”

“Nope.” I smirk evilly at him and shrug. “I don’t trust you not to run off with how flighty you’ve been acting, so you’re staying right there. You want to talk? Fine. Talk.” But I’m not signing jack shit unless I’ve read all the fine print, and it’s to my benefit. The white of his cheeks flush darker and his eyes widen with panic.

“Oh, it’s just that, the *nature* of the possible amendment is...intimate and...” He looks down at my thighs pinning him to the bed once more. “...I give you my word I will not flee, Miss St-”

“Valerie.” I grind out through my teeth. It feels like every time he says ‘Miss Stone’ like he’s increasing the distance between us. His people view knowing and using another’s first name as intimate. When he doesn’t use mine, it makes me feel

like he doesn't *want* to be close to me anymore. That upsets me more than I'm prepared to admit, even to myself.

"..." He stares at me for a moment, before a change comes over the Dynast. Instead of cowering nervously on my bed, Vrajan's lilac eyes become filled to the brim with determination. He uses his core strength to move to sit up. I blush, my chest suddenly pressed to his, and very little space between his face and mine. "Valerie." He says my name with intent and the deepest baritone I've ever heard. Oh sweet gold mines, he's *never* said my name like *that* before. I'm acutely aware that I'm sitting on his lap, and try to snap myself out of thinking *once again* of Vrajan as anything other than the doting Korvis I'm allowing to feed off me. He's my friend, and we've hit a very painful snag in this arrangement of ours, but we'll get through it.

The intensity of his stare and the way one of his hands came to hold my back changed the whole mood of the moment. I try to turn my head so he can bite me, but his other hand takes hold of my chin and guides me back to stare helplessly into his lilac eyes and black diamond pupils. "Beside me are two tablets." He refers to the tablets he was previously cowering behind, but are now discarded on the bed to our right. "One is the amendment to our contract, and the other is a full anatomical and biochemical overview of the Korvian feeding process." I raise a brow, but don't interrupt. I thought this amendment was going to be about the duration or pay. What has the biology or anatomy of how he feeds suddenly worthy of an amendment to our contract? He's already been feeding off me for well over a month now so...what's the deal? "I want you to read *both* after our conversation. While you do, I will retire to my bedroom. I will ingest some Synth-Red instead, this morning, though it does not sustain me for very long, so it will only give you a few more hours before I will need to feed from you."

"But--"

"Which will be long enough for you to decide *if* you wish to continue feeding as we currently do...or if you would like to give consent to the amendment." I rest my hands on my thighs and raise a brow at him.

“Does that mean that this amendment is to the feeding process?”

“Correct.” He releases my chin and lifts his so he can tap either side of his throat. I watch dutifully at the cue to do so, and see him stroke either side of his neck like he’s sore. “As you already know, the phyrodox glands of a Korvis secrete a kind of venom via ducts to the fangs during a feed.” I watch as his fingers move up his neck, and tense when he opens his mouth to show me his four fangs on his upper jaw. He taps the outer two with his fingers, the larger two, and then speaks as decisively as he does regarding his work. “The primary phyrodox ducts deliver a mixture of chemicals that prevent clotting, and encourage the body to replenish your blood in between feedings. We have made this process more efficient with the Regen pills that you take, which is based off the natural venom I just mentioned.”

“Yeah.” I confirm, as I *do* already know that. He explained that to me when we first met. Where is this going? He taps the inner two fangs, and then seems less sure of himself.

“Korvians, in fact, have a secondary phyrodox duct that delivers *another* venom during the bite, to the inner fangs.”

“Okay?” I still didn’t see why we were talking about this *now*. “So?”

“So, Valerie.” He gulped and I smell a rat. “Mine are... blocked.”

“What? Like, you have a medical condition or-”

“No, no.” He cuts me off and tentatively places his hands over mine on my thighs. “Mine are blocked by a device I had to consent to have injected into my secondary phyrodox ducts before I was *permitted* to enter Theskian space, to procure a feeding companion.”

“Oh.” Well I don’t like the sound of that. “What? Like, are you naturally venomous?” He raises a white brow. “I mean, of course you are, but I mean like do you also make like a poisonous venom or something you have to have blocked or something?”

“...no.” Why did that one word make me think that rat I could smell earlier was about to smack me with the other shoe?

“Vrajan?” I slip my hands out from under his and fold my arms. I can already tell this isn’t going to be good. “*Why* did you have to have your secondary ducts blocked before you were allowed to enter Theskian space and have a feeding companion?” The way he took a deep breath and braced himself did *nothing* to reassure me.

Romance Author



Chapter 18

Intoxication

Vrajan.

This is it. This is the moment I've been rehearsing in my mind since my Mother and Queen gave me permission to make Valerie this offer. I had hoped I would settle her first with lighter conversation, but I should have known better. She is not one to skirt the issue, or shy away from it. Even now, she's asking me directly for the truth. So I will give it to her.

“Do you remember that I told you that the relationship between a Korvian and their feeding companion is a precious and intimate one?”

“Yeah, I'm not just food to you. I know that, Vrajan.” A smile tugs at the corner of her mouth with sympathy. “You care about my wellbeing. I can see you are upset about hurting me, and if that's why you're hesitating then-”

“Please allow me to finish?” I can't bear to hear her say she understands I can't help it one more time. Valerie nods and listens carefully as I continue. “The secondary ducts deliver what we refer to as the Bonding Succour.” I tuck my white and black hair behind my pointed and ridged ears and wade onward. Valerie is listening intently and her expression doesn't afford me any clue as to what she's thinking. Perhaps she is reserving her reaction until I have finished? Regardless, I am eager to present her with all the facts so she might make her choice. “From even the first bite, the feeding companion receives a dose of Bonding Succour. The effects of which are as follows.” She cants her head to one side and is hooked on my every word. “First and foremost, it has a potent anaesthetic property that numbs the area of pain, but also further promotes the recovery of the feeding companion between feeds.”

“You fucking what?!” Her nostrils flare and outrage spreads across her face. I was afraid of this reaction, and must finish before she acts rashly.

“However!” I cut in, and whatever she was about to assault me with is paused on her tongue. “It is not the *only* effect of the Bonding Succour. “ She closes her mouth and raises a brow as she reserves her judgement until I have finished. Thank the stars. “We have experimented thoroughly, and there is no way to effectively or safely, secrete or produce, a version of the Bonding Succour that does not have the effect that gave it its namesake.” I gulp, knowing this was the moment that would either make or break Valerie’s resolve. “You see, from an evolutionary point of view, if the feeding companion was in pain...*like you are*...from each feed...then the feeding companion would be *reluctant* to allow the feed. They would flee, and the Korvis would starve. However, it arose in a particular ancestral line to the Korvis, a trait that caused the bonding of the Korvian to the feeding companion.” I cleared my throat, going for the kill, so to speak. “It was this evolutionary trait that moved our species from, for want of a better word, parasitical, to symbiotic in nature.” I pause to give her time to process what I’ve just said. She seems to appreciate it, and nods when she’s ready for me to continue. “In essence, the secondary duct and the Bonding Succour caused not only the anaesthetic effects I have already described, but also an...intoxication as well.”

“Intoxication?” She furrowed her brow. “You mean like, alcohol or drugs or something?”

“Or something.” I chuckle nervously. How will she take this? How do I *want* her to take this news?

“Stop beating around the bush already, and tell me.” She thrusts her hands up as if to receive a very real answer across her palms. “What effect does this secondary venom have that’s *so bad*, that the Theskian council made you have your ducts blocked?”

“You have to understand, that in telling you this, I am in no way expecting you to-”

“Vrajan!” She cups either side of my face to hold me as she gives me a highly strung and frustrated smile. “I am in agony when you bite me, and it’s getting worse in between each feed. Since I can’t take *any* medication without making you sick. As you seem to produce a natural pain killer you’ve been keeping from me, you had *better* give me a *really* good reason why you’ve been holding out on me for a fucking month!” I gulp. As I expected, she’s angry, but I don’t sense she’s angry *with me*. Not yet, anyway.

“Because it’s also a *very* potent aphrodisiac, and results in the mating of the Korvian and feeding companion.”

She blinks slowly.

Shock spreads across Valerie’s face.

She takes her hands back.

Her mouth hangs open for a moment, before she finds her voice.

“Aphro...aphrodisiac?”

“Yes.” I nod and wait patiently for her reaction. All the while I resist the urge to audibly gulp and pick at my nails. Any moment I will find out just how much Valerie wants to be pain free. I am a wreck on the inside as I portray patience and calm on the outside. Or at least, I hope that’s how I appear to her. She can’t tell how my heart races or how my palms sweat.

“Meaning...?” Both her eyebrows raise and she slowly brings her hands together to mime her finger going into the ring she forms with her thumb and finger on her other hand. “We would...?”

“Yes.” I clear my throat. “And, well, the Bonding Succour is injected into you during the bite, and I would also ingest it in your blood so it...has the same affect on *me* as it would on *you*.” She seems frozen in surprise. “It’s why it’s called the Bonding Succour. It gives relief from pain, but also... causes *bonding*.”

“Oh.” Valerie’s blush spreads across her face, and she tenses on my lap. She suddenly doesn’t seem as comfortable straddling me as she once was.

“It also-”

“Fuck, there’s *more?!?*” I can’t help but chuckle. She’s so funny when flustered, and I am reassured by the fact she isn’t horrified. I thought she would be appalled at the mere mention of mating, but she seems to be embarrassed rather than disgusted. She hasn’t scrambled off my lap either.

“Yes. You see, it’s addictive in nature, the Bonding Succour. As long as you have it three times a day, with each feed, a full symbiosis is achieved and the feeding companion is very healthy. As is the Korvian. However, your body would go into withdrawal if you were without my bite for a prolonged period of time, and you would, well?” I shrug. “You would *literally* crave me. M-my bite, I mean.” Now I’m also blushing. “As you can imagine? The Theskian Empire were not willing to allow any Korvian into their territory, when they could *in theory* bite *anyone*, and that individual would become addicted to the Korvian. I *therefore* had to have my secondary ducts blocked before permitted entry.”

“Y-yeah I guess they *would* have something to say about...that.” Valerie shrugged and winced at her sore neck. She touched it and I frowned at the discolouration there.

“Your recovery would be more efficient with my Bonding Succour. Even your bruising would be gone before the next feed.” I reach to touch her sore skin over her jugular, and I hate that I’m the cause of her suffering. “You wouldn’t be in pain anymore. I...could take it all away.”

“Wait?” She takes my hand away from her neck and looks me in the eye. “Are you telling me this so I’m *aware*, or... are you...*offering* this to me?” I take a deep breath and nod

“I want you to read the amendment and feeding file I have brought you first, but...yes.” My heart is galloping in my chest and my blood is flowing in all sorts of directions at the thought of what I’m proposing. I’m also anxious she will turn my offer down. “I have come to like you a great deal, Valerie.” I gulp and pluck up my courage. “I despise seeing you in pain. Especially as I am the cause. If you consent, and sign the amendment, then I will take a pill that will dissolve the blockers

in my secondary ducts. I can feed from you *painlessly*, and you will heal much faster in between feeds.”

“I mean...*that* all sounds great.” I sensed the ‘but’ before she even said it. “...but I would also become addicted to this Bonding Succour, *and* we would fuck?”

“Yes. W-we would.” I clear my throat and chew on my lips. I can feel my phyrodox glands swell with venom eagerly and my mouth waters hungrily. I also feel my arousal causing my boxers beneath my robe to bulge. Her eyes open wide, as she feels this reaction from her position on my lap. “I am, well, fine with that.” I can’t look her in the eye at my admission. “I have come to like you a great deal, Valerie, and would...be *more* than fine with that arrangement.” I can feel the heat in my face as she stares at me. “But I will allow *you* to make that decis-”

“If I become addicted to your bite, what happens when the contract term is over?” I *do* look her in the eye then, and ignore the pang of hurt that hits me in the chest. Of course, she has only agreed to be my feeding companion for a year. She plans to return to her old life once that time is over.

“You will *already* need to go through a rehabilitation program at the end of our companionship, based on the way we are *currently* feeding. The experience will be *more* unpleasant for you, as you will have to go through an assisted withdrawal if you have had my Bonding Succour as well. With medical help you will still be as you were before. And I will pay for all of it, of course.”

“Hmm...” I wait patiently as she folds her arms and looks off to one side. She hasn’t moved from my lap, and she’s staring at the tablets on the bed. “So I have to go through rehab anyway, but it will be more of an ordeal if you remove the blockers...but they *could* give me stronger drugs if I’m not your feeding companion anymore...so it’s not like I’d be going cold turkey.” I hold my breath. She’s considering it. I thought she would want me to leave the room as she makes her decision, but her seated position on my lap doesn’t allow me to leave. “Not experiencing any more pain *is* a big plus for me.” Valerie seems to be mulling this out loud for my benefit, and I’m very grateful for that. Not knowing what she’s thinking was making me very

anxious. I sit silently and listen as she weighs up her options. “The cost of rehab later is not especially off putting, as I’ll have to go through it anyway to a lesser extent even if I declined the offer. It will all be paid for...and I would fully recover?” She directs at me and I nod eagerly.

“Yes. We have a lot of data and records of many feeding companions who have gone through the process in the past when their Korvian has passed away or moved on.” She nods slowly, adding that for consideration. “You would make a full recovery.” I add encouragingly. Valerie regards me curiously and I wonder if I should have quit while I was ahead.

“You sound like you want me to consent to this amendment?”

“I do.”

“Why?”

“Because I hate hurting you and I...well.” I tentatively place my hands on her shoulders. “Like I said, I have come to like you a great deal. I would be...*happy* to give you my Bonding Succour and achieve full symbiosis with you, Valerie.”

“Including the sex part?”

“Ah, well, yes.” I chuckle with a blush.

“Are we even compatible?” She is no where near as flustered about this aspect of the conversation as I am. “How do Korvis even mate?” I swallow excess saliva and my diamond pupils dilate. “Have our species ever mated before?”

“Humans and Korvians, no. But anatomically humans are similar enough to a Sacrons and female Qeknians, that I am confident that we are compatible.” She doesn’t seem convinced by that answer. “It’s all in the feeding file.” I nod to the tablet on the bed. “There is a passage specifically about the mating aspect that follows full envenomation with the Bonding Succour.” My loins stir further beneath her and she shifts on my lap. It’s obvious she can feel my arousal, and I bashfully avert my eyes. “I will go and drink some Synth-Red. You should have some breakfast and read through the files. Will two hours be enough time to consider it?”

“Sure.” She chuckled and shuffled backward to stand at the foot of the bed. “I’ll read through the files and erm...see in you a couple of hours?”

“Two, yes.” I nod and swipe my veil back up to hide the majority of my blushing cheeks. “Of course, if you have any questions, let me know.”

“Yeah, thanks.”

“Well. I’ll just...” I point to the door, nod, and flee with embarrassment. I hear her chuckle behind me, but it isn’t malicious. I smile and feel a flutter of hope in my chest. At no point did she seem horrified by the thought of mating with me. She was not outraged for more than a few seconds at the fact I could have eased her pain at any time and kept it from her. Hopefully that means she understood the ramifications, and the reason my secondary ducts were blocked.

I gag a few times on the vile and thick Synth-Red to take the edge off my hunger. I look at the clock and mentally begin a 2 hour timer. What will Valerie say? Will she refuse and insist we continue feeding as we are now? To avoid becoming addicted to my Bonding Succour, and the intense need to mate? Or...will she say yes? Am I two hours away from unblocking my secondary ducts, giving Valerie the true bite, and then... making love to her?

Romance Author



Chapter 19

Decision time

Valerie.

I pace as I try to decide what I'm going to do. No wonder Vrajan came in all sheepish, when he knew he was about to drop *that* grenade on my lap. I sit on the chair facing the vanity table mirror and finish off the last of my orange juice I brought back with me from the kitchen. I had a light breakfast of toast shortly after Vrajan ran off to leave me with this conundrum to deal with. I wasn't especially hungry, but it occupied my hands for a while as it sank in what choice I was going to have to make.

Option 1, I say no. I do not give consent for a highly addictive chemical to be pumped into my body so that I become some sort of sex mad slave to Vrajan. I don't like the idea of with anything messing with my head, or my body. I specifically agreed to this sort of contract, because I *didn't* want to end up as a concubine or sex worker. Only, option 1 also meant that I would have to accept gut wrenching, mind splitting pain three times a day for 11 months. Something that would be even harder to accept when pain relief was one bite away. At least before I thought there was no alternative to the way Vrajan fed from me. Now I know all he has to do is pop a pill and he can give me a pain free feed? It was very tempting. I'm going to have to go through rehab anyway, but at least it will be quicker and easier for me to go through if I'm not in withdrawal from his Bonding Succour.

Option 2, I say yes. For the next 11 months I will have no more pain. I'm going to have to go through rehab *anyway*, and although it sounds like it will be hell to be weaned off his Bonding Succour, plenty of people have done so with a full recovery. Only, there's the slight hitch, as the pain relief comes

hand-in-hand with the aphrodisiac that will make us want to have sex. And he said ‘us’. It would be in my blood, which he’s drinking, so we would have a mutual need to bump uglies.

I get up with a huff and resume pacing. My mind keeps looping back to what that might look like. What exactly is he packing? I’ve seen him wearing boxer shorts when he’s disrobed for me plenty of times now. His crotch looks, well, crotch-like. There is the usual male bulge I would expect to see on a male of most Theskian species, and when I was sat on his lap earlier he was getting aroused. I felt *whatever* he had under there getting harder and pressing against me. But what does he have? A dick? A cock that slides out of an internal pouch when aroused? Does he have a tentacle? What if he’s covered in barbs or spikes?

“Have our species ever mated before?”

“Humans and Korvians, no. But anatomically humans are similar enough to Sacrons and female Qeknians, that I am confident that we are compatible. It’s all in the feeding file. There is a passage specifically about the mating aspect that follows full envenomation with the Bonding Succour.”

I round on the bed. I’ve read the amendment contract already, and it’s straight forward. It’s just a clause that says if I sign it, I give consent for Vrajan to remove his blockers and accept the effects of the Bonding Succour on my body. I *haven’t* read the file on Korvis feeding yet. I sit on the edge of the bed and swipe my finger through it to find the passage about mating. “Oh my fucking-what is *that?!?*” I turn the tablet portrait, to landscape, and back again as I gawk at the anatomical drawing of male Korvian genitals. I squint and bring the tablet right up to my face to understand that I’m looking at.

No. No that doesn’t make sense. How would that even fit? Never mind would it be enjoyable once inside me? It opens at the end? I press my thighs together and chuck the tablet onto the bed behind me. I’m shaking my head and panicking. I really want to be pain free, and I think I can handle rehab at the end of the program with his financial backing. I kind of *like* Space Dracula, and I can get on board with becoming Mina the alien vampire’s bride for 11 months. He doesn’t strike me as an asshole that would be rough in bed, aside from the blood

drinking part, but...the sex itself is making me hesitate. I eye the tablet behind me warily and the thing I just saw on that diagram. Vrajan has *that* under his pants? Really? I shudder and cup my face in my hands with my elbows on my knees. “I mean, he said Korvians have had sex with Sacrons and Qeknians before?”

I lift my face up and talk to no one nervously. I might not have dated a Sacron before, or any alien for that matter, but I did basic biology in high school, and they covered reproduction in Theskian race species. Sacrons had frills at their necks and four arms, but otherwise the men had a cock and the females had two breasts and vagina. Humans and Sacrons could date and have sex. I saw plenty of mixed species couples at high school and college growing up. They couldn’t have kids, but sex for sure. I reach behind me to swipe up the tablets and fix a determined glare at my door. I can freak out all I want about the alien *appendage* the file showed me, but I have no idea how sex would work with a Korvian unless I *ask*. I’m not one to be squeamish or shy about sex, and even though I can tell Vrajan *is*? “I have to know.”

I march like a woman on a mission, which I am, out of my bedroom and right up to his bedroom door. I knock three times, firmly, and the door opens so quickly that I think he must have hurried over from the first knock. Vrajan is still wearing the blue chiffon robe and he’s put his hood and veil back in place.

“Valerie? You are early.” He presses his hands to his chest timidly. “I can’t decide if that’s a good or bad thing. Have you made a decision, or do you have questions?”

“I have one question.” I hold up one finger. I’m not going to lie, but I knew I was going to enjoy his reaction way more than I should. “It’s the one thing stopping me from saying yes and signing this.” His diamond pupils dilate, and he stands straighter. His hands leave his chest, and he offers them towards me with urgency.

“Truly? Then tell me? What is your question?” Vrajan seems elated that there is only one thing holding me back. I suppress the urge to grin before I ask the question and go for it.

“I read both the files, and the diagram in the feeding file is hard to interpret. It’s worrying me a bit.”

“What is?” Vrajan steps right up to me and seems desperate to put my mind at ease. “Valerie, what is holding you back?” I am a bad person, because this is going to be so much fun, even if I don’t get the answer I’m looking (hoping) for.

“What does your dick *look like*, exactly?” I bit my tongue to keep myself from snickering at the way his eyes widened with shock.

“M...my...?”

“Cock, Vrajan.” I point to his groin area. “The diagram was a little scary, and it doesn’t look erm...compatible with my anatomy.” I can’t stop the snicker that escapes me as I relish in his obvious embarrassment. “Fuck, it looks like it would *eat* my pussy, and not in the good way.”

“Sweet stars.” Vrajan presses a hand to cover his eyes, and I chuckle behind my lips as I chew them together. “My-Valerie-that’s very, well, *personal*.”

“So is agreeing to having an aphrodisiac that makes me want to fuck you three times a day...so...surely you understand that I need to know if A, it’s possible, and B, it’s *safe* for me.” He pressed both hands to his face over his veil now. Despite my amusement at his reaction, I’m being very serious. I’m no virgin, but I’ve never been attracted to other species before. Until now. If his ‘junk’ was relatively human looking, I think I would have already decided to say yes.

“It is.” He mumbles behind his hands.

“It is what?”

“Compatible and safe.”

“No offence, and please understand this from my position, but the diagram on the file didn’t make it look like *either* so...” I clear my throat and wait for him to come out from behind his gloved hands. When he doesn’t budge I poke his arm. “You realise if I agreed to this, I would do a lot more than *see* your genitals, right?” Vrajan snaps his hands down and looks at me like I’m being intentionally snarky. I am, of course. It’s the

most fun I've had in a while. I'm also in the least amount of pain I've been in for a while, since we're overdue a feed.

"I am aware."

"Then...?" I present both hands down towards his crotch. "Show me it isn't hazardous to my health, and I'll sign the amendment."

"..." Vrajan stared at me intently for a long moment, before turning around and walking into his bedroom. "Very well Valerie. Please come inside and I will...fully disrobe for you."



I didn't really think this through. I realised that the sex was the only thing holding me back, and charged ahead to get answers without thinking about how I was going to get the answers. Standing now at the foot of Vrajan's red silk clad bed as he starts to remove his blue robes, it's *really* bringing home what is about to happen. Now *I'm* the one holding the tablets to my chest protectively. I've seen Vrajan's alabaster white skin plenty of times. The black spiralling pattern that begins in his chest and coils around his shoulders, arms, torso and legs are not a new sight. Nor is the way his knees and elbows downward darken from white to black. His bat like pointed ears don't make me bat an eye, and his white and black face are familiar to me. His lilac eyes anchor me as he undresses to stand only in his boxers. His hands hold the waistband with his thumbs hooked on the inside, and he pauses. I realise he's looking at me, searching my gaze for something. I put the tablets down and smile. As amusing as it was to tease him, he's a tender soul, my space Dracula. He ran away with tears in his eyes when I saw him without his veil for the first time and freaked out. He wept yesterday when I told him to leave when I was in too much pain to deal with him too.

Vrajan is about to make himself as exposed as he can get, and is probably anxious about how I'll react. My teasing... yeah. That probably didn't help his confidence.

"I just want to know if we're compatible. If we're not, I promise I will be polite about it."

“We are compatible.” He rumbles at me, and I blush. That was *not* the timid response I was expecting. “Once you see that we are...will you sign the amendment? The pill to remove the blockers is there.” Vrajan nods to the table beside his bed, and a small metal box. “It takes 60 seconds to work.”

“Oh. That’s fast.” I chuckle and shrug. “I...yeah.” I nod and walk around his bed to put the tablets down on the side table. “I *really* don’t want to go through that pain again, awake for it all, if I don’t have to. I trust you, so if you say I can safely go through rehab at the end and fully recover, I believe you. So...yeah.” I walk around the bed, and I’m sure this is the most awkward I have ever been in my entire life. “If we’re safely compatible, I’ll sign it and we can *commence*.” I snigger and throw two thumbs towards the bed. I chuckle at how corny that was, but it did the trick. He sighed with relief and nodded to me.

“I am pleased to hear that. I have hated causing you pain.”

Down went his pants. Just like that.

I dropped my chin close to my chest and stared at his... yeah I guess it’s a cock? It looks more like a creature than a cock to me. For the most part it was white with smooth black segmented ridges on the upper side of his length. It seemed fleshier on the underside, white, and at the end were black fleshy petal like tendrils that appeared to spiral together protectively. I flinched when they opened like a fucking flower, and the whole thing lifted like a serpent. Inside the tendril tips I saw not a glans or a slit, but a lumen leading down the middle of his ‘penis’. My head tipped to one side and my mouth opened, when I realised something inside his cock was *moving*.

I have always been far too curious for my own good. I shuffled closer, my gaze still firmly set on his monster schlong, and I swayed my head to try and look down the petal opening of his cock.

“Can I get a closer look?” I ask him whilst pointing at his crotch and not able to look away.

“Oh, erm, y-yes. If you like.” He opened and closed his hands down by his sides and he watched me as I lowered to one

knee in front of him. “Oh stars.” He muttered under his breath, and I would have laughed, if I wasn’t kind of hypnotised by his alien cock. On the inside of the lumen I could just make out some thin tendrils that seemed to caress the inside of his cock, and caused it to undulate.

It was apparently prehensile too. I flinched and leaned back when the fleshy petals opened and closed at the end of his cock, and it swayed towards my face. Like he could quite easily snatch a hold of my lips if he wanted to. It’s not like he has any spikes or teeth or anything, but I wasn’t prepared for the sudden reach of the three dextrous tendril tips trying to capture my lips for *whatever* reason. “Oh, I’m so sorry. I am becoming... stimulated, and erm, your warmth near my mandibles...it’s instinctive to...I’m sorry.” I dart my eyes upward and see his hands are covering his face again. Damn, he’s so cute when he’s shy. Wait, did he say mandibles? Like mouth parts? I look down at his cock again and the way those fleshy petals open and close protectively around the lumen and inner tendrils. Is it like a mouth? Wait, was alien Dracula’s dick trying to kiss me? Oh I bet those three fleshy *mandibles* could do wicked things to my clit. Hang on? *Could* his cock kiss me on the mouth too? I wonder...if I can get my tongue inside there...maybe just the tip...

When I realise where my mind had gone, I realised I have no reservations whatsoever about Vrajan’s cock anymore. In fact, I was kinda thirsty as I thought about getting more *acquainted* with it. Man, it’s been a long time since I’ve been laid, and Vrajan is so sweet. I can very much see myself enjoying three trysts a day with the Dynast and his...monster cock... Yes, yes I can. I threw option one in a dumpster fire in my mind, and reached with both hands for option 2.

“Where’s the amendment clause?” I ignore how hard I’m blushing about how horny I suddenly am, and march over to his side table.

“Y-you’re going to sign it?” He asks with bated breathe.

“Yes.” Damn right I’m going to sign it. Damn, *that’s* what I felt under me when I straddled his lap earlier? “You said we’re compatible. I think it will, erm, fit.” I sign the contract

and turn around to offer it to Vrajan. I flinch when I realise he must have followed me, as he's right there when I turn around.

“You understand that this is not something you will wish to change your mind about later? Even from the first bite, my Bonding Succour will make you wish to mate with me, and then as we approach the next feeding time, you will experience a craving for my bite?”

“Yes.” I am listening. I am. But I am also acutely aware of his cock's proximity with my groin. I shove my sweatpants down and kick them to one side.

“V-Valerie, are you sure? You must be sure before-” I pull my shirt over my head and throw it to the floor as well. “...” He watches me with fat diamond pupils as I peel my panties over my hips and let them fall to my ankles. “You have signed the form?”

“Yes.” I nod.

“And you clearly give consent for me to fully envenomate you to the point of ecstasy, and mate with you, as we shall both desire?” His voice is the deepest I've heard it, and his stance as towering as I've ever seen it.

“Yes.” I nod again, and keep telling myself that this is an easy price to pay for the thing I really want. No pain and to successfully survive my indentured servitude. I am certainly *not* excited to find out what kissing Vrajan would be like. On the lips and his lower mandibles. Nor am I thinking about claiming my space Dracula like a wanton Mina and demand him to bite and fuck me... Yeah, I'm not convincing myself on that one, but fuck it. It's amazing what inhibitions vanish when pain is no longer overpowering your desires. Just how long have I been attracted to Vrajan? How long has he been attracted to me?

“I have come to like you a great deal. I would be... happy to give you my Bonding Succour and achieve full symbiosis with you, Valerie.”

“Including the sex part?”

“Ah, well, yes.”

Vrajan backed away and I reach for him with alarm.

“Where are you going?”

“To take the pill to remove my blockers.” He chuckles at me and I pout at how desperate I sounded. I tongue my cheek and try to look at ease as he opens a small metal cube with a thumb print at his bed side. The pill was black and he swallows it whole after cupping his hand to his mouth. I’m standing there watching him intently as he taps his fingers across the screen of the tablet for a few minutes. I know he’s tall, but has he always been so lean? I can see his muscles flex and appreciate the chiselled angles of him beneath his white skin and black spiral markings. Even his ass is toned. He isn’t wide in frame but he is lithe and suited his 7ft height.

His long white and black hair flared as he turned around quickly to return to me. Vrajan practically skidded to a stop once he reached me in his eagerness. The sexual tension in the air had us both panting and hyperaware of the other. “I am told that when the blockers have dissolved and are no longer in place, I am likely to have an excess of Bonding Succour flood into my mouth. I-I’m not drooling.” I snort and put my hands on my hips. I was going to say something teasing about him drooling over me, when I feel the caress of his cock between my thighs. It moves like a prehensile tentacle, and I inhale sharply as the petal shaped mandibles at the end carefully part my labia. “Do you mind? I’m feeling very stimulated and I’m sensitive to the cold.” I lick my lips and nod. I mentally track every caress of his alien cock as he nestles closer to my ‘warmth’. His soft mandibles move and feel like the end of tentacles, but without any suckers. “I can sense your warmth *there*.” He offered as a way of explanation and his hands came up to hold my shoulders. Holy crap. This is really happening. We’re about to fuck. My mouth opens and I widen my stance, captivated with the hungry way he’s looking at me. The delicate touch of his mandibles start to tease my labia apart. I am a little embarrassed at how wet I’m becoming already. “I won’t penetrate you unless you say I can.”

“Oh, well that’s alright then.” I snigger and chew my bottom lip. “I thought we wouldn’t want to have sex until you bit me?” I chuckle. He looks coquettish at me and chuckles bashfully.

“Yes, I know, I just...” He seems to struggle to find the right words for a moment. “I meant it when I said I have come to like you a great deal, Valerie. Am I...doing anything you wish me to stop?”

“...no.” I admit with a cheeky smile. I don’t want him to stop *anything* he’s doing. I knew the Dynast was a sweet guy, and Lord knows I’ve always been in short supply of *those* my entire life, but since *when* did Vrajan become so sexy? He’s not even trying to be seductive right now. He’s no growly Alpha male, even if he sounds like one, but the way he’s devouring me with his eyes is making my toes curl. He’s kind and tender, and he hates the fact I’ve been suffering all this time. I know he took a big risk in telling me about his addictive venom. I could have freaked out or told him to go to hell all together. Or worse, I could have threatened to tell everyone that Korvians are walking talking ‘fucking’ narcotics on legs. Had he told me when we met at the Indentured Servitude Centre that his bites would lead to sex and an addiction from the first day, I wouldn’t have signed the contract. No way. I wouldn’t have signed it for another Korvis either.

But Vrajan? My nipples are like hardened peaks and I’m *still* thinking about how it would feel to have his serpent like cock in my mouth to tongue open his fleshy petals. He is not the only one feeling desire *before* the Bonding Succour has entered my body. The prospect of no pain and being able to enjoy the experience has opened up doors that were sealed firmly shut. It’s blown them wide open, and I’m about to thrust myself neck and pussy first into the seductive abyss on the other side of his fangs. “I was just making an observation.”

I tease, and I gasp at the stroke of his prehensile cock at my entrance. Fuck, the urge to tip my hips to get him to delve inside me is hard to resist. The movement between my nether lips almost distracts me from the visible pulse at either side of his neck. Vrajan opens his mouth and bares his fangs. I watch, hypnotised at the predatory display. From the tips of his inner set of fangs I see black liquid start to drip steadily in tiny beads. They land on his own tongue and his diamond pupils dilate wider than I’ve ever seen them. His hands slide up my shoulders to cup either side of my neck. A deep growl rumbles in his chest and he reels me closer. My breasts press to him just below his

pecs, and his right hand strokes down my neck, over my shoulder, and grips my bicep. I stare wantonly at his mouth as he leans down towards my aching neck.



“It will sting for a moment.” His lips are wet with his black venom. “And then you will feel the bonding process begin.” My arms lift up at his sides to hug around his waist, and I lift my chin to offer more of my neck to him. I nearly stumble as he lowers to sit on the bed and brings me down to straddle his lap for the second time today. Only this time, we’re both naked and about to take this *companionship* to the most intimate level possible. With my knees braced on either side of his hips and my thighs spread, I feel his cock mandibles spread wide and part my labia wide apart. “Valerie.” He says my name breathlessly and licks my jugular. I’m sore, but I’m also reassured that soon I won’t feel any pain at all. I’m also being bombarded by the anticipation of the potent aphrodisiac dripping from Vrajan’s fangs. His hands caressing my arms and shoulders. His slick lips at my neck. The fleshy petals of his cock-end twisting together and slithering his length inside me. “Oh Val.” He moans, opening his mouth and firmly biting me. His fangs pierce into my jugular in the same place as usual. We’re even feeding in roughly the same position as last time. His tongue still massages my throat to work my blood into his mouth faster, and it still felt like white hot needles striking hot when he penetrated my skin.

And yet?

“O-o-ooooh!” I grip his shoulders and cry out, not in pain, but pleasure. His hands paw clumsily up my legs to take hold of my ass, and he drags me along his thighs so I’m in the perfect position. His cock buries flush inside me and I can feel the pulsing and undulating of his length against my inner walls. The fleshy petals of his mandibles tease at my cervix as I am seated fully onto his dick. He moans deeply around my throat, and I can hear and feel the vibration of his savage cry of pleasure.

I feel no pain. My neck is blissfully numb, and I feel the pressure of his tongue lapping over the bite wound as he removes his fangs. I don’t feel a single throb or spark of

discomfort. “Oh Vrajan, that feels fucking awesome.” I tangle my hands in his white and black hair and cradle his head to my neck. He is still licking at the four puncture wounds of his making, when his hands grasp my ass cheeks firmly. “Ah!” He rolls my hips down with the buck of his, and he shudders with delight.

“Valerie.” He finally takes his lips from my throat to look at me with eyes brimming with desire. My blood coats his lips and chin as our panting breaths mix together. “I have never...this is...you are...you feel...”

“I *feel*.” I agree, my mind fogging at the edges as well. In fact, my whole world is blurring to give me tunnel vision. All that remained was Vrajan. His hands caressing up my back and holding my shoulders. His magnificent cock moving inside me like the conductor of my delight. As we writhe together, carnal poetry in motion, the segmented ridges of his cock bombard my g-spot with ecstasy. The fleshy underside pulsates with his inner tendrils moving inside his cock to push me even further to the edge. His mandibles stroke and tease me at the end of each thrust, and I feel deliciously stretched around his girth with each upward pump of his hips. Even the way my hands moved over his firm pecs and fisted at his hair as I rode him felt *fantastic*. I never wanted this feeling to end. I don’t know when we started kissing, but the taste of my blood on his tongue did nothing to temper the inferno of need he poured into me.

“This is so...it’s more than I thought...Valerie.” He groaned and rolled us over on his bed. My back landed on the mattress and I whimpered at the loss of heat, but a moment later his body covered mine once more. I wrap my legs around his waist and welcome him back to me with open arms. He licks a hot trail up between my breasts, smearing blood there, and once he returns his lips to mine, he thrusts into me with a grunt. I cry out, delirious with need, and my climax looming on the horizon. The new angle makes me arch in pleasure against him. I can feel the ridges of his cock glide inside me, slick with my arousal, against my sweet spot without relenting. The pace has turned savage and I love it. He snarls and pounds me into the bed, his hands clawing at the silk sheets beneath us. I kiss him like I don’t need air and only his lips will appease my hunger. I try to

buck my hips to meet his every thrust, and slam my right hand up to brace against the headboard.

I look into his fat pupils with my own and taste euphoria with every fibre of my being. It crashes through me and robs me of my breath. I shudder with every wave as it strikes like a storm of ecstasy thundering through me from where our bodies are still grinding together. He watches me writhe in pleasure and swipes his tongue across my lips. I'm still reeling with my climax when I feel him find his own release. His cock seems to bulge at the base first, and then it the swelling moved along to the very end. As Vrajan hissed with his fangs bared, I felt pressure so deep inside me, it had to be at my cervix. His mandibles were massaging and pushing something against me.

Vrajan shuddered and bowed his head to kiss me tenderly. I wanted to bask in the best sex I've ever had, and the drunk like buzz blanketing my body, but the pressure remained even as he slid his cock from my pussy. We were both still panting as Vrajan passionately kissed me. Still, that pressure inside remained.

"Vrajan." I said his name breathlessly and we laid on our sides facing one another. I still felt no pain. Only a deep satisfaction and warm tingling all over. Oh, and the pressure inside my pussy. "That was amazing." I begin with a dopy smile on my face. He mirrors my expression, but he blushes and comes over a tad shy. I love it. "But I have to ask?" He lifts his still heavily dilated eyes back to mine. "I feel something..." I shift my hips on the bed and yeah, it's still there. "...inside me?"

"Oh. Yes, that will be an egg." He answered me casually.

"Say fucking what now?" I bluster and start to sit up, but he presses a hand to my shoulder to keep me with him. "Did you just say there is an egg inside me?" I started to worry about something with a shell that could break and cut my flesh on the inside.

"Yes, technically, but you don't have to worry." He takes one of my hands and brings it to his chest. I feel his heart beating beneath and I am calmed by it. "Korvians are oviparous

in nature. Most of us are male, and a few are female. The females oversee Hives and do not themselves breed. The males of our species are the breeders.” Funnily enough, at the sound of the B word, I’m sobering up *very* quickly. “Look at your face?” Vrajan is giggling. That asshole is *giggling* at my panic. “Firstly, the egg inside you is unfertilised.”

“Oh thank fuck.” I exhale deeply and giggle with relief. He chuckles with me and I relax tenfold.

“Korvis have a mating season, and it’s the only time of the year where we fertilise our eggs with harvested genetic material.”

“And this isn’t that time of year?”

“No.” Again. Thank fuck.

“And erm, when you say harvested material?” I know the answer already, but I’m going to fucking ask like an idiot. “Where is that harvested *from*?”

“You.” He takes my hand from his chest and kisses it with his blood smeared black lips. “The feeding companion’s blood is needed as sustenance, but the DNA is usually not important. During the mating season however, it is used to randomise and produce varied offspring. Then? If our feeding companion was willing, we would implant the fertile egg within them during mating.”

“Oh.” I gulp and take all of three seconds to react to that. “Please don’t lay a fertile egg inside me.” He laughed loudly and reassured me that he wasn’t offended that I didn’t want to play host to a Korvis egg. A live one, anyway.

“I would never do so without consent. Our mating season is only one week long, so we would simply have to abstain from the implantation process during that week.”

“And when is that week?”

“...” He looks up towards the ceiling with thought for a moment like he’s doing the math. “Not for another 8 months.” Ah, so it *is* within my contracted time then? Note to self. Don’t lose track of that 8 month marker. “And the infertile egg inside you is probably already breaking down as we speak.” I do a

little wriggle and confirm that the pressure is lessening. I nod, happy enough now that I know that no surprise alien baby is going to start growing inside me.

For a while we just lay there, looking at each other. As my body hums with satisfaction and our smiles mirror each other, it feels oddly peaceful. Like all roads converged on this moment and we would have always found ourselves here. “How...are you feeling?” I chuckle and raise a brow at him.

“No.”

“No?”

“That’s not what you want to ask me.” I smile and wait for him to try again.

“Alright.” His deep voice rumbles and Vrajan shuffles close enough that he could have kissed me if he wanted to. “Are you in any pain or discomfort?”

“None.” I am happy to report.

“Did you enjoy-”

“Obviously.” I snarkily cut him off, and he lowers his arm around me to spoon me to his chest. “So?” I sing with a curious edge. “No more pain, and hot sex three times a day? With a guy I consider to be my friend, and champion of justice for his entire species? *And* I’m pampered and paid at the end of it?” I playfully shrug. “I think I can live with that.” I wonder how I’m going to explain this to my sister. Oh yeah Cassie, I’m good. My indentured servitude has taken an unexpected turn. The Dynast may look like he’s stepped out of a horror film, but he’s sweet like a cupcake and dotes on me. He may have fangs, but he has no temper whatsoever. No vices to worry about, and I live in a luxurious space cruiser. I’m basically Mina to this alien Dracula. He has a monstrous cock, and I’ve learned I’m apparently into that, as when he bites me he pumps me full of an aphrodisiac. Anything else...oh right. He also lays an egg in me when he cums, but don’t worry. I can’t become his incubator unless it’s his mating season, and that’s 8 months away, so I’m good.

Hmm...I might leave some of that out when I speak to her...

“I am also pleased.” He whispers, but his voice is a throaty rumble as he smirks at me. Vrajan speaks to my lips and I swoon into his chest even more. “I think you are beautiful, courageous and lots of fun.” I blush as he peppers my face with kisses to punctuate his praise. “I also think you are delicious, and I consider *you* a friend as well. I truly hated seeing you suffer, but I was not allowed to discuss my blockers and Bonding Succour with you without my Queen’s consent.” He smiled and kissed me. “I got it after our last feed, don’t worry.”

“Oh, well that’s good I suppose.” I chuckle and snuggle to his chest. “Erm, Vrajan?”

“Yes?” His mouth rests against my forehead and my eyes start to droop closed.

“I’m kind of tired.”

“Then you should rest. I intend to guard you anyway.”

“Guard me?” I mumble a chuckle, already settling down for a nice nap when he drapes the silk blanket over us.

“It’s a Korvis thing.” He whispers and nuzzles at my forehead. “A natural guarding behaviour after a feed. You rest, Valerie, and I’ll watch over you.”

“Sure.” I am only half listening by this stage. I am not in a single ounce of pain and I happily drift off in his arms and snuggled to his chest. I’m warm, I’m safe, and I’m mentally purring like a kitten.

“For as long as you will allow it, I will always watch over you.” I absently feel lips on my brow before I drift off to sleep.

Romance Author



Chapter 20

One happy Dynast

Vrajan.

I smile and bask in the moment. This is the first time since Valerie became my feeding companion that I have enjoyed guarding her. Previously, I have tended to her as best I could, but my guilt made me shed tears over her as she slept. Normally by this point her neck looked badly bruised and swollen, and she whimpered in her sleep. I hated seeing her like that. I *love* seeing her like *this*.

Valerie is warm, peacefully still, and her body fits perfectly in my arms and to my body as I hold her. Her back pressed to my chest and her long brown hair swept away from her neck. I snuggle with her happily, and tend to the feeding mark with my tongue.

“Mmmm?” She moans in her sleep and groggily blinks her eyes open. “...Vrajan?” I smile around my tongue and continue to lap gently at her neck. “Are you licking me?”

“Mm hm.” I confirm and she tips her head to look at me with a raised brow. My tongue is still out of my mouth as she does, and it makes her chuckle.

“*Why* are you licking me?”

“I am tending to you.” I smile and lean down to nuzzle my mouth at her throat, and nudge her to face forward. I resume licking her neck and she shrugs and lets me.

“Tending to me *how*?” I pause to speak against her throat to answer her.

“Now that my secondary ducts are unblocked, trace amounts of my Bonding Succour is secreted into my saliva.” I lick a slow line over her four puncture wounds. “Not enough to

cause the feeding frenzy, but enough to make use of the healing properties of my succour.”

“Oh. Is that why I feel pain free right now?”

“Yes.” I sigh with relief. This is as nature intended. True symbiosis between the Korvis and their feeding partner. No pain, no fear, and nothing keeping them apart. “Nor will you feel pain ever again, aside from the initial penetration.” I hug her tenderly and go in for another lick, but she wriggles against me to turn onto her back. She smiles, tipping her chin towards me and looking up through her lashes.

“Yeah, speaking of *penetration*.” Her smile turns suggestive and my cheeks darken with a blush. “I’m a little, erm, sticky?” She lifts her voice at the end with a chuckle. “I need to go and freshen up.” I nod and lift my arm to release her. I miss her warmth and her soft body right away, but I hide my disappointment at our parting behind a smile. The mixture of our sexual fluids and the dissolved egg I implanted in her *has* made her upper thighs slick. I catch sight of some of my dark semen and lick my bottom lip into my mouth. Making love to Valerie was more amazing than drinking her blood. I am already anticipating our evening feed so I can make love to her again. “So I’ll just...erm...see you later?”

“Yes, of course.” I lay on my side with the red silk sheet draped over my waist in what I hope is a provocative display. I track her lovely form as she retreats from my bedroom. It’s clear she’s feeling awkward about what we just did, but I saw no regret or discomfort in her brown eyes. Once the door was shut I flopped onto my back and grinned up at the ceiling. That was *wonderful*.

A century ago, *that* was how my ancestors fed, three times a day! Her blood has always tasted divine, but the feel of her writhing and moaning filled me to the brim with delicious need. No wonder it’s called a feeding *frenzy*. From the first drop of my Bonding Succour hitting my tongue, I was consumed in the inferno of desire. I wanted all of Valerie. I wanted to drink her blood and feel it’s warmth seep into my very being. I wanted to join my body and my pleasure with hers, and we reached heights I never knew were possible.

I giggle and press my fingertips to my lips with one hand, as the other fists at my sheet to tug it up to my chest. Everything about what we just did excites me for more. I am not sure I could *ever* have my secondary ducts blocked again. I knew it would feel pleasurable once they were removed, but I just found true euphoria inside Valerie. Inside her neck and her...body.

I turn onto my side and smother my bubbling laughter into the pillow. I am elated. There was part of me that truly feared Valerie would not be willing to mate with me in exchange for pain relief. When she said she thought we would not be compatible, I knew that wasn't true...but a small voice inside me whispered that it could be. I know humans don't reproduce in the same way as Korvians do. I shake my head, seeing no need to dwell on something that did not come to pass, when the reality I have found myself in is so wonderful. I finally get out of the bed and retrieve one of the tablets to check I have filed the amendments correctly. Once I can see they have been submitted and confirmed as being received, I also send my mother a message.

My Queen. I have the best news. Miss Stone listened to everything I had to say, read all the documentation, and signed the amendments. She consented in every way to become bonded to me, and we have consummated the agreement fully. We have achieved full Symbiosis, and I am delighted. I believe she is as well. Rest assured, we shall not advertise the fact that I fully envenomate her, and Miss Stone supports my mission here in Theskian space. She has supported me in this task many times already. I look forward to giving you more updates on my progress towards gaining membership to the Theskian council, and my relationship with Miss Stone. With great pride and joy, your chosen Dynast and adoring son, Vrajan.

I cupped my cheeks, still blushing and smiling with happiness, when a beep on my tablet drew my attention. I knew it wouldn't be from my mother, since she very rarely replies to my emails right away. I sit back on the bed and swipe through various emails from the council and supporters, and then walk with the tablet into my bathroom. After freshening up, I dress into another soft chiffon robe, purple this time, and occupy myself with work. All whilst wishing time would hurry up and

bring us to the evening, so I can get my hands and fangs on my lovely Valerie once more.

Romance Author



Chapter 21

Calling Cassie

Valerie.

Fresh out of the shower and dressed in some comfortable pyjamas, I jump onto my bed to land with a bounce on my side beside the laptop Vrajan has allowed me to use. I stroke my fingers along the long metal base that will project the screen and keyboard for me, and tap my fingers across the holo-keys with anticipation. It's taken far too long to get A, Vrajan's trust to let me call her, and B, permission from *her* 'master', for her to talk to me. I would have hit the fucking roof that we needed *anyone's* permission to contact each other, but when you sign away your rights as an Indentured servant, you can't really start flapping at the mouth about these things. I enter the connection request to Cassie's vessel orbiting the starbase Lord knows where, and wait. I fiddle with some locks and absently start to braid them, when the connection is made.

"Val!" Cassie's beautiful freckly face fills the screen and I feel tears come to my eyes. Her short blonde hair is a wavy mess, and her blue eyes are brighter than ever. "Thank God. I've been worried about you."

"Me?" I cant my head to one side at how bizarre that sounded. "I'm the big sister here? That's *my* line?" She rolls her eyes at me and folds her arms. Unlike me, she's not draped comfortably on a luxury bed. I take in whatever I can see around Cassie, and see she's sitting in a metallic looking room and at a dull steel desk. She's sat in a chair, and she's wrapped in a thick blanket that looks knitted from a rainbow of coloured threads. "How are you Cas?"

"Great." She smiles at me and I don't see anything *off* in her eyes. She's never been a very good liar, so I watch her carefully for her tells. "I'm an accountant, and you know I'm at

home when it comes to doing math.” I nod, and my smile turns sad. She was *supposed* to be in charge of the family business’s finances. Not an accountant for some space captain’s little operation. “Life is pretty straight forward. My master is...” Ah, there is a tell. She looks off to one side when she’s trying to think of something quick. “...in the transport business. The only thing *I* have to do, is ensure everything is valued, stored, sold at a profit whenever possible, balance the expenses, and ensure the salaries are paid out correctly. Not to mention the profits recorded accurately. So really, the same stuff I was doing for Dad.”

“You mean before he pissed our future up a wall so we had to become indentured servants, and before we had our castes taken from us?” I *may* still be a little bitter about that one. “Sure. Tell me more about this transport business?” She tenses nervously, and I’m sure there is something there she is nervous about, but she shrugs it off and tries to put the spotlight on me instead.

“Nothing much to tell, unlike *you* Val. I saw the interview you and your master did.” She chewed her bottom lip anxiously and leans closer to the desk, and therefore the laptop on her end. “Your master is a *Korvis*?”

“Yes he is.” I smile at first, the memory of the last feed fresh in my memory, but then I see how worried Cassie looks. “The Dynast is everything I said on the interview and more. He’s a gentleman. He’s kind. He’s caring. He dotes on me. Spoils me. And he’s kinda...cute.” I realise what I’ve just admitted to, with the surprised look on my sister’s face. “He’s basically the opposite of every man I’ve ever met, and we’re very good friends.”

“But he bites you?” She doesn’t look convinced.

“Yes, Cassie.” I shrug at her. “I’m his feeding companion. That is the premise of my indentured servitude to the Dynast. To let him feed off me. It’s totally safe though, don’t worry.”

“Doesn’t that hurt?” She winced and sank into her shoulders.

“It did.” I blush, thinking about the ecstasy I found with him during his last feed. That Bonding Succour is *something else*. Even now, I am pain free and my neck is barely swollen to the touch either. “But, erm, it doesn’t anymore.”

“Oh?” She cocked her head to one side curiously. “So, you just got used to it?”

“Something like that.”

“How did-”

“Enough about me.” I chuckle and cut her off with a cheeky grin. “I know what you’re doing Cas. Stop with the 20 questions as a deflector shield. Tell me about your master. What was his name...” I chew the side of my cheek in thought as I try to think back to the Indentured Servitude Centre. “Captain Unthulo? Sacron, right?”

“Right.” Cassie blushed, the little minx, and cuddled up more under her knitted blanket. “The Captain owns this ship, the operation, and now *me*.” She snorts. “He treats me really well. Like, I’m his prized pet. I have my own quarters, whereas the rest of the crew have to share bunks, and my room is next to his on the upper deck. I think it might be part of the Indentured Servitude terms and conditions or something.”

“And are you okay?” I worry, hearing she’s on a ship with a load of men, and her room is right next to the Captain’s room. “No one is...pushing their luck with you, are they?”

“No!” She flusters and I have to admit, it’s rather funny how easy she is to tease. She is the daughter of a merchant, but she has mother’s constitution. Not when it comes to hard work, oh no. She’ll put sweat, blood and tears into a hard day’s work. When it comes to personal topics like this one though, she becomes a shy mess. “I-no of course not! The Captain doesn’t even think of me like that. I mean, I-” I smirk, about to ask her why she thought I was talking about the *Captain*, when Cassie looks up from the screen. She must be looking at someone at the opposite side of the room. “...Boss?”

“...I need to speak to you in my office.” I raise a brow. The owner of that voice sounded curt and tightly wound. Like every word was being restrained with his iron will. I watch my

sister's face and don't see any fear there. She's blushing and seems surprised to see her master, but she doesn't seem disturbed in any way. "Now."

"Yes Boss." She nods, and then looks back at the screen. "I'll call you again in a few days? Love you Val."

"Love you too Cas." I barely got out before the call went dead, and the screen went black. "Well, that guy is an asshole. I'm glad Vrajan is nothing like *him*." I turn off the laptop and the holo-screen vanishes. "At least Cassie seemed fine." In my mind I imagine her standing timidly to attention before a big burly Sacron Captain. Barking orders at her about the company books and profits. All I know is, he better keep all four of his hands off my sister, or I'll find him and break them all one knuckle at a time.

Romance Author



Chapter 22

The Theskian Council

Vrajan.

3 weeks later.

“-lack of support on this bill in congress, simply proves that the empire is not ready for the admission of the Korvis into the Theskian council.” The Prelka’s heads were both in agreement and nodded together. Why such a giant green oaf with two brains who has less intelligence than a regular person, was able to have *any* say in the future of my people, was downright insulting. Especially when you consider that the first interaction that the Theskian Empire had with the Prelka, was going to war in their quadrant. In fact, most races with membership to the empire have dark pasts, yet they are quick to pass judgement over all Korvis. I am sat at my desk and looking at a large holo-screen filled with the council members. The Prelka Councillor, Getrata, has run at both mouths openly about denying my admission to the council on behalf of the Hive collective. He is a hopeless cause and I waste no energy trying to get his support.

The Sacron Councillor, Olphan, is the eldest member of the council. His skin is dark blue, his eyes are darker brown, and he holds many scars from his military service as a general, before stepping up as a councillor for his race. All four of his arms are folded over his chest and he is stoic as ever. He very rarely gives his opinion until he has fully formed it. Thus far, he has not yet expressed a positive or negative view towards the Korvis. He has suggested they exercise caution, but always allows me to speak.

The human Councillor, Justina Andrews, seems to be the one who is most likely to approve my membership. She is openly curious and asks many questions. At first I found this

invasive, but ever since my interview with Valerie went viral, she has asked *more* questions. I now see her inquisitiveness for what it truly is. Genuine curiosity. She is also the youngest of the Councillors, in her mid 30s, and her long blonde hair is always twisted in a hair grip that reminds me of crab legs.

Speaking of sea creatures, beside her screen is the one showing the Tallahestra Councillor. They are referred to 'affectionately' as Kraken by the humans, since they resemble that mythical creature for them. Pharom has his lower body of powerful tentacles swaying in a tank of water. His upper body is 'humanoid', with his arms crossed over the edge of his tank as he looks at the screen. He is cerulean from head to tentacle tips, with pink suckers, and his eyes are bright blue. He has darker blue markings as natural camouflage when hiding in seaweed, and he wears a crown to signify his rank. As do I. His crown appears to be made not of metal like mine, but coral spikes and pearly shells. Pharom is not quite as curious as his human counterpart, but is far more so than the others.

The final Councillor was Ninthor. He wore large black sunglasses to hide his insectoid eyes. His skin was pale white, his thick mane of hair black and spiky, with two long feather like antennae, white, which swept back over his head like horns. He wore a tailored black suit, waistcoat included with pin stripes, a pocket watch, and a polished black cane. His cravat was frilly, and his black tarsus feet would have been visible after the hem of his trousers, if he wasn't sat at a desk. What *was* vividly apparent, and marked Ninthor as a Qeknian, were his four insectoid wings. They shimmered with blue, black, yellow and green swirls to draw the eye. Ninthor is typically timid, and it was his people that bore the brunt of the rogue Korvis tribe's abuse, so he is the least likely to approve my admission to the council.

These five people were my main obstacles to achieve my goal; to one day have every member of my race experience what I currently have with Valerie. To have the freedom of movement, trade, equality in the Theskian empire, *and* to achieve full symbiosis with a feeding companion they truly connect with. Not only are the Korvis struggling to survive on Synth-Red and Regen pills, but our population is in decline since we have far too few females and no hosts for our eggs.

This was not an issue when the implantation of our eggs was carried out within our feeding companions. Since our exile, only the Queens have been able to carry them, and she can only bear one at a time. The Korvis are desperate, and my mission must be a success to secure our future.

“Do you not think the reason that the bill to allow Korvis admission would be carried out in a fairer forum, if *I* were permitted to speak on behalf of the Korvis? As per my appointed role?” I smile beneath my green veil, and my M shaped crown catches the light as I tip my head to one side. “Thus far, the bill has only been spoken about without *any* input from those whom it concerns directly. As the Dynast, I speak for my people, and have yet to be permitted to *do so* in Congress.” I offer my gloved palms to the screen, and Justina nods, agreeing with me. “If the future of your *entire* species was being discussed, wouldn’t *you* expect to be present as the representative of your species?”

“I would.” Olphan answers firmly.

“As would I.” Justina agrees.

“I think we would all say the same.” One of Pharom’s tentacles snaked over the rim of his tank. “However, at the time that the bill was to be discussed, you were without a feeding companion, and therefore, you were not deemed *safe* to have on site *to* attend congress.”

“As you are all aware? That has now changed.” I declare with pride.

“Yes. We all saw that little *show* you and your pet put on.” Getrata’s left head sneered. I growl, surprising even myself, and have to reign myself in. Justina flinched, and Olphan leaned forward to narrow his dark eyes on me.

“With all due respect? Miss Stone is my feeding companion, not my pet. She deserves no less respect than any of us.” At that, Justina and Pharom seemed to curve their lips with a smile. “I care a great deal for her-” Justina even seemed to ‘aww’ under her breath. “-and we Korvis hold the relationship we share with our companion as a matter of deep trust and honour. I have and will continue to weather disrespect,

prejudice, and outright hate, but I will *not* tolerate the same aimed towards *her*.”

“Would you prefer I call her your indentured servant, then? Since that’s what she is?” Getrata’s right head sniggered. “Deep trust and honour my arse. She signed a contract and will be paid for her obedience and service.” That stung. He’s technically not wrong, but that’s not the whole truth either. Not anymore.

“I was under the impression that the Caste system of the Theskian Empire, and the institution of the Indentured Servitude Services, was the foundations of Theskian society and hierarchy?” I counter smoothly. “Are you therefore telling me, that you disagree with the use of Indentured Servants Councillor? Or that this is not a meaningful method of employment?” I smirk, my diamond pupils dilated with the thrill of the hunt, as I make the Prelka Councillor sweat on both his brows.

“I hope that is *not* your opinion Getrata? Since you happen to have, what, *four* Indentured Servants in your household?” Ninthor sniggers, and that surprises me. Normally the insectoid sides with the Prelka against me.

“As servants, yes.” He tries to defend himself. “They know their place, and we do not have ‘relationships’ with them.”

“And are you therefore saying, that it is impossible to respect and care for an indentured servant?” I continue to back Getrata into a corner for the others to turn on.

“N-not like you are trying to suggest!” He snarls with both mouths, in too deep to back track, and I grin. He just started to dig his own hole. “They are nothing more than servants bought at market!”

“Then you are alone in that opinion, I’m sure. I met my husband through Indentured Servitude in our household as an apprentice.” Justina scowled. “We now have four children together.”

“You *must* be aware that Indentured Servants are vital surrogates for my people? Mothering our infants?” Pharom

angrily slapped his tentacles on the water's surface, and looked like he would drag himself out of his tank to constrict around the Prelka, had they been in the same room. "My *mother* happens to have been an Indentured servant!"

"Ay. A Sacron, if I remember correctly." Olphan lowered all four arms with his hands in tight blue fists. "As is the nanny to my many babes. The Indentured Servitude system keeps our economy, and our multi-cultural society, working towards prosperity and cohabitation. Not to mention, long lasting employment and connections."

I sit back, my hands cupped on my lap, and enjoy the discord I have just conducted. My Queen will be pleased when I tell her how much ground I've gained for the Korvis today. The Prelka grunts an apology, unable to take the united criticism of his peers.

"I agree with your view of Indentured Servants. It is only through this system, that I met Miss Stone, and I care for her a great deal. She accompanies me in all my dealings, and would be by my side, if you were to allow me to represent the Korvis and discuss the bill to allow my admission at congress?" I appear at ease, but on the inside I am anxious. All this will be for nothing, if they don't allow me entry to the council debate chambers. Previously, my lack of feeding companion had them united in refusing my admission to even the conversation about my membership to the council. Now that I have Valerie, have I done enough groundwork with them to change their minds?

"As long as you have Miss Stone with you, I see no reason to deny the Dynast the right to represent his people, when this bill concerns his entire race." Justina smiles, and I am quite sure I have a yes vote from her already. Humans love social media, and my interview with Valerie positively increased public opinion of the Korvis. She also seems to react positively when I talk about how I care for Valerie. I must remember that.

"I second that." Pharom nods, settling back into his tank and bows his head to the screen. Good. Another potential supporter there. His mother was an Indentured Servant, and his species rely more heavily on them for breeding than the Korvis will. He is another potential supporter.

“I also think he should attend, though you must understand, we will have to increase security accordingly, and your movement within the council building will be limited.” Olphan nods, and I bow my head to him as I did the others. He is ever cautious, but that is still enough support to get me into the debate. 3 out of 5 is enough. If I can get these three Councillors to approve my admission as well, that is enough. My chest swells with joy. This is the first step towards a brighter future for my people.

“Of course. I will adhere to any security measures you see fit and fair.” I bow my head again.

“As long as you do, there is no reason to deny the Dynast’s request.” Ninthor pursed his pale lips together, and his shimmering wings flexed restlessly behind him. He wasn’t happy with this development, but he was at least being reasonable about it.

“I want to go on record saying that I do not agree, and this is a terrible idea.”

“Noted.” Olphan answers Getrata, and then snaps his head back to the screen at the sound of the door to my office opening. I look up over the row of screens and smile at the sight of Valerie.

“Oh, I’m sorry. I thought you’d be done by now.” She chuckles nervously with her hands up and starts to back up.

“That’s quite alright, Miss Stone.” I chuckle, and roll my wrist for her to come closer. She is fully dressed in one of her thick woolly sweaters she likes to wear in between feeds, and it comes down to her mid thigh. This one is red with black spots on it, and her thermal leggings are black. “Would you like to meet my dear feeding companion?” I offer to the council and Justina’s reaction is both predictable, and endearing.

“I would be delighted to meet her.” Justina leans closer to her screen as if it was a window she could peer around. In fact, everyone appears curious to meet Valerie. Getrata sneers bitterly with both his faces, but doesn’t voice any reluctance to meet her.

“Oh, erm, aren’t these like, really important people you’re talking to?” She strains an awkward smile.

“The Theskian Councillors.” I chuckle at her comically shocked expression. “Come now Miss Stone? We both know you are *not* shy.”

“Well, *no*, but I’m also not a politician either. What if I fu-er-screw up?”

“Come closer lass.” Olphan calls out, and he’s grinning, amused by how she nearly cursed. He has all four hands on his desk and leaning forward with anticipation.

“Okay. But for the record?” She has a finger raised as she marches over to stand beside me. “I’m Merchant caste, so don’t expect Gentry caste level suave.”

“Good. You’ll say what you mean, then?” Phoram sniggers and looks Valerie up and down. I resist the urge to do anything defensive like growl at him or pull her onto my lap to make my ownership clear.

“I always do.” She shrugged and eyes up the screens curiously. “I can’t believe I’m looking at the Theskian Council.” She cheekily grins at me, and I start to lose myself in her eyes. “Are you going to be much longer? Not to rush you, but we have plans?” Her long hair slips over her shoulder as she leans over to brace a hand on the arm of my chair.

“Oh, have I lost track of time?” I fluster and reach for a button on my desk that displays the time. “Oh dear, you’re quite right.”

“Oh, is it *dinner* time?” Getrata speaks up with a disgusting smirk on his left face, and a scowl on the right one.

“Not that it’s any of your *business*, but I have a dress fitting for a fancy party we’ve been invited too, and we have an appointment to make.” Valerie shot back at the Prelka before I could even blink. I tensed, worried that perhaps trying to capitalise on the positive view towards Indentured Servants by bringing Valerie over my have backfired. She is fiery, my Valerie. “We need to leave in 20 minutes.” She blanks the Councillors and leans in to kiss me through my veil. It was quick, and felt natural for her. My eyes widen and I am flustered

by the intimate gesture. “I’ll go and change, since I doubt they will let me in wearing my comfy lounge wear.” She chuckles and tugs at her woolly jumper. “Don’t be late.” She winks at me, then turns to wave at the screens. “Nice to kind of meet you. Later.” She doesn’t wait for their reply and walks out as if she hadn’t just met the Theskian Councillors. I forget myself for a moment, and cup my cheeks with both hands through my veil. I’ve come over bashful at the kiss, and the sound of someone clearing their throat gets my attention. I brush my hands down my robe and chuckle awkwardly at that intimate moment having such an audience.

“Yes, Miss Stone is very forward spoken. I like that about her.”

“I think you like more than how forward *spoken* she is?” Olphan chuckles suggestively.

“And it seems to be mutual.” Justina cooed. “My husband sometimes comes into my office to remind me of other engagements too. Just like that.”

“Stars wept.” Getrata rolled all his eyes and appeared to want to gag to one side.

“When you say you care a great deal about your feeding partner, you mean...in the traditional sense, don’t you?” Ninthor had a knowing look on his face, even with his sunglasses hiding his eyes.

“Yes, and it’s all legally registered.” I answer him, as his species was once the regular feeding companion of choice for the Korvis. Our planets were the closest together, after all. The others may not know about Bonding Succour and the mating aspect of Korvian relationships with their feeding partners, but the Qeknians did. As well as being abused by the rogue tribe, he *should* recall the many meaningful bonded pairs between our people throughout time. I hope the last century has not erased that from their historical records. “We are very happy.”

“So it would seem.” Ninthor’s antennae tips rub together behind his head and he holds me on the edge for a while, before huffing with a nod. “I look forward to meeting Miss Stone in person.” I smile behind my veil and it reaches my lilac eyes. That has to be a good sign? “You may need to teach her ‘Gentry

level manners', however, as she can't snap at Councillors as she just did."

"Agreed." Getrata sneered from both mouths in unison.

"Oh I don't know?" Olphan sniggered and rubs his chin with one of his hands. "It will be nice to have another person in the room who get's straight to the point without mincing."

"I also have no interest in changing a single thing about Miss Stone. I think she is wonderful exactly the way she is."

"Awww." Justina pressed her hands to her chest. I have her number. She's a romantic, and a strong yes vote. "Let's get our PA's to agree on a date for the bill discussion, and make it sooner rather than later." Everyone agrees eagerly, aside from Getrata who grunts with agreement after everyone else. He is also the first to log off. I bow to them all in turn, and once I am alone in the office, I take a moment to bask in my success. That went better than I could have hoped. Soon I will stand with the Theskian Councillors and make my case for admission. Once I'm a Councillor, I can petition for visas to be made accessible to more Korvis. Yes, they will need to have feeding companions before they can enter Theskian territories, but that's just the first step.



My eyes land on the door to my office, and I scramble out from behind my desk. I march at pace towards her bedroom, my green chiffon robe billowing behind me, and I knock eagerly on her door. None of my success, or happiness, would have been possible without her.

"Valerie?" I cup my hands together and wait for her to open the door. When she does, she seems at ease, until she realises I'm purring at her and leaning into her personal space.

"Erm, so, did you have a good meeting?"

"Oh my, yes." I lift and remove my crown to place on a side table. "Valerie?"

"Yes." She answers my question, hearing it in my hungry tone and seeing it in my predatory gait. She chews her

bottom lip and reads my mood perfectly. She kicks off her slippers and socks, as I unfasten the side of my veil. Once my headdress is removed, she whips her jumper over her head and tousles her long brown hair. I tug at the fastenings of my robe so it slides like silk over my shoulders to pool around my feet. She unfastens the back of her bra and throws it to the ground. “I wondered how long you would make me wait.” She breathlessly moaned and took hold of my boxers at my hips. “We were due to feed an hour ago.” She tugs my boxers down my long white legs and lowers to one knee.

“The meeting went on longer than pla-” The moment my cock is free, she licks at my black fleshy mandibles. They unspiral and capture the tip of her tongue. I brace my hands on either side of the doorway and watch her greedily. She strokes my cock with both hands to stimulate the sensitive flesh beneath, and the black ridges on top. Her tongue teases at the inner tendrils, and pleasure sparks up from the intimate caress. Her lips seal around my mandibles, and she moans as she kisses my cock. I arch my head and growl up at the ceiling. She could bring me to sweet completion just like this, but I want far more. I need it. My fangs start to bead with venom, and my hunger grows. “I need you.” I reach down and card my fingers through her hair to gently coax her to look up at me. “Give me your neck.” She teases me by sliding her tongue free slowly. “Valerie.” I whimper with need, and lift her by her biceps to bring her back up to her feet.

“Woah!” She laughs with a smile once she’s balanced on her feet. “I forget you’re super strong.” Her arms wrap around my waist, and I nestle my cock between her thighs. I almost get my mandibles to work her slick labia apart to delve inside her, but she backs up and stops me. I grin, my Bonding Succour coating my black lips, as I watch her jump playfully onto the bed. She lands on her back, bends her knees, and parts them with a smirk to offer herself to me. “Come and get me, Vrajan.” I snarl with need and pounce on her. She laughs, bouncing on the bed again from the impact.

“I already have you, Valerie.” I cradle the back of her head and tip her to the right to offer the left side of her neck to my fangs. “You are *mine*.” I growl, bare my fangs, and bite her. She cries out and embraces me with her whole body. Her hands

grip my shoulders to anchor herself, and her legs cage themselves around my waist.

“Fuck me.” Valerie begs, and I will not deny her. Her blood is nirvana on my tongue, and I pump her full of my venom. My Bonding Succour floods her senses, and mine, and our bodies become consumed with the need to bond. To mate. To chase after each other’s pleasure. My cock mandibles tease apart her labia, and this time she can’t escape me. I slide my ridged length inside her tight wet heat, and buck my hips to thrust all the way in. She claws at my back and moans, and I feel it in my mouth as I drink from her. I drag my tongue over her throat, working her blood quickly into my mouth, as my venom is already starting to heal her. I remove my fangs from her neck, and lave the bite mark to sample every last drop of her rich taste. Now I’m no longer fang deep inside her, the real mating can begin. She knows it too, as I feel her brace herself for it. Her pupils are as dilated as mine, when I begin the frenzy. Like wild beasts in heat, I ram her with my cock. I kiss her and worship her, moaning as we rut together wantonly. “Oh fuck! Those ridges! Mother fucker.” I smirk into the kiss, knowing she’s talking about the segmented ridges on my cock. I’m bombarding her g-spot with pleasure with each thrust, and she’s stretched wonderfully around my girth.

We fit perfectly together. As companions who enjoy each other’s company. As partners working towards the freedom of the Korvis. As passionate lovers. All of it. I adore this woman, and I can’t even fathom a day in my life without Valerie in it. I am addicted to her no nonsense personality, her loyalty, her quick wit, and her beauty. These last three months have been a dream, and I never want it to end. When I kiss her, feed from her, make love to her, and tell her she is mine? I mean it.

Contract be damned. In 9 months time when it ends, I will not let her walk out of my life. I will not be without Valerie. “Ooooooh Vrajan!” She shudders with pleasure in my arms and all around my cock. I lick at her lips and look right into her eyes, pumping my cock deep inside her with each thrust, and pour my feelings through my lilac eyes.

I love you Valerie. We were made for one another, and I will make you see that before the end of your contract.

“Val.” I whimper, so close to cuming, I can feel my egg sack bulging at the base of my cock. We writhe together, and every inch of ecstasy I find with her, she finds with me. I can’t hold back much longer. I awkwardly shove my knees up the mattress so I can kneel up, and I drag her hips towards me to keep her seated firmly on my cock. I lick my thumb, and when she sees what I’m planning, she nods up at me with encouragement. I buck my hips into hers and thumb at her clit, desperate to finish her off before I implant within her. I purr and drink in the sight of her as she starts to devolve into whimpers and trembles with anticipation.

“I’m close.” She is restless, meeting my thrusts and playing with her breasts. I watch her greedily as she tweaks at her nipples and moans my name on her lips. “Vrajan. I...” She tenses and begs me not to stop. My gorgeous future Queen looks magnificent as she cums. Her long brown hair splayed on the mattress around her. Her lips parted in ecstasy and her eyes shut. Her pussy grips my cock and destroys the last of my resistance. I hiss with delight and press myself flush to her. My mandibles tease at her cervix, and if she was ovulating, they would deliver the egg to her womb. My inner tendrils guide the egg along my bulging shaft, and would have also passed the egg through her cervix, if it wasn’t sealed shut. Instead, it presses to her and goes no further. That’s the pressure she feels, and knowing my egg is inside her pleases me. Even though I know it isn’t fertilised, I love the idea of having implanted inside her. I think about her carrying my child one day, and hope she will give her consent one day to host my son. There is plenty of time for that. She’s only been my feeding companion 3 months. I am sure how I feel about *her*, but I think she will need more time before she feels the same way about *me*. I am hopeful, and determined, that she will give herself to me as my bonded even after the contract has finished.

Only once the last tremors of pleasure have passed, do I smile happily at her and slide free of her.

“You are so beautiful.” I purr and kiss her lips, as I move to spoon her to my chest. As always, I turn her so her back presses to my chest, and I can lick at her puncture wounds with ease. I take blissful pleasure in tending to her wound with my tongue.

“And you are so *tardy*.” She chuckles and snuggles down happily in my arms. “We were meant to feed an hour ago. That way, we could have made the dress fitting appointment. I wondered if we would be able to get it out of the way and then feed when we got back, but you came to my room all frisky and hungry.”

“I apologise only for the tardiness.” I chuckle and speak to her neck as I continue to lick at her wound between my words. “I will reschedule the appointment in a moment. We can always go tomorrow if they can’t see us later.”

“Humph.” She huffed. “I suppose, but it’s rude to miss appointments.”

“You are quite right.” I sing softly. “But I fear, when it comes to my hunger for you, I am incapable of putting anything else first.”

“My blood is that good huh?” She teases me, and I reach down to turn her chin so she looks me in the eye.

“It is not only your blood that I crave, Valerie.” For a moment I think she understands the full weight of my feelings for her, but she laughs it off with a roll of her eyes.

“Yes yes, we have hot sex too, and the Bonding Succour makes it even better. Trust me, I’m addicted too. Literally.” She chuckles, but my expression remains serious. I need her to understand how I feel about her, even if I’m not brave enough to spell it out for her yet.

“Your body is lovely, of course. But it is actually the way you conduct yourself, that fans the flames of my passion.” She gulps and there is something nervous in her brown eyes. I tenderly kiss her shoulder and rest my cheek there as I smile at her. “I am sorry for being *tardy*. Did you start to suffer any side effects?”

“No.” She shrugged and smiled, glad to be on safer ground again, no doubt. For whatever reason, Valerie is up front with her opinions, but not with her feelings. She begins to withdraw whenever I try to coax them out of her for too long. I am, however, making more ground each time I do. “It must take longer than being an hour late to start making me feel any side

effects. What would they be, by the way?" She rolls her eyes when I duck my head back down to her neck to resume licking at her bite mark.

"After several hours without a feed, you would experience increased arousal, agitation and aggression towards anyone who isn't your Korvis partner, and the single occupation of finding said partner. The same goes me too, just so you are aware." I give her lovely throat some tender licks to work more of my bonding succour topically into her swollen skin. "If we are unable to engage in the feeding frenzy within 24 hours, we start to feel anxiety and pain. Your organs will start going into true withdrawal, and I will starve. Your organs could go into shock, and you could perish. As would I." When I lift my face from her neck I see she's looking at me warily. "We would die without each other, unless we are weaned off each other gradually."

"So at the end of the contract, how would we 'wean' off each other?" I trap my tongue between my teeth. I am quite determined that shall not come to pass, however, I answer her anyway.

"We would start by extending the time between two of the feeds, and I would supplement with Synth-Red. We would then reduce the number of times you feed me to twice a day, instead of three times a day. Once stable in that regard, we would repeat the first stage. Extend the time between those two feeds. I would consume more Synth-Red, and then we would drop off one of the feeds. Eventually you would no longer feed me directly, and I would have to give you a diluted sample of my Bonding Succour to finish weaning your body from it." My stomach turns. I never want that to happen. "It has been done many times, and safely, don't worry."

"Right." She nods, reassured, but also not naive enough to overlook the intensity to my lilac stare. "Well, that's 9 months away." She offers her neck to me as an obvious way to distract me. I am pleased for the diversion, and resume tending to her with my tongue. "Don't forget to rearrange the appointment with the dress fitters."

"I will do so, and apologise, once I have finished." I tug her blanket up to cover us to keep her warm as I lick and kiss at

her neck. I push all thoughts of the end of her indentured servitude from my mind and simply enjoy the moment. Right now, Valerie is mine. She's in my arms, her blood is in my veins, and my semen is on her thighs. Perfection.

Romance Author



Chapter 23

Yes my Queen

Valerie.

I huff and hold my arms out for Cassie's verdict. She leans closer to the laptop she's using in her metallic office, and looks me up and down. This is so weird. I'm *not* the girlie one. Growing up when we went to the Merchant conventions and partied, I would wear a power suit, since I was destined to be the boss bitch of our company once Dad retired. Cassie would wear something feminine and cute. Having *her* look over *my* dress and tell me to twirl for her, felt like we'd reversed roles.

"Well? Is the verdict in or what?"

"I...oh Val." She swallows a lump in her throat and her eyes start to water. "I don't think I've ever seen you look so beautiful." My grumpy pout softens and I avert my eyes bashfully.

"Well, it's a nice dress." I shrug and gather enough of the skirt in either hand to swish it. Just a little bit. The material is mustard yellow with a golden shimmer where the light hits it. The fabric was like taffeta, and flared out from a golden chain of ivy leaves below my bust. The fabric gathered across my breasts and over my right shoulder, before ruffling in a baggy sort of way, like a waterfall of sunshine, to the elasticated cuff at my wrist. The left of my neck and shoulder is bare, and the arm sleeve is elasticated from my upper bicep, to billow down in the same fashion as my right sleeve. I've pinned the back of my hair with slides, so it falls in wavy brown curls over the left side of my neck, with a few waves framing my face. I don't do makeup, so this will have to do. "Do I really look beautiful?" I try to ask like I'm questioning her judgement, but honestly, I'm not used to that sort of flattery.

“I think you are beautiful, courageous and lots of fun.”

“You are so beautiful.”

“Your body is lovely, of course. But it is actually the way you conduct yourself, that fans the flames of my passion.”

Oh, erm, other than the last few months with Vrajan, of course. I swear Space Dracula is trying to make me turn pink with all the flattery he showers me with. More so since we're horizontal tango champions three times a day. Oh là là.

“You look stunning Val!” Cassie cooed at me, and I was about to say something snarky to redirect attention from my appearance. Only, a knock at my bedroom door distracted me.

“Don't come in!” In a fluster I hurry towards the door, for fear that Vrajan is about to walk in without his veil on. Cassie wouldn't mind, of course, but I knew *he* would. I press my finger to the lock button, just in case, and exhale with relief that I got there before he came in. “I have my sister on a video call. Do you still want to come in?”

“Yes Miss Stone. I am fully presentable to see your sister, if that is alright?” He chuckles, and must have realised why I yelled at him to stop. “I normally don't interrupt your time with your sister, but we must depart to make the shuttle transfer for the Gala.”

“Of course. Come on in.” I smile and unlock the door, turning to walk back towards Cassie with a smile. A couple of weeks ago Vrajan came in to my room whilst I was talking to Cassie. He handed me a delivery of some scarfs and shawls he'd ordered for me, and neither of them expected me to carry out introductions. Ha. It was priceless. They were both fawning and fussing like the gentle souls they are. I'm glad Cassie and Vrajan have met, as she's much more at ease with me being the feeding companion to a Korvis, now that she's seen him and heard me make him laugh. “We need to head out to the Gala now Cas, so I'll catch up with you later.”

“Sure thing sis. Have fun.” She waved at me and I playfully saluted her before hanging up.

“Alright. Let's go and mosey with some important people.” I grin and turn around to face Vrajan. “I swear not to

swear, and not to stand on your toes *too* much.” I’m still grinning when I notice the way he’s looking at me. He has a hand pressed to his chest and he seems to be in a state of shock. “What? Is something on my face?”

“Oh my, no, I...” He averted his lilac gaze to the screen to check the call had ended, and then lowered his veil. Vrajan walked right up to me and held my hands in his out by my sides to really look me over. “You are the loveliest vision. You do not know this, but like I wear green as the Dynast when performing my duties, the Queen of each Hive wears golden yellow.” I blush, realising I’m dressed in a way that’s making him think of me as a Queen. “If you were wearing a veil and a crown, you would absolutely pass for a Korvis Queen. Standing before her Hive to fill them with confidence and awe.”

“Er...” Was my intelligent response in the face of so much flattery. My cheeks are pink and my eyes are wide. “... should I change? Is this, erm, too much?” Vrajan was with me when I went to get fitted for a dress, but he must not have realised what colour it was going to be.

“Not for you.” His smile made my knees damsel level weak, damn it. “If I had known you would be dressed as a Queen, I would have had a crown commissioned for you.”

“I’m hardly going to w-”

“Although?” He chuckles and reels me closer with both hands to step towards him. “It’s probably a good thing I wasn’t aware of just how majestic you were going to look tonight before you fed me today.” Vrajan leaned down and licked his lips in a way that spoke straight to my pussy. “Because I rather think I would ruin that dress with my ardour. Even now, I feel a gluttonous desire to slip my fangs into your neck to drink you deeply, and then...” His breathing quickens and his throat bobs as he swallows thickly. I find myself leaning my head to the right, inviting him to make good on that promise.

“And then?” My voice is husky with need and my body hums with it.

“And then.” He ghosts his black lips over mine, and the faintest hit of Bonding Succour seeps into me from the contact. After all? It’s in his saliva now, and he licked his lips. “No we

mustn't." He releases my hands and staggers back a step. "I can't feed from you again today." I turn my head to look at him and his robes are tenting where his prehensile cock searches for my heat.

"Are you hungry?"

"No." Vrajan leans against the wall like he's trying to restrain himself there. "Yes."

"Which is it?" Fuck, I can't blame him for struggling to think straight. I can barely find two brain cells that aren't screaming for sex to put a coherent thought together myself. "Do you want me or not?"

"Oh, I want you, Valerie." He growls, and that gravely noise plucks at my clit to come fucking hither. "Oh my Queen."

"Vrajan?"

"Yes?"

"Do you *have* to bite me for us to have sex?" Because I'm so horny right now I could burst.

"Well, technically no, but-"

"Oh thank God." I march forward and pin him to the wall. My hands hurry to remove his crown and headdress whilst I kiss the living daylight out of him. I have no idea how he managed to hold my hands, talk to me sweetly, and make me *this* wet, but damn I am desperate for Vrajan to touch me. "Fuck me." I demand, and his hands fist and fight with my skirt to bunch it around my hips. All the while we moan and kiss like we're drinking in ecstasy from a shared well of desire. I have no idea how his fangs aren't catching my lips and tongue, but I'm more preoccupied with shoving my panties down and getting his dick out to care.

"Valerie, my beautiful Queen." He moans and the moment I've lifted the skirt of his green chiffon robe out of the way to shove his boxers down, he shoves me, causing me to stumble backwards. My ass bumps into the vanity table, and he shoves me around to face it. "Look at how beautiful you are." My hands brace on the table and he shoves my skirt up to my waist. I can see the soft curve of my ass in the vanity mirror

over my shoulder. “Is it any wonder I am addicted to you?” He uses his right foot to slide mine to spread me, and the fleshy petals of his cock end slide between my slick pussy lips. Oh fuck, I’m wet.

“Holy fuck.” He rolls his hips to slap to my ass. One hand is holding my skirt up my back, and the other is holding his robes up by his chest. I lower to my forearms and greedily watch the show in the mirror. The flex of his abs with each firm thrust. The exotic black spiralling stripes across his stark white skin. The teasing hint of fangs through his moaning lips as he fucks me. His dilated diamond pupils are lusty against their lilac canvas. “Oh fuck. Harder. Fuck me harder. Please.” I’m begging and bucking my hips back to meet each thrust, whilst looking at my wanton face in the mirror. Passion swollen lips. Sex hungry brown eyes. The beginning beads of sweat on my brow.

“Yes my Queen.” He moans and really works his core to ram me into the table. Fuck *me*, he’s putting that superior strength to good use, and he still manages not to hurt me. I can feel absently the undulation of his cock inside me with each slick drag of his length against my g-spot. His fleshy mandibles are teasing at my cervix every time he bottoms out. “I’m going to egg you. A-are you close Val?”

“Don’t stop.” I beg him through my reflection, so close I could cry. “Oh God, fuck, please, I need it.” He purred and released his robe. He leaned forward reached around my hip to press the pad of his middle finger to my clit. “Mother fucker.” I cried to the mirror, and didn’t recognise the wanton woman mewling there. “V-rajan. So close. Don’t stop.” He grinned, baring his fangs to the air as he rammed me with abandon and milked my clit for every sweet drop of pleasure he could. I dug my nails into the table and came with a less than ladylike grunt, but from the grin on his face he *loved* it. My eyes rolled and my knees shook with the force of my climax squeezing my breath from my lungs. I could taste it, it felt so good. I fluttered my eyes open to see that not only had Vrajan watched me cum, but the moment he succumbed to euphoria as well. He pressed me firmly to the table, pinning me there as his cock bulged from base to tip.

“Fuck.” I raised a brow, surprised and amused to hear the F bomb slip from *his* lips as he came, and I felt when he pushed an egg against my cervix. I was about to comment on this, when I saw him cant his head to one side and his smile grow into a devilish smirk.

“What are you....?” I widened my eyes at the pushing sensation *continuing*. It felt a tad uncomfortable, and I was getting worried he was pushing the egg too hard into my cervix, when something seemed to *give*. As a healthy young human woman, I can attest to the fact that *nothing* should just *give* ‘up there’. “Vrajan?!” I snap at him, drawing the dots together from the ridiculously happy grin he’s now wearing and the way he’s avoiding my stare in the mirror. “Did you just push a mother fucking egg into my womb?”

“Only the inner egg. You must be ovulating. Your cervix is, as it were, open for delivery.” My left eye twitches and he chuckles nervously at me. “It isn’t fertilised. It will break down rather naturally.” He shrugs and gathers his robe with his free hand before it can get sticky. “I really enjoyed fully implanting you with an egg, Valerie.” If he hadn’t just popped a fucking egg past my uterus, I would be turned on by the way he licked his bottom lip into his mouth and purred my name. As it is? I’m still a tad *miffed*.

“Fertilised or not, you should still *ask* a lady if you can fire an egg inside her uterus. Regardless if her cervix is *open for delivery*.”

“Oh, I’m sorry.” He frowns and harpoons the flames of my anger. “I thought...you’re right, of course. I should have asked. I am *very* sorry Valerie. Please forgive me?” Damn it, his eyes are watering. He thinks I’m really angry with him. I damn well should be...but...screw it. I’m totally not. It would have been a very different story had the egg been *loaded*, but it wasn’t, and he knew it wasn’t. Korvis mating season isn’t for another 7 months.

“I forgive you.” He sighs with relief and smiles at me.

“Thank you. I will make sure to ask next time.” His smile is bright, and I chew my lips as I weigh up if I want to address the fact he’s thinking about the ‘next time’ he can ‘egg

me'. Man, my life and my vocabulary has changed so much in the last 4 months. I'm still warm and fuzzy from the very hot sex we just had, so I decide to let it go. For now. "My beautiful Queen." He leans down and tries to nuzzle my hair from the left side of my neck.

"What are you doing?" I chuckle at the tickle of his nose.

"Tending to...oh?" He leans back and bashfully clears his throat. "I was going to tend to your neck but...I didn't bite you." I grin, fully aware of that fact. "We didn't make love because of my Bonding Succour. We had sex because we just... wanted to."

Oh crap. He's right. There was no biting or envenomation to whip us up into a mating frenzy. We...kind of did that all on our own. I have *no idea* how I should feel about that. I must have looked awkward, as he chuckled nervously and tried to pretend he didn't say anything. "So? That was delightful. I suggest you hold your skirt around your waist, and I'll back up to get some wipes. I'd hate to stain your lovely dress. W-we also have the Gala to attend. It's easy for me to change my attire, so I'll do that promptly."

Vrajan fussed over me in a way that was to distract me from the truth grenade that just went off in our pants and then our faces. We just had sex because we *wanted* to. No Bonding Succour was used in the making of this sex-tactular escapade. Vrajan took one look at me, told me how beautiful he thinks I am, and I pounced on him. We became hornier than two teenagers in the back of a cruiser. It was all us. What I felt, was all me. "Here you go." He carefully presses a few wipes between my legs so I don't leak onto the dress. "I'll see you by the transfer airlock?" I didn't get to answer, as he fled from the room. Probably because he's freaking out as much as I am.

As I 'freshen up' and try to look as pristine as I did before, I'm oddly nervous about going out there to face Vrajan. Everything was really simple before when 'the venom made us do it'. Literally. No such excuse was responsible for the romp we just had.

“Valerie, my beautiful Queen. Look at how beautiful you are. Is it any wonder I am addicted to you?”

Addicted to me...without the need for his venom? And how exactly do *I* feel about Vrajan, if I don't need his venom... to want him so badly I chased after him and started this whole thing?

Romance Author



Chapter 24

Where we stand

Vrajan.

I can tell she's tense beside me as we sit together in the transfer shuttle. She's picking at her nails and hasn't said a word since we left. Rather predictably, the security in charge of the Gala are taking their time to process the Korvis vessel before allowing us to dock. The transfer shuttle is fully automated, so I don't have to focus on flying or anything other than the silence between us. I can't stand it. What we did was wonderful, and then because I put a spotlight on the fact we made love because we *wanted* to, not because of my Bonding Succour, Valerie has withdrawn into herself. I have known how passionately I feel about her for a long time. I believe she is unsure how she feels about me, and this was a rather blunt way to find out she's at the very *least* attracted to me. Without the need of my venom.

"Valerie?" I speak her name softly and hesitantly tap one of her hands with mine.

"Hmm?" She snaps out of whatever preoccupied her and blinks up at me. She's done a wonderful job in freshening up. You can't tell at all that she was a wanton mess before we set off today. My feeding companion looks lovely in her regal gown. I want to run my fingers through her soft waves she's styled into her hair, but I abstain.

"May I?" I tap again at her hand, and she offers it to me with a smile. I slide my fingers between hers and enjoy the affectionate gesture when she gives my hand a squeeze. "I fear we don't have the time to properly discuss what just happened between us before the Gala." Her eyes widen and she tenses. "But after the Gala, I would very much like to talk about how you're feeling. What you are thinking. If there is anything I can do to support you in any of the above." I lift her hand to press a

kiss through my veil to her knuckles. “I regret implanting within you without permission, but otherwise, I regret nothing.”

“Oh I know.” She raises a brow at me with a cheeky grin. “Talk about trigger happy.” She darts her eyes down towards my groin and I chuckle at the insinuation.

“Well, yes.” I clear my throat, blushing behind my veil. “But I want you to know I care about you a great deal. More than I have ever cared about anyone else. Please don’t feel any pressure to rush anything. We have plenty of time, you and I.” I pat her hand and hope I’m putting her at ease. “I therefore suggest you don’t worry too much and just let things develop... naturally.”

“Naturally?” She chuckles and shakes her head at me. “Vrajan? Honestly, I don’t know where I stand anymore.” She shrugs with a sigh.

“How so?”

“Well? Four months ago I entered into this agreement with you as your indentured servant, and your feeding companion.” She crosses one leg over the other and finally opens up to me without resistance. “I signed on to let you drink my blood.” I chew my lips, worried she’s regretting agreeing to be fully envenomated. “Things have already developed *naturally* towards us becoming friends *before* the whole Bonding Succour thing. I still understood where the lines were drawn when I signed the amendment to allow your secondary ducts to be unblocked, and for us to have sex with each feed too.” I nod encouragingly. So far, I don’t see an issue anywhere, so she can’t be finished. “But I stepped over that line with you today.” She swung her right hand up and gestured between us. “The line was *gone*, and we became more than just master and indentured servant. We were more than friends. We became lovers. *Real* lovers.”

“I don’t see anything wrong with that.” I add timidly and hold onto her hand like an anchor in the coming storm.

“The lines are just kind of blurred now. I knew where I stood before, and now I don’t.”

“Then I shall tell you.” I nod firmly and hold her gaze. “You stand with me, and I stand with you.” I half turn on the seat, determined not to lose her by fumbling this pivotal moment. I love her too much to fail. Losing her terrifies me and pushes me into action. “I do not want you to feel under any sort of pressure. Please don’t worry about where lines are or aren’t. All that matters is we are together. You and I are a team. I need you to know that I cherish our time together. I cherish *you*.” My other hand cups her face and I stroke my thumb along her cheek bone. “Yes, we have grown much closer than when we first met. Back then, I didn’t know you enjoy watching comedians and wrestling matches.” She smiles up at me and it’s heavenly. “I didn’t know that when you raise a finger to wait a minute, it’s as good as warning me you’re about to go to battle.” She snorts and chews her lips together. “And I certainly didn’t know as many curse words before meeting you.”

“Ha!” She chuckles and her cheek curves against my hand. “Well, I keep telling you? I’m a Merchant Caste girl. Miner by trade. We hurl insults like meteorites.”

“That may be true.” I chortle and lift her chin as I lean down to whisper to her. “But that is not *all* you are. Just as you are not only my indentured servant and my feeding companion. You are also my confidant, my friend, and the woman I care for above all others.” I press my covered brow to hers and close my eyes. “Please don’t worry about boundaries and lines. We’ve come so far together already. Don’t pull away from me now, Valerie.” I bring her hand to my chest and open my lilac eyes to look into her lovely brown ones. “Don’t look back. Move forward with me. One step at a time.” My thumb smooths over her lips, and I lick mine with the urge to kiss her. “No matter what our future looks like, let’s walk into it together.”

“You know?” Her tone is playful, as is the smirk on her face. “I see why you were appointed as the Dynast.” Valerie takes her hands back, folds them under her bust and chuckles at me. “You’re a silver tongued bastard, aren’t you?” I cup my hands together on my lap and shrug.

“I have been told I am a persuasive speaker.”

“Very.”

“Are you therefore persuaded?”

“To do what *exactly*?” In typical Valerie fashion, she hits to the heart of the issue. “What are you trying to persuade me to *do*?”

“Exactly what I’ve been saying this whole time.” I purr and wink at her. “Relax, take the pressure off, and see how this naturally develops. I happen to be enjoying your companionship very much. In every way. Are...are you?” I hide how anxious I am for her reply. “Are you enjoying your experience with me so far? Are you happy with me, Valerie?” Do I make her happy? She keeps me on edge for a moment like she’s thinking it over carefully.

“Sure.” She drops one of her hands onto mine, and I eagerly envelop it in both of mine.

“Sure? I make you happy?”

“Yeah.”

“Do you regret anything that has transpired between us so far?”

“I guess not.” Valerie grins, and I realise that’s as much as I’m going to get from her. Still, I’ve gained far more ground with her than in any of our previous conversations. I can tell she has relaxed too, and seems far more at ease than at the start of the journey. When she shuffles to rest against my side, pokes at my arm to drape it around her, I feel my heart sing. I think I’ve come as close to telling Valerie I love her as I’ve ever been. She has also admitted I make her happy, and she regrets nothing. Excellent. “So this Gala?” Valerie looks up at me. “I’m not expected to dance, am I? Because I can’t dance.”

“Neither can I, nor would I like to risk making a spectacle of myself.” I chuckle. “We need to represent ourselves well today, as many influential members of upper Theskian society will be present. People of political and financial influence.” My heart rate picks up a step as I think of the Gala. “I have done my research, of course, but this will be the first event of this nature I will have attended.” I chuckle with a tense edge. “My lack of feeding companion prevented my attendance

in the past. It is highly likely, therefore, that we will gain quite a bit of attention.”

“You mean, they’re going to stare at the Korvis in the room?”

“Yes, very much so.”

“Well let them look, and if they get fresh, I’ll hit them.” She grins with a fist raised, and I chuckle nervously.

“Please don’t threaten anyone here Valerie.” I press a finger to her fist and lower it. “Your protectiveness is endearing and sweet, but we really must portray ourselves as non-threatening.”

“Speak for yourself. I’m a feisty bitch.” She winks at me and grins. “But if they play nice, so will I. I have to pretend I have gentry caste level manners, after all. To go with my disguise.” She nods down at her dress and I sweep my eyes over her lovely form once more.

“You...*do* look rather magnificent.” I lick at my fangs, and she sniggers at me.

“Down boy.” She laughs and swats at my chest to bring my eyes up from her lap to her face. “We’ll hardly represent ourselves well, if we dock and the security guards fine us boinking. Eye on the prize.”

“Yes my Queen.” I whisper, and she eyes me for a moment.

“Queen huh?” I lean down, purring at her with desire. “Don’t I need to have a crown and a throne to be a Queen?”

“I can have a crown made for you, and *I* rather like being your throne.” She’s still laughing as I take hold of her waist and drag her lovely body to sit across my lap.

“Vrajan!” She cackles with glee and pokes my side. “Gala first!” She puts her hands on my shoulders and playfully pouts at me. “Hey? I thought Queens were obeyed?”

“And worshipped.” I growl and reach for my veil, but she takes hold of my wrist to stop me.

“Okay, calm down before I whip out some garlic.” I roll my lilac eyes. She made me watch something called Dracula and drew parallels between me and the human with fangs on the screen. She said it was the easiest way to explain why she sometimes calls me Space Dracula. I don’t see the parallels. I do not look human. I do not turn into other animals. I do not turn other people into my species with a bite. I am not sensitive to sunlight, silver, crosses or garlic. I certainly have no interest in making myself a harem of women. Valerie is the only ‘bride’ I desire.

“Another vampire joke? Really?”

“Yes.” She comically nods at me like she’s telling off an infant. “And I have many more on the bench to play if you don’t calm down.”

“Very well.” I chuckle, enjoying her humour immensely.

“Gala first.” She nods at me firmly.

“Yes, of course.” I help her to her feet. “Boinking when we get home?” She flashes me a chastising glare...but she’s also blushing and chews her lips.

“We’ll see.”

“Excellent.”

“Horny Space Vampire.” She grumbles and lowers back to the seat beside me with her arms folded.

“Seductive Temptress.” Valerie gasps with outrage and presses a hand to her chest.

“Why Dynast? I am a pure and innocent lady.” I roll my neck to the side to look at her incredulously. She sniggers and can’t maintain the facade. “Okay no, I’m not, and I’m planning on tonguing your dick when we get home. For starters.”

“For starters?” I press my knees together and bump my shoulder with hers with a giggle. “And what shall you have for desert?”

“With the mood you’re in? An egg fired inside my pussy.” My cock thickens and lifts like an awakening serpent, so I press it down with one hand and cross my legs. Valerie spots

this and snorts between the lips she chews together. “Did I wake cock-zilla?”

“Please don’t call my penis that.” She laughs and I adore that sound. “Would you like me to give your vagina a similar name?” I fluster, and try to ignore my building arousal.

“Oh, please do.” She folds her arms and rises to that challenge. “Would you like me to make some suggestions?”

“I would rather you didn’t.” This has backfired, and she’s loving it.

“Wanna plunge into my Pleasure Palace? Play hide and seek with my Penis flytrap?” She wiggles her eyebrows at me.

“Please stop.” I am blushing so hard I feel the heat, but we’re both laughing.

“Are you going to explore my twinkle cave? Get caught with your hand in my cookie jar?”

“Stop!” I am laughing so hard my eyes are watering.

“Are you sure? I have more. Like, do you want to slot-it into my deep pocket?” Her grin is devilish, and I beg for mercy.

“N-no more!” I drop my forehead to her shoulder, shaking I’m laughing so hard.

“I’m the daughter of a Miner. Did you *really* think you could out cringe me?”

“I surrender and apologise.”

“So you damn well should.” Valerie snorts and tips her head to nudge my brow with her cheek. “Thank you.” I lift my head, as there’s something more to her tone than playfulness. “Not for the pussy jokes, but for the rest of the talk. I was overthinking it and having a mini meltdown in here.” She taps her temple, and I press a kiss through my veil to her lips.

“You are most welcome Valerie. Thank *you* for trusting me.” She hit her tenderness threshold with a shudder, a fake cough in her throat, and a roll of her shoulders. She did very well to be so open with me for so long. I’m definitely making ground with her sharing her feelings with me.

“Oh look, we’re docking.” She points to the window. I lift my gaze and confirm our transfer shuttle is about to dock with the larger Gala vessel. “So, I’m Miss Stone in there, and you’re the Dynast.”

“Indeed.”

“Snobs ahoy.” She mutters under her breath, clearly not looking forward to mixing with the upper classes here. “Can we leave yet?”

“No.”

“Damn. Worth a try. Alright? Let’s get this over with.” She stands and offers her left hand to me. I stand with a smile and tenderly slide my fingers between hers to hold her hand. “I will *not* tell rude snobs to fuck off. I will *not* threaten to punch anyone. I will *not* glare at idiots. Happy calm thoughts.” I smile and suppress a chuckle. She’s funny even when she’s not trying to be. She’s also not putting on airs. She is genuinely worried about doing all of the above, and I will need to do my best to help her resist temptation as well.

“I promise to deal with all snobs and idiots.”

“Good.” The door opens, and we give each other a nod, before walking through.

Romance Author



Chapter 25

Falling for him.

Valerie.

After going through the security gate and being practically detained for half an hour, we finally walk hand in hand into the swanky Gala. The whole place smells of money. Pearly white marble with black swirls resembling smoke was smooth and polished as far as the eye could see. The floors, walls, furniture and sweeping staircases were all made of it. Golden silk curtains and drapes framed priceless artwork. Tables surrounded the outer edges with golden place mats and coasters. I saw champagne bubbling in tall flower shaped glass flutes on the tables, and on platters being circulated by servers in black and white servant wear. Most are likely indentured servants like I am. Possibly escaping a whole host of debt, desperation, chasing a change of scenery, or saving up to make a big career move when it's over. Some will even be seeking a higher apprenticeship in event management, and this is their first step on the ladder.

The guests all look like snobs. Wrapped in the finest fabrics, dripping in shiny metals and gem stones, and smelling of the most expensive fragrances. Every Theskian race is here. I can even see a large tank set in two marble hands the size of giants, where Tallahestra are swimming around. They speak to the guests on the outside of the tank either by using the inbuilt localised speakers on the glass, or by swimming up to call down from the rim above.

The 'calibre' of people swanning around may be way out of my league, but the scene itself isn't all that unfamiliar. I've been to big parties thrown by the richest of the Merchant Caste plenty of times with my father over the years. He made a point of bringing me along so I learned the names and faces of

everyone who was important. I was, after all, supposed to take over the business.

According to Cassie, Dad's just declared himself totally bankrupt now, and lost his Caste. Due to the terms and conditions of our indentured servitude, our Caste status is protected under the duration of the contract. The banks are therefore not *allowed* to come after me or Cassie for collateral, or compensation for his debt. Even our payout is protected from debtors, so they can't strip us down to the bone once we complete our contracts either. It's why this was the best solution. It has taken him 4 months, but good ol' Dad finished spiralling just like we knew he would years ago. Cassie is trying to find out where he is and make sure he gets to a shelter or something. Personally? He dug this hole and should fester in it. Selfish prick. He gambled and drank away his future, and ours. He refused any help or advice. He always apologised for decimating our legacy, but then went right back to it the next day.

So fuck him.

That may be hard hearted of me, but I stopped letting that man disappoint me a year ago, when he used his next of kin privileges to hack into my savings. He took every penny I had, and took it to the nearest casino. He lost it there, of course, and I've never forgiven him. What kind of Father does that to his own daughter? That one move ruined any chance I *could* have had to take over the company when he crashed and burned. That money was supposed to help me and Cassie establish ourselves as heads of the company when he retired. Well? You can't get more retired than Casteless and hopeless. If Cassie wants to try and get him some help, then fine, but that man broke my heart, and I don't have it in me to forgive him. I just don't. The only person I've ever trusted not to use me or screw me over, is Cassie...until recently.

I sweep my eyes up to my side at Vrajan and my heart flutters. I trust him. Not just with my blood and my body, but I trust him with my heart too. Lord knows when that happened. I normally guard it a lot more viciously than I have with Vrajan. But there's just something so nice and honest about him. It genuinely upset him that he couldn't tell me for a long time

about his Bonding Succour. My Dad lied to me every time he opened his mouth, and he only ever copped to it when I caught him in the lie. My so called friends and love interests soon *lost* interest, when it became clear my family were headed towards Casteless status. Even our workers transferred to other companies to abandon ship.

Everyone I've ever known has abandoned me and Cas. Mum died, but I can hardly blame her for that. Dad abandoned us the moment he chose his addiction and refused help, over me and Cassie. Our friends protected themselves and got rid of us when we needed them the most. My whole life, the only person I could truly trust is my sister. I accepted that would always be the case.

Until Vrajan.

One thing about being his feeding companion and being with him all the time, is getting to know him really well. You can't hide your flaws indefinitely from someone you have to be with *all the time*. Other than when I'm asleep or chilling in my room, I'm with Vrajan. When we're on the main starbase, I'm literally holding his hand. We do interviews together. Attend administrative meetings with endless paperwork he has to proofread and amend with lawyers together. We shop together. We go sight seeing together. Vrajan is fascinated with going to the cinema, but we always have to sit in a VIP booth so the rest of the customers don't know we're there, and we never watch a horror film. Namely, because of the Korvians displayed there insult him. Hell, they insult me too now that I know the guy. We've toiled through customs together. Answered questionnaires together. Hell, I painted my nails yesterday while Vrajan sat on the bed as he grumbled to me that 'darn Getrata is at it again'. We both think his left head needs a face lift, the bigoted prick.

Vrajan keeps me company and talks to me while I eat. He's started joining me for showers...erm...where we sometimes start his feed...and then he fucks me against the shower wall...mmmm.... I am down with all of that. I can't believe that I freaked out the first time I saw Vrajan without his clothes on. He's tall, lean, strong but gentle when he needs to be, has an *amazing* monster cock that he wields *wonderfully*,

and well? He's handsome to look at too. His eyes do it for me. They always have. I've never seen lilac eyes so bright, and his diamond shaped pupils draw me in. Now that there's no pain I'm really enjoying the full experience of being his feeding companion.

I mean, don't get me wrong. The dude isn't perfect. He doesn't always *ask first* when he wants something, like, I'm his feeding companion and therefore, everything goes now right? Nu-uh. There are still 'Korvis things' he does, that I'm trying to get used to. I've got my head around the whole licking my neck like a giant cat after sex part of his guarding instincts thing he does. I'm used to all the hand holding and invasion of my personal space. The egg thing is a looming timer that makes me a little nervous. Not right now. Right now I like the full sensation I feel for a few minutes after sex before the egg breaks down. Earlier, having the inner egg pushed into me wasn't a *stellar* experience, and that was another example of him not asking first.

The growling. Oh sweet lord the way he glares and growls at people he thinks are giving me the eye makes me want to flick his nose like a bad dog. Since his secondary ducts were unblocked and we've started doing the pretzel three times a day, he's become possessive of me. Men, women, or other, it doesn't matter. If Vrajan thinks they're checking me out, he will move himself between us and scare the shit out of them with nothing more than a glare and a deep rumbly growl. He can cut that out before he ruins all his hard work. Chuckling that 'I can't help it, it's a Korvis thing', doesn't excuse him, quite frankly.

Oh, and then there's the wardrobe thing. He thinks I haven't noticed, but he's slowly turning my wardrobe into particular colours. Red and blue dresses, for the most part, but after today I'm expecting to see more yellow ones too. He has said several times he likes to be able to lift my skirt and get to 'business' right away. Space Dracula better not smuggle away any more of my comfy pants and slacks, or I'm going to start messing with his clothes too! Let's see how he likes wearing pink robes and having glitter bombs go off in his laundry.

I snicker, having amused myself with the imagery. Still, despite his flaws, I always huff and forgive him, and then he

makes it up to me. I'm sure he finds things about me annoying too, but hasn't mentioned any, so I can't piss him off too much. He makes me feel like I'm special. Damn it. No wonder I pounced on him earlier. How long have the damn boundaries between us been missing? Why am I not more freaked out by the fact that I am totally falling for a black and white cinnamon roll with fangs?

"Are you alright?" I blink and realise that not only was I staring up at Vrajan, but he's caught me doing it.

"Yes. I'm fine." I am not fine. I am staring a very worrying realisation in the face. I don't *just* trust Vrajan. I don't *just* like Vrajan. I don't *just* enjoy his company and don't mind his flaws. I don't *just* think this super sweet Dynast needs me to swat away the BS, so he will succeed in his mission. I don't *just* support his daunting task so much I worry about how what I do and say will affect his mission. I don't *just* think he's kind, loyal, honest and trustworthy.

Mother fucker.

I've fallen ass over tit for the guy. Shit.

Romance Author



Chapter 26

A trap if I ever heard one

Vrajan.

“Are you sure?” She doesn’t *seem* fine.

“Yeah, yeah fine.” She clears her throat and looks around the Gala. “Fancy place huh?”

“It’s very large.” I can tell she isn’t going to elaborate on whatever she was consumed by a moment earlier, and this isn’t the place to try and coax it from her. “Korvis architecture is not as open. It’s more like a network of tunnels, which is why our home cities and Motherships are referred to as ‘Hives’.” She returns her attention to me with genuine interest. “We build our homes out of crystals mined from our sector called Lopetaenite, because it has a curious quality.” I walk her around the edge of the hall, and we both ignore the soft gasps and pointing figures as I pass the other guests. My long billowing green chiffon robes, head dress, veil, and golden M crown make me stand out, as well as my superior height. I am recognisable as a Korvis long before anyone looks at my lilac eyes and diamond shaped pupils. For now *I* am the one who draws their attention, not the lovely human woman holding hands with me. “Lopetaenite can transmit light easily so we need fewer light sources, but they bend that light so you can’t see through the crystal. It still allows for privacy in each chamber.”

“What does the crystal look like?” Trust the once future heiress to a mining company to be curious about the mineral properties of Lopetaenite.

“Blue and pale, like water.”

“And how is it mined?”

“With lasers, as it’s incredibly strong. Normal drills can’t cut Lopetaenite.” I am looking for somewhere for Valerie and I to sit together, but anywhere there are spaces are also surrounded by hateful glances. All we need to do to succeed at this Gala, is to be present without incident. To show a Korvis can attend a high society event like any other Councillor, and there is no need to worry. It’s important this outing is successful, but I am not going to subject Valerie to prejudice by stubbornly sitting somewhere that will draw ire towards us. I’d rather keep her walking around the hall with me all night if I must.

“Sounds like it would be quite the commodity to trade with.” She smiles, and then huffs with frustration. “I *would* offer to hook you up with some contacts to get the ball rolling, but the Korvis aren’t allowed to trade with the empire yet. Oh, and it will make me sick to my back teeth to have to direct you to the competition when you *do* get that bill passed.” She sneers like she’s tasted something foul. “Andrews will be your best bet. He isn’t exactly easy on the eyes or ears, and he’s as blunt as they come, but he won’t screw you over.”

“Oh?” I give her hand a squeeze, having located a little seating nook carved into the wall. Soft golden cushions look inviting, and I certainly don’t mind being in close quarters with Valerie. I’m sure she won’t mind our legs touching. I lead her over and we sit together. “I would have thought you would direct me to your father’s company?” She flashes me a grimace and I wonder if I’ve said something wrong.

“Couldn’t do that even if I wanted to.” She shrugs. “As expected, he’s declared bankruptcy. He lost his caste status this week. Stone Inc no longer exists.” She shrugs and purses her lips together bitterly.

“I am so sorry to hear that.” I hold her hand on my lap and pat it. The rest of the party melts away as I focus on her frown. “Is there anything I can do to help?” Valerie smiles like I’ve said something far more profound than I have.

“You’re doing it. Trust me.” She sighs and nods her head to the side to indicate the busy ball room. Lots of people are dancing, music is playing, and gossip is circling. “I heard quite a few people on the way over that need their mouths washing out with soap.” I snort in the back of my mouth at her mildly

unhinged grin. “And I didn’t shout at any of them.” She nods dramatically. “Not even the one that called me your fang whore. I’m doing well.”

“Yes you most certainly are.” I chuckle with her, and just like that, we’re both at ease again. “I am so pleased you are here.” I don’t let on that I heard far worse than that, and had to restrain myself from showing them what a real ‘gut ripping throat chewing monster’ looked like.

“Because you wouldn’t be here without me?” She cheekily counters.

“That may be true, but I meant you specifically. You, Miss Stone, are excellent and distracting company.”

“As are you, Mr. Dynast.” She wriggles happily in her seat. “Oh, why don’t we people watch?”

“Oh, yes, I adore this game.” I clear my throat and sit side by side with her to look out at the rest of the party. Valerie taught me this game once when we had to sit outside of a theatre and wait for a taxi, because customers complained about my presence, and had me removed from the audience. It passed the time, and proved to be quite fun. “What about her?” I whisper to Valerie and nod to a Sacron female. She is draped in a silver catsuit, far too many necklaces and rings, and her yellow frills hang over her shoulders with blue tips painted onto each spine. Her lower hands are braced on her hips and the upper set gesture as she entertains a group of women she’s talking to. Most are fellow Sacrons, but there are some humans and Prelka there too.

“Frill and tit enlargement. Probably to compensate for her fella banging the nanny.”

“Oh my.” I titter with mirth and we giggle like naughty children at the back of a lecture. “Your turn?”

“Okay.” She hums and looks around the hall to pick someone for me to put an amusing, if not scathing backstory to. “Him.”

“Who?” I lean closer to her and try and search the crowd with my lilac eyes. Most people who catch me looking gasp and huddle away.

“The guy walking right towards us. The guy with wings.” She chuckles under her breath at me, and my heart sinks. Walking towards us with purpose was a Qeknian. He has pale white skin, red rounded glasses on today to match his red and black pin striped suit. His thick black hair was combed back, and his long feathery white antennae arched backward over his head. His blue, black, yellow and green wings were folded down his back, and he walked with a cane at pace to cross the dance floor to get to us.

“Why, that would be Ninthor.” I sit more upright and put a polite smile on my face. “Councillor of the Qeknian, and not especially a fan. Prepare yourself. He’s heading for us with purpose.”

“Shit.” I nip at my tongue with one last bubble of amusement at Valerie’s manner, and we are both posed in readiness when Ninthor comes to a stop before us.

“Well?” He braces his hands on top of his cane and regards our polite smiles for a moment. “This is my charity Gala, and since you’re here and gunning for the next spot on the council, you should join the rest of us upstairs, don’t you think?” He doesn’t sound like this was his idea. Almost like he’s been told to come and invite us to join them. I wonder, by whom?

“We would be delighted to accept your invitation.” I bow my head and keep my voice as soft as I can make it.

“Yes. Well, I’ll tell the security guards to let you both into the VIP section. We’re all up there.” He half turns and points with his cane to an upper level. “And I mean, *all* of us.”

“The council?”

“And various other heavy hitters, yes.” There is something like a warning to his tone. “Don’t keep us waiting Dynast. Dinner will be served soon.” He turns and leaves, and I feel ice in my veins.

“Dinner, he says?” I whisper bitterly. “A trap if I ever heard one.” Valerie tugs my hand to get my attention.

“Why is it a trap?” She asks innocently and I look down into her warm brown eyes.

“Because they have invited me to join them for *dinner*.”

“I don’t see-”

“For *dinner*, Valerie.” She still doesn’t follow, so with a sigh I quickly fill her in. “A very social meal, where *I* will be the only one at the table who *isn’t* eating.”

“Mother fuckers.” Now she’s caught on.

“They will make a spectacle of me.” I sigh and chew my lips a moment. “It will make my *dietary needs* a focal point for everyone there, and no doubt the topic of conversation.”

“Which in turn draws attention to *me*.” She scowls and if she could have, smoke would have spilled from her flared nostrils. “So it’s not an invitation. It’s a roast.”

“It’s a double sided sword. If I refuse to accept the invitation, I have slighted the council and these ‘heavy hitters’ Ninthor is referring to. I could lose vital support with the upcoming bill meeting. If we go, we will need to be on guard the whole time and prepare for verbal dissection.” I did not want that for Valerie. This was not the plan. We were to be seen here, not put on display.

“Then...let’s beat them at their own game?” She glowers defiantly. “After all? If they *try* and draw attention to the fact you can’t eat with them as your *dietary needs* are different, let *me* answer their questions. Like we do in interviews.”

“...are you sure?” I worry for her. “This isn’t the same as an interview. The people we are about to sit with do not fear repercussions in the same way as a reporter might?”

“Am I going to enjoy this? No.” Valerie stands and like a real Queen, she summons me to follow her with a single look. “Do we need to get this done? Absolutely. If anything, we might be able to win some people over, right? If they see that A, I’m healthy and happy as your feeding companion, and B, messing with *me* was a *terrible* idea.” I chuckle at her ferocity.

“Well?” I lift her hand and press a kiss through my veil to her knuckles. “To battle then, my Queen.”

“Ay, fucking ay.”

Romance Author



Chapter 27

Dinner and a show

Valerie.

My stomach is swarming with wasps, buzzing angrily, as we walk up a fancy set of marble steps. The security guards, a human and a Sacron male, wave a metal detector wand over us both. It pings at the golden leaf belt under my bust, and the crown on Vrajan's head. We aren't asked to take them off though, and are waved through. As soon as we round the corner at the top of the stairs, it's like walking into another world. Like the ancient Olympian Gods are gathered around a solid gold table to look down from the balcony over the mortals below. Instead of Zeus, Hera, and the rest of the Gods, I see the same Council members from the screens in Vrajan's office. I see many more dignitaries and rich people, bejewelled around their necks, fingers, frills and eyes. Ninthor is sat at the far side of the long golden table and watches us intently through his red lenses. He isn't scowling, per se, but appears uncomfortable.

Not as uncomfortable as I feel when everyone, and I mean *everyone*, stops laughing and talking, to turn and stare at me and Vrajan. I hold his hand a little tighter and my heart races. I'm no shrinking violet, but fuck me, this is unnerving.

"Greetings." Vrajan speaks in that softly-softly way he does when he's trying to come across as less intimidating. He bows low with respect, and I rather stiffly copy him a moment later. "Thank you for inviting us to join you."

"Of course you had to join us!" I snap my eyes to the left and see a brightly smiling woman. Her long blonde hair is in a hair grip to resemble an updo, and she's dressed in a shimmering pink dress with a low plunge neckline. Diamonds catch the light from a collar around her neck, her bracelets and earrings. "It's nice to meet you in person. I'm Councillor Justina

Adams.” She starts to point to two seats to her left, like she’s going to invite us over to sit with her, but very quickly they are occupied by a Prelka who takes up two place settings. He’s huge, and he leans with his muscly grey arms on the table to mark his territory. “Oh, erm...” She looks down the rest of the table to look for another place for us to sit.

“Might we sit here?” Vrajan waves his free hand to the seat at the very end of the table. The chairs on either side are vacant, so I would be the only person sat next to Vrajan.

“I see no other place for you to sit.” The Prelka’s left face sneers.

“Other than back where you came from, of course.” His right face chuckles. I bite my tongue and don’t resist the tug of my hand to follow Vrajan. He pulls out a chair for me first, on his right, and like a gentleman pushes me in to sit at the table. He lowers gracefully into his seat as well, crosses one leg over the other, and cups his hands together on his lap. There is a drawn out moment where everyone just keeps staring at Vrajan. Like they don’t want to take their eyes off him, or just don’t know how to break the ice. It’s so awkward it’s suffocating. Even Justina seems unsure what to say, with her lips opening and closing as she tries to put something together.

“Nice party.” I blurt out. “The, er, music is great.” Good Lord, this is so socially awkward.

“It is, isn’t it?” Justina latches onto that and catches my eye. “Ninthor has excellent taste when it comes to the entertainment. He regularly hosts such charity events.” Justina turns to include Ninthor in the conversation, and bug boy doesn’t catch what she’s throwing. Instead he averts his gaze to whisper something to a human man beside him. “...well, in any regard, it’s certainly lively.” Justina comes back to me with a smile.

“Not lively enough for the Korvis Dynast to dance though?” The Prelka I recognise as Getrata closer down our side of the table directs to Vrajan with an accusatory tone. “We saw you do nearly a full turn around the hall before finding the most antisocial place to huddle away from the party? What’s the

matter? Was it too *tempting* down there?” Mother fucker! He’s trying to paint Vrajan as some sort of blood thirsty predator!

“Getrata?!” Justina tries to chide him, but both his heads set Vrajan with a ‘your move’ grin. Once again all eyes are on Vrajan.

“Like a buffet on a carousel?” He continued, and I gripped my hands into fists on the table.

“I’m not sure what you’re trying to imply, Councillor.” Vrajan chuckled like Getrata had said something innocently inaccurate. “But I’m not one for dancing. Two left feet, and with all this chiffon, I feared I would rather spectacularly tumble if I tried.”

“What of your companion?” I gulped at the sharp address three seats up on my side of the table. It’s the burly looking blue Sacron Councillor. He is wearing a tailored dark matt silver suit with four arm sleeves, and a hat that sits perfectly on top of his head without being jostled by his frills. “Do you not enjoy dancing and conversation? Or do you not get a say?” I open my mouth to answer, when a human man speaks up from the other side of Getrata.

“Of course she doesn’t. Meals in heels on a leash just do as they’re told.”

The deepest growling hiss I have ever heard booms out from Vrajan, and the whole table flinch in their seats. Some out of their seats. I turn my head and see Vrajan’s diamond pupils are like stars, they are so narrowed on the idiot who spoke, and he’s lifted up in his seat like he’s about to launch across the table at him. His veil even draws into his open mouth to show the impression of his fangs. Security guards flood into the balcony area and I am genuinely worried Vrajan’s about to get shot. Fuck.

“Hey asshole!” I stand up and point angrily at the man. His blue eyes are wide and his skin is pale around his thick ginger beard. His black tux looks crumpled from the way he’s staggered out of his chair and pressed himself to the wall. “My *name* is Miss Stone. I am *not* called ‘meals in heels’, and what you just did was highly insulting in at least *two* different cultures. Ours, and the Korvis.” I put my hand on Vrajan’s

shoulder and strain to push him to sit back in his chair. “I am his feeding companion, which is a precious relationship. I’m his best friend, and you just talked about me like I’m a slab of meat.” He starts to hiss again, so I shove him to sit back, and drop myself to sit across his lap. Namely, to keep him in the fucking chair, but also to show the table how comfortable I am with Vrajan. It’s starting to work as people return to their seats, and the guards lower their weapons. It seems I’m less threatening than a snarling Korvis, so I’ll keep yapping on to keep their attention on me. “Talking about me like you just did was *highly* insulting. I expect an apology.”

“*You* expect an apology?” Both Getrata’s heads shrieked.

“Yes.” I bark, adrenaline and anger masking a healthy dose of anxiety as I worry that this is about to go tits up, keeps me on a roll. “Because regardless of me being an indentured servant, or Merchant Caste, I’m a mother fucking lady, and if he doesn’t apologise right now, I’m putting my fist in his face.”

“Miss Stone.” Vrajan tries to caution me, but I hear the smile in his tone. His arms are also around my waist holding me in place like he’s trying to hold *me* back.

“I am not apologising to *you*.” The guy looks around and sees he’s now the only one not sat down, and gingerly returns to his seat. All the while, my eyes are like daggers on him.

“Why? Don’t I deserve an apology? What’s your issue? Is it because I’m an indentured servant?”

“No, of course not.”

“My Caste?”

“N-no.” He’s getting flustered as more eyes turn away from me to look at him. Namely to see how he answers, I bet. Good. Let’s roast asshole number one instead of us, thank you very much.

“Then it’s because I’m a woman?”

“NO!”

“Then why do you think it’s okay to talk to me like that?” I tongue at my cheek and fold my arms. In my peripheral

I can see Justina smirking and the Sacron Councillor is grinning like he's highly amused. All the female guests at the table are starting to scowl at this dude.

“Really? Because you called me meals in *heels*, specifically. Traditionally women wear heels. What? Do you think women should be on a leash and do as they're told? You invite sexist people to have dinner with you?” I direct to the table, and behind me Vrajan chuckles in his throat.

“It's nothing to do with you being a woman!” He bangs his hands on the table with anger. “It's because you're a Korvis's-”

“Oh!” I cut him off loudly. “So you were insulting to me, because I'm friends with a non-human? So you're *not* sexist, you're just a Xenophobe.” I dramatically nod at him, and then look over at Ninthor like I'm *not* impressed with him. “You invite Xenophobes to have dinner with you then?”

“I do not.” He lowered his red glasses down his nose and two large red eyes made up of fly like segmented eyes light up and glare at the man. “You need to leave, Donald. Now.”

“I am not a Xenophobe!”

“So if I were the guest of another human, would you have called me meals on heels?” I am not letting this worm wriggle himself out of this.

“N-no, but-”

“Then quite frankly?” I lift both hands up to give him the middle finger on both. “You heard our host. Fuck off, you speciest piece of shit, before I come over there and shove my foot so far up your a-” Vrajan covers my mouth with his hand and leans around my shoulder to give me a look. Ah, yeah. I got a little carried away there.

“I think you've made your point.” He chuckles and releases my mouth. “And we are both grateful and heartened to see such view points as the Delegate Donald Ferros harbours is *not* welcome at your table, Councillor.” Vrajan bows over my shoulder towards Ninthor, who has returned his red glasses to cover his eyes once more. Security guards drag ‘Donald’ off like he's a criminal in a fine suit, and Getrata is scowling on both

faces. If looks could kill, me and Vrajan would both be dead right now. “I also apologise for getting a tad cross myself and hissing. I hope I didn’t startle anyone. It’s instinctive to make that noise when...upset.” Even Justina raised a brow at him. “Like Miss Stone said, she is very precious to me, and it upset me when she was spoken to in such a way.”

“And that’s very sweet hun, but I take part in my own bar fights, thank you.” I wink at him over my shoulder, and I can tell he’s blushing at the pet name from the way his eyes widen and he averts his gaze.

“Brilliant!” The big blue Sacron claps with his upper hands and has a tear in his eyes for how hard he’s laughing. “I like her.”

“I think Miss Stone can certainly handle herself.” Justina chuckled, and the Sacron lady beside her cooed at us like something really cute was happening.

“Yes, well played.” Ninthor toasts me with a glass. “I hope you are through with your less than stellar language and threats of violence, Miss Stone?” Ninthor raises a brow at me, and there’s a hint of a smile to his pale lips. “This is a civilised gathering, after all.”

“Sure. If people are civil to me, I’m civil back.”

Thankfully the mood seems to be light, having just entertained these posh twits, and other than Getrata’s constant glaring, the attention turns away from us.

“Are you alright?” Vrajan whispers to my ear, and I turn to face him. “Your heart is still racing.” I gulp and nod at him.

“I’ll be fine. It’s the adrenaline.” I chuckle with a shrug. “Are you okay?” I whisper back to him. We both know the real reason Donald made that slight. He was a Xenophobe alright, but specifically against Korvis. I brashly, and rather luckily, turned the tables on him, but it could have gone terribly wrong.

“Thanks to you, I am fine.”

“So I came to your rescue?”

“Well, I suppose it would be more accurate to say you came to *Donald’s* rescue.” Oh boy. I was right. He really *was*

about to pounce on that guy. Vrajan patted a hand on my lap and sighed. "I...was very cross. Thank you."

"Any time." I smile and lean a bit closer. "Oh, and sorry I cursed like a merchant again." I comically wince at him, and he chuckles. "When I get pissy, I get cussy."

"I noticed." He nods with a chortle. "When I get 'pissy' I get 'hissy'?" He tries to follow my logic, and it's adorable. I snort with laughter trying to contain it, but fail. I teeter with laughter, and forget we have company. When I catch my breath he's looking at me in such a way, time seems to stop. It feels like he's telling me something profound, without speaking a single word. His hands aren't moving, but they feel warm on the small of my back and on my lap. I feel so safe here with him, and in his eyes I see an invitation to never leave his arms. He has said nothing, but I feel full of feeling. My feelings, and his. I lean down, lips parted, eyes half shut, and about to kiss him through his veil-

"AHEM!" I sit bolt upright, blushing with embarrassment, as Ninthor calls across the table to break the moment. "Perhaps you would be so kind as to return to your seat now, Miss Stone?"

"Erm, yeah. Right." Oh my giddy aunt. I nearly kissed Vrajan in front of a table full of the most influential people in the galaxy. *And* I got caught. Like a teacher just walked in on a pair of horny teens at the prom trying to get a leg up in an empty classroom. Shit. The Sacron councillor and Justina are laughing, and the couples present start giving each other 'the eye' like they've caught onto my brainwave.

"Miss Stone?" I sweep my eyes over to Vrajan, and watch as he reaches over to grab the arm of my chair. He effortlessly slides me over, in the chair, to sit beside him at the end of the table. He then matter-of-factly takes one of my hands and cups it in both of his on his lap. "Much better." I grin and slide over in my chair so my arm bumps with his. My shoulder comes to his upper bicep, and he leans down so we can continue whispering to each other. "You are magnificent."

"You're *mine*, and this bitch marks her territory." I smirk, expecting him to chuckle, but instead his pupils blow

wide and he inhales sharply.

“I...am very glad to be yours, Miss Stone. Are you therefore, mine as well?” Woah. He just took the wheel and turned us from light banter street into serious talk lane. I can tell from the way his beautiful lilac eyes hold me in a trance, that he’s *very* serious. My answer, should be serious as well. I lean up to put my chin on his shoulder.

“I think we should probably discuss that at home, don’t you?”

“Oh, yes, of course I-” He starts to fluster.

“But the short answer is yes.” I grin, enjoying messing with my space vampire sweetheart. Oh good lord, he is *my* space vampire sweetheart, isn’t he? I don’t hesitate to defend him. I don’t hesitate to stand beside him. I *did* hesitate to accept how I feel about him...but fuck it. I think I’m past that point too. “I am yours too, big guy.”

Vrajan makes another booming noise from his chest, startling the guests for a moment, before they realise what it is. He isn’t hissing or snarling this time. He’s purring. Vrajan rests his brow with mine, and we both shut our eyes. “Promise you’ll never abandon me?” I whisper so softly, I wonder if he can hear me. I don’t know what made me say that now, but I know *why* I’ve asked it. If I’m truly accepting the fact that I, Valerie Stone, am totally and ridiculously in love with Vrajan, I need to know he won’t leave me like everyone else has. If I give him my heart, I need to know he will keep it safe.

“Never.” He doesn’t even hesitate. “*And* I believe you know *why*.” I open my eyes to see he’s looking deeply into mine. Yeah. I think he’s right. I do know why. I’ve known what ‘I care deeply for you’ has been covering for all this time.

“...I want to go home.”

“As do I.” He squeezes my hand on his lap and chuckles. “But that would be rather rude, don’t you think?” Oh yeah. We’re at the big boys and girls table. I groan with frustration and pout, which seems to make Vrajan laugh even more.

“Fine, but as soon as we *can* go home, we’re going home.” I point at his face with my free hand. “I mean it. We

have shit to talk through, and *stuff* that needs to happen.”

“Oh, I look forward to it.” He lifts my hand from his lap to kiss the knuckles through his veil. “But I feel I must warn you, that ‘stuff’ will likely have to *thoroughly* happen, before I’m capable of civilised conversation with you.” Hunger flashes in his eyes, his pupils dilating, and I feel it between my thighs.

“AHEM!” Ninthor calls out again with his hands up like ‘seriously?’ “Dynast, since it is *apparent* that we are going to be honoured with both your presence, and the company of Miss Stone, might I ask that you conduct yourselves appropriately?”

“Lay off them.” The Sacron speaks up with a grin. “As long as they don’t start mounting each other in public, there’s no harm in some goo-goo eyes and hushed whispers, is there? I mean, if *my* wife was here, the minx wouldn’t be able to keep her hands off me.” He barks with laughter, and Ninthor rubs his temples. I chuckle as well, and Justina gasps like she’s had a wonderful idea.

“Partners! From now on, let’s bring our spouses with us too! My husband has fantastic jokes. He has me laughing all the time.”

“Miss Stone is *only* present as the Dynast’s feeding companion.” Getrata sneered, piping up from his seething stew with a snarl on both faces.

“Ay, she is, and she’s giving us all envy.”

“I would love to bring my girlfriend.” The lovely Sacron beside Justina cooed. “We hardly ever go out *together* these days. It would be nice.”

“Perhaps put it to a vote?” Vrajan offered with a grin.

“Why not?” Justina giggles and puts her hand up. “All in favour of inviting our spouses moving forward to social work events, raise a hand.” Everyone bar Ninthor and Getrata raised a hand. Vrajan even raised our clasped hands together, making me roll my eyes at him. “Then the motion is carried!”

“Is there a reason you don’t want to bring your partner with you?” The Sacron Councillor teased Ninthor.

“Olphan? You know why.” Ninthor chided him. Ah, that was his name. Olphan. “My husband is shy, and his work is very important.”

“Give him the choice. He might surprise you.” Justina winked at Ninthor, who scowled...but it melted into a pensive look. I keenly felt his gaze as he looked over me and Vrajan like he was weighing something up. I don’t know why, but I smiled at him and nodded with encouragement. Maybe he wouldn’t have such a stick up his ass if he had his partner here with him.

“Very well. I’ll ask him.”

And just like that, the conversation became full of excitement and anecdotes about their loved ones. Food arrived, we all ate apart from Vrajan, and no one commented on that at all! In fact, they continued to engage him in conversation over dinner. Getrata didn’t really speak at all for the rest of the evening, and he’s the only one I glared at in retaliation to the stink eye he kept giving me. Asshole.

Finally it was time to leave. The main Gala had been cleared out already, and security escorted us all to the docking ports to our own transfer shuttles. I yawned and stretched my arms out by my sides as we waited for our shuttle to dock.

“What time is it?” Vrajan also yawned and looked around us until he locked onto a wall clock.

“It is a little after 1am.”

“No wonder I’m tired.” I roll my shoulders and smile up at him. Sleep is fogging up the edges of my mind. “Time flies huh?”

“Indeed.” He held my hand as the shuttle docked and the doors opened. We walked side by side into the shuttle, and I can’t help but giggle when he yanks me down suddenly to sit on his lap. The door auto locks and the shuttle launches a few moments later. I snuggle to his chest, the chiffon soft against my cheek and his pecs below firm. I start to doze off when the shuttle docks at our cruiser. “It’s alright. I’ll carry you.” I am not going to complain.

Romance Author



Chapter 28

Noted.

Vrajan.

I cradle my precious one in my arms as we step through the decontamination lasers entering the cruiser. Valerie smiles up at me through drooped eyelids as she dozes. I deftly walk through the cruiser and hesitate at a T junction. If I turn left, I can settle Valerie down on her own bed. If I turn right, I could take her to mine. There is so much I want to tell her, but now is not the time. She's too tired, and with a yawn, I realise I am too. I turn left and carefully open her door with my elbow, as to not jostle her. I slowly lower her to stand in front of her bathroom and don't release her until I'm sure she's steady on her feet. The first thing she does is step out of her heels and sigh with relief.

"I think Team Korvis kicked some serious ass tonight." She declares with another yawn. She pushes open her bathroom door and I follow her with my hands outstretched. As she stands in front of her sink and starts to unpin her hair, I unfasten the back of her dress for her.

"Yes, I believe we did. You were particularly formidable tonight." Her dress slides down her arms and sides to land like a golden halo around her feet. I push down her arm sleeve, and she unclasps her strapless bra. I spot her hair brush and work it through her long brown hair whilst she brushes her teeth. "Justina and Olphan seem to be yes votes. He wasn't there tonight, but Pharom is a likely a supporter as well."

"I'm not holding my breath for a Christmas card from Getrata." She snorts around her tooth brush, and spits the foam into the sink. I loosely braid her hair for her and appreciate her loveliness. Both from behind, and from my towering height as I look down over her shoulder. Her breasts are full enough to fit in each hand if I slipped them under each of her arms and took

their weight in my palms. Her dark pink nipples are soft, and her hips even softer.

“I agree. Getrata is dead set against passing the bill.”

“What about Ninthor?” She washes her face and looks at me in the reflection of her mirror. “I couldn’t tell where he stood.”

“Neither can I.” I sigh, placing her brush down to lift my hands to remove my crown. Valerie turns and slides her hands into the side of my robe to tug at the cords there. “Sometimes I see a deep reluctance and fear in him. Other times? He seems like he could be swayed with his peers without too much fuss.” It isn’t long before she has me de-robed. I stand in my silk boxers, my robe and headdress draped over my arm, and smile down at her. “Regardless, 3 out of 5 is all we will need.”

“And then you will be Councillor Dynast.” I cup her cheek with my free hand and kiss her tenderly.

“And you will be beside me?” I kiss along her jaw to her ear. “Holding my hand and sharing in my victory?”

“I’m up for that.” I moan and let my clothes drop to the floor. I absently place my crown on a shelf to collect later, and take hold of her shoulders. I’m about to kiss her senseless, desperate to show her how much that means to me, to share in my victory with her, when she yawns and tries to hide it by closing her mouth around it. I stem my passion and bring her to my chest to hug her instead.

“Come on.” I chuckle and make her laugh as I sweep her back up into my arms. I carry her in four strides to her bed and tenderly tuck her in. Valerie does a double take when she realises I’m not planning to get in bed *with* her. “We’re both tired. We have no plans tomorrow. We can talk and be intimate all day once we’re fully rested.” I kiss her sweet lips and try to back up, but her arms go around my neck. “Valerie?”

“Vrajan?” She giggles my name mischievously.

“We need to sleep.” She rolls her eyes and lets her arms flop above her head around her pillow.

“Okay. I *am* dog tired.” Valerie closes her eyes and yawns like she’s drifting off already. I take a moment to enjoy her blissful and serene expression, before backing up. I retrieve my crown and clothing from the bathroom, glance back over at the light of my life, and slip out of her bedroom. I freshen up in my own bathroom and feel a giddy warmth in my heart. Valerie is right. We have made wonderful progress towards my admission to the Theskian Council tonight. That is my mission, after all, and should be the thing that has filled me with joy.

But it isn’t.

I smile and fixate on that moment where Valerie stopped me from lashing out at Donald. How despite the way everyone else cowered in fear at my anger, she put her hand on me to push me back into the chair. She defended me. She called me hers, and agreed to be mine. She loves me. I’m sure of it now. Tomorrow, when she’s not as tired, I will tell her how I really feel. I’m not afraid anymore.

I open the bathroom door and falter a step when I see Valerie curled up in the silk sheets of my bed. She still looks half asleep as she looks at me with a tired smile. “So...you know I said earlier about those lines becoming blurred?”

“Yes?” I walk towards her and the bed, and slide under the sheets with her.

“I don’t think we need any lines.” My heart soars and I gladly scoop her body to mine under the sheets.

“I agree, but I warn you?” I smile so wide my fangs peer out of my lips. My lilac eyes water and my heart is brimming with love. “If we start sharing a bed to sleep, I’m not sure I’ll be able to go back to sleeping without you.” I stroke her cheek and lift her chin to kiss her lips.

“Noted.” She wriggles closer and pushes me to lay on my back. I laugh as she positions me so she can snuggle up to my right side and brace her cheek on my shoulder. She is asleep within minutes and I turn my head to watch her. My right arm holds her close and silent tears slide down my cheeks. I promise to love this woman with my every breath. To sleep beside her every night. To hold her hand through all her joy and all her grief. Tomorrow I will tell her how I feel, and request

permission from my Queen to present Valerie to her. As is tradition, before asking her to become my bonded.

Romance Author



Chapter 29

I love you.

Valerie.

I smile in the shower, running my hands through my hair as I wash out the suds of fancier conditioner than I could have ever afforded before entering indentured servitude. To think I was sick to my stomach with fear as I walked into the ISC, and then it doubled when I was walked into the office with Vrajan. He was so mysterious and dangerous when I laid eyes on him for the first time. Sitting regally in that chair with his green chiffon robe draped across his towering height. Only his eyes were visible, and I was captured in his intense stare. His deep gravelly voice instilled fear in me too.

Now, I wake each morning to a giddy ‘Valerie my sweet? It’s time to feed.’ Even now, I’m getting horny as hell with anticipation. What was once utter agony I had to grit my teeth and just *get on with*, was now a nipple hardening, toe curling, mind splitting bliss. No more pain, just incredible sex and orgasms. Mmmm.

“Valerie?” I smirk and roll my eyes. This is also typical. He no longer gives me 30 minutes exactly to prepare for the feed. He waits as long as he thinks it will take for me to finish freshening up, and then barges in.

“Yes?”

I turn to look at the glass screen of the shower cubicle door. It’s frosted, the glass, but I can see his tall outline through it, and it *isn’t* the shape of a man who is wearing a long robe. As I thought, he’s naked. Vrajan pushes open the shower door and purrs at the sight of me. I subconsciously pose with my hands in my hair, water running in thin rivers over my breasts and drawing his lilac eyes. He rumbles with a purr as he tracks the

water down my navel to the V of my pelvis, and the pink flesh peering out from my dark mons. He licks his fangs, and is hungry for a lot more than just my blood.

He steps into the shower cubicle and I step towards him. The humid air is electric as we become entranced by each other's presence. Fuck. I remember comparing Vrajan to a demon from hell. All he needed was horns, I said. Well, I've come to the realisation that if Vrajan was a demon? He would be an incubus. He's tall, lean, and exotic with his stark white skin and spiralling black markings. Black skin from his knees and elbows downward. His mane of white hair faded to black level with his cheekbones. And then of course, there's his sinfully tempting cock.

Oh the hours I've spent enslaved to those ridges and fleshy petal-like mandibles. I just love having his cock in me. In my mouth to tongue inside his lumen. Inside my pussy as he pounds me to oblivion. I even love the feel of his girthy length in my hands. Right now his prehensile masterpiece lifts towards me like it's already searching for a way inside me to bury into my heat. Fuck, I'm wet already, and I don't mean from the shower. With another step we meet in the middle of the shower cubicle, and I look up into his hungry lilac eyes.

"My Queen." He purrs and leans down to kiss me. The freshness of water on his dark lips takes nothing away from the heat of the kiss. "I hunger for you." I smirk and tip my head to the right to offer him my neck. "All of you." I gasp at the sudden presence of his hands at my waist. I stumble a step as he turns me quickly and presses my back to the tiled wall. He doesn't manhandle me often, but it's hot as hell when he does. "I want all of you, Valerie." Vrajan whispers over the sound of the shower and his hands glide over my wet skin. He kneads my hips, caresses my waist and sides, and I groan as he cups my breasts possessively. Hell, everything about Vrajan right now *screams* possessive. "You told me last night you are mine." My heart races in my chest and I gulp. The sexual tension right now is heavier than the humidity in the air from the shower. "It's good that you have realised this." He grins at me, his fangs peering out and black beads of venom glisten at the tips. "Because I am deeply in love with you, Valerie Stone, and have been *long* before giving you my bonding succour." Holy crap.

He just came right out with it. My hands lift up to hold onto his thick biceps, as his thumbs start to toy with my rock hard nipples. “You are my feeding companion, but you are so much more than that. I love you, my fierce Queen. I plan on worshipping and loving you until my last breath. You may not find words as easy to arrange as I do, nor are you as open with your feelings, but those are mine.”

“Oh fuck.” His hands playing with the weight of my breasts, and tweaking at my nipples was a diversion. Vrajan nudged my left foot to widen my stance, and the three warm fleshy petals teased their way between my slick labia. They unspiral and part my nether lips. “But your actions are far louder and more moving than the sweetest poem.” He releases my breasts and reaches down to grab my thighs.

“V-ra!” He hoists me up the wall so my eyeline is level with his, pinning me there, and doesn’t give me any time to think what he’s about to do. With a roll of his hips, his cock fills me one delicious ridge at a time. “Fuuuck.” I scramble to hold onto his shoulders as he thrusts all the way in. It’s now a battle to juggle the feel of his warm strong body surrounding my smaller one, and the beautiful things he was saying. The mandibles at the end of his cock are teasing my cervix with gentle caresses, and one of his ridges in particular is pressing against my g-spot. He pants, just as affected by my tight heat gripping his cock as I am.

“I love you Valerie.” He kisses me and I tangle my fingers in his long black and white hair. I try to pour into that kiss just how I feel. I’m going crazy. I need him more than I need air. This firm and tender pace he’s set is sweet and maddening all at once. “I will never leave you.” My eyes open and I search his lilac ones for the truth. “I am determined that once the Indentured Contract is over, you will stay with me.” I gasp. He’s just laying all his cards out? Just like that? “Not for employment, but for love. My Valerie. My Queen.” He kisses his way from my lips, to my chin, and then across towards my neck. “My love.” I moan and hold the back of his head as he gives me ‘the true bite’. The initial sting fades quickly and he groans at the taste of my blood. His tongue drags across my throat as he drinks from me. My senses dial up to ten, the venom in full swing. Vrajan removes his fangs from my neck

and presses his tongue to the wound. He moans my name and laves his tongue over the bite mark. "You complete me Valerie." I cry out as he adjusts my thighs around his waist and takes firm hold of my ass. I look up through hooded eyes and lust blown pupils, as Vrajan leans back to look at me. My hands move to rest on his shoulders and he purrs like a wild animal.

"AH!" He uses his freakish strength to hold me against the wall by my ass, and my shoulder blades rest against the cool tiles. The slide of his cock as he moves his hips back a few inches is sweet, but the force he slams back into me is fucking feral. He hisses through his fangs and bloody lips, and I clench my legs around his waist. "Again." I demand. "Fuck me Vrajan." I need him to put out this fire burning inside me. "Please." I beg with a whimper.

"Yes my Queen." I moan with each wanton roll of his hips. I blush at the intense way he's watching me as he fucks me. He watches my breasts bounce with each thrust. He drinks in the breathless way I'm moaning his name and begging for more. Harder. Faster. "Valerie." He hisses and rolls his hips to really work those dark ridges on his cock against my sweet spot. I shudder at the rising ecstasy throbbing through me. "You're still ovulating. I can feel your cervix. I want to egg you so bad."

"You want to put an egg into my womb?" He snarls with a monstrous grin and answers me by picking up the pace. "N-not loaded though?"

"Not fertile, no." Vrajan wraps his left arm under my ass, turning me on with how fucking strong he is to support my whole body as he rams his cock into me in *one arm*. I realise quickly why he's changing the angle, as he licks his tight thumb with a wanton pout. "So can I?" He lowers his thumb to my clit between us and I howl at the way he thrums me.

"Mother fucker."

"I'd like to be." He answers, and I decide not to address that right now. I'm far too close to cuming to unpick that. All I want right now is to finish climbing the erotic Vrajan shaped mountain of pleasure, and dive into a mind numbing orgasm. "So can I?" He hisses, and I realise he needs an answer *right now*, as the base of his cock starts to bulge. "Val?"

“Yes, fuck, do it.” He hisses and gives me three more firm thrusts, before holding pressing me firmly to the wall. He kisses me savagely and I wrap my arms around him. His right hand is still working my clit, and as the egg pushes against my cervix, that shoved me over the edge. I tense all around him and shudder with pleasure. I can taste it on my tongue, it’s so good. Said tongue is being caressed in Vrajan’s mouth with his, and he kisses me through every tantalising hum of pleasure through my body. I feel the pressure at the back of my cervix build, and build, and just as it was starting to get uncomfortable, the feeling seems to burst and soften inside me.

“Oh my Queen.” He dips his head down to lick and kiss at my neck. “I *love* that my egg in inside you right now.” The inner egg is, at least. Empty of DNA. No Korvis babies for me. I am *not* ready for that. I’m still reeling from the fact that Vrajan has admitted that he has *no* intention of letting me leave once my contract is over.

I should really be pissed off about that. I have every right to collect my payout and carry on with my life once my contractual term is over. To start up a new Stone Inc with my sister and get my life back on track.

But fuck, I like this set of tracks better. If anything, I feel relief. Is that weird? That this slice of happiness I’ve found doesn’t have a use by date. I don’t think I could have been brave enough to ask him if I could stay. Not right now. The fact he’s put his neck out there already fills me to the brim with joy. And tears. I’m girlie crying, damn it. I stroke my hands across his cheeks and into his hair.

“Vrajan?” I whisper his name, like I don’t want to break the spell between us. “Can you put me down a minute?” He gently lowers me to my feet and his cock slithers out of me. “I.” I croak, a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes. I put my hands on his pecks and he holds my elbows, as if to steady me.

“It’s okay.” He whispers with his lips to my brow. “Your actions yesterday have told me how you feel. I simply wanted you to know how *I* feel.” He kisses me and I feel a thousand fireworks go off in my heart.

“No one has *ever* cared about me like you do. No one.” I know I’m ugly crying and turn my head with embarrassment. But he just opened up to me in a way no one else ever has. I hate feeling vulnerable, but he makes me feel so precious and safe, I want to. Open up, that is. “I’ve always been too much or not enough of something for anyone I’ve pinned *my* hopes on. Shit, my own dad chose his addiction over me and Cas.” I bow my head and hide my face by pressing my brow to his chest. “I learned a long time ago that I can’t *rely* on anyone else. I need to be there for Cas.” I snuffle and brace my fists on his chest on either side of my head. “You have no idea how much I want to just say hell yes, let’s take Team Korvis to the big leagues. This year and every year. But Cas...” I close my eyes and my heart aches. I have gone from ‘I doubt I’ll ever settle down, but Cas will probably get married, have 2.5 kids and live next door, to wondering what it would be like to settle down myself. One day in the *very* distant future, he would convince me to fire a *loaded* egg inside me and we could have little baby Space Draculas. Fuck, I can see it. Me screeching at the kids to get their asses back to me and do as they are told. Like, put your damn veils in the hamper or I’m not washing the blood off. Vrajan is too soft and would spoil them of course, and me, but would snarl like a possessive beast if anyone even looked at us funny. Yeah, I can see it. Fuck, I *want* it...but...“Cas will be all alone at the end of her contract if I don’t go back to her. Everyone else has left us in the dust. I can’t leave her in my wake too.” No matter how much I want to just say yes and never look back, I can’t leave my sister behind.

“No you won’t. Of course you won’t.” Vrajan lifts my chin and gives me that intensely hypnotic look he wears when he’s about to bulldoze more of the walls I spent years building around myself. “No matter what, please don’t *ever* think that choosing *me*, means not choosing your sister. Once her contract is up, *we* will support her however you see fit.”

“We?”

“Of course.” He chuckles and strokes my cheek. I’m stunned. I was not expecting him to say that. “She would become my sister too, wouldn’t she?” I gulp thickly and feel like he just reached down and removed the last brick from my mental fortress of solitude. “*We* would support her. Either by

sharing in our home, or having her own. As the Dynast, and the future Korvian Councillor, we shan't be short of funds, you and I." He winks at me and on the inside, I step out of the rubble at my feet. "You must remain with *me*, of course, but you can still work remotely with her? Can't you? To have that 'bigger and better Stone Inc' you told me about?"

"You remember that?" I chuckle and blink through my tears. I told him that in our first ever meeting.

"Of course." Vrajan cupped my cheeks and thumbed away my tears. "I'm quite sure if we speak to my mother *very* nicely, she'll allow Stone Inc to have exclusive trading rights with our miners too."

"You mean for the Lopetaenite?" That blue crystal had some really rare properties that would really put us ahead of the market if we got exclusive rights to it. I *may* have sent out a few discreet feelers to some old contacts, now that I have full laptop privileges. The interest for Lopetaenite was there, but no one could get their hands on it since it's in Korvian space.

"Indeed." He chuckled and rolled his lilac eyes at me. "I saw the way your eyes lit up when I talked about the crystal with you yesterday. Mother agrees that there is potential there for trade, once I am appointed and trade is established with the Empire." I watch, stunned, as he pumps some soap from the wall into his hands. "She is unable to leave Korvian space right now, but she would like to do a video call with you at some point soon." Vrajan lathers his hands together and has a cheeky grin on his face.

"Are you serious?" My cheeks flush pink. "Your mother wants to-" One hand cups me between my legs and the other lavishes my breasts. I'm still oversensitive from the firm pounding he just gave me, and tremble at the gentle way he *tended* to me.

"She wishes to meet the woman I have given my Bonding Succour and heart to, yes. Do you think it would be possible for me to meet your sister in person? You could ask her to ask her master if that's alright, yes?"

"I...yeah." I run away from the ash of my mental fortress, flipping it off and leaping for the first time ever head

first into *joy*. I take hold of either side of his head and lean up on my tip toes to kiss him. It feels a little stupid now, thinking I couldn't have Vrajan *and* my sister in my life. Hearing him say *we* would support Cas, and that *we* would be a family, made something inside me snap into place. Some void inside me I never knew was there, was finally full. I can see our future so clearly now. "Okay. Team Korvis is going to go the distance. Sign me up. Just... don't fuck this up, okay?" There. I said it without saying it. I mean, he knows what I mean, right? I wish I could just *say it*. It's just three words, right? It's so wrong, but I just...can't get this rid of anxiety to let go of my voice box. I love him, and I want to tell him, but there's a terrified little girl inside me that worries that once I say it, I'm tempting fate to come and ruin my happiness. Like it has every other damn time.

"Yes my Queen." He purrs softly and holds me in his arms. I rest my right cheek against his chest and just...take in the moment. It's just the sound of his heart beat in my ear, and the spray of water from the shower head filling the cubicle. I hold him tightly and yeah, I cry a little more. Vrajan starts to purr and sway with me, and his gentleness is my undoing. He is so kind, so strong, so doting, and a mother fucking space vampire that can snarl once and make a table of politicians shit bricks. So...it should be okay to say those dangerous little words to him, right?

Fuck it.

"I love you too." I speak so softly, I would have thought he didn't hear me, had he not stopped dead. I also tense, waiting for his reaction.

"I-I know." He's crying, my gentle giant, and I look up into his watery lilac eyes. "But hearing you *say it* means so much to me." His smile is beautiful. Black lips curved over his fangs, and yet no smile was more tender than his. "Thank you, my love. My darling. My Queen." We kissed like lost lovers reunited. Touching, caressing, and speaking without words. When we finally came up for air he turned off the shower and took my hand in his. Vrajan had done this hundreds of times, but every time still felt special. "How about we get dry and I bring

you some breakfast to eat in bed? We'll cuddle and watch the news for a while, and then one of those comedies you like."

"It sounds perfect." He leads me into the bedroom and wraps a towel around me, before wrapping a second one around himself.

"Almost perfect." He purrs and I know where his mind is before he leans down to lick at my bite wound. "For it to sound perfect, we would also have to include all the cuddling we're going to do, followed by making love to you." I chuckle and roll my eyes at him, but still blush with anticipation. "I don't think we shall get dressed today."

"Oh, don't you?" I snigger. "You are planning for us spending the day in bed together all day, then?" He pauses, smirks, and chuckles deeply before replying in such a way, if I were wearing knickers, they would have fallen right off.

"Not *just* in bed, Valerie. I'm more than happy to unleash my passion on you whenever, and *wherever* the mood takes us." I gulp and nod up at him with two thumbs up. I second that motion. Yes please. All of it. "But first? You need to eat. You fed me, so now I'll feed you. Toast or cereal?"

"Toast please." He nods and backs up towards the doorway.

"Orange or apple juice?"

"Orange please." I giggle as he pauses with his hands on either side of the door frame.

"Followed by oral sex or fingering?"

"..." I put my hands on my hips and tongue my cheek at him. Cheeky bastard.

"Or would you like both?" His grin widens.

"You're a fucking menace." I point at him with a grin.

"That's not a no?" I laugh and swipe a pillow from the bed to throw at him. He caged his arms over his head, laughing, and once the pillow hit the floor he giggled at me. "Still not a no. Both it is!"

Romance Author



Chapter 30

Vindictive two headed serpent

Valerie.

“Valerie!” I look up from my shiny new laptop, about to give Cassie a call since she she texted me 5 minutes ago to asking me to, when Vrajan marched in like his ass is on fire.

“What’s wro-”

“Hurry! We must leave right now.” Vrajan thrusts both hands towards me.

“Leave? And go where?” We didn’t have any plans today. Other than a sweet little firework show he wants to watch later to mark our ‘5 month anniversary’.

“To the Theskian Council embassy. Quickly.” He waves both hands at me to follow him to the walk in wardrobe.

“What? Why do we need to go there?” I close the laptop display screen and crawl off the bed in a hurry.

“Because that vindictive two headed serpent has done his best to try and bite me in the posterior. If I wasn’t doing my due diligence and checking the council agenda with my own, I wouldn’t have noticed.” He seethed, his hackles well and truly raised, as he whips out a dress bag and places it on the bed.

“Erm...in Galactic standard?” I watch as he unzips the bag and pulls out a lovely yellow dress.

“The bill to debate and vote on Korvian admission into the Theskian Council meeting has been moved from next month, to *today*.” His pupils were like stars; they were so narrowed with adrenaline. Space Dracula was hissing with anger. Yikes. “His ID code is all over the rescheduling request,

and it *appears* like I confirmed the change of date, but I most certainly did *not*.”

“Son of a bitch.” I got with the program and started stripping out of my comfy sweat pants and hoodie. “So he changed the date on the sly, *and* faked that you knew about it?”

“Yes. He had to, of course, as to not run the risk of one of the other councillors flagging the date change with me. No need, with my confirmation logged on the account.” Vrajan helped me step into the dress and I turned quickly so he could fasten me in at the back. It’s so soft and light, yet opaque. I haven’t seen this dress before. It’s a mustard yellow, which makes me smile. It’s the ‘colour of Queens’. It’s a billowing ruffled charmeuse gown, with a halter neck collar and no sleeves. It still had three hook and eyes that needed fastening at the back, and Vrajan deftly looped them together for me. “Like I said? I was doing my due diligence to look for future meeting slots upon my successful appointment, when I saw the change on the calendar.” He huffed and returned his hands to the dress bag. I hurried over to the vanity table to run a brush through my hair. “Had I not been so forward thinking, we would not have known about the date change.” I saw him take black box from the bottom of the bag in the reflection of my vanity table. “I had to work very hard to get this opportunity to be present for the bill debate, and I doubt I would get another chance if it looked like I simply didn’t bother to attend.” He moved to stand right behind me and opened the box.

“Asshole. How much time do we have?” I braid my long brown hair into the neatest plait I can in a hurry.

“An hour. It will be tight.” I nod and hurry over to tie a thin yellow bobble around the end of my plait. “We will need to leave right away. I am glad I had this outfit prepared in advance for you. I have thought often about this day.” He sighs, clearly disappointed it’s such a rush. For five months I’ve been right with him as he’s petitioned, debated on the vid calls, gone through interviews, and been insulted to his face. He’s not the only one who’s been thinking about the big day where he can finally stand shoulder to shoulder with the other councillors and properly make his case for admission. *I’m* anxious about it too. I will be keeping my Merchant Caste mouth shut today; I know

that for a fact. “I hope you don’t mind, but I had this made for you.” I raised a brow and watched in the mirror as he retrieved two items from the box. Firstly, he draped a long yellow veil to match the dress over my head. It rested on my shoulders and was so light I could barely feel it was there. I touched the bottom right corner and smiled. It’s made of the same material as Vrajan’s veil. Then he placed a golden tiara with diamonds on top of my head to keep the veil in place. “I don’t want to cover your face. You are not Korvian...but...we match this way, don’t we?”

“We sure do.” I nod and side step out of my chair to dramatically offer him my right hand. “And I will tease you about the matching outfits *later*. Right now, we have to hurry. You have a bill to get passed.”

“Yes, and you are my *meal ticket* into the embassy.” Vrajan chuckles and leads the way out of my bedroom. I pop my lips and shake my head at him.

“Meal ticket? Really? You went there?”

“You do look *ravishing*, my Queen.”

“Keep the smooth talk for the debate, big buy.” I snigger as we walk up to the docking bay. “Are you ready for this? It’s a month ahead of schedule?” I hold his hand tightly as he hesitates to answer me. “Vrajan?” He turned his head and his lilac eyes were bright.

“I have been waiting for this moment from the first time my Mother gave me this crown, and appointed me as the Dynast. Yes, Valerie. I am ready for this.”

“Ay fucking ay.” I smirk and wink up at him. “Let’s go kick their asses.”

“Yes dear.” He lifts my hand to kiss my knuckles through his veil. “And once I’m *Councillor* Dynast to the Korvian Hive, we will celebrate.”

“OOoo. And how will we be celebrating?” I giggle, already knowing where his mind is from the way he’s looking at me. He *really* likes this outfit, but I have a feeling I won’t be wearing it for very long once we return home. Fine by me.

“In the traditional way.” I raise a brow at him and smirk at the seductive lull to his gravelly voice.

“Which is?” I dare him to elaborate with a grin. Vrajan leans down with a slow chuckle in his throat.

“Why my Queen? With my fangs in your neck and my cock in your pussy, of course.”

“Oh. Of course.” I clear my throat and blush deeply. He’s *really* come out of his shell as of late. He still blushes a hell of a lot, but he’s much more forward with his desires than in the beginning. I like it. “*That* traditional way. Yeah.” He giggles, amused by my fluster, so I raise the other hand to give him the middle finger. “Bite me.” I smirk, seeing how my taunt makes him think of feeding and sex, and *he* blushes too. Good. That still works. If he’s going to tease me, he can have some of his own medicine too. The dock connected to a transfer shuttle and we headed towards, what we hope, is the bright future of the Korvis.

Romance Author



Chapter 31

The Bill

Vrajan.

I meant what I told Valerie. I have been preparing for this debate long since she became my feeding companion. I am eager to represent my people, and push down the nervous buzzing in my stomach. I need to be cool, calm, and calculating in my address. I need to work all the positive angles regarding my companionship with Valerie, and I must come across as non-threatening. Bow my head to everyone, including that slippery Prelka Getrata. Keep my voice soft and quiet, and my frame smaller and relaxed. Holding Valerie's hand fills me with warmth and confidence. We're not due a feed for another two hours, and even if we're a little late, that's fine. Valerie and I have been an hour to two hours late with a feed before, and neither of us have felt anything other than an increased libido. Part of the bonding succour's affect to encourage the feeding and mating. Worst case scenario, this takes 4 hours, and we have a rather wild romp upon our return. Something to look forward to.

We turn heads as we arrive at the security docks outside. Valerie looks like she is my bonded already, dressed the way she is. If she had worn a veil, they might even think she was a shorter female Korvis. Only, our Queens never leave the Hive they govern, and females are rarer than males in comparison. Her fingers and mine are woven together like they naturally fit together.

It takes us over an hour to get through all the security gates leading up to the Theskian Council Embassies. In a chamber that connects them all together, the Councillors assemble to negotiate and debate various bills. I hope dearly that

one day very soon a Korvian embassy will be built and attached to the main council chamber.

“You’ve got this.” Valerie squeezes my hand and I purr at her confident smile.

“*We’ve* got this.” I squeeze her hand back, and together we are escorted by elite guards towards the council chamber. Most are Prelka and Sacron, but a rather tense fellow to my right is a Qeknian. They all wear white combat suits, boots, protective vests and helmets. The Prelka wear two helmets, the Sacron’s uniform has four arm sleeves, and the Qeknian has holes for his green wings at his back, and in his helmet for his antennae. “Here we go.” I take a deep breath, smile behind my veil, and wait patiently as two of the guards enter a security code to open up the inner chamber.

“No swearing, no scowling, no sass.” I chuckle in my throat at her self chastisement under her breath. We walk together into the large domed room. The walls are blue with white sweeping archways leading up to the high roof. In the middle of the chamber is a circular platform to address the podiums surrounding it. Each held the sigil of the people it represented on a purple fabric banner hanging down the front of the podium.

The planet Earth symbol is a tree standing brimming with leaves. Justina stands behind it with a bright smile. To her right is a podium with the Sacron symbol of four hands holding onto the forearm of the other to make a circle. Olphan nods to me and his neck frills are relaxed against his neck. Ninthor stands behind the next podium, which has the sigil of the Qeknian people on it. Four wings around a spear. It’s the spear of knowledge, but it’s still a weapon. For their kind, knowledge *is* a weapon. A tall watery tank with an attached chute to swim away if required, is Pharom. He is wearing his mighty coral crown and some of his tentacles have adhered themselves by suckers to the glass to keep himself in place behind the Tallahestra podium. Their symbol is a spiral of suns, as their planet has many. To our right is Getrata at his podium. His people have recently changed their sigil from their two faced goddess of victory, complete with weapons and bleeding fangs, to something more *tame*. The Dvaktia bird is famous on their

home world for shimmering gold in sunlight, so the Prelka have chosen it as the symbol to represent how civilised they now are.

I am escorted to a podium with no sigil. Unlike the others which are welded to the floor, mine is on wheels like it's been moved in here temporarily. I smile, intending to change that in this debate.

“Greetings.” I bow low to them all in turn, amused at the furious look on Getrata's faces as I have turned up and foiled his plans. My lilac eyes are full of ambition as I mentally put my speech in order once more. “It is an honour to stand before you today and discuss in detail the benefits of passing the proposed bill to allow my entry into the council.”

“And it is an honour to have you here, Dynast.” Justina nodded to me, and then glanced over at Valerie. “As it is to see you again, Miss Stone.”

“Thank you.” She clumsily curtsies, and I resist the urge to either giggle or coo at her.

“But she can't be here.” Getrata's left head snapped.

“Councillors and petitioners only.” His right head chuckled. “So you're *companion* will have to wait outside.”

“Dynast?” Valerie grips my hand tightly and I turn to cup her cheek to reassure her.

“Will Miss Stone wait just outside?” I direct to Justina, as Valerie is one of her people. “With the security guards and CCTV?”

“Of course.” Justina nods, and Olphan rubs his chin with his upper right hand.

“You *can* be a room apart, surely?” He asks me, and I must assure him I can be trusted without my feeding partner attached to me. The last thing I want is for them to think I'll lose control and try and feed on them. It's an irrational fear many Theskians have. Not helped by their horror films and how my kind are represented. “She will be perfectly safe with the guards and security doors just outside.”

“Of course.” I bow my head to the Sacron councillor, and hold both Valerie's eyes. “You'll be just outside. I saw a vid

screen on the wall. This may take a while, but please be patient.”

“Sure. If you’re fine then I am.” She smiles and I kiss her knuckles through my veil. She leans forward to kiss between my eyes, one of the few places exposed through my headdress and veil. “Kick their asses. You’ve got this.” I adore her.

“Your confidence gives me strength. Wait outside, and do *not* move.” She gives me a playful salute with two fingers, and the security guards walk her out of the central chamber. I turn to face the councillors and place my gloved hands onto my plain podium. “Councillors of the Theskian races. I, the Dynast to the Hive Council, will outline today the vast benefits for my admission to the Theskian council. Please allow me to share with you my vision for Korvian kind as part of this great Empire. I will then, of course, take all of your questions and assure you why this is the right move forward.” Right away I notice that Justina, Olphan and Phoram seem receptive, curious, and encouraging. Ninthor is, as he always is, hard to read. Getrata’s faces are both set to a disgusted scowl, but I ignore him. I don’t need him, nor do I care about his opinion. “To start, I should like to set the record straight on the reason for our exile, and present evidence to solidify assurances. Then, I will discuss the bounds my people have achieved in medical technology we would like to share with you, as well as other forms of industry. Not to mention, the financial boom you will undergo from all of the above, and our contributions towards the Indentured Servitude Services that are the bedrock of this grand and multicultural society.”

Romance Author



Chapter 32

Chaos

Valerie.

Well, this is boring. I'm sitting on a stiff black leather couch with nothing but the news to watch, and that's not a good thing. I sit forward in my fancy yellow dress, staring at the horrifying sight of people protesting across the empire. Peacekeepers and security firms, and in some places the military, are all keeping them at bay.

“This is Fin Derone here for Empire Informed, and I'm right outside the first security gate for the Theskian embassies.” I have watched four different reporters for different news channels already, so I know that the large building made of multiple tall domes is the building I'm sitting in. Fin Derone is in his late 30s, has a neat buzz cut at the sides and quiff on top. His glasses are black rimmed, and his grey suit is smart, even if he's removed his jacket and tie. “People of every race have turned out to protest what is apparently happening behind me right now.” He points to the building over his shoulder, and whoever is controlling the camera drone moves it to get a better view. “Security seems a little over the top, if you ask me, with so many armed guards walking the perimeter. Unless, of course, they are anticipating trouble? Most of the people I have spoken to this morning are genuinely concerned about allowing a predatory race like the Korvis to have free reign in Theskian space.” I grip my fists and scowl at the screen. Predatory race? Fuck off. Vrajan says the vast majority of Korvis are like him. They want a singular feeding companion. They don't want free reign for some sort of feeding frenzy like in films. Freedom of movement, trade, and equality is not something that people should be so pissed off about, damn it. What's unfair about that? Every Korvis that is allowed into Theskian space to acquire a

feeding companion will be thoroughly vetted. Only volunteers or willing indentured servants like me, will become feeding companions. “However, there are those who are willing to do a lot more than hold up their signs and demand to be heard.”

The screen changes and I cup my hand over my mouth. My stomach turns and I feel sick. The feed changes to another location, which can't be too far away, since the Council building is visible in the background. Hundreds of angry people, humans, Sacron and Prelka, are rioting against the clear shields of the peacekeepers. Knock out grenades are being hurled in both directions. I can see signs with the Anti-K movement symbol sprayed on it in blood. Or what's meant to look like blood. As well as some rather crudely drawn stick figures of a Korvis chewing on the middle of a human or Sacron. I can't tell. It's *really* badly drawn. “Some are mobilising in readiness for what they are calling an invasion disguised as an olive branch by their emissary, Mr. Dynast.”

“Fucking assholes.” I glare with heat on my cheeks. Part of me wants to march out there and shout some sense into those idiots. They have an opinion on something, and someone, whom they know nothing about! None of them have ever *met* a Korvis. They certainly haven't met Vrajan. Calling him Mr. Dynast is wrong, for a start. He is *the* Dynast. That's his title and rank, not his name. Idiots. Do your damn research Fin. We've done enough interviews for you to get that right you dweeb. Yeah, I could go and find this dude and tell him why he, and all these other idiots are missing a few dozen screws, but I'm not that stupid. I am not putting my ass at risk with adrenaline high protestors. They wouldn't listen to me anyway. Right now, what Vrajan is doing is the best way to be heard and make changes. One step at a time, and through the proper channels. As much as it's pissing me off watching all this crap on the news, it brings home just how important this meeting is. I'm not going to risk 5 months of pain staking ass kissing and political tango Vrajan has gone through, just so I can go out there and flip off the idiotic and bigoted masses. They will learn. One day, they'll realise how fucked up it is that they have such a strong opinion about a race of people they don't know a damn thing about, outside of a century old bias report, and horror films. Stupid.

I smile, thinking of Vrajan, and glancing over my shoulder to the doors to the central chamber. *My Korvis* is sweet and tender. He's nothing like the horror films show Korvis to be. Do I think he's physically capable of ripping someone open and chewing on their heart? Probably. Vrajan is big, strong, and the memory of him growling and scaring the shit out of everyone at the Gala in the VIP room makes me wonder. He can manhandle me without breaking a sweat. Do I think he is emotionally capable? No way. He doesn't want to hurt anyone. He isn't interested in anyone else but me. I place a hand over my chest and tell my heart to calm the hell down. Vrajan will be out of the chamber soon enough, either with good news, or not good news *yet*. Either way, we'll be together again soon.

I nod towards the door, and turn back towards the vid screen, when I see the peacekeepers by the exit talking to another unit. I feel a wobble of worry in my stomach. There were only 6 guards before. Now there are 12? Are things so bad that they need 12 guards on the council chambers? I realise I worried too soon, as the first 6 peacekeepers leave. It's a shift change, that's all. They leave, and six new officers march into the waiting room with me. All of them are fully armoured in white riot gear, like the first unit was, and they hold their weapons ready.

"Is it bad out there?" I ask the nearest one, who looks at me like he was surprised I addressed him. I can't make out the colour of his skin, but with his height, four arms and the flexible neck guard over where his neck frills would be, I can tell he's a Sacron. In fact, they all are.

"Yeah. Pretty bad." He shrugs and comes to stand in front of the central chamber door behind me. An assault rifle in each pair of hands. "Don't worry Ma'am. We'll keep you safe."

"Thank you." I smile and nod with respect. I feel safer already. They are spread out in the room covering all the exits, and are armed to the teeth. No one is getting in here now. I watch the screen, chewing my bottom lip as Fin Derone continues his chilling report.

"The brutality being shown to the protesters is simply fanning the flames of their anger. What we need is a peaceful and open forum for them to express their concerns. Why are our

councillors not addressing the worries of their people? Don't we have a right to feel safe? Right now Mr. Dynast will be painting a shiny picture about the Korvis *not* being blood sucking monsters, and if they buy that, then we're *all* in trouble."

"Oh I can't listen to this shit." I push up from the sofa and glance around for a remote. There is no coffee table and I can't see one. "Anyone see an off switch anywhere?"

"Yeah, right here."

Wham.

Something thick is cupped across my nose and mouth, and three muscular arms wrap around me. I scream into the fabric as fumes assault my nose and lungs. One of the guards comes towards me and I try and kick him, but my world is fading in and out of focus. I thrash and try to twist my head away from whatever chemical they're trying to knock me out with, but I'm just not strong enough. "Is she out yet?"

"Nearly, Boss." The one in front of me leans forward to stare through the black lense of his helmet at me. I try my best to kill him with my groggy stare, but soon it's a fight just to keep my eyelids open. "Won't be long now."

"She's a fighter." The guy holding me chuckles and I feel his lower arms start to turn me to lay in his arms. His upper left arm props up my upper back, and his lower arms hold my lower back and thighs. His upper right hand keeps the fabric pressed to my face. I can't feel my limbs anymore and my vision is blurry as hell. "Sleep now Ma'am. I meant what I said. We'll keep you safe. You just need to have a little nap." Bite me, mother fucker. I try to fling my hand up to slap him, or claw his eyes out, but it barely twitches an inch. I can see my blurred reflection in his mask, and my crown and veil has come off in the scuffle. "Come on now."

"Boss, we have 4 minutes before they realise we've knocked out the cameras and we're not the unit assigned to replace the previous unit. We need to leave."

"She has to be out cold first, otherwise the guise of a medical emergency doesn't work." 'Boss' grumbles through his teeth at one of his guys and...and I...what am I...shit I can't...I

can't... "Ah, here we go. Call the evac shuttle. We're leaving with the package."

My eyes roll back and everything fades to black.

Romance Author



Chapter 33

Gone.

Vrajan.

2 hours later.

I push the doors open, walking side by side with Justina and chuckling at an anecdote she just told me about her husband.

“And then he said, ‘I can explain’.” She barked with laughter, and I politely chuckled. We left the central chamber first, and I can’t wait to tell Valerie how well the meeting went. I did it. I am have been appointed as the Korvian Councillor. It was a 3 to 2 vote, as I expected. I lift my head and look for Valerie...

...where is she? I lift instinctively to my full height and tower over Justina and Olphan.

“Dynast? What’s wrong?” Olphan asks me as I march suddenly into the middle of the waiting room. I turn on the spot, looking at the couch, and then through all the windows I can see. “Dynast?”

“Where is Miss Stone?” I counter with a sharp edge.

“Maybe she went to the little girl’s room?” Justina offers and walks towards me, also looking around.

“With *all* the guards?” I feel panic starting to set in. My heart pounds, my diamond pupils narrow, and my hands grip into fists at what I’ve just seen. I stare at it in a state of terrified shock, as the others chatter away.

“Hang on, he’s right. The guards should still be here. One might have gone with her, but six of them?” Olphan takes a

com disc from inside his jacket and starts talking to someone in his own language.

“I’m sure she’ll be back any...” Ninthor offers, only to stare as I lower to lift something off the floor. “...oh no.” The rest of the councillors turn with alarm at the sound of Ninthor’s dread. I hold in my hands the soft yellow veil and the tiara I had made for Valerie.

“You...said she would be safe?” I turn slowly to look at Olphan, who pauses on his call when I address him. The veteran seems to pale at the intense look in my lilac eyes. “Where is Miss Stone? Where is my beloved?”

“And where are the damn guards!” Ninthor clicked and pointed up at the vid screen. Chaos was going on outside, and he was probably worried about his own safety.

“I’m calling for more now.” Olphan barks. I cradle the veil and tiara in my hands and whine. “Don’t worry, they’ll be here soon.”

“With Miss Stone?” An explosion outside is displayed on the vid screen, and I turn to see a sea of Anti-K signs and banners. “What...is this?”

“Freedom of protest for some, an excuse for violence for others.” Justina scowled and puts her hand on my left bicep. “Dynast? Look at me.” I can’t. I’m looking at the wildfire of anger and hate on the screen as humans, Sacron, Prelka and Qeknian collide with peace keepers. All because of me... All I want is peace and freedom. Willing feeding partners for my people, so we don’t die out and we can breed in a healthy way. Peace, not persecution. How can they hate my kind so much? “Dynast, we are going to find Miss Stone.”

“Oh no.” I feel nausea coil around me like a vicious serpent. “Did *they* take her?” I hold her veil and tiara to my chest and point at the screen with my right hand. I look to Justina for answers. “You said she would be safe, and I trusted you, and now the Anti-K movement have taken her!” My voice is far from soft and quiet, and I hiss deeply.

Everyone backs up from me and security officers come running down the corridor. Likely from Olphan’s call, of course,

but they still take one look at the situation, and move to form a firing line between me and the other councillors.

“DOWN ON YOUR KNEES!” One of them shouts, and I stop breathing. Is this it? Am I going to be shot without a second thought? Gunned down like a monster? Justina is horrified and screams at the guards before they can pull the trigger. I officially owe her my life.

“No! Don’t you *dare!*” She shoves one of the guards out of the way and marches over to me. “This is the newly appointed Councillor Dynast of the Korvis, and you will not aim your weapons at him, am I clear?!” She stands with me, and Valerie would have done the same had she been here. But she is not here, and her absence shreds my heart. Where is she? Is she safe? Is she being harmed?

“Trigger happy idiots.” Olphan clips one of the guard’s helmets and barges through the line to come over to me as well.

Ninthor and Getrata...stay behind the guards.

“Thank you.” I sniffle and hold the veil and tiara to my chest with both hands. “Where is my beloved?”

“Excellent question.” Olphan scowls at the 6 guards, and from the species ratios, is the unit that was here before. “Explain where you all were, right now, and where is the Dynast’s feeding companion?”

“We-we were relieved of the post, sir.” The Qeknian guard clicks anxiously to Ninthor. “They knew our security code and told us to join the security unit at the gate.”

“Who did?” I snarl, but Justina and Olphan place a hand each on my arms to keep me where I am. “Who took my beloved?” Because for the first time in my whole life, I want blood, and not to drink.

“Well?” Ninthor’s wings flexed anxiously behind him. “Debrief me, right now.”

“They wore peacekeeper uniforms.” A Sacron piped up and nodded to Olphan. “All Sacron, all similar heights and builds. Their unit leader was the only one who spoke to us. They never used names or took off their helmets, sir.”

“So a merc band.” Olphan sneered and started calling someone again. “We need security footage.”

“I don’t think that’s going to be possible.” Getrata’s heads looked at different corners of the waiting room, and pointed with each corresponding hand to them. “Look. The cameras.” I sweep my lilac eyes up to see the black mini domes that house the cameras are singed and cracked. “I’m not a tech expert, but I read a report once about cameras being overloaded like that to wipe out their short term memory.”

“Ay.” Olphan sighed. “He’s right. We won’t see who took Miss Stone on any footage. This was a professional job, damn it.”

“Why do you think that?” I ask, my heart racing.

“They had regulation issue uniforms.” Ninthor nodded and slowly walked away from the protective line of officers to join us. “They knew the current security code and were in and out without alerting anyone. They’ve covered their tracks, and took Miss Stone with an ease that speaks to being *far* from simply being opportunistic protestors.”

“If anything, I bet the Chaos outside helped as a diversion for them.” Getrata folded his arms and commented with one head looking at me, and the other looking out the window to the nearest riot. “Someone went to great lengths to target your girl.”

“Someone?” I swallow venom and my diamond pupils narrow on that slimy fucker. “You mean *you*, of course. Is that how you planned it?” I storm towards Getrata, and startle everyone in the room when not even Olphan’s four hands can hold me back. The peacekeepers tense, and I could hardly care less. All of Getrata’s eyes widened and both mouths opened in outrage.

“How *dare* you accuse me of-”

“You changed the date and time of this meeting to try and make me miss it.” I hiss and point at him aggressively. “You were shocked when Miss Stone and I realised what you did, and turned up anyway. You even faked my acceptance codes so no one would question it, with the desire of ruining my chances of

petitioning for my admission to this council. I thought we had thwarted you, but here I stand without Miss Stone.” I swallow a lump in my throat and red mist starts to curl at the edges of my vision. “Clever of you to have a back up plan, but if you hurt her I will make you pay dearly. Give her back to me, right now.”

“I had *nothing* to do with this!” His left head barked angrily. “I might not like the idea of you being in our council meetings, or your people walking the same streets as mine, but I wouldn’t put another Theskian at risk just to stick it to you.”

“But you would interfere with and forge council records?” Justina glowered up at him. “Which we will fully investigate later, but right now Miss Stone is the priority.”

“She is my *only* priority.” I hiss and look for the nearest door. I have no idea when in the last two hours this has happened, but can she have gone far? Her ID would have pinged, surely, if they took her off the star base. Due to being my feeding companion, her biosignature and face is on the hot list at any customs gate. They wouldn’t move her through official paths, which leaves smuggling routes. Those will take time as to not risk discovery. But how much time do I have?

I am forced to stop mid stride towards the nearest door by Olphan. “What are you doing?” I snarl, and his four hands ball into fists.

“I could ask you the same thing?” He counters, not aggressively, but certainly on edge.

“Are you mad? *Obviously* I am going to look for-”

“Because without your feeding companion, you technically can’t *be* here.” He forces out like it leaves a bad taste, but it doesn’t matter. He still said it, and then he made it worse. “Answer me honestly Dynast. When did you last feed?” His words hit me like a knife in the back and right in the heart.

“When did I last...?” I glance around me and see I’ve been surrounded on all sides. “You vote me your equal, and then when my dear Miss Stone has been kidnapped under *your watch*, you then surround me with guns like I’m a wild animal?”

“Yes, and it pains me to do so, as you seem like a good sort, but you are still a Korvis without a feeding companion in Theskian space.” He gives me a hard yet pained look. “Councillor or not, you are currently breaking the agreement we have with the Hive council, even if it’s not of your doing.”

“I see.” And it makes me sick with betrayal. He isn’t wrong, however, and I grip my hands down by my sides. Valerie’s tiara digs into my palm through my glove. “So I will be detained, then?”

“Must we?” Justina stood beside me, not afraid of me, which does her credit. Everyone else, Olphan included, are keeping their distance from the big bad Korvis. Is it a human female quality I wonder? This compassion and loyalty? Every human woman I’ve met seems to have it, in any regard, though I have met few. Or was this a rare quality that Justina simply shared with Valerie through her own merit? “Can’t he just be escorted back to his ship?”

“I would rather be detained here.” I interject and place a hand gently on her shoulder. “So the moment Miss Stone is found, we can be reunited.” Justina pats my hand on her shoulder and nods. “I would *prefer* to help look for her, but I can see that is not an option.” I glance over at a Peacekeeper coming towards me with handcuffs. “I should hope I am afforded *some* respect? I am, after all, complying and showing no signs of aggression.” When the human officer doesn’t slow or lower his cuffs, I feel so helpless.

“Surely that isn’t called for?” Justina tries.

“Is it?” Olphan asks warily with all his arms folded. “Note, Justina, that the Dynast did not answer my earlier question. *When* did you last feed?” I close my eyes and feel everyone staring at me.

“...five hours ago. I *am* due to feed, but I will not suffer any side effects for you to worry about for-” My wrists are taken and forced behind me. They are gripped tightly in magnetised handcuffs. Valerie’s tiara and veil fall from my hands, and it feels symbolic. Like I’ve lost my grip on her too. I swallow down my grief. Valerie has been taken from me, and she could be in serious danger. My freedom has been taken from me like

I'm some sort of criminal. And my dignity has been taken from me like I'm a mindless bloodthirsty beast. I hang my head, powerless and weighed down in fear for my precious Valerie, and my own future. The calls for violence from the vid screen cut me deeply, and I fear terribly that those monsters have done something to Valerie just to cause this very moment to take place.

I hang my head over and weep. There is nothing else I can do. I am about to be shoved by peacekeepers to a holding cell somewhere whilst I begin to starve. I do not trust that these people will find her in time. For her sake, or mine. After all? It's as Olphan said. This was done by a professional group, and they couldn't have done so without someone on the inside helping them. This is likely the exact turn of events they were hoping for. To be arrested in handcuffs. I am saddened at my failure to succeed for the future of my people, but I am distraught as I think of Valerie's fate.

"Fuck." Getrata grunts from both mouths, and charges over towards me. "Yes, I fudged the records because I think the rest of you are making a huge mistake letting the Korvis back into our space, but this is wrong." I cast a glance up at his faces, confused by his sudden admission and support. Surely he's the inside source? Surely Getrata's hands are all over this?

"I think we all agree it's wrong, but we have no choice." Olphan snaps and holds up his palms. "I don't like this either. We've all been manipulated, but he hasn't fed for five hours. Who knows how long it's going to take for us to find Miss Stone? If he isn't put under guard and detained now whilst he's agreeable, what happens when he enters a feeding frenzy."

"That phrase does not mean what you think it does." I hiss at him, making him tense. A feeding frenzy occurs with one's feeding companion, and no one else. If I don't get Valerie back within the next 3 hours, we will likely enter one. The longer I starve, the more dangerous it will be for anyone between me and Valerie. Since we have achieved full symbiosis, I will desire *her* blood over all others. Her desire for my bite will also make her suffer whilst we are parted. I *hate* the thought of her in pain without my venom. Oh! It suddenly occurs to me

they will not know of how Valerie will also be affected by our separation. “I-I should also make you aware of-”

“You need to leave, so we can get our people to work.” Olphan nodded to the peacekeepers on either side of me.

“But you need to know that-”

“No, *you* need to know that I’m not going to rest until we have found Miss Stone and the bastards responsible for taking her.” Olphan throws over his shoulder at me, and then starts talking with the other councillors. I am forced by either bicep by a Sacron to march out of the waiting room. They take me through a side room and a security tunnel, rather than outside of the building. That’s one saving grace, I suppose. At least my degradation is not being made public.

“Move faster.”

“I am, in fact, slowing to *your* pace.” I bite back at the armoured Sacron to my left. I make a point of lifting to my full height, and I am a good foot taller than him. “If you wish to go faster, then you need to start jogging.”

“Pft.” The soldier to my right sniggers, and makes the one on my left huff. I sniffle, and note that they do in fact, start to jog. I stride into a brisk pace, and I am soon lowered to sit in an armoured hover truck. The guards move to the front of the truck once I’m locked in the holding compartment at the back. There is a viewing screen so they can keep an eye on me as they drive me to a prison cell.

In the same hour I was awarded the rank of Councillor, I was also arrested as a danger to anyone with a pulse. To rise so high, and then to fall so low? Devastating. None of which matters more to me than Valerie’s safe return. Yes, I am hungry, but my fear and grief overpower anything else I feel. I bow my head forward, my veil damp with tears as I am gripped with terror. Who has my Valerie? Is she tied up? Unconscious? Or swearing her ‘Merchant Caste mouth’ off at whoever took her? “I can’t believe what I’m seeing. He’s crying.”

“So?”

“I dunno. I guess...I expected him to lose his shit and go berserk or something. Not...cry.” Great. Now they think I’m

either a monster, or pathetic. My shame compounds.

“I get it. If anyone took my Tylia, I’d be a wreck too. Hey? Hey Dynast?” Why is he talking to me? I lift my head to look at the screen and watch as one of the officers takes off his white helmet. His skin is vivid green and his frills are yellow. They flex as he rolls his neck from side to side, and he locks his orange eyes onto the screen at me. “Just hold on. Once we’ve got you secure in a holding cell, I’ll make sure to chase for updates on your lady for you.”

“Thank you.” I nod with gratitude.

“It’s the least I can do after being tricked by those fake officers. They will lose their castes and get 25 years in prison just for *that*. Add on top that they’ve kidnapped your feeding companion and put your life at risk? *And* made the Theskian council look like idiots? Well.” He sniggered and nodded to his partner in solidarity. “I don’t think they’ll see the light of day again.”

“Or they might get shot?” The other officer offered.

“As long as Miss Stone is found safe and sound first, I do not care.” I sniffle and absently try to wipe the tears from around my eyes, but frown when the cuffs restraining my hands behind my back stop me.

“If they get Harknass’s unit on the recovery opp, they’ll shoot for the head. They always d-”

Boom.

Something collides with the side of our truck, and my vision spins as the vehicle does. I feel the sensation of the vehicle spinning and my right side hitting the wall with the vid screen. It shatters and shards fly, slicing at my arms and making my robes spatter with blood. A moment later, I hit the floor and everything goes black.

Romance Author



Chapter 34

Withdrawal

Valerie.

I groan and rub my face, feeling a headache throb through my skull. What the fuck happened to me? I blink my eyes open and realise I'm laid on my right side on a metal floor. No wonder I'm cold as hell. I shiver and groggily roll over onto my stomach. I prop myself up onto my stomach and forearms and look through lidded eyes at my surroundings. Huh? Where the hell am I? I groan at how heavy my body is and lick my lips. They are dry, my head hurts, and I squint to focus my vision. Did I drink a butt-load of whiskey last night or something? I can't remember ever being *this* hung over.

Wait, hang on? This has nothing to do with booze. As I come round the fog is lifting and I remember the bullshit that took place before I passed out. I was kidnapped by very polite and fake as fuck Sacron police officers. Mother fucker. I can taste some sort of chemical at the back of my throat, my nose stings, and my lips are dry. It must be from whatever they used on the cloth they smothered me with to knock me out.

I look around and see I'm in something akin to a basement or a storage hold. There are wooden crates everywhere and the walls are made of dull metal. I push myself up onto my knees first, then use a crate to hoist myself up to stand.

"Son of a bitch!" I hiss and hold my middle as a wave of dizziness and throbbing pain sweeps through me. It's not just in my head like I first thought. My whole body aches. Did they rough me up, whoever took me, when they carried me off to Lord knows where? I am still wearing the long yellow ruffled charmeuse gown, but it is scuffed in places. The floor is dusty and the air is stale. My brown hair is still in a plait, but wisps of

hair frame my face. “Ah!” Another wave of misery pulses through me, and I lean heavily on the crate to my side. I hurt *everywhere*. I have no sleeves, so I examine my arms and frown at the lack of any wounds. No bruises. No cuts. No sign of injury of any kind. I drag the right side of my dress up to look at my legs, and they are just as blemish-free as my arms. Yet they are fucking aching, and a ricochet of agony hits me again with enough force that I cower onto the crate. “Did they drug me?” Other than the chemical on the rag, of course. Well, unless it was something really nasty they used to incapacitate-mother fucker?!?! SHIT! Shit shit shit SHITTY fuck! I know what this is. Realisation slams into me and shakes me with fear. It’s not drugs making me feel like waves of vision splitting dizziness, and pain rocking my body.

It’s withdrawal.

How long was I unconscious? How long have I been away from Vrajan? We were due to feed when he got out of his council meeting, so how long ago was that? I have been a few hours late in the past and been a little hornier than usual, but otherwise fine. If I’m feeling dizziness and pain like this, how long have I been here? Was I unconscious for so long that I skipped super horny and went to screaming pain as my organs started to protest? And what state is Vrajan in? He’ll be starving, alone, and surrounded by people who will probably piss their knickers at the sight of him without a willing meal. What did that asshole call me at the Gala? Meals on heels.

Shit. Fuck. Balls! I whimper through another wave of pain, and kick off my heels. They weren’t very high, but I can barely stand as it is, so off they go. I push off from the crate and look around. No windows. There is only one door, and it’s locked with some sort of security panel. I stagger over and brace my hands on either side of it. I struggle to focus, but eventually I find a little yellow button with a speaker symbol on it. I press it and weather another wave of pain, before speaking. “Hey! I don’t know who you guys are, or why you’ve taken me hostage, but I don’t think you understand what you’ve done. I-I’m sick.” Well, I’m in withdrawal from Vrajan’s Bonding Succour which I need more than fucking water right now. Fuck. “You’ve taken me away from the Dynast, but he’s the only one who can help me. Ah!” I whimper and struggle not to fall down to my knees,

the pain is so gripping. “It’s going to get worse. Shit. Please? I need to go back. Please? I need him.” And he needs me. “If you are hoping to get money in exchange from me, sooner is better than later, because pretty soon what’s happening to me, is going to happen to the Dynast. Then you’ll get nothing from him, because he’ll be too sick to give it to you.”

“How can you *both* be suddenly sick?” Someone answers me and it’s coming from behind me. I look around, still keeping my finger to the speaker button, and spot a camera aimed at me.

“Because I am the Dynast’s feeding companion. You clearly have no idea about Korvis biology, and the Dynast and I have a symbiotic relationship.” I don’t want to tell them too much, but all I need, all I want, is to go back to Vrajan. “If you took me hoping for a payday, fine. But you’re also killing us. *The-fuck.*” I cry with a fresh wave of hell and claw at the wall as I grit my teeth and make it through the other side. I’m panting, fatigued from the pain already and covered in a cold sweat. “The longer this shit goes on, the worse we’re both going to get. I’m still alive and locked away down here, meaning you need me alive, right? That implies I’m leverage? For payment, or something? Well you’ve fucked up, because you’re slowly assassinating us both.”

“That’s a rather elaborate ploy.” The voice chuckles with a deep rumble. “Symbiosis huh? I’ve heard many pleas from hostages over the years, but that’s a new one.”

“It’s true!” I snarl up at the camera. At least I have confirmation I’m a hostage. “How long have you held me hostage?”

“Why is that important?” MOTHER FUCKER! I want to scream, but I’m afraid of how that will hurt my throbbing skull.

“Because without me, the Dynast is starving to death, and my body is shutting down you fucking idiot. I’m supposed to take Regen pills. Got any of those lying around? If you’re hoping to hand me back over for a fee, the timer is running out-” I scream and hold my head. It hurts so much. I feel like something is inside my skull and scrambling my brain. My stomach is in knots and nausea crashes into me like a tsunami.

Tears slug down my cheeks and I fall to my side on the floor. I shake and hold my stomach. “You’re killing me.” I whimper and once I can see straight again, I bang my fist against the floor.

This is not just a few hours apart. I must have been unconscious for a long time to now be in this state. What state is Vrajan in? He will be worried sick, but he’ll be feeling what I am too. Maybe worse, since he’s starving as well. Anger wells inside of me. I have no idea why these fuckers have taken me hostage. I don’t now who they are, and I don’t give a damn. The first opportunity I get, I’m finding something sharp or blunt to shove into someone’s eye socket. I need to find a way back to Vrajan.

“Boss, she doesn’t seem to be faking it. Her vitals are all over the place.” I’m curled up on my side and listen intently. “We might need to get her to sickbay to sedate her.”

“No!” I howl up at the camera. “Any drugs you give me will be in my blood and hurt him! He-he will already be weak because of our separation. You could kill him! No drugs. D-do you hear me? No dru-ah.” I arch against the floor and scream in pain. It’s getting worse. I feel like I’m dying. Like my veins are trying to rip themselves free from my bones. Fuck. I’m cold but I’m on fire and pouring with sweat.

The door opens and I loll my head to the right to look at the man now standing over me. My vision is blurry and my brow is beading with sweat, but I can tell he’s a Sacron. His is wearing black leather boots, brown trousers, a blue sash slung across his hips, and a billowing white shirt. He has crimson skin, four arms, all of which are reaching down to scoop me up. As he adjusts me into his arms to hold like a bride, I see his irises are yellow with orange streaks. His neck frills are huge, have yellow spines, and they are flared with alarm like a leathery mane.

“I’m taking you to our sickbay.” He speaks to me and turns to carry me towards an elevator.

“Take me back.” I beg him, shaking with pain. “I need the Dynast.”

“You *look* like you need rehab. What has he been giving you?” I scowl through my agony at the nerve of this fucker.

He's passing judgement on Vrajan?

"Symbiosis."

"Is that a drug."

"It's a biological harmony *you* have interrupted, because you have no idea what you're doing." He shoots me a look like I might have a point. At least he doesn't appear to be a stupid kidnapper.

"Look, as soon as we have our payment from our employers, we're going to give you ba--"

"How long have I been here, because depending on that answer, I might not live long enough for you to get paid." My body punctuates the point with another sledgehammer of agony to my head. I wail like a banshee, and even with four arms, he struggles not to drop me. His frills are wide around his head and he is horrified at what he's seeing. He is *not* as scared as *I* am, trust me. Fuck. I'm dying. I'm actually dying. He steps out of the elevator and starts jogging towards his destination. Absently I notice there are other Sacron peering out of various rooms as we pass them at speed, but I can't focus on them. The world is difficult to perceive through the pain tearing through me. "My body is shutting down."

"Hold on." He barks down at me like an order. "We'll sedate you and help you detox from whatever this is."

"You have no fucking clue what you're taking about." I seethe, scared and furious, and this fucker's the cause. I struggle to lock into his yellow eyes, but I manage it. "I'm supposed to be weened off gently from his venom. Slowly. Y-you've forced me to go cold turkey and my organs are dying. You're killing me." He scowls and lowers me to a metal table. It's freezing, but it barely touches the sides of the barrel, with how much pain I'm in.

"Like I said? We'll sedate you and--"

"Unless you're a doctor with experience in Korvis symbiosis in the feeding companion, you have no fucking clue if what you give me will kill me." The crimson Sacron pauses his hands over the medical station beside me. "And even if it

doesn't? It might kill the Dynast. No drugs." I need Vrajan. I need his bite. His venom. His touch. I need him.

"But-" He turns with a syringe in his hand, and I manage to fling a hand out to slap it from his.

"NO DRUGS!" I scream and spasm through another tsunami of torture in my veins. I'm sweating so badly it's leaving damp spots on my dress.

"Boss? What's all the commotion?" Huh? I turn my head and see my sister stood in the doorway to this sickbay. Great. I really *am* dying. I'm hallucinating. Her blue eyes are wide as she looks at me, and the rainbow coloured shawl she's wearing slides down to the floor. "...?!?!?"

"Cas, go back outside." He booms with anger at my hallucination to leave...but then, if *he* can see her...then she isn't a hallucination.

"Cassie?" I whimper, and she snaps out of her shocked trance.

"Val!" She cries out and runs towards me. Her hands are cool against my damp cheeks as she comes to my side and examine me. "Oh my God. Wh-what happened?!" I want to answer her, but pain claws through my eyes and chest and I cry out in agony. I writhe in her arms, and she almost cries harder than I do. "What the hell happened to my sister?!"

"Your...sister? She's your *sister?!?*" Cassie looks to the red Sacron with horror...and then betrayal.

"Did you...take that hostage job? Did you *kidnap* my *sister?*"

"Cas, I didn't know." He sounds panicked and tries to touch Cassie's shoulder, but she shrugs him off. "I swear to you, if I knew she was your sister, we would *never* have-"

"Don't fucking touch me." Woah. I can't remember my sister swearing, but she has a scowl that is as formidable as mine normally are. "Valerie is my sister, but even if she wasn't, she would have been someone else's sister. Someone else's daughter. You promised me you wouldn't take the job."

“I am Captain of this crew, and I will take on whatever job is in the best interes-”

She slaps him. If I could have, I would have grinned and given her a high five. “...Cas, please I-” He reaches for her, and she raises her hand ready for another slap.

“I can’t put into words how much you have broken my heart right now, *Captain*.” He seems to sway on his feet with the impact of her words. “But right now my sister needs medical attention. Get us to a doctor, right now.”

“No doctor.” I take hold of Cassie’s arm, struggling to focus on her through the fog creeping into my mind. I think I’m about to pass out, which terrifies me, as I’m not sure I’ll wake up again. “I need the Dynast. No drugs. Just him. I’ll die, Cas. W-we both will.”

“What?!” Fresh tears well up in her eyes. I see old pain there flare to life. For her, this might be like losing mother all over again. “N-no. No you can’t die Val. You’re all the family I have left. You can’t. I-I won’t let you.”

“Dynast. Cas, I need him.” Another wave of spasms and the feeling of my blood boiling behind my eyes is the last thing I feel, before passing out in my sister’s arms.

“VALERIE!”

Romance Author



Chapter 35

The Lawyer delivers

Vrajan.

I am sat in a prison cell. It's within the bowels of the council building. Maximum security, with two guards outside my cell, and an army down the hall. I know this, as I was dragged past them shortly after being dragged out of the armoured truck crash. At the time I thought I was being rescued, only to be further restrained. I have the same magnetised handcuffs on, but there is now a muzzle around my face. My crown is gone, but they have left me with my veil and headdress. A round cage sits around my head and is held in place by a collar around my neck.

As they fixed it to me, I saw across the road *why* they felt the need to do so. There was a human woman, a redhead, with a neck wound, and she squawked loudly for all to hear how I bit her. She said she came to offer assistance after the crash, opened the door to the truck, and I bit her like a rabid animal. Her blood is on my veil, but I can't taste it in my mouth. I did not drink from her, nor did I wish to. I was not crazed at the time, nor would I feed from anyone but Valerie, unless I was starved into desperation. I was not at that stage, and I did not feed from that woman, but no one would listen to me. I was placed in this head cage, and then forced into this prison cell. I have been arrested for assault, and for breaking the peace treaty between the Theskian Empire and the Hive.

I have been set up, and left here to starve and suffer. The only thing they *did* afford me, was one call. So I made it to my mother. This didn't alarm anyone, until they realised my mother was the Hive Queen for all the Korvis. She took one look at me in a glorified muzzle, and screeched so loudly that her veil

tussled around her face, and even I would have covered my ears if I could reach them.

My mother will be mounting a rescue mission, and she might rescue me in time, but not Valerie. I explained to her that simply demanding that I am handed over will not save my beloved. I must remain, and be reunited with her as soon as possible. In the mean time, she can use her position to put pressure on the Empire to find Valerie, and not to allow me to wither away. In the mean time, my mother had the sense to demand that this woman who claims I have fed from her has blood samples taken by an independent source for analysis. *I* know why she's insisted on this, but the Theskians don't.

Good. Whoever their insider is, we can't afford to let them know what we're hoping to prove with this test. Not by what is in her blood, but by what *isn't* in it.

I have vomited most of the Synth-Red I try to ingest. This does not bode well for my appearance. The toilet in here is stained red, as is my veil and head cage, since they won't remove it. I can reach in to tug my veil up and down, but that's it. Ha! I must look just like how their horror movies portray the Korvis, with the way the guards pale and cower from me.

I can see from the wall clock that it's been nearly 24 hours since I last fed. My pain is crippling, and my hunger is unbearable. I told them to get me some Synth-Red from my ship, which they did, but it has barely taken the edge off. I can hardly stomach it. If this is how *I* am feeling, my poor Valerie must be well into withdrawal right now.

"-client has been treated atrociously." I am huddled on the little cot bed in here and shake with pain. Who is that? "And we *will* be suing you for his prejudicial treatment. At every turn, the Dynast has followed every instruction and ridiculous procedure you have put him through. Your treatment of my client is criminal, and I'll see your organisation answer for it in court." A woman's voice buzzes ahead of her, and her tarsus click against the floor.

"Ma'am, I'm just doing my job, and I'm telling you, don't go in there."

“I am *perfectly* safe, now open it.” My neck hurts in the head cage as I lift it to look at the newcomer. She is Qeknian, which I wasn’t expecting, but I *was* told I would be appointed a willing lawyer, since no Korvis without a feeding partner is allowed into Theskian space. Much to the frustration of my mother, when she tried to send one of my cousins to defend me.

“A Councillor to his entire race has been tied up and muzzled like a mad dog. You should be *ashamed* of yourself.” She buzzes angrily. She’s young, short, and plucky. She has a yellowish exoskeleton, black markings across her eyes and chin, which compliment a black suit dress she’s wearing. She has black fuzz on her head, like hair, and she has a pair of clear glasses over her large yellow eyes, which are made of lots of smaller eyes. Interesting? She isn’t hiding hers, like Ninthor does.

“Like I said? Just doing my job Ma’am.” A human peacekeeper hovers his hand over the door release. “Are you sure about-”

“I am not accustomed to repeating myself.” She buzzes angrily up at him and her yellow wings shimmer behind her. “And you had better have a key with you as well to unlock his restraints.”

“No way.” He shook his head and his voice wobbled nervously. I groan and push myself up to sit to appear less incapacitated than I feel. My bones ache in protest, but I ignore them.

“You will not come to any harm. I am too weak to do much more than talk.” The guard unlocks the cell door, and the Qeknian holds her hand out with expectation.

“If you won’t do it, I will. Give me the key.” She is rather brave. I will have to get her name. If she’s about to tell me I’m free to go, I’ll hire her on retainer. “Thank you.” She sasses the guard and clicks her way into the cell with me. “Apologies for your treatment, Councillor Dynast. We’re going to sue the pants off them all, don’t worry.” Her two eye bundles take in the blood on my veil, and she seems to pale, but hides it well. “I have good news.”

“You’ve found Miss Stone?” She frowns and my heart sinks. She reaches behind me and I hiss with pain and relief as my wrists are freed. I rub them on my lap and shake off the dizziness to focus on her. “Very little else will be good news, I’m afraid. Is there no sign of her?”

“I have a lot to tell you, but not here.” She brings the key fob to the side of my head cage, and pauses. “I...*am* safe to release you, Councillor?”

“Yes.” I croak. As plucky as this lawyer is, she still felt the need to check I wouldn’t attack her. “Like I said? I am very weak.”

“The Hive Queen is demanding your return so your doctors can treat you.” She sighs and presses the key fob to the cage. She catches the frame and eases it away from my neck. “Oh, and I brought this.” She lifts a leather case from her side and opens it like a present for me. “It won’t do you any justice being seen in a bloody veil. I know it’s not green, but I had to improvise.” I look at the black fabric and my hands shake as I reach for it. She watches me as I place it *over* my bloody veil to hide it. “Oh, I thought you’d change it over?”

“No one but my Mother and my feeding companion can see my face.” I take much longer than usual to attach the fabric in place with the hooks of my headdress.

“I would look away?”

“The cameras would not.” And it’s bad enough they may have caught a glimpse of my mouth as I vomited Synth-Red. “Thank you for this. Miss?”

“Xetolota.” She nods with a smile and offers me her hand. “I am your lawyer.”

“Yes, I ascertained as much.” I am so weak now that I struggle to stand. She sways under the strain to help me. She must only be 5ft 4, and I am 7ft. She insists on holding onto my left forearm to steady me as we walk. She tries to hold my hand, but I curl it into a fist. Only Valerie holds my hand. “Please, bring me up to speed Miss Xetolota.”

“You can drop the Miss, and absolutely. We’ll use an interview room on the next floor, but in short, you are no longer

under arrest, and your name has been cleared of the false accusation made by Mrs Fellows.”

“Was that the redhead woman’s name?” Xetolota nods, and escorts me slowly into an elevator. The armed guards hold their weapons and watch me go in with her. We are greeted on the next floor by guards as well.

“She has been arrested and is being interrogated as we speak. It seems that her puncture wounds in her neck don’t match your dental records, *and* your Queen played her ace well.”

“Her ace?” Xetolota glares at a guard to move out of the way as we arrive at an interview room. The chairs in here are leather and much more supportive than the cell I came from. I lower into the chair nearest to the door and grip my hands on the table. I hiss and shake with the intensity of my pain.

“Dynast! Do you need-”

“Miss Stone.” I grit through my teeth and I pin her to her seat with my diamond pupils. “She is *all* I need. In the meantime? What ace did my Mother play?” I pant and Xetolota’s pity is sweet, but unhelpful. She nods and cups her hands on the table between us.

“She waited for the results of the independent blood work to come back, and then produced a legally registered document where Miss Stone agreed for your secondary ducts to be removed.”

“And therefore anyone I fed off would have my Bonding Succour present.”

“Which Mrs Fellows *did not*, and is therefore, a liar.” She smirks, tasting an easy case to prosecute, no doubt. I don’t care about Mrs Fellows past the fact that I have been proven to be innocent. “They are working on her now to find out who put her up to it, and hopefully, who took Miss Stone in the first place.”

“Or who hired them to do so?” My money is on the Anti-K movement. I grip my chest and shudder at the pain twisting through me like toxic vines. I am starving, I am in pain, and *I* have had Synth-Red. If Valerie hasn’t had any Regen pills,

she will be in deep withdrawal by now. “That can wait. Miss Stone’s safe return must be paramount. Without my Bonding Succour, her life is in danger.”

“We are doing everything we can to find her.” She sympathises, but that does not help either. “In the mean time, your status as Councillor is safe, since you did *not* attack Mrs Fellows *or* break the treaty agreement between the Hive and the Empire. They won’t release you until Miss Stone has been found, and that I believe, is in accordance with *your* wishes?”

“Yes. I need to be here to give Valerie my Bonding Succour the moment she is found. She will die with out it, now we’ve been apart over 24 hours.” I worry dearly if she will be found in time, and I’m moved to tears. I close my eyes and hang my head. How hard are they looking for her? Really? She’s just one human to them, but she is everything to me. I love her, and I will not take another as my feeding companion. I only want her. I want to hold her forever. I want to grow even closer to her and stand side by side in the Korvis Embassy *she* helped me to achieve. I want her to meet my mother. I want us to have the rest of our lives together.

Yet, every second that ticks by lowers the chances of getting my beloved back with her heart still beating.

“Here.” I look up and see Xetolota is offering me a handkerchief.

“That is kind of you. I have had little kindness as of late. Thank you.” I take it from her, my hand trembling, and dab around my eyes.

“Excuse me?” Someone pushes the door ajar and leans their head in. I can’t tell who or what species this guard is, as they are wearing full white armour and the helmet hides their features. No antennae holes though, so they are not Qeknian. “I-I ran here.” They pant. “A Miss Cassie Stone and a Miss Valerie Stone just turned up at the front door of the Council building. I was told to come and get-”

I stand and the chair I was sitting on skids back. The newcomer gasps and drops silent. Adrenaline thunders through my veins with a primal roar booming out of my chest. I raise my hands and my pupils dilate to fat diamonds. I feel strong, but it’s

a lie. I know what this biochemical all or nothing response is. It's a biochemical last resort to get me quickly to my feeding companion.

"Feeding frenzy." I stagger towards the door and the guard backs up with alarm. "I am entering a feeding frenzy, for my feeding companion. I need her. She needs me."

"Okay, alright." Xetolota shuffles around me into the corridor, and has to run to keep up with me as I stride towards the nearest exit. "Erm, I'm pleased that Miss Stone is safe and sound, but erm, when you say *feeding frenzy*, what exactly do you mean? Dynast?"

"Get *everyone* out of my way." I hiss and the rest of the world bleeds away. I know the way to the front door. I know where Valerie is. She needs me. My lips become slick with venom dripping from my fangs. She needs my venom. I need her blood to put out the flames inside my veins. "**Anyone between me and my feeding partner are in danger, Xetolota. Warn them to move.**" I snarl, and Xetolota spreads her wings to fly ahead of me in a blur of black and yellow.

"Shit shit shit!" The lawyer zips out of sight down the corridor, and is warning everyone she passes to get out of the way. Good. Because right now I'm afraid of what I will do to anyone who stands between me and Valerie. I must get to her. Bite her. Drink her. *Fuck her. She's mine. Valerie!*

Romance Author



Chapter 36

The feeding frenzy begins

Valerie.

15 minutes earlier.

“Hold on Val.” I hear Cassie’s voice and groan. I’m not in pain anymore, but I am numb and cold. I ache down to the bone and I feel like I’m lagging from the world around me. Out of step, like, I know I heard Cassie’s voice, but my brain took a while to realise *what* she said. Hold on? To what? Or until when? I crack my eyes open and realise I’m in some sort of wheelchair. The platform hovers off the ground and I’m slumped in a slightly reclined position. I’m buckled in with belts around my waist to keep me in place. How did we get here? How long was I out? Should I be worried that my body isn’t screaming in pain anymore? And what the fuck happened to the big crimson skinned Sacron everyone kept calling Boss? I also want to know what the hell Cassie has to do with that guy, but can’t find my voice. I groan and blink as I realise I’m not even on the same ship or building I was being held hostage on. We’re moving over concrete roads, and high fence walls separate us from the high street. I do a double take as I see Cassie is pushing me towards a wall of white armoured Peacekeepers. “Help!” She calls out to them and they spot us. I can’t imagine we’re easy to miss. One little human blonde woman running and pushing a hover chair, with another woman half unconscious and slumped in said chair. I shiver with the cold breeze whipping past my arms, and roll my head against the backrest to look up at my sister. Cassie’s wavy blonde hair is a strewn mess, her cheeks are rosy from exercise, and her blue eyes are focused on the guards. “Help!”

“What’s wrong ma’am? Did you come from the riots? Does this woman need medical attention.”

“No drugs.” I mumble and turn my head back towards the guard. My vision is hazy, so can’t really make much out about the white armoured figures in front of me. Even Cassie was out of focus when I stared up at her.

“I’ll call for the emergency services, Ma’am. What happened?”

“You need to let us into the Embassy, right away.” Cassie tries to push me past them, and I whine with a dull ache as my body is jarred. Someone is standing in our way. “You don’t understand. My sister-”

“The entire Council complex is on lockdown right now to the general public, Ma’am.” The skinny white figure in front of me speaks. “Emergency services can attend to your sister here.”

“I don’t think my sister needs emergency services. She needs the Dynast.”

“The Dynast?” The guy in front of me speaks, and I experimentally grip the arms of the hover chair. My subconscious seems to know where I am, even if I can’t take in the true appearance of the grey blob behind the peacekeepers. Cassie has brought me back, and Vrajan is somewhere in there. “Why would she need to see the Korvian Councillor?”

“Feed.” I fumbled through my lips and tap into what fumes I have left to pull myself to sit forward. Can I make it? Will I fall over if I try to stand now? I should really try...but I’m...so tired. My head lolls and I lose time, lifting my head and blinking through the fog to find the conversation has moved on.

“-have to confirm her identity before we can let her inside.”

“Fine! Just hurry up. My sister is literally running out of time.” Cassie’s voice is scratchy from crying. “Please, call whoever you have to, but this is Valerie Stone. She’s the feeding companion to the Dynast, and *needs* to see him.” Yes... Vrajan...I need to see him. I need to feed him. I need his bite. I’m so empty without him. I writhe in the chair, my body shuddering. What with? Cold? Pain? Need? All of the above? I yawn and struggle to keep my eyes open. I slip off, only to gasp

and whimper as Cassie grabs my shoulders to pull me back in the chair. Shit. I must have passed out again. There's now a woman in a black dress in front of me. She's hovering with yellow wings buzzing behind her. I can't make much else about her out, with my vision being so blurred.

"-have to hurry. Bring her over here. I've ordered an emergency transport vehicle with diplomatic immunity to take Miss Stone back to the Dynast's vessel."

"No, no she needs to see him right now."

"Oh trust me, she's about to." The fuzzy yellow and black figure moves over my head. I suddenly slump back into the chair as we move at speed to the left.

"Where are you taking my sister?!" Yeah, what she said? I drop my cheek onto my left shoulder, and then force my chin upward to look at my latest captor.

"Right here." She stops my hover chair and flutters around to land in front of me again. I groan at the effort to turn my head forward to follow her. "Hi, I'm the Dynast's lawyer. I worked with his Queen to get him out of prison." Wait, what? *I'm* Vrajan's Queen. He was in prison? What?! My head hurts too much to understand what she's talking about. "Your timing is *perfect*. I called through security ahead of him and cleared the way for you two to leave, and do, well your thing." She chuckles by my ear. Fuck. Too much noise. She needs to go away so I can sleep... It's so hard to keep my eyes open... "He's on his way. The shuttle is behind you. Please try and get him inside as soon as you can? I think the last thing *anyone* wants is a *public* feeding frenzy." I phase in and out of some of what she said, but I got the most important part.

Vrajan is coming. Soon I'll be safe in his arms again. I'm not going to die. I smile and tears well in my eyes, finding a 30th wind from somewhere to keep my lids from shutting. For a moment, I can't see anything through my tears as I blink them away. The flying lawyer lady cups my cheek and moves out of the way. "Ah, here we go. Show time."

Romance Author



Chapter 37

In my arms.

Vrajan.

I march past the councillors in the entrance hall. I don't know why they are here. To see what happens next? Or to simply make sure I have left with my feeding companion? I care not.

“Dynast we are-” Olphan tries to speak to me, stepping into my path. He bounces off my left shoulder as I stride forward like the unstoppable force I am. He stumbles into Getrata, but I do not care to look back and see if he's alright. My focus and my vision is only on Valerie. I see her through the glass doors long before I push them open. I gasp and my heart clenches at the sight of my lovely Valerie. She's sat in a hover chair, her long brown hair wavy from her plait, which has long since gone with her hair tie. Her skin is almost as pale as mine. Her lids are half shut over her brown eyes, and her pupils are slack as they are dilated. She starts to pant at my approach and her hands grip the arms of the chair. Her feet clumsily slide down to the floor when she realises I am running towards her. Xetolota holds the handles of the hover chair, and chooses her moment well. She waits until the last moment, and when Valerie pushes herself out of the chair to stand, Xetolota runs with the chair out of the way.

“**Valerie.**” I reach her just as her knees give out, and wrap my arms around her. I hiss loudly and she paws at my green robe desperately.

“Vrajan.” She whines, in agony without my bite. She feels the same fire assailing her heart as I do. Only her blood and my venom can quench our flames and give us peace. I am on my knees and cradle her with one arm. My free hand comes up take hold of my veil.

“USE THE SHUTTLE!” Someone dares to interfere, and I turn my head to screech at them. My mouth is wide open and both veils press to the hollow of my wide mouth and fangs. The Peacekeepers, a human and a Qeknian, cower back from me. I pant and refocus on Valerie’s hands as they slip from my robe, and I snap my head back to her.

“...Vra...ja...I...” Her eyes start to roll back into her head. It must be now. I spot the transport shuttle, and know we’re both going to be vulnerable once I begin the feed. I scoop her up and in two strides, we are safely seated inside. The door shuts quickly, and the engine rumbles, but I barely notice.

“Hold on, my Queen.” I remove both veils and my headdress. I hold the back of her head and between her shoulder blades. “Give me your blood, and take my Bonding Succour. We will feed and heal together.” I bring her neck to my mouth and bite her.

The heavens sing and a symphony fills my soul. At the first wet hit of her blood warming my throat, I moan and hungrily drink from Valerie. I swallow her blood and pump her full of my Bonding Succour. I know when it’s starting to work, as her hands come up and fist at my robe with renewed strength. I drink and drink until her heart is stronger, but tells me to take no more. Then I lick at her wound to savour every rich drop. It’s like I’ve crawled for days through unforgiving hot sands, and now float in a cool lake of tranquillity. Later I will rage and use all my connections as the newly appointed Korvian Councillor to find out who took my precious Valerie and risked her life. I will make them pay for making her suffer and putting her in danger like this. I will find every single one of the unit who took her, and hunt down the hand behind them that put them to task.

But for now, I put any plans to avenge my beloved aside to worship her. If we were not so weak, I think I would have ripped her dress off already to continue the frenzy. However, we *are* both weak. Our bodies are just not capable of anything more right now. I collapse beside Valerie, pawing at her until she’s flush to my chest and I can cage her there protectively. I close my eyes and take in the smell of her hair. The warmth of her body. The frailty of my dear feeding companion. I weep, having come so close to losing her. I feel the inferno of the feeding

frenzy in my veins, tempered with exhaustion, and know it will be all consuming once we have rested. The fuse has been lit, and the explosion is coming. I will just have to wait until we are both strong enough to weather the blast.

I press a kiss to her brow and fresh tears slide down my pale cheeks. I am relieved to have Valerie back, but fear how close I came to losing her. How desperate my enemies are to prevent my elevation to equal the other Councillors, and therefore pave the way for the Korvis to return to Theskian space. They targeted Valerie. My sweet and foul mouthed beloved. I hold her tighter and chew my lips to smother my sniffling. I want to sleep, and will do so for hours, once I have Valerie securely on my ship. I will tuck her into the red silk sheets of our bed, set a course towards my Mother's Hive ship, and pass out beside her once we are on an intercept course with Korvian escort ships. Only then, can I rest knowing she is safe.

Oh, and of course, once we awaken, we will writhe together with my venom pumping through our veins. Never will she be deprived of my Bonding Succour again. Tradition be damned. Next time? Valerie is standing right beside me when I go into the council chambers to debate *anything*. If they don't like it? Then I'll be there remotely instead, where I know Valerie and I are safe. I pass the time thinking about all kinds of legal action I can take, considering how badly I was treated. I'm sure the Indentured Servitude Agency would have a say about one of their assets being endangered whilst under contract. Not to mention, that Qeknian Lawyer, Xetolota, seems like a competent sort. She didn't seem to view me as a monster, and she worked quickly to carry out my mother's orders. I will have to ensure she is put on retainer, considering her efficient work. It will be useful to have an efficient and determined Theskian lawyer.

"...grats." I hyper-focus on Valerie as she mumbles something against my chest.

"Pardon?" My body aches and will need time to recover, but her blood courses through me and soothes what was previously a wild fire of pain. Hearing her voice is yet another sweet elixir. "What did you say Val?"

“...” She groans and I wonder if she’s asleep. She should be. Her body was in withdrawal without my venom, and the pain she must have been in will have exhausted her. “... congratulations.” Valerie doesn’t open her eyes, but she does press a groggy kiss to my chest through my robes. “Councillor.” I laugh and nuzzle my mouth over her brow.

“Sleep, my love. Get your rest, for when *I* am rested, my body will be consumed with the feeding frenzy. Our symbiosis has tempered it, for now.”

“...?” She squinted up at my equally groggy stare, and managed to raise a brow at me. “Are you saying...you’re going to fuck my brains out after this nap?” I chuckle and nod at her, caressing her nose with mine. “Yeah, I’m so tired, I wouldn’t feel anything, so that shit is going to wait.”

“Agreed.” I long to sleep, even now, but can’t. Not yet. Not until we are safely in Korvian space. “Go to sleep. I will carry you to bed and tuck you in.”

“Good. Can’t feel my legs.” She nestles up to my chest and shivers. “Bed. Sounds good.” And a moment later, her heart rate lowers and her breathing evens out. Fast asleep.

“It sounds perfect.” I whisper and adore her with my eyes. Something I hope I will be able to do for the rest of my life.

Romance Author



Chapter 38

Reunited

Valerie.

I yawn and open my eyes. It feels so good to be without pain. I mean, seriously, breathing feels fantastic. I take a deep breath into my lungs like I spent the last 24 hours with a concrete slab crushing my chest, and now it's gone. I have a million questions buzzing in my head. Who took me? What happened to Vrajan while we were apart? Why was Cassie there, and how did she get me back to the Council building?

All that can wait. I'm safe, I'm back with Vrajan, and the feeling of wanting to take 'the final dirt nap', has gone. In fact, I feel light, warm, and maybe a little tipsy? Huh? There is a definite gentle buzz, a nice one, as I really come to. Must be the Bonding Succour. I smile as I open my eyes to see the lilac ones of my sweet space vampire.

Holy Fuck!

"Wow-shit, Vrajan?" I tense, naked, laid on red silk sheets on my back, and staring up into Vrajan's eyes. He's crouched over me on his hands and knees with a wild expression on his face. His diamond pupils are constricted in like stars, and his black lips part slowly over his fangs. His long white and black hair looks thick and unruly around his pale face. His muscles are flexing, like he's fighting an invisible wall keeping him from lowering onto me.

Well shit? *I'm* suddenly fully awake. Where is my sweet good morning and tender kiss? Why is he on all fours on top of me and staring at me like I'm a prime stake? I flinch as black beads of venom drip from his fangs and land on my clavicle. "Erm, Vrajan, are you o-" He opens his mouth wider, roars like a fucking panther, and I *barely* manage to throw my head to the

right in time for him to bite me. “Ah!” I whimper through the initial sting, as he damn well *chomped* into my fucking neck. I instinctively fling my hands up to his chest to push him off, and tears well in my eyes...oh...actually...fuck that’s really nice. I relax and lick my lips at the flood of pleasure coursing through my body. My heart pumps the Bonding Succour around my body so every cell hums with delight. I cry out, pawing and pulling at his back to hold him as close as possible. “Vrajan.” I rasp his name, rubbing my shins up his thighs. It feels so good, but I want more. “Please.” I beg, sliding my hands down his lean back to grab his ass. He bucks forward, and I feel his thick cock press against my tresses. “Fuck, *please.*” That slightly tipsy sensation has turned into a full on wanton chorus. It’s screaming WANT with every fibre of my being. “Vrajan!” I groan with frustration and take *matters* into my own hands. Or rather, I shove my right hand down between us and stroke his cock. I feel the ridges and whimper, knowing what they’re going to do to me once I get him up close and personal with my g-spot.

“Urh.” Vrajan finally stops feasting on my blood and grunts with satisfaction. He licks at my throat, but it’s not in his usual tender way he takes care of my wound. Oh no. He’s lapping at my bite wound to capture every last smear of blood in a frenzy. Good for him. He knows what he wants. I know what *I* want, and I want it more than anything else. Damn it, he’s too high up my body to impale myself on his cock.

“Fuck this.” I am *done* with waiting for him to fuck me. I wrap my legs around his waist, shove his chest, and rock us over like I’m an amateur wrestler. He clearly wasn’t expecting it, as we rolled over so I sat on his lap. My left hand landed on his shoulder to pin him to the bed, and I quickly moved my hips to straddle his. His initial startled expression melts into a smirk around his bloody fangs.

“Yes.” He purrs up at me. I grin, glad he’s *finally* on the right fucking page. I part my slick nether lips and shudder with relief at the warm press of his fleshy mandibles snaking their way inside me at the clear invitation. At-fucking-last. I lower onto his cock and trumpets sound in my mind. “Val.” He grabs my hips to work me all the way onto his dick, and we both take a moment to bask in the pleasure. I feel wonderfully full. Like

this is what I was craving from the moment his venom hit my system. The three fleshy petal shaped mandibles at the end of his cock tease at my cervix. The stretch of my pussy around his girth is fantastic, and the press of his ridges are in all the right places. Vrajan slides his feet up the bed to bend his knees. He bucks up into me so I rock forward with a delighted moan. I plant both my hands against the headboard as we get a carnal rhythm going.

“Oh, there.” I whimper and bounce on his cock to meet every thrust. Each slide of his ridges tease pleasure from my g-spot, and I ride him in a desperate race towards my climax. It, and I, can’t cum fast enough. Damn it, I want that release. To cry out as ecstasy devastates me from head to toe. “Vraj, more, I need you. More.” I whimper, delirious with need. My hands caress his hot as sin body. His pecks, his abs, and I whine. It’s not enough. I need...fuck I need to cum. Tears bead in my eyes as my thighs start to burn from the frantic pace of our fucking.

“Come here.” He growls and in a blur, he whips us over to cage me on the bed. “My Queen.” He moans, slapping his hand to my left ass cheek, and lifts my hips to follow his cock as he knees up. Oh, I love how strong he is. His other hand braces on the head board, and he wraps his right arm around my waist. I throw my legs around him and tangle my fingers in his hair.

“No, *you* come here.” I grunt and pull him down to kiss me. Tongue, lips, fangs and blood. I love it. I love *all* of it. He’s so close to me right now. He’s inside my tight pussy. He’s surrounding me with firm muscles. His mouth dominates mine, and his venom has invaded every inch of me. Closely followed with euphoria brimming over the edge to drown me. Screw that. I’m diving right in, head first. “Oh *fuck!*” It’s like we’re rutting like wild animals. Vrajan pistons his hips like a machine, pounding me into the bed. I slam one hand into the headboard so he doesn’t fuck my head into it. His arm around my waist, holding my ass off the bed, pulls me down onto his cock with each thrust. Ooooooooooooh, *fuuuuuuuck*. “I-I’m getting close.” I moan around the kiss, and he picks up the pace. I’m so wet. The air is filled with the sound of our skin slapping, moaning, and of course, the bed creaking.

“Val.” He speaks my name breathlessly to my lips, and I’m fucking *done*. The feeling of his cock swelling against my g-spot *finally* shoves me over the edge. I tense and shut my eyes to focus as much as I can on my climax. Fuck, it’s amazing. It’s like my body is vibrating with sparks of pleasure thundering like a wave from my pussy. The swelling of his cock and the egg being pushed along his dick, prolongs the delicious afterbuzz of my orgasm. He cums, tense and smiling. I feel the pressure of his egg at my cervix, but it will soon soften and break down.

I sag to the bed. A hot, sweaty, spent mess of a woman. Vrajan lowers on his forearms at either side of me and gently licks at my neck wound. I let him, as it’s cute *and* helps me heal faster. The trace amount of Bonding Succour in his saliva sees to that. My arms rest above my head and I take a moment just to catch my breath as he licks away. “That.” I begin with a cheeky smile on my face, turning my head and fluttering my eyes open to look at him. “Was *hot*. And a little terrifying, but mostly hot.” I chuckled and was pleased to see Vrajan was back to normal. He’s blushing, always a good sign, and he bashfully averts his lilac eyes.

“I am, well, glad you think so. I resisted the feeding frenzy for as long as I could. Were we not so weak last night, this would have already happened.”

“Is that what that was?” He nods and I shrug. “It was one wild fuck, anyway. I’d say sign me up, if it wasn’t for the 24 hours of hell that I had to go through first. That was *not* fun.”

Ah.

That wasn’t the right thing to say.

Vrajan kneels up and holds his biceps with a sad expression on his face.

“I am so sorry that happened to you Valerie. You must have been in so much pain. I-I swear I will never let that happen again.”

“Well, good, but it wasn’t your fault.” I move to kneel with him, and sway with a wave of dizziness. Vrajan catches my biceps and steadies me to kneel with him. “You didn’t *allow* them to capture me.”

“Regardless, you will stand with me in the council chamber, to hell with tradition or procedure. I will *never* let anyone take you from me again.” He scoops me to his chest and we hug each other like the reunited lovers we are. “I have never been so frightened and helpless my whole life.”

“Same.” I sigh, the severity of what just happened to me landing on me hard. I was kidnapped, forced to go into withdrawal from Vrajan’s Bonding Succour, and I nearly died. I hold him tighter and start to cry. We hold each other for a while, and I feel his cheek on top of my head.

“Rest assured, my love, that when I find out *who* took you and who hired *them*, I will have them arrested and transferred into Hive custody.” He lifts my chin and for the first time I see genuine rage there. “They will rot for the rest of their days in the worst prison I can find in Korvian territory, where they will *never* escape, and *every* *Korvis* knows what they did to my feeding companion.” He scowls and the flash of fangs sends a chill down my spine. So? It turns out my cinnamon roll space Dracula has a darker streak after all?

“You know? You’re kind of hot when you’re angry possessive.” I smirk, and his scowl falls into an amused smile. “Alright. Team Korvis will get right on that. But first?” I wince and hold my stomach. Now I’m not out of my mind horny, I’m famished. “I’m really hungry. And thirsty. And kind of dizzy?”

“Oh, yes, of course.” He scoops me up and takes me into the bathroom first. “Let me tend to you, my love. I will see to all of your needs.” I smile and relax completely. I’m home, I’m safe, and Vrajan is always in his happy place when he can fuss over me.

“Okay, Team Korvis needs to freshen up, refuel, and then nap. Like, a lot.” I yawn and he laughs at me.

“That sounds wonderful.” He offers me *four* Regen pills, and I give him a surprised look. “You and I have both been deprived of proper nutrient for a 24 hour period. I have now fed from you, but more than I normally would in the last two feeds. You will need to double your dosage for a while, and compensate with diet as well. For quite some time, I’d wager. In fact, I shall contact my doctor to advise me in that area. Don’t

worry, my Queen. I will nurse you back to full health.” We kiss, and it’s so sweet, until he leans back and pops all four pills into my mouth. “Now swallow.” I grin, and *almost* say ‘you should ask before you tell a girl to swallow’, but I’m way too tired for that level of sass. Instead, I drink them down with a glass of water and let Vrajan help me freshen up. The shower was a sweet and tender moment, as he helped me wash my body and hair. I can tell he’s tired too, but he’s a lot stronger than I am. I also know Vrajan well enough that he will not rest himself, until he’s seen to me. Such a sweetie, my man.

We sit in towels in the kitchen, and he keeps me company as I force down plenty of food and water. I managed a few sandwiches, and now I’m spooning my way through a tub of ice cream. What? Vrajan said I need some calories, and I’m sure there must be a rule somewhere about being allowed to comfort eat after being kidnapped and nearly dying. Fuck, I have issues. I feel little wobbles in my stomach as I get flash backs of being on the cold floor of that metal room with crates in it. Of screaming and banging on the door. The agony of my organs starting to shut down and lash out at me. Slipping in and out of consciousness and fearing that the next time, I wouldn’t wake up.

I swallow the lump in my throat and push the rising dread in me away. I’m home now. Safe and sound in my little corner of heaven with Vrajan. Neither of us are going to go along with being apart for a long time, after what happened. Not without body guards we can trust, maybe. Now he’s a Councillor, I’m sure he can vet and hire some.

“Vrajan?”

“Yes?” He is sat right beside me and his arm holds me close to his side. It’s like he can’t bear to be too far away from me, or even look away from me for too long. The near loss is still raw for him too.

“There is something else we need to talk about.” I push the mostly empty ice cream tub away from me and turn to look up into his big lilac eyes. “My sister was there.”

“Yes, I remember her being at the Embassy. Did she find out you were missing or-”

“No, I don’t mean at the Embassy. I mean she was *there*.” I take Vrajan’s other hand in both of mine, needing the support. “Wherever I was taken to, I was in a bad way. A Sacron with red skin and, fiery eyes, yellow on his frills, I think?” I try to recall through the haze of pain what my captor looked like. “Everyone called him Boss? Anyway, he took me to their sickbay, and then there she was. Cassie.”

“Wait?” He sat up a little straighter with a dubious expression on his face. “Your *sister* was with your captors?”

“Yeah. She lost her shit when she saw me there, and told ‘Boss’ I was her sister. He started to freak out, like he knew Cassie, and was horrified that I was her sister.” I shrug and sigh. “I passed out, and then came too in a hover chair coming right up to the embassy. Cassie was pushing the chair. Then you know the rest probably more than I do.”

“I see.” He looked off to one side and mulled something over.

“I need to call her.” I start to stand, and he jumps up to support me when I swoon.

“You need to *rest*.”

“Yeah, you think I’m going to rest with my sister could be with my kidnappers?” I shoot him a sour look, and he rolls his eyes with a nod. He knows me well enough not to push that point.

“Very well, but I wish to be there with you. Off screen. And record the call.” I frown. He want’s evidence. My sister is involved, somehow, so he’s right. We’re going to need it.

“I don’t *know* why Cassie was there, but I have an idea.” Now I’m not out of my mind in pain, a memory has popped to the forefront of my mind.

“I-no of course not! The Captain doesn’t even think of me like that. I mean, I...Boss?”

“...I need to speak to you in my office. Now.”

“Yes Boss. I’ll call you again in a few days? Love you Val.”

“I do as well.” Vrajan’s tone is foreboding. “Just *who* does your sister work for?”

“She’s an indentured servant, like me, so anything her master has done, it’s not her fault.” I fluster, and he holds my hand to calm me.

“Of course not. If anything, your sister is likely the reason we are both alive and well right now.” I nod, with relief and total agreement. We walk back to my old bedroom, and I put on a pair of blue sleeping shorts and a long sleeved top. I fire up the laptop. He sits on the other side, so I can see him, but Cassie won’t be able to. “If her master has broken the law, he will be prosecuted, and her Caste and rights will be protected by the terms of her indentured servitude contract.”

“Good.” I nod and start entering the call request. I put a polite smile on my face and wait for the call to connect.

It doesn’t.

“The ship to ship call code you have entered is no longer in service. Please check the call code you entered, and try again.” The automated response chilled me. I checked the code, called again, and got the same monotone response.

“I feared this would be the case.” Vrajan reached over and cupped my cheek. “It is likely that upon returning you to the Embassy, she either returned or was collected by her master, and they have gone off the grid to avoid arrest.”

“...you mean...my sister is *missing*?” My stomach turns and my blood runs cold. “She’s on a criminal ship, in *hiding* somewhere?” With Vrajan’s nod, I gasp and tears well up in my eyes. Cassie is missing. She said she was on a ship with a full crew of Sacron men. Is she safe? Are they punishing her because she ruined their kidnap attempt and put them on the peacekeeper radar? Not to mention, ruined their payday.

“*Look, as soon as we have our payment from our employers, we’re going to give you ba-*”

Before I know it, I’m crying and Vrajan has me in his arms.

“Don’t worry Valerie. We’ll find Cassie. We’ll get her back, and we’ll arrest everyone else involved.”

“Or you could give me a gun and I could shoot them?” I’m more upset that these fuckers have run off with my sister, than the fact they put me through 24 hours of hell. “You’re a super influential Councillor now, right? So you could have them arrested, have the cameras turned off, and I could shoot their balls off?” He chuckles and doesn’t acknowledge my request.

“We *will* find your sister. Right now, I need you to rest. Very soon I expect we will be contacted to give our statements as to what happened, and then we can truly start the search. For Cassie, and the ones who took from me.” I hate the fact that there is nothing I can do right now. I’m also exhausted, physically and emotionally. It doesn’t take much prompting from Vrajan to get me to snuggle up in bed with him. He holds me close as I work out the rest of my frustration and worry in the form of sniffles, before finally drifting off to sleep.

Romance Author



Chapter 39

The leather throne

Vrajan.

Two months later.

I sit upon the comfortable reddish brown leather ‘throne’ Valerie helped me to select for the Korvian Embassy, reading over the next council meeting itinerary. I look around absently and smile at my surroundings. Oh how far we’ve come.

The walls of the Korvian Embassy are dark green, reflecting my station as the Dynast, and it has a familiar honeycomb impression on the metallic walls. It would be more like home if the walls were made of Lopetaenite and cast shimmering light across the floor. Instead, the walls are metal and the floor is red carpet, and soft underfoot.

Empty offices lining the walls in cubicles. One day I will fill them with my own staff. At the moment, my team work remotely from Hive vessels outside Theskian space, but that will soon change. I have negotiated the fair trade agreement, and very soon more of my people will have interviews with the Indentured Servitude Services vetting department, to seek out their own feeding companions. A big win for my people. Synth-Red is becoming less efficient at meeting our dietary needs. It’s still repulsive to ingest, and our population is closer than ever to becoming unstable. We need feeding companions for nutrition, but we also need them for reproduction. Of course, only after the feeding companion completes their indentured contract, and both are bonded.

Here, one day, I will conduct meetings and receive my kin for support, disputes, and legal action of all kinds. I hope to have the ISC have their clients meet the Korvis in question here, in a warm and friendly environment.

I got to work as the Councillor right away after my appointment, and my recovery from mild starvation, to ensure my manifesto was heard and actioned by the council. Of course, they approved the addition of a Korvian Embassy, like all the others, which had its own corridor leading to the central chamber. It took a month to get the plans drawn up, approved, and the building work completed. It has taken me a second month to get Korvis candidates approved for transport. My team, of course, are at the top of the list. They have worked hard to work remotely, but they will be far more effective here in the flesh. I was able to justify their need to be here, as my team, so even Getrata couldn't object. I'm expecting them within the next fortnight. It warms me with pride and joy to know my kin will join me here. The first of many. We need the Theskians to see us, and our feeding companions, as a normal way of life in the empire. Only then can we see if Theskians would be willing to relocate to Hive vessels, or even our home world. One step at a time, of course.

“No, that's not acceptable.” I look up from the itinerary with a smile behind my green veil. Valerie, a lovely vision, paces and sternly tells off a human she's talking to on a handheld communicator. She holds it in her right hand, gestures with her left, and takes no prisoners. My Queen is magnificent that way. She barks with confidence, and is a vision of loveliness as well. She wears a red shoulderless long sleeved top; a tease as she knows red is my favourite colour. Her trousers are shimmering black, which she affectionately calls 'space pants', and they billow around her lovely legs. Her long brown hair is silky from her side parting, and swishes delightfully as she paces in front of me. “I'm telling you Andrews, if you want to buy in to this venture, you're going to have to knock at least two zeroes off that fee.” I sit back and watch her work. Valerie is CEO of the newly licenced TK Stone Inc. A precious metal and gemstone mining operation. Some of her old contacts have happily flocked to her when she got her company licence, with the financial backing of the Hive. The High Queen and the Hive collective are keen to get a Theskian company working on our home world. Money speaks, and it is a universal language. I believe my Mother also wishes to endear herself to my beloved, and she is eager to return that gesture in

kind. My mother has never had a daughter, only sons, and Valerie keeps saying something about making a good first impression. I have told her *many* times that she did that, when she accepted my Bonding Succour. She did so tenfold, when she stood by my side and supported me as my partner in giving our people a real chance at a brighter future. “No, no *you* listen. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of an operation to break new ground. No one has *ever* mined Lopetaenite, apart from the Korvis. TK Stone Inc has *exclusive* access rights to mine a crystal the Theskian Empire has never heard the likes of before. You received the mass spec break down and mineral density report, right?” She pauses, listening to his reply.

Valerie is putting the many years of experience as the future heiress to her father’s company to good use. Something I know she is far more pleased about than she is letting on. “Yes, I know I’m not the one with the ships and tech needed to carry out the operation, but *I’m* the one with the exclusive mining rights and access. No one else has it. Look, stop busting my balls here and come out with it? Do we have a deal? Or do I need to hang up and call Bvork?” Her eyes catch mine right when she starts to smirk with victory in her brown eyes. “Yes, and he *is* a greedy son of a bitch. He doesn’t pay his workers as well as you do. Come on Andrews? Don’t make me fill Bvork’s slippery ass pockets. I’m going to hang up in three...two...?” She punches the air with a hop in her step as she comes towards me. Her delight is clear, and I delight in her joy. “That Andrews, is the best decision you have ever made.” I open my arms so she can jump up to sit on my lap with a grin. “I’ll send you the coordinates and when the Councillor and I can meet your fleet to begin the op. Later Andrews.” She hangs up and I stroke my gloved fingers across her jaw.

“Success, my love?”

“Chalk up another win for TK Stone Inc.” I purr and turn her chin close to me so I can kiss her cheek through my veil. I adore that she has named her mining company TK Stone Inc. Team Korvis Stone. It feels like she is saying I love you every time she says it. In her own way, she is.

“I am pleased you were able to conclude a deal with Andrews to make use of his ships.”

“That was the last hurdle.” She shrugs. “Once I got the word out, I managed to get plenty of people to work for me through my old connections. Not as many as I had hoped once I said *where* we would be mining, but I have enough.”

“And of course, you can hire Korvian workers as well.” I reassure her, and she smiles brightly. I am so pleased that she has found satisfaction with her old passion and craft returned to her.

If anything, it has helped to keep her mind off her missing sister. Two months have passed, and there is no sign of Cassie Stone. The Indentured Services Centre are protecting her status, but she has been declared a missing person. Her master has been black listed across the empire from taking on any more indentured servants, but that offers little comfort to my Valerie. She has a case number and an detective in the peacekeeper investigations unit she calls daily for an update. I hold her hand through every call, and hold her every time she is told ‘no new information at this time.’ Captain Unthulo and his crew are wanted for kidnapping, assault, and attempted murder, since Valerie and I could have died from the sudden separation. “Mother wishes to know if when we rendezvous with Andrews, if we might have time to visit *her* as well?”

“Oh. Yeah. Your Mum still wants to meet me.” Valerie chuckles nervously. They have talked via vid call, but both seem anxious to impress the other, so it was rather strained. I am sure once they meet face to face, they will both stop worrying about the impression of the other. “In person huh? So, is she like, tall like you?” She picks at her sleeves and her grin is awkward. “You will stop me from cursing in front of her, right? Because I really don’t want to drop the f bomb in front of your Mother... the High Queen...yikes.”

“She already adores you, and will only think more highly of you once you relax.” I tease her and she shrugs at me. She’s still tense, and get quite a fun idea. “You *are* rather tense.” I purr, blushing coyly, and slowly turn her chin away from me to gaze at her lovely neck. “I could...help with that.” I whisper, and right away, I know this was the right move.

“Here?” Valerie gasps with mock outrage and brings a hand up to hold my wrist. Not to pull me away, but to keep me

close. “Why Councillor? Do you want to get *nasty*, right here on your badass throne?”

“It’s a chair, you minx. And for the record, mating and making love to you is *never* nasty” She wiggles her eyebrows at me. “So why not?” I retrieve my discarded tablet, and change the itinerary list to the Embassy security controls. “Doors locked.” The heavy sound of metal bolts locking into place sent a thrill through us both. “Cameras off.” The lights over the domed cameras in each corner flickers off. “And we are secure. Locked in and alone together.” Valerie chews her bottom lip and dares me with her lustful eyes. “I can help you relax, my beloved. ‘Right here on my throne.’” I tease her with a chuckle. “What do you say to *that*?” Her grin is salacious as she peers up at me, her neck poised ready for a feed.

“I say, *bite me.*”

Romance Author



Chapter 40

Epilogue

Vrajan.

I hum in my throat, aroused by her challenge. I support her waist with my right hand, and my left releases her face to tug down my veil. It rests under my chin and I lick my fangs with anticipation. My glands throb, secreting venom in tandem with my rising arousal, so my lips become wet with black droplets.

“It would be my pleasure.” I caress her right cheek on the way, sliding my hand up into her hair to fist in her hair. “And yours.” I hiss, peeling my lips back, reeling her close and sinking my fangs gum deep into her throat. She gives me that little whimper that always greets me with when I bite her. A moment later she is moaning and tugging at my clothing. Valerie is always impatient to start mating, but I must finish feeding from her first. I resist the urge to chuckle whilst drinking from her, as the last time I did that, she slapped my arm and sulked with me. Her warm blood coats my tongue and drenches my throat like liquid bliss.

“Vraj.” She grunts my name as I retract my fangs from her neck. I moan her name to her bite wound as I take care to lick the blood clear, and use the Bonding Succour in my saliva to reduce the swelling. She heals much faster when I take my time with this after care. Sometimes she snuggles with me and lets me lap away. Like a kitten, she says.

Today, she is not that patient.

“What are you doing?” She slides off my lap to kneel at my feet, and throws my robes over her head. “Valer-oh.” She yanks down my boxers to my ankles and crawls her hands up my tones legs to grip my hips. “Oh, I see. *That’s* what you’re

doing.” Her lips press to the mandibles at the end of my cock, and I gasp with the sudden and delightful pressure. I grip the arm rests of the chair and look down at the outline of my beloved beneath my robe. I can’t see her what she’s doing, but I can feel it. I open my mouth wide and exhale choppily as one of her hands wraps around my cock, and my mandibles capture her soft bottom lip. Her tongue swipes across them, teasing them open to toy with the thin undulating tendrils inside my cock. I shudder with pleasure as she begins stroking me whilst kissing my cock. “Valerie, my l-love that’s, that’s wonderful.” She uses her tongue to reel my cock into her mouth and I whimper at the heat of her surrounding me. I must see it. Her pouty lips sinking around my cock and her hands stroking me from the base towards her mouth. I desperately reach to the left side of my robe to tug at the fastening cords. I throw my robe open and feast at the sight of my bonded gorging on my cock. Perhaps this *is* a throne? For she makes me feel like a King as she worships me. I can’t stand it. Her mouth is so warm and wet, and the suction she has with the end of my cock is mind-shatteringly good. “I don’t wish to cum in your mouth, my love. Please?” Valerie hummed and took her sweet time sliding her lips over the dark ridges of my length. “Ah.” She flicked her tongue at my mandibles and grinned up through her lashes at me. I shudder and reach for her with both hands. She stands in front of me and taunts me by undressing slowly. “You are magnificent.” I drink in the sight of her full breasts and hardened nipples as they are freed from her strapless bra. I dart my lilac eyes down her navel to the crux of her thighs as she steps out of her black space pants and black panties. “Oh, stars, come to me.” I reach for her again, and she looks me over with a devilish grin.

“But where shall I sit?”

“Here.” I point to my cock as it reaches up toward her. I miss the heat of her mouth, but I will soon bury myself in her tight pussy. “Right here.” I groan when she doesn’t move. “Valerie.” She licks her lips, nods, and turns around. I enjoy the sight of her round bottom and the dip of her spine. Even more so as she backs up towards me. “Yes.” I realise where this is going and take hold of her hips to bring her up onto my lap. My cock seeks out the heat of her tresses, twisting and wriggling my soft

mandibles between her pussy lips.

“F-uck.” I guide her to sit on me, sliding my cock deep into her until I’m fully sheathed. She is a wonderful vice of slick delight around my cock, and she squirms to get a better purchase. She rests her legs on the outside of mine, her feet on the floor. Her hands find purchase on my knees. I howl with pleasure at the first rise and fall of her hips. It’s a slow and torturous pace, as she uses her hands on my knees as leverage to rock back and forth.

I was wrong. This chair isn’t the throne. *I am her* throne, and she is my Queen. I groan and hiss, mad with the rising tide of ecstasy she’s milking from my cock. Her creamy globes are magnificent as I watch her bounce up and down. But I want more. She needs it too, from the approval she gives me as I help things along. I slide down the chair slightly and plant my feet firmly on the floor to buck up into her. I move my right hand over her hip to target her clit, and she cries out with desire. “Yes! Fuck, yes!” Valerie leans back to give me better access to her sensitive nub. I thrum at her clit, circle and gently pinch her. She whimpers and rides me like I’m a stallion racing towards the finish line. “Oh! Ooooh. Vraj. Fuck me. I-I’m so fucking close!” She whines, and I will not leave her wanting. She panics when I push her up and off my cock. “N-no I-” Valerie turns to face me, and I hurry to stand and move behind her. “Vraj?”

“Bend over.” She nibbles her bottom lip and bends forward so her forearms press to the seat of my chair. She parts her legs and dips her spine to angle her hips and ass towards me. I step right up to her and my cock nestles eagerly back into the slick heat of her pussy. “I won’t last long.”

“Me neither. Fuck. Hurry.” She whimpers and I make sure to reach around her hips to resume toying with her clit like it’s her pleasure button. “Ah! Yes yes *yeeees*, right there.” I pump my hips forward so I slap my pelvis into her soft bottom. My other hand lands on her shoulder and I pull her onto each thrust. “Mother *fucker*.” She hangs her head forward and groans deeply. She robs my breath as she cums. Her sheathe grips and squeezes all around my sensitive ridges. I hold her still and relish the swelling release of my egg, and climax, deep inside her. Ambrosia. We ride out every sweet drop of erotic delight together.

It's almost comical how we both sag and hang our heads forward once we emerge through the other side of our pleasure haze. "Well?" I raise a brow and lift my head to find Valerie looking over her shoulder at me. "We christened your throne." I chuckle and place a kiss between her shoulder blades, before pulling out. Stars, she's so funny. And beautiful. And smart. And all mine. I love every inch of this woman. I even love that she expresses her feelings in a different way than I do. You have to really know Valerie, to see the motives behind her actions. I know when she's happy, when she's worried, and when she's hiding how she's feeling. I know she's keeping busy and fretting over meeting my mother, because it stops her dwelling on what's really worrying her. Cassie's whereabouts and safety. I can and will continue to help her with both. Searching for Cassie, and remaining calm in the meantime.

"We certainly did." I help her to stand and turn her in my arms to kiss her.

"We can tick that off TK's agenda now." She winks at me.

"There's an agenda?" I laugh, and we gather our clothes from around the throne. "What else is on the agenda?"

"*Lots* of things." Valerie teases me, and leads the way to the staff bathroom. We are safely locked in here, but she will need to freshen up. I follow her, of course.

"Such as?" I cock my head to one side and my long white and black hair and green headdress slips over my left shoulder. I perch my right shoulder against the door frame, as she 'tends to herself'.

"Well, we need to get more Korvis friendly cruisers ready for your team to arrive."

"Yes, I'm securing the living accommodation through the council." I nod. We work together in all things, Valerie and I. The other Councillors joke that *we* are the Councillor to the Korvis, and I don't correct them. Just as Valerie comments that *we* are running TK Stone Inc. Because we are a true team, and I love that about our relationship too. How she has supported me from the very beginning. I am happy and privileged to do the

same with her new business.

“And we really need to shut down those Anti-K protests.”

“We can’t shut them down.” I roll my lilac eyes at her, and step into my boxers. “Freedom of protest. As long as they are peaceful, they are allowed. What we *can* do, is gain more support and improve public opinions of us.”

“So more cutesie interviews?” She pretends to gag and makes me laugh. “Fine, but we are picking the venue next time.”

“Of course. Anything else on the agenda, my dear?”

“Mining Lopetaenite, dominating the market, making a but-load of money, and making a Lopetaenite castle for the two of us to live in one day. Sound good?”

“It sounds excellent.” I purr and shrug my robe back over my shoulders. A castle for my Queen sounds more than perfect.

“Well, we have five months left, so that’s a target. Since we’re not allowed to end my contract early-” We enquired as much together with the Indentured Servitude Centre, so she could openly be with me, simply because she wants to. Unfortunately, there is no way to legally end the contract without serious ramifications, so we will wait it out instead. “-but once it’s over, you want to do that bonding ceremony thing, right?” I laugh, and slip into the bathroom behind her to freshen up myself. We are totally at ease as we talk and dress once more.

“Yes, ‘that bonding ceremony thing’, which will make us married, my love.” Though, I think of her as my bonded already. She finishes dressing leans with her backside against the sink. She looks up into my eyes as I finish tying my robe to close it at my left side.

“And your mother will be there.” She folds her arms and smiles defensively again. Goodness, she makes me laugh.

“Of course.” I cup her cheeks and adore her with every fibre of my being. “My mother will be the one to officiate the ceremony, after all, as the Matriarch of my Hive and tribe.”

“And Cassie will be my maid of honour.” She nods, and I feel my heart tighten in my chest for her. “So we need to find her in the next 5 months, as she needs to be there. Since she’s my only family.”

“Oh Valerie.” I bring her into my chest and hold her close. “I promise you, I will do everything in my power to help make that happen. If there is any chance, we will find it.” I don’t want to promise her we *will* find Cassie, but I want her to have hope. She deserves it. “Together, my beloved.” I lift her chin and hold her gaze with mine. “We will find answers together.”

“And revenge, of course.” She nods up at me with determination, and I purse my lips. She isn’t kidding, after all. My fierce Queen will not be satisfied until she has her sister safe and sound, and those responsible in the most hopeless prison cell imaginable. As the Councillor, I intend to make that happen. Either that, or they might find themselves shot out of an airlock. Which ever pleases Valerie the most.

“Of course, my love.” I kiss her lips, sweetly, and with my heart in her hands. “You have my word.”

“And you have my trust.” I glow with joy. Valerie does not trust easily. This is not news to me, but it is still enough to fill me to the brim with happiness. It is yet another way Valerie shows how she feels. “I love you Vrajan.”

“Oh my darling.” I hold her in my arms, and in my heart she will forever stay. Five months from now, five years from now, and until my last breath.

“Come on.” She sings at me, wriggling free and taking my hand. “Sexy interlude and tender cuddle time is over. We need to get back to work, Councillor.” I grin like a happy fool and follow Valerie out of the bathroom and towards my ‘throne’. “In 2 weeks we will have six attaches, and their hungry mouths to feed.” I snort at the Korvis joke. “We still have a lot to do before they get here.”

“Yes dear. *We* do.” And I will enjoy every moment of it. My Queen is right. There is much to be done, and together, we will succeed at anything we put our minds to. On that I have no doubt.

The end...for now.

Romance Author



Afterword

Thank you for reading *Indentured Companion*, first of the *Indentured Servitude Series*. **Would you like a FREE festive NSFW short story featuring Valerie and Vrajan?** It's the week before Christmas, and Vrajan is acting weird...turns out, there's a reason for that! Join Valerie and Vrajan for a sexy and sweet festive short story



Then click the link to claim it and join my newsletter list ^_^ —> <https://bookhip.com/VCJSDTZ>

But what about the next book, I hear you ask? Next there will be a book called **Indentured Accountant**. It explores Cassie Stone's indentured servitude to Captain Unthulo, a gruff alpha sort of male, and his motley crew, as they do their best to turn a profit and live a life of adventure and freedom. The crew

of burley Sacron aren't sure what to make of the timid little blonde human to start with...but of course...she inadvertently gives the Captain a certain impression, which leads to shenanigans and sparks flying. Oh, then clothes flying, of course.

There are also questions from book 1 that are answered in book 2. Like, who kidnapped Valerie? What exactly is Cassie and her master's involvement in this plot? Who is the master mind? Where is Cassie right now, and how will Valerie get her back safe and sound? This book is MF, NSFW, sweet, steamy, with misunderstandings, and HEA.

Can I just give a shout out to the following amazing Beta readers that read the advanced copy and gave their feedback.

- Peta

-Billie

All my Patrons get early access to regular updates a week across all my books. For as little as £1.50 you get three to two chapters a week depending on the book, and of course, I mean ALL OF MY BOOKS!!!!

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Thank you so much for reading Indentured Companion
^_^ You rock!

Romance Author



My other books

My Other books

One Hell of a dark romance series.

[Possession.](#)

Tammy lived a life of abuse, and then died. Killed, in fact. She wakes up falling into the first Circle of hell. Her eyes and hair are black and her skin is white like death. Hell is a scary place, and it turns out she is a particularly rare kind of demon. Thankfully a foul mouthed Incubus found her first and helps her to hide...from one of the Devil Princes of Hell, who is present when her abilities tear through another demon. Prince Stolas of the First Circle of Hell intends to capture Tammy as his pet to use, but his obsession soon becomes much more than desiring her powers. And he is very direct about what he wants. Meanwhile someone is making a move against the Devil Princes of Hell, and they turn their eyes to the beloved 'pet' of Prince Stolas.

This book is full of triggers, but it is Hell, after all. Cursing, blood and gore, demonic possessions, physical violence, torture, murder, hauntings and torment, tons of NSFW, Daddy Kinks, sexy talk, spanking, and literally facing her fears. HEA for the main characters...for demons in hell, that is.

[The Otherworldly Match series-](#)

Otherworldly Match is a Science fiction LGBTQ+ romance with Non-Binary aliens with human partners. Eleanor was not prepared to see any Kathar after her childhood trauma, and now she was going to have to 'breed' with one...or lose her citizenship. Cole on the other hand couldn't wait to meet his Kathar partner and chase his dreams. Two story lines intersect as you get further into the story, each with their own juicy story lines, tasty drama and plot rich action as the books develop. The

Kathar escaped a great plague on their home world and to prevent extinction, they require compatible humans to breed with. They are non-binary, empathic, and romance (and mating) with the Kathar is totally out of this world.

[Operation Colonise series-](#)

The Earth is overpopulated. Allico Inc has led an expedition to colonise a life-supporting planet, and sent multiple vessels across the galaxy, only to find the planet is already inhabited and they call their homeworld Thelia. The Ucfeni are a sentient race that resemble Nagas from Earth mythology. Allico Inc forms an alliance with the Ucfeni to form vital colonies on Thelia. This is agreed, in exchange for antibiotics and medical treatments. Part of the deal is that each human that lives outside the human compounds and amongst the Ucfeni must have an Ucfeni sponsor! To learn how to live in their world and by their rules. Read this series and dive into a rich and immersive alien world of romance, drama, action and more sexy Naga men than you can shake a stick at! There are strong sexual themes in this series and at times, blood and gore.

[A Dire Proposal-](#)

Princess Heloise is the fifth in line to the Oscarian Throne. War is looming with their deadly neighbours, and this is one princess who will not sit idly and do nothing. The enemy of my enemy is my friend? Well, how about inviting that powerful Warlock, the Wraith King, that everyone fears, to a ball with the aim of convincing him to court her? This is not your typical Princess and beastie romance. Heloise is the one pursuing him, but will she win the wicked warlock over? Is love on the cards? Sex certainly is. Will Heloise become the badass Queen that will shock the Kingdom to the core? Who will she step over to sit on the black throne beside her husband? What will she have to sacrifice to achieve her goals? There is tense romance, drama, mystery, and gory violent scenes in this story. There are strong sexual themes and violence in this book.

What to see what's coming soon? Check out my website for previews! [-https://millie-lowelle-romance-novelist.mailchimpsites.com/previewscoming-soon](https://millie-lowelle-romance-novelist.mailchimpsites.com/previewscoming-soon)