

Baby
FOR THE
MOSAIC
MED CHIEF

ALIEN BABY PACT

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Baby For The Mosaic Med Chief

Alien Baby Pact

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Blurb

She was matched to another Mosaic but claimed by the Med Chief.

BRIANA WILLIS RELUCTANTLY accepts her proxy match with a Mosaic commander, but when she reports to MedBay for her genetic modification injection, the Med Chief insists she's his mate. She seizes the opportunity as a way to escape both matings, planning to ditch the chief later, but she forms an unexpected connection with Quillin. Could his insistence of a Mating Flare be real, and she's his destined mate?

Once she accepts the truth and his claiming, they still have to convince the Faction, which is difficult since they're wanted fugitives. Can they enact change to years of tradition, or will their bond be permanently severed by Quillin's forced participation in a blood fight when Commander Zartik demands revenge?

Seven years ago, the Faction agreed to save Earth from the vorathan invasion in exchange for Earth women giving them one year of proxy rights to act as a surrogate, since the aliens of the Faction faced a dwindling population. With the vorathans feared throughout the galaxy as bloodthirsty, vicious marauders, the Earth's government agreed.

That doesn't mean the women did.

Sometimes, you want to read about the entire alien empire and all its myriad twists and turns, immersing yourself in hundreds of pages of intrigue. And sometimes, you want to skip the frills and get to the main event. Juno and Aurelia are pleased to bring you a series of short, steamy romances about untouched human women making babies with their truly alien mates.



Chapter One

QUILLIN STROLLED INTO the examination room, a cup of Serp *ambrosi* cradled in his hands. The sweet, sharp scent of the drink filled his senses, a familiar and comforting routine. He took a sip, letting the *ambrosi*'s tranquilizing effect soothe his mind in preparation for another mundane session.

As Med Chief, these examinations had long ago lost their novelty. He would check the charts, administer the genetic modification serum, monitor for any reactions, and send the human on her way to her new match—oftentimes to her displeasure, but the treaty dictated everyone's role. Day in, day out. He could do it in his sleep.

Quillin glanced down at the open chart glowing on his datapad, skimming the information for his next patient. Briana Willis. A nice name, he mused, taking another sip of *ambrosi*. The warm liquid trickled down his throat, calming the restlessness that seemed to have taken root in him today.

With a flick of his wrist, he minimized the chart and strode toward the examination room. Time to get this over with. He pushed open the door, eyes downcast as he took one final swig from his cup.

“Hello, I'm Quillin. I'll be—”

He froze, the words dying on his tongue. His gaze lifted as his world shifted, tilting dangerously on its axis. An ethereal vision stood before him—a woman of unparalleled beauty, with dark skin that evoked star-flecked night skies. A halo of curls framed her delicate features. Her figure was an enticing symphony of curves, with each more enchanting than the last.

Quillin's grip failed, and the ceramic cup slipped through numb fingers. It hit the floor with a resonant crack, splattering sweet *ambrosi* like a starburst across pristine tiles.

He scarcely noticed and barely heard the sharp gasp echoing through the room. The woman before him consumed all his senses as a tempestuous rush of foreign emotions

crashing through his mind. His skin rippled with color as kaleidoscopic patches swirled wildly across his body.

This was no gentle flutter and no routine spark of compatibility. This was a hurricane raging unchecked, a cataclysmic upheaval of his reality.

The Mating Flare. Impossible, unbelievable, and undeniable.

Quillin swayed on his feet, dizzy with the force of the Mating Flare raging through him. His gaze remained locked on the vision before him—Briana Willis, according to his chart.

“Are you all right?” Her voice was melodic, imbued with notes of concern. It cut through the chaos in his mind like a beacon, calling him back to the moment.

“I...” Quillin blinked hard, shaking his head in an attempt to dispel the fog enveloping his senses. “Forgive me. I don’t know what came over me.”

He took a faltering step forward, then another until he stood before this captivating creature. This close, he could discern flecks of amber in her dark eyes. They watched him warily but didn’t shy away.

“Hi, I’m Briana.” She gave a tremulous smile. “Are you sure you’re okay, Med Chief Quillin?”

The sound of his name on her lips sent a thrill through him. Without thought, he reached for her, fingers tracing along the line of her jaw. So soft.

Briana tensed, and Quillin immediately dropped his hand. What was he doing? He was here to administer genetic modification serum, not...not whatever madness had seized him.

Quillin stepped back, shaking his head to try and clear the intoxicating haze that had come over him. “Forgive me. I seem to have lost my composure.” He turned away and busied himself preparing the genetic modification serum, hoping the routine task would help settle his scattered thoughts.

His hands trembled slightly as he loaded the injector, acutely aware of Briana's presence behind him. Her floral scent still filled the air, surrounding him. It took all his willpower not to turn back and look at her again.

"Is everything okay?" asked Briana uncertainly. "Should I come back another time?"

Quillin steeled himself and turned to face her. "No, please stay. I need to examine you. It's my duty."

He gestured for her to scoot closer. Briana perched on the edge, watching him warily.

Taking a steadying breath, Quillin initiated the exam, waving the medical scanner over her to ensure she was in optimal health before giving the injection. As the device hummed and blinked, he found his gaze drawn back to Briana's face, tracing over her elegant features. She really was breathtaking.

He blinked and hastily returned his focus to the scanner. "Your results look normal so far. Now I just need to administer the genetic serum."

He held up the loaded injector. Briana eyed it nervously but tilted her head, baring her slender neck. As Quillin pushed the injector into her skin, his fingers grazed her nape. Another spark raced through him at the contact. He pressed the button on autopilot, his attention focused on the curve of her neck. He wanted to lick it.

With the serum delivered, he stepped back, blinking at the thoughts whirling through his mind.

Briana met his gaze, confusion and curiosity swirling in her eyes. "What happens now?"

"Now..." Quillin's voice trailed off. What did happen now? The Mating Flare changed everything. "Now we talk."

She seemed puzzled. "That's standard protocol?"

He didn't answer the question, not wanting to lie. "Before we discuss anything else, may I ask—how do you feel about being matched as a proxy for Commander Zartik?"

Briana lowered her gaze, fingers twisting nervously in her lap. “I’m afraid,” she said after a moment. “This is all so new to me. Zartik seems honorable but distant. I don’t know if we’ll be compatible. I know it’s just a year...or until we have a baby, but...” She bit her lusciously full lower lip, betraying her anxiety.

He clenched his fists, fighting the possessive flare blooming in his chest. “You shouldn’t have to mate with one you fear.”

He began pacing, desperate energy boiling through his veins. “What occurred between us—the Mating Flare—it signifies an exceptionally strong bond. I know I’m still a stranger to you, but I can’t ignore what fate forged between us.”

She frowned. “The what?”

He realized it was all on his side and sighed. It was hard to focus but he tried as he stopped and turned to her, eyes blazing. He intended to try to rationally explain, but an impassioned plea burst from him instead. “Come away with me, Briana. We can leave and start over somewhere.”

Briana’s eyes widened in shock. “Just...leave? But why would you risk so much for me?”

Quillin crossed back to her in two strides, grasping her hands in his. “Because you’re mine now. It’s the Mating Flare. I have no choice but to protect you. I want to. *Need* to.”

Her eyes were wide as she tried to pull her hands from his. “I think you must be ill, sir.”

He was half-mad with need. Did that count?

“What is this Mating Flare you keep mentioning?”

“It’s an instinctive awareness that you’re my mate. My ideal match in every way. It’s more mystical than medical.” How galling that was to admit for a man of science, though he didn’t care about any conflicts with his beliefs right now. He was consumed by the need to claim her.

He brought her hands to his lips, basking in her sweet scent and soft ebony skin. “Say you’ll come with me,” he said, no longer trying to mask the desperation in his voice. “I can’t bear the thought of you in another’s arms. I have to claim you as my mate.”



Chapter Two

BRIANA STARED AT HIM, shocked by his words. “Claim me as your mate? But...we’ve only just met.”

He grasped her hands, his golden eyes boring intensely into hers. “It’s the Mating Flare. Extremely rare, but it signifies an unbreakable bond between us.”

She jerked her hands back. “Even if that’s true, I was matched to Zartik. I’m supposed to be his proxy.”

At the mention of Zartik, his expression darkened. “You belong to me now. I can’t allow that mating to occur.” He moved closer, firmly gripping her shoulders. “Come away with me,”

Briana’s mind reeled, unsure what to do. She wanted to run back to the safety of her POD, but that would just bring Faction enforcers after her. Yet she also feared what Zartik might do if he learned of this supposed bond with the Med Chief. She certainly wasn’t eager to be a proxy for the reserved and distant Mosaic Commander, and Quillin seemed preferable—not that she intended to be a surrogate for either of them if she could help it.

Against her better judgment, she heard herself say, “Okay. I’ll come with you.” For now, at least. She would figure out how to escape later.

His relief was palpable as he took her hand and led her from the MedBay. They hurried down a dim corridor, Quillin leading the way with long, swift strides. Her nerves jangled with each step and her breathing was loud in her ears. Suddenly, he pulled her into a shadowy alcove, pressing a finger to his lips. She froze as heavy footsteps approached. Two enforcers walked by, conversing casually.

She sagged once they passed, but he stiffened, peering around the corner. “More coming,” he whispered.

Sure enough, two more enforcers appeared, coming their way. He took her hand and boldly stepped out of hiding. She

stared at him in alarm but didn't dare make a sound.

“Good evening, officers.” Quillin greeted them calmly. “Just taking my proxy home after her exam.”

One officer glanced between them curiously. “Bit late for an exam, isn't it?”

Quillin laughed. “You know how the schedule gets backed up. I appreciate you gentlemen keeping the Embassy safe.”

The enforcers nodded and continued on their way. She stared after them in disbelief. How had he appeared so confident?

As they descended the Embassy steps, she made an impulsive suggestion. “My POD isn't far. We could hide out there tonight.”

He agreed at once. Ducking through the streets and foot traffic, Briana led Quillin to her modest POD. The small space held a hint of comfort amidst the uncertainty that hung in the air. She locked the door behind them, her hands trembling with a mix of anticipation and unease. They were alone now, hidden away from the watchful eyes of the Embassy.

Quillin looked around the POD, seemingly taking in its simple furnishings and the traces of Briana's life scattered throughout. The air was thick with a blend of nervousness and curiosity. He turned to her. “A provisory occupant dwelling is smaller than I've heard.”

She let out a startled laugh. “It was even smaller before my assigned roommate matched with a Tark last month.”

He nodded. “I probably met her.”

“Along with dozens of others by now,” she said with a hint of bitterness, feeling like just a number to the Faction and even Earth's government, who'd signed the treaty on her and every other young woman's behalf.

“More likely hundreds.” He seemed ill-at-ease with the admission.

Silence reigned for a moment until a rumbling sound filled the space. He put a hand on his stomach and chuckled

awkwardly. “I missed lunch.”

Briana watched him closely, her heart pounding in her chest as she managed a small smile. “You know, there’s a synthicator in the kitchen area.”

Quillin’s gaze met hers. “I could eat.”

Why did she have the unnerving and slightly arousing image of him eating something entirely different from food suddenly in her mind, making her breathless?

They moved to the kitchen area, a compact space adorned with a small dining nook, a sink, and the synthicator. He examined the controls, his fingers hovering over the holographic interface. Briana noticed the contrast between his imposing figure and the gentle way he handled the technology. She wondered how it would feel to have those long, lean fingers touching her and shivered.

With a few deft gestures, he programmed the synthicator, selecting a recipe from the database. The device hummed to life, the soft whirring sound filling the air. A delightful aroma soon enveloped the room, tantalizing their senses.

Briana’s eyes widened in surprise upon smelling only familiar scents. “You eat Earth food?”

Quillin turned toward her, a hint of amusement in his voice. “A Mosaic must be resourceful.” He winked. “I observed your favorited requests and chose a dish you enjoy.”

He lifted the lid of the synthicator, revealing a large bowl of steaming chicken and dumplings. The sight brought back a flood of memories for Briana, the scent triggering a sense of nostalgia that tugged at her heart.

“It’s chicken and dumplings,” said Quillin, his voice filled with warmth. “Your most requested meal.”

Briana’s breath caught in her throat as she stared at the chicken and dumplings. The aroma filled the room, mingling with the memories of her mother’s cooking. Quillin’s gesture touched something deep within her.

She blinked back tears, realizing he'd taken time to understand her preferences and had gone a step farther, replicating a dish that held a special place in her heart, though he couldn't possibly know that, or why she was teary-eyed. "This is my mother's recipe. Mostly. I programmed it in by memory."

His golden eyes widened with surprise, and a soft smile tugged at the corners of his mouth. "I had no idea. I'm honored to have brought back a small piece of your past."

Her heart swelled with emotion, and she found herself opening up to him, sharing the bittersweet truth. "It's never been quite the same since...since I lost my family. I loaded the recipe into the database myself, trying to recreate the taste from memory, but it's not quite right. It's just close enough to always be a reminder of what I've lost but remains comforting."

His expression softened, his gaze filled with empathy. "I know the pain you've endured, and I understand the significance of holding onto those precious memories. Food has a way of connecting us to our roots and to the people and moments that shaped us."

Briana nodded, her eyes shimmering with unshed tears. "Yes, it's like a thread that ties me to my past, to the love and warmth that once filled our home."

"Tell me about your family...if you wish." He sat down at the dining nook across from her as he issued the invitation.

"My mother was the heart of our home." Her voice was soft with nostalgia. "She had a voice that could melt the coldest hearts, and her music filled every corner of our small apartment. I can still hear her singing lullabies to me and my little sister."

A wistful smile touched Briana's lips as she continued, her eyes glistening with tears. "And my father was the gentlest soul. He played the piano with such grace and taught lessons from our home. His melodies always carried a touch of melancholy, as if he held the weight of the world in his fingers."

Quillin's presence was a comforting anchor despite him technically being a stranger. "Tell me more about your little sister."

Briana's sighed with joy and sorrow. "Lisa was a ray of sunshine. Always laughing and always finding joy in the simplest things. She had an innate gift for music. She could hear a piece and replicate it immediately without formal training on any instrument she tried."

"Do you have that gift?"

She shook her head. "My talents are in singing, but I used to envy her. Not that it was a bitter thing. She was my playmate and best friend. I used to play games with her, giggling until our stomachs hurt. She had the most infectious laughter—it could brighten even the darkest day."

His eyes shimmered with understanding. "I can imagine the profound impact their love for music had on you."

Briana nodded, her voice filled with yearning. "Their passion for music was infectious. It awakened something within me...a desire to express myself and find my own voice. They nurtured that spark, encouraging me to explore my own musical talents."

Silence settled between them, filled with the echoes of lost melodies and cherished moments. Briana took a deep breath, summoning the strength to share the painful truth. "But then... the Vorathans invaded. They destroyed everything we held dear. My family was taken from me in just a few minutes."

Quillin's grip on her hand tightened, his touch offering a steadying presence. He didn't need words to convey his empathy. His presence alone spoke volumes. He was a kindred spirit and obviously a survivor of his own tragedy if he was part of the Faction.

She mustered the courage to ask, her voice gentle yet filled with curiosity, "What about your family? What happened to them?"

His eyes grew distant, as if he was transported back to a time of pain and loss. After a moment, he sighed heavily and

met Briana's gaze. "The Vorathans invaded my homeworld when I was just an adolescent. They swept through our agricultural settlements, leaving destruction in their wake. My family were farmers."

He paused, his voice tinged with both grief and determination. "I was away at school preparing for a medical career when the attack occurred. When I returned, my world had crumbled. My parents and my younger brother, Rion...all gone." The weight of his words hung heavily in the air.

Briana reached out, her hand gently resting on Quillin's arm. It was a small gesture, and a silent offering of comfort, though it sent a spark through her to touch him. They both understood the magnitude of each other's losses and the raw wounds that still lingered.

He continued, his voice laced with sorrow. "Their memories remain etched in my heart. The warmth of their love and the joy we shared I carry with me, even as I strive to rebuild and protect others from the devastation we experienced."

Her heart ached for the young man who had lost his family and the man he had become. "I'm so sorry for what you've been through," whispered Briana, her voice filled with genuine empathy. "No one should have to endure such loss."

"I agree, as do most of the Faction. When the Coalition turned its back on all the Zed-Class worlds, many of us were disgusted. We wanted to end the Vorathans, but we also wanted to ensure no one else experienced the pain of losing their family and homeworlds to those vicious marauders."

He spoke with such passionate intensity that it was impossible to look away from him. She blinked after a moment. "I'm glad the Faction helped us, but they demanded a heavy price."

Quillin's eyes flickered with a mixture of determination and regret. "Yes, the Faction's assistance came at a cost. The draft is not a path any of us would have chosen willingly, but we believe it's necessary to protect what remains of our species."

She couldn't hide her dissatisfaction. "Being forced into a mating feels like giving up our freedom and our choices. I understand death by Vorathans would have been much worse, but it's disheartening to lose my right to choose."

Sympathy tinged his expression. "I understand. The draft has its flaws, and it often feels like we're mere pawns in a grand game, but we must remember that even amid these circumstances, there's still room for us to find understanding and perhaps even love."

"So, where does the Mating Flare fit into all the politics and treaties?" She arched a brow as she awaited his response.

He looked uncomfortable. "It carries no weight. It's such a rare thing and only takes place in Mosaics. It only began happening to us when we integrated other species' DNA into our own to ensure diversity and survival. Who knows from which species it originated, but it happens so infrequently that I don't believe there's a rule written to address it."

"But you taking me from Zartik breaks plenty of rules." She bit her lip, not liking the idea of him being in trouble. She also didn't like the idea that she could be taken from one alien by another, as though she were property, but Quillin was clearly the better of the two.

Not that she planned to stay around and get acquainted. Once he was asleep, she was out of there. She'd already be gone if she hadn't been so panicked as to suggest they hide in her POD.

His expression turned somber, his gaze shifting away for a moment. "You're right. The Mating Flare doesn't hold much significance in the grand scheme of politics and treaties. It's an enigma, a natural phenomenon that defies explanation. While it brought us together, it doesn't have the power to break the rules that bind us."

He met her gaze again, his eyes filled with determination. "Some rules are meant to be challenged, especially when they conflict with our sense of right and wrong. I can't deny the attraction between us or the undeniable connection the Mating

Flare signifies. It's why I was willing to risk everything to be with you."

Briana's brow furrowed as she absorbed his words. "What if we get caught? What if there are consequences?"

Quillin let out a sigh, his voice laced with a mix of concern and resolve. "There will always be risks and consequences, but sometimes, we have to be brave enough to challenge the rules and fight for what we believe in."

Her uncertainty lingered as she searched his face for reassurance. "I don't know what to do. This is all so overwhelming."

He reached out and gently brushed a curly strand behind her ear, his touch a tender caress. "I know it's overwhelming. The choices before us aren't easy, and the path we've embarked upon is filled with uncertainty."

A mixture of fear and curiosity coursed through her veins. There was something different about him in that moment—a vulnerability beneath his stoic exterior. She wanted to know more, to uncover the layers of the Mosaic Med Chief who had claimed her. She decided to put aside the political discussion and focus on him. "How did you end up with the Faction?"

His eyes glistened with a hint of melancholy. "They saved me in a rescue party whose job was to follow around the Vorathans and try to save anyone they could. Their force was too small back then to prevent the invasions and deaths, but General Pate did what he could. That was before he became Grand Admiral."

"Are you happy with the Faction?" *And the sacrifices they demand*, she wanted to ask.

He shrugged. "Happiness is subjective. After the Faction took me in, I dedicated myself to serving our cause. I've spent years working as a Med Chief and ensuring the survival of all our species, but it has been a solitary existence. I've made sacrifices, forsaking personal connections to fulfill my duties."

A pang of sympathy resonated within her. Beneath his composed demeanor, he clearly carried a deep sense of

loneliness, longing for something more than the cold routines of his role.

“And what about love?” she asked softly. “Have you ever felt that kind of connection with someone?”

His gaze flickered with longing. “I’ve witnessed the blossoming of love in others and seen the way it transforms them, but I’ve never allowed myself to indulge in such emotions. Love was something reserved for the fortunate who didn’t bear the weight of our responsibilities, and for the privileged few since we’ve lost so many of our females of all Faction species.”

A somber silence settled between them, the weight of their respective pasts creating an unspoken understanding. They were two individuals who had known loss. She hesitated for a moment, her heart torn between the undeniable connection she felt with Quillin and her apprehension about committing to a stranger. The weight of their shared pain and the depth of their understanding couldn’t be ignored, but she still needed time to process it all.

Her voice trembled slightly as she spoke, her words filled with both vulnerability and caution. “Quillin, I... I feel a connection with you, and I appreciate everything you’ve done to protect me, but I’m not sure if I’m ready to commit to being mated to someone I just met.”

His expression softened, his gaze filled with understanding. “I understand your hesitation. It’s a lot to take in, and the decision to mate isn’t made lightly. Your feelings are valid, and I would never want to pressure you into something, but my heart knows you’re mine. I hope you’ll feel that soon.”

“Perhaps.” Briana took a deep breath, gathering her courage. She glanced out the POD window nearest her and was startled to see it was after dark. The day had disappeared as if in a flash. “There are two beds. You can take the second one if you prefer it over trying to sleep on the tiny couch.”

His eyes widened, and he nodded. “Thank you. Your trust and consideration mean a great deal to me. I’ll gladly accept

the second bed, and we can continue our conversation there.”

Quillin apparently understood her unspoken boundaries. They moved to the bedroom, and the air was thick with anticipation and nervousness. She watched warily until he settled onto the second bed, creating a respectful distance between them.

As they continued their conversation in the soft glow of the bedroom, Briana felt a growing sense of comfort in Quillin’s presence. They shared stories, discussing their pasts, their hopes, and their fears. The barriers between them began to fade, replaced by a growing sense of trust and understanding.

Since Hollie’s match, she’d gotten accustomed to silence, so it was soothing to have another voice fill the room again as he recounted tales of his family and the laughter and love they shared on their farm. Briana listened intently, captivated by the glimpse into his life before the war. It allowed her to see the resilience and tenderness that ran beneath his reserved exterior.

In turn, she shared more about her family, their musical talents, and the joy they’d brought to her life. He listened attentively, his gaze filled with genuine interest and empathy. They bonded over their shared experiences of loss and devastation, finding solace in each other’s understanding.

As the night grew late and the weight of their conversations settled upon them, Briana was comforted and secure with him in the same room. Despite her initial reservations, she found herself gradually opening to the possibility of a deeper connection with him.

In the quiet moments that followed, as they talked themselves to sleep, a whirlwind of emotions consumed her thoughts. She no longer felt the need to feign sleep and slip away in the darkness.

Instead, she found herself wanting to stay and continue this journey of discovery and connection. She wondered if she was doing the right thing, taking this leap of faith by staying and talking. She should have doubts, but she suspected logic rather than emotion motivated that thought.

She felt safe with him, and she couldn't fight off sleep any longer. She could always escape tomorrow if she chose.



Chapter Three

A SHRILL BEEPING JARRED Quillin from sleep. He jolted upright, momentarily disoriented. The insistent beeping continued, accompanied by heavy pounding on the front door.

Adrenaline flooded his system as realization struck—they'd been found. The enforcement squad must have tracked them here. Quillin leapt from the bed, his heart hammering.

“Briana, get up.” He rushed to her side. She grumbled in protest as he shook her shoulder urgently. “We have to move now.”

The pounding at the door grew louder, angry shouts accompanying each thunderous boom. Her eyes flew open, confusion clouding her face. Then understanding dawned, and her eyes went wide with fear.

He grasped her hand, hauling her from the tangled sheets. The door wouldn't hold long against the squad's barrage. Their only hope was the rear exit.

He pulled Briana along as he swiftly tapped the control panel, lowering the ramp. It descended agonizingly slowly. He shifted from foot to foot, acutely aware of each second ticking by. Finally, it locked into place.

They hurried down the ramp just as the front door splintered open behind them. Shouts rang out from within the POD. He didn't look back, focused wholly on escape, but the enclosure around the POD limited their options. There was nowhere to run but open ground.

Then a yell came from their left. The squad had anticipated their route and moved to cut them off. He cursed under his breath. Their only option was to run and make it to the treeline.

“Stay close,” he shouted. She nodded, face ashen but determined. He tightened his grip on her hand. “Now.”

They took off sprinting. The ground blurred under their pounding feet. His lungs burned, but he pushed harder. Blaster

bolts sizzled past them, scorching the earth. Briana's harsh breaths echoed his own.

The forest loomed ahead, tantalizingly close. Just a bit farther. Quillin risked a glance back. Half a dozen enforcers pursued them, closing in. He turned forward and summoned every last ounce of strength.

Her cry of pain pierced his heart. Her hand wrenched from his grasp as she stumbled and fell. "No." He skidded to a halt, panic surging through him. He whirled back and saw Briana clutching her leg, face contorted in agony.

Quillin scooped her up in one smooth motion. Her arms locked around his neck, holding on for dear life. Then he was running again, crashing into the forest just as a blaster bolt sizzled past them.

He wove between the trees, putting distance between them and their pursuers. Briana trembled against his chest, her ragged breaths hot on his skin. Rage and fear warred within him, but one thought rose above all—he had to save her.

When they pushed through the trees, he found himself in a neighborhood he didn't recognize, but that didn't surprise him. He rarely left the Embassy. This particular area was rundown and seemed unsafe, but he pushed through.

His lungs burned as he sprinted through the grimy alleys, one thought driving him onward. He must get Briana help. Her pained breaths and white-knuckled grip on his shirt fueled his desperation.

He scanned the dilapidated buildings, looking for somewhere to hunker down. There—a crumbling hotel. He mounted the creaking steps and shouldered through the front door.

The greasy manager jerked upright, face purpling. "Hey. You can't just barge in here—"

He cut him off with a snarl. "Which room?"

The manager spluttered indignantly, but Quillin silenced him with a glare. Sweat beaded on the manager's forehead as he pointed a trembling hand at the farthest door.

He stalked down the hallway and kicked open the door. Gently laying Briana on the stained mattress, he assessed her leg. The wound continued oozing blood. He needed medicine and fast.

“I’ll be back soon. Stay awake,” he ordered. Briana nodded weakly, face gray.

He hurried from the hotel, his focus singular—to find medical supplies. The seedy district’s back alleys formed a maze, but he let his superior sense of smell guide him until the scent of antiseptics indicated a black-market dealer, since there was certainly no functioning medical center around.

He approached warily.

The wiry man eyed his Mosaic features with unveiled disgust. “We don’t serve your kind here.”

Desperation clawed at his restraint. “I have credits, and I’m not leaving without supplies.”

The dealer crossed his arms. “Double price for your type.”

Rage simmered in his gut, but he nodded briskly. The man grinned, showing rotten teeth. Minutes later, Quillin’s arms overflowed with stolen meds as he rushed back to the dingy hotel. He burst into the room, kicking the door shut behind him.

Briana was trembling on the bed. At the sight of him, she tried to push herself upright only to fall back with a stifled groan.

“Don’t move.” He knelt beside her, carefully peeling back the seared fabric surrounding the wound. Briana flinched as he cleaned away congealed blood with antiseptic wipes. “Almost done.”

With delicate motions, he debrided damaged tissue and sealed leaking blood vessels with a cauterizing pen. Briana’s face glistened with sweat, and her teeth were gritted against the pain.

He maintained a steady stream of reassuring words as he worked. Once the wound was cleaned and closed, he activated

the regenerator, holding the biostimulating laser over her leg. As the device worked to regenerate healthy skin and muscle tissue, Briana's taut body gradually relaxed. Her breathing evened out, and her eyes drifted closed.

Quillin monitored the regenerator's progress closely. "Just a bit more," he murmured. When it finally beeped completion, he set it aside with a heavy sigh.

She gave him a tired smile. "Thank you."

He gently squeezed her hand, overcome with relief that she was safe. "I'm just glad I could help. How are you feeling?"

She stood up gingerly to test her leg, wincing slightly. "Sore, but much better thanks to you."

He nodded, re-examining the newly regenerated skin again. "The wound is sealed, and your vitals look stable. You should stay off that leg for a while though." He met her eyes. "I'm so sorry you got hurt. It's my fault for putting you in harm's way."

Briana shook her head firmly. "You saved my life. I chose to come with you, remember?" She gave him a tired but reassuring smile. "We're in this together now."

Her forgiveness soothed his battered spirit. She was far stronger than she knew. He gently brushed a stray curl off her forehead. "You should rest. I'll keep watch and make sure you're safe."

She needed no second urging, weariness pulling her quickly back to the bed and even faster into sleep. He settled on the bed beside her, every sense poised to protect his wounded mate through the night. He wouldn't fail her again.

Exhaustion eventually overtook him as he kept his silent vigil over her sleeping form. Despite his best efforts, his head drooped forward, eyes slipping closed as sleep embraced him. He jolted awake sometime later to a gentle sensation along his jaw. Still disoriented, he blinked groggily to find her gazing down at him, her fingers trailing lightly over his skin.

The first hints of dawn filtered through the grimy window, casting everything in hues of blue and gray. She gave him a

soft, sleepy smile. “Hi,” she whispered.

He straightened, shaking off the last vestiges of sleep. “Hi, yourself. How are you feeling?”

“Much better.” She shifted to sit beside him, wincing only slightly. Her fingers returned to tracing the lines of his face as she regarded him thoughtfully.

He remained very still, transfixed by her touch. A low rumbling purr escaped him when she stroked the black horns protruding from the sides of his head. It was a particularly erogenous zone in his species, though she likely didn’t know that.

When she finally spoke, her words stole his breath.

“I’ve made my decision,” she murmured. “After everything we’ve been through, I can’t deny what’s between us. We’re meant to be together. I want to be your mate.”

Joy and relief surged within his chest. Unable to form words, he drew Briana into his arms. She came willingly, tucking her head beneath his chin with a contented sigh.



Chapter Four

BRIANA'S HEART RACED in her chest as she made the admission to Quillin. It was crazy, but how could she deny the connection between them? He'd known instantly, but it had taken her nearly a day to accept.

She grinned, feeling crazy and reckless as she tipped back her head and parted her lips in an invitation. "Shouldn't there be a claiming involved?"

He stared down at her, his golden eyes blazing with a heat she could feel all the way to her soul. He swept his hand through her hair, leaning in so that his breath whispered against her lips. "Yes, there should be."

He kissed her, soft and gentle, yet full of passion. She closed her eyes and opened herself to the feeling, letting it carry away all her doubts and fears. A fire blossomed inside of her, one that spread like wildfire throughout the rest of her body as he deepened their kiss.

When he finally broke away, she felt breathless and new—like an entirely different person than who had laid there just moments before.

His hand was still in her hair, and he looked down at her with an intensity that nearly knocked the breath from her chest. "You belong to me now," he said softly.

She nodded, feeling the truth of it deep within her heart. She hadn't known what she was looking for until this moment—but now she knew. He was her home, and he always would be.

He leaned in to kiss her again, a promise of forever lingering in the air between them. He pulled away with the faintest of smiles on his lips, and she leaned forward, wanting more. Her heart pounded as she moved closer. His breath quickened, and their gazes locked in a passionate embrace that she knew would soon lead to something more.

The air between them seemed electric, like the atmosphere was charged with the desire of what was unfolding. She was a little afraid, since she'd never done this before, but excitement underscored everything else.

When he lifted a hand to cup her breast, thumbing his thumb across her nipple, she purred like a kitten with wanton desire. She reached for him, pressing her body against his and wrapping one arm around his neck.

His hands snaked their way down to cup the soft curves of her ass as he murmured into her ear, "I've been wanting this since the moment I saw you." His lips descended on hers hungrily as she moaned in pleasure.

She laid beneath him, her breath coming in shallow gasps and felt every movement he made as if it were her own. His lips pressed against hers and she tasted the warmth of his mouth on hers. She moved slowly at first, unsure of what to do or how to respond but driven by an instinctive desire for more.

He explored her body with fearless fingers until it seemed like every nerve ending within reach sang with pleasure and desire for him. As he did so, he whispered naughty words into her ear that made her skin tingle in anticipation and her pussy wet.

She was lost in a sea of passion, and the waves washed over her and threatened to entirely consume her. She clung to him, desperate for more of his touch but unwilling to let go even if it meant drowning beneath the tides of pleasure that threatened to overwhelm them both. "I'm really not sure what I should do," she said, her voice quavering with uncertainty.

"That's totally understandable." He kissed her chest and then again. "You've never done this before. I understand you're a virgin and will try not to hurt you."

He gave a slow smile that spread honeyed warmth through her veins. "Let me kiss you..." His gaze darted to her thighs before he kissed her chest a third time, squarely in her cleavage. "Everywhere." He almost purred the word when he lifted his head again.

She moaned, liking the sound of that. He finished undressing her and himself before laying her back on the thin mattress in the cheap hotel room. She barely noticed their surroundings as he began kissing from her chin down. His lips were soft and gentle against her skin, like a feather brushing lightly against her body. She let out a little gasp as his tongue flicked against her inner thigh, and then again as he moved higher still.

He took his time exploring every inch of her pussy with his mouth, teasing and tantalizing until she was burning up from the inside out. When his tongue flicked across her clit, she whimpered and arched her hips. “I didn’t know it would feel like this.” And he’d barely touched her yet.

He chuckled against her pussy but didn’t reply other than to kiss her again before swiping his tongue from her opening up to her clit. Her body quivered as each motion sent waves of pleasure rushing through her. His hands traveled up and down her body, caressing and touching, until she was panting with desire. She begged him to continue but he teasingly refused, telling her to wait a few moments before he resumed licking her once more.

When he stopped again, she raised herself on her elbows to glare at him. “What are you doing? Either fuck me or don’t.” Heat from embarrassment warmed her cheeks.

The damned alien just laughed again, but with a gentle edge. “I want to make sure you never forget this, and I also need to make sure you can handle my cock.”

Her gaze moved to the long, thick protrusion. She’d shied away from looking at it before, feeling nervous. Now, her eyes widened, and she trembled. It was so long and as thick as her wrist. It glowed golden like him, with the same chimeric patches—which were all vibrant red at the moment.

“It’ll never fit,” she blurted.

He smiled. “As a Med Chief, I can assure you it will...with proper preparation.”

He bent his head to her pussy again, once more resuming licking and sucking. She hovered on the edge of coming while thinking about the huge cock between his muscled legs. It looked textured, and she wondered how it would feel inside her. Her breath caught as he moved his mouth to her inner thigh, a soft moan escaping her lips. His tongue moved in circles around the contours of her skin, getting ever closer to its destination.

Tension built within every muscle in her body as he finally reached her again, this time with clear determination. He was surely done teasing her. With delicate precision, his expert tongue teased open these new depths until involuntary shudders ran through her body and mind in waves of ecstatic bliss followed by an almost unbearable anticipation for the next wave.

She came with a small shout, clamping her thighs around him as she writhed against his face. He seemed content and remained there until her tense muscles relaxed moments later. When he finally pulled away, she felt a strong desire to keep him with her forever.

Fortunately, he wasn't leaving for long. Just so he could change position. She shivered with a touch of fear but mostly anticipation when the head of his cock pressed against her opening as he gently eased his way inside her.

Once he fully entered, she noticed the prominent ridges in his shaft. It hurt for one excruciating moment, making her cry out.

He kissed her brow and cheeks. "Hold still, my love. It will soon feel good." He slowly rocked his hips as he spoke. His cock moved gently within her, and a wave of desire spread through her body. Every thrust sent sparks of electricity along her nerves.

His lips descend onto her own with force as he pushed his cock deeper into her, feeding their heated connection with every thrust. His arms were strong and tight around her, sending waves of warmth radiating through them as they moved together in perfect unison.

Each whisper and moan that left either of them seemed to create an unspoken understanding between them that this wasn't just a simple act of pleasure, instead speaking to a much deeper bond. She was so deeply connected to him in this moment that it frightened her.

It felt as if this would last forever, and yet it seemed to pass too quickly. Waves of pleasure began as a low, rolling sensation in her belly that quickly intensified into an unstoppable and all-encompassing wave. She gasped and gripped the sheets tightly as ecstasy overwhelmed her, leaving every nerve alive with sensation until it finally released into shuddering bliss.

He stiffened, and his large cock with its decidedly wonderful ridges spasmed inside her. She couldn't look away from his pure masculine beauty as his orgasm came quickly after hers, an explosive wave washing over him and making his body quiver with pleasure. His breath seemed to have been taken away from the intensity of it all, and pure bliss her mind filled with nothing before it finally subsided into satisfaction.

She collapsed in his arms, and he held her close, their breathing mingling in the still air as they laid together. Neither spoke but Briana could still feel an unmistakable bond between them. As she drifted off to sleep, a deep sense of contentment filled her. This was just the beginning of something special.



Chapter Five

QUILLIN'S EYES FLUTTERED open, greeted by the feeble light filtering through the tattered curtains of the run-down hotel room. He stretched his limbs, feeling the stiffness from the previous day's events. His gaze shifted to Briana, her form curled beside him, and he smiled at her as tenderness filled him.

He reached out, brushing a stray curl behind her ear, and savored the intimacy of the moment. Briana stirred, her eyelids fluttering open to meet his gaze, and a gentle smile curved her lips.

"Good morning, my love," he said, his voice filled with affection.

Her smile grew, and she intertwined her fingers with his. "Good morning. I'm grateful to wake up beside you."

They lingered in the quiet embrace, their hands entwined. The world outside their cocoon felt distant and insignificant, overshadowed by the strength of their connection.

Their tranquility abruptly shattered when the hotel room door splintered and crashed open. Faction enforcers stormed in, their black-armored figures imposing and commanding.

He rose to his feet, positioning himself protectively in front of Briana as he wondered who had betrayed them. It could have been any number of people in this neighborhood, especially if the Faction offered even a modest reward.

The lead enforcer's voice reverberated through the room, authoritative and cold. "Quillin, you are under arrest for abduction of a human and dereliction of duty."

His heart pounded in his chest, and his senses were on high alert. He tightened his grip on her, his voice defiant. "We won't go down without a fight. Briana, stay behind me."

Her grip on him intensified. She sounded afraid but also resigned when she said, "We can't win. We have to surrender."

Reluctantly, Quillin nodded, his gaze fixed on the encroaching enforcers. The weight of their situation settled upon them, acceptance mingling with the determination in his eyes. Finally, he lifted his hands in a gesture of surrender. “Allow us to dress.”

The leader of the squad grunted, but none of them turned their back. He did his best to shield Briana as she slipped on her clothes, including the bloodied and tattered pants. Once he was also dressed, the enforcers swiftly closed in, restraining Quillin and Briana. Metal binders constricted their wrists as they were marched from the room that had provided sanctuary.

As enforcers forcefully led them out of the hotel room, he stole a glance at his mate. Her eyes reflected a mixture of determination and fear, their silent understanding transcending words. Thoughts of the consequences they would face raced through Quillin’s mind, but amidst the turmoil, a steadfast resolve burned within him, fueled by the strength of their love. He silently vowed to protect her with his very last breath if necessary.



NEARLY AN HOUR LATER, no one had tried to separate them, and they stood before Grand Admiral Pate, supreme commander of the Faction forces. He was a towering Grimlock whose disapproval seemed to pierce his soul.

His sharp gaze assessed Quillin and then Briana, frowning at their entwined hands. “Explain yourselves.”

He stepped forward but retained hold of her hand. “There’s no crime here. We share a mating bond created by the Mating Flare.”

Pate’s eyes narrowed. “The Flare? That’s not possible with a human.”

“I swear it’s true,” said Briana. “We felt the bond from the moment we met.”

He shot her an amused glance, briefly distracted in the midst of the turbulence by her slight fabrication. She hadn’t

felt it right away.

Pate waved a dismissive hand. “You can claim a bond, but that doesn’t make it true. You insult me with this fabrication, Med Chief.”

He met Pate’s gaze without flinching, his voice steady. “Grand Admiral Pate, the Mating Flare has brought us together. It’s a force beyond our control. Our love can’t be denied.”

Pate remained silent for a moment, the weight of his decision hanging in the air. Finally, he spoke, and his voice was filled with measured authority. “I somewhat grasp the power of the Mating Flare. It has defied understanding, but the final decision of your fate lies not with me.”

Quillin’s heart sank as Pate’s words echoed in the chamber. He knew who had the final say—the very Mosaic to whom Briana had been matched.

Seconds later, Commander Zartik entered the chamber, his indifferent expression revealing nothing of the storm that must be raging within him. To have a proxy match was a rare prize. To have her stolen away was an unacceptable betrayal. He understood the man’s position but couldn’t change destiny or undo the Mating Flare and his subsequent claiming.

Quillin’s heart clenched as he caught a glimpse of the commander’s longing gaze directed at Briana. Zartik exuded dominance and possessiveness. His eyes narrowed as he surveyed Quillin and Briana, his gaze lingering on their entwined hands. A flicker of anger flashed across his features.

“You dare to claim what is rightfully mine?” Zartik’s voice resonated with a mixture of anger and betrayal. “You, a mere Med Chief, have defied our laws.”

He stepped forward, his voice steady with conviction. “Commander Zartik, the Mating Flare formed a bond between Briana and me. It’s a connection that transcends our roles and origins. We can’t deny the power of our love.”

Zartik’s nostrils flared, his eyes narrowing as his gaze fixed on Briana. His nostrils flared as he sneezed, scowling at

both of them. “I was promised the human female as my proxy, but she has been tainted by your scent mark and despoiled. She is impure.”

Briana’s grip tightened on his hand, her voice tinged with determination. “I’m not a possession to be claimed or spoiled. I choose love, and I choose Quillin.”

The commander’s face contorted with rage, and his voice dripped with venom. “If you reject me, I demand satisfaction. A blood fight. Quillin will face me in the arena.”

Quillin’s heart raced, adrenaline surging through his veins. His chances of winning were slim, but accepting the challenge was the only way to protect Briana and win approval for their mating. With a resolute nod, he met Zartik’s gaze, his voice firm. “I accept your challenge.”

Things moved quickly after that. The enforcers prodded him and Briana from the Grand Admiral’s meeting room to the arena located at the back of the Embassy. He wasn’t sure the humans knew about it, or its significance in settling Faction disputes, since he’d never bothered to visit it himself, and he’d been part of the Faction for years.

There were already people gathering, so word had spread quickly. He tried to ignore them as he turned to Briana. “Even if Zartik kills me, you won’t have to be a proxy for him now. You publicly rejected him, and you’re no longer a virgin. And he agreed to settle the matter in a blood fight.”

She glared at Zartik and then him. “This is barbaric.”

He stiffened. “It’s tradition and the only way to protect you.”

Tears welled in her dark eyes. “I don’t want to lose you.”

He put a tender hand to her cheek once an enforcer removed the binders. “I have more to lose than the commander, so I won’t allow myself to fall to his blade.” Before he could kiss her or say more, the enforcer prodded him toward the arena.

The crowd erupted in a frenzy of anticipation as he and Zartik stepped into the arena. The air crackled with electricity,

heavy with tension and the scent of sweat and anxiety. His muscles coiled with determination as he kept his gaze locked on his opponent.

Zartik's lips curled into a wicked smile as he circled Quillin, his movements fluid and calculated. "You aren't a soldier. You're soft, so prepare to meet your end, Med Chief. I will teach you the consequences of defying our customs."

His jaw clenched as his focus sharpened. He sidestepped the first jab, his body a symphony of controlled power. "I don't have your training, but I'm fighting for a love you could never understand."

"Love." Zartik spat derisively as he drew his blade.

Quillin drew his sword as well, steeling himself to face the far more seasoned warrior. Seconds later, the clash of metal against metal reverberated through the arena over and over again, and he felt each jolt even into his teeth as every strike echoed with a resounding impact. The crowd roared, swept up in the spectacle of the battle.

His heart pounded as he parried Zartik's relentless attacks. The weight of his blade was unfamiliar, since he hadn't trained with one in years, but he tried to regard it as an extension of his hand. It became a different kind of scalpel as he wielded it to first block and then attack. With every swing, he channeled his love and determination.

Sweat soon trickled down his brow as his breaths came in ragged gasps. The scent of blood hit him when he made a cut into Zartik's side as they danced across the arena, their bodies a blur of swift strikes and calculated defenses.

Zartik's snarl echoed through the arena as he lunged forward, his blade aimed at Quillin's heart. His instincts kicked in as his body moved with uncanny agility. He twisted, narrowly evading the fatal blow, and swung his sword in response. It connected with Zartik's shoulder, knocking him off balance.

"I won't let you deny me a chance at happiness." He surged forward, his attack fierce and unrelenting. It drove

Zartik to his knees, and he saw the shock reflected in the soldier's expression.

Zartik brought up his sword, successfully blocking Quillin's next attempt. The clash of steel resonated as his muscles strained with each blow. His senses became hyper-focused. He blocked, parried, and counterattacked with precision, his movements a miraculous performance born of desperation and determination.

Zartik fell backward when Quillin swung at him again, landing on his ass. Sweat dripped down his face as fury and disbelief radiated from him. "This can't be. I'm the rightful match and a warrior. I claimed her first."

Quillin pressed forward, his voice filled with resolve. "Love can't be claimed, Commander. It's freely given, and she chose me." With a savage surge of anger, he struck Zartik's thigh, making him fall back farther. In that instant, the commander left his throat exposed.

He almost surrendered to the rage, but as he watched the sword sailing toward his opponent's neck, the surge of bloodlust left him. He halted the blade against Zartik's throat.

"Do it then." The prideful commander bent back his neck, offering a better aim at his jugular.

It was all so pointless. He couldn't see a good reason to take Zartik's life just because tradition dictated he should if he was the winner. "No." The arena fell into an eerie stillness as Quillin's word hung in the air.

Zartik's eyes widened, and he gritted his teeth. "You wish to further humiliate me, *healer*?"

"No." His reply was softer this time. He exhaled slowly. "We can choose a different path, Zartik. We can set aside our grievances and both have a future. I offer you a chance to accept my mating with Briana and let go of revenge."

Zartik's chest heaved, his face a mixture of fury and conflicted emotions. The weight of his decision pressed upon him as he clearly contemplated the situation. He must be

hearing the echoes of tradition warring with the possibility of a different future.

Slowly, the commander moved backward before getting to his knees. He was wary as he rose to his feet, and his voice, laced with bitterness and resignation, pierced the anticipatory silence from the spectators. "You leave me little choice."

"I offer you my hand in peace." He extended his hand toward his adversary.

Zartik's gaze flickered between his outstretched hand and the faces of the crowd. He hesitated, the weight of his past grievances clearly bearing down on him, but as the minutes ticked by, a glimmer of acceptance shone in his eyes.

Finally, with a heavy sigh, he reached out, clasping Quillin's hand in a tentative grip. The crowd erupted in a mixture of relief and applause as the tension in the arena gave way.

Grand Admiral Pate stepped forward, his gaze sweeping over the scene before him. The crowd fell silent, their attention now focused on the supreme commander.

"After carefully considering the circumstances surrounding the Mating Flare between Quillin and Briana, I've reached a decision. Quillin, while I must emphasize your actions in taking Briana without proper permissions are not acceptable, I also recognize the Mating Flare is a force beyond your control, with no established protocols to address such matters."

Quillin nodded, acknowledging his transgressions but also the uniqueness of their situation.

Pate's gaze then shifted to Briana, his expression softening. "Briana, you've undergone unforeseen circumstances and have chosen to stand by Quillin's side. Your conviction speaks volumes."

Briana nodded but didn't speak.

"Therefore, in light of the absence of formal procedures to register a claim inspired by the Mating Flare, and considering the genuine connection and commitment I have witnessed

from both of you, combined with Zartik's generous decision to yield, I give my approval for your mating."

A collective sigh of relief spread through the crowd, their murmurs of agreement mingling with the fading tension. It was as if they'd all forgotten they had come to witness bloodshed.

Quillin and Briana exchanged a grateful glance, their bond now validated and acknowledged by the highest authority within the Faction.

Pate's voice held a faint scolding tone as he added, "However, I must stress the importance of adhering to our laws and protocols in the future for all members of the Faction and Earth. This exceptional circumstance should not set a precedent for disregarding our regulations."

He bowed his head respectfully. "I understand, Grand Admiral. I assure you I will fulfill my duties."

Pate nodded, his gaze shifting from Quillin to Briana. "May your union bring harmony and strength and be a testament to the power of love."

Quillin moved to Briana to reclaim his place by her side before they spoke quietly with the Grand Admiral for a moment. He expressed his quiet gratitude to Pate, acknowledging his decision and the opportunity they had been given, and Briana did the same.

Pate nodded and waved them off. "Let's forget about the whole matter."

As they left the arena, hand in hand, he couldn't resist stealing a kiss. Briana returned it willingly, but they held off on expressing too much passion in front of the large gathering. When they parted, he took her to his quarters in the Embassy, and they made love again, this time as officially recognized mates and not fugitives on the run.



Epilogue

A FEW WEEKS LATER, Quillin sat with Briana in the cozy confines of their quarters at the Faction Embassy, their sanctuary away from the bustling world outside. A nightly cuddle was quickly becoming one of their traditions as they watched some of the limited TV programs available. The current one was a perplexing mix of cast members that seemed to try to appeal to all the species living in and around Earth. It charmingly missed the mark, but it was lovely to see the unity and attempts at harmonizing.

Briana's eyes were filled with a mixture of tenderness and curiosity as she looked at him when an ad reminding Faction members to stake their claim to a piece of land in the new homeworld flashed across the screen. "Are you sure about staying?" she asked, her voice tinged with concern. "We have the opportunity to rotate to the new homeworld with the other Faction races. It could be a fresh start for us."

He met her gaze, ensuring she could see his sincerity. "My family were farmers and deeply connected to the land, but my calling lies in healing. I believe I can do the most good here on Earth as a Med Chief among the diverse beings who call this planet home."

Briana's features softened, a visible sense of relief washing over her. She let out a relieved sigh. "I'm so glad you feel that way," she said, her voice filled with genuine happiness. "I'd prefer to give birth in a hospital here rather than in a clinic or a POD with just you on your homeworld."

Quillin's brow furrowed as he leaned in closer, his eyes filled with anticipation. "I...what?"

Briana giggled softly, her hand gently resting on her stomach. "We're going to have a baby."

He gasped, feeling a joyful smile spreading across his face, "I...you...a baby?"

Briana nodded, her eyes shining with excitement and a touch of amusement, probably from his garbled question and

stunned reaction. “Yes, Quillin. I’m pregnant.”

His heart leaped with delight as he pulled Briana into a tight embrace. “We’re going to have a baby,” he whispered, his voice filled with awe. “Our love has created a life and a new beginning.”

Briana chuckled softly, her hand caressing her still-flat belly. “Yes, a precious little life that’s a testament to our love and the future we’re building together.”

He pressed his lips to her forehead, his touch gentle and reverent. “I’m in awe of the possibilities.”

As they sat there, wrapped in each other’s embrace, the weight of their shared journey and the joy of their impending parenthood settled upon him. He felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude and responsibility.

He placed his palm on her stomach. “I promise you I’ll be the best father I can be. Our child will know nothing but love.”

Her eyes reflected happiness and trust. “I know you will. You’re going to be an amazing father. I couldn’t ask for a better partner.”

As they sat there, their hearts entwined and their future radiating with the promise of a growing family, thoughts of nursery decorations, late-night feedings, and teaching their child about the beauty of the universe filled his mind. “Do you think it’s a boy or a girl?”

Briana shrugged playfully, a mischievous twinkle in her eyes. “I have no idea, but I’m sure they’ll be perfect, just like their father.”

“Their mother is the perfect one.” He chuckled, his heart swelling with love for Briana and the little life growing within her. He gently rubbed her belly, his touch both tender and reverent. He leaned in, his lips meeting hers in a sweet, lingering kiss. It was a celebration of their love, their partnership, and the beautiful future they were creating together.

As their lips parted, he rested his forehead against hers, their breaths mingling in a shared moment of bliss. “I love

you, Briana,” he whispered, his voice filled with reverence and adoration. “And I love our little miracle growing inside you.”

Briana smiled, her eyes shimmering with tears of happiness. “I love you too, Quillin,” she said, her voice filled with warmth.

When she leaned forward, he kissed her again. The kiss was one of joy and love, though there was an undercurrent of passion, as ever. He couldn’t imagine ever getting used to the way his body responded to his mate, just like his heart was linked to hers forever.





About Juno

JUNO WELLS GREW UP on Florida's Space Coast, watching the shuttles take off from Cape Canaveral. When she hit college, her childhood fantasies about space travel turned highly romantic. Now her mind reels with space adventures of fantastic alien lords in distant galaxies, and the earth women they love.

Wells' stories explore the complex, sensual relationships between inhabitants of different star systems. There are always happy endings just as there is always a new world to explore.

Have a comment? Make first contact with Juno at authorjunowells@gmail.com.

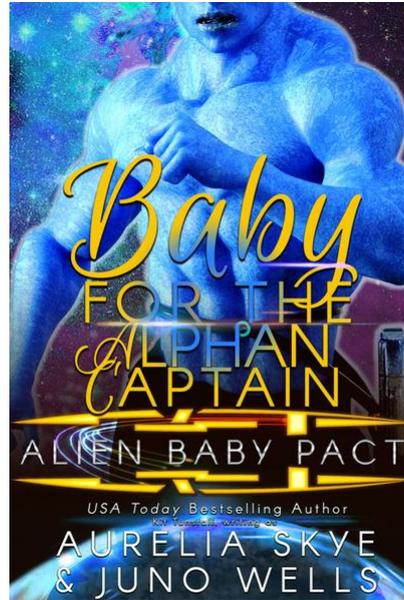


About Aurelia

AURELIA SKYE IS THE pen name *USA Today* Bestselling author Kit Tunstall uses when writing science fiction romance, paranormal romance, and paranormal women's fiction. It's simply a way to separate the myriad types of stories she writes so readers know what to expect with each "author."

[Website](#)

Did you love *Baby For The Mosaic Med Chief*? Then you should read *Baby For The Alphan Captain* by Aurelia Skye and Juno Wells!



A runaway proxy, a determined Alphan, and a searing claim that marks them both.

Five months ago, Pei Ling Xiang's life was turned upside down when Earth authorities broke into the bunker where her family had sheltered for the last eleven years, dragging her parents to prison and taking her and her sister to the Faction Embassy to be registered as proxies. When she learned she would be paired with an Alphan, she panicked and fled. If Brighton hadn't taken her in, she would have been in a desperate situation. Once he catches her, she settles in with Zafer and grows to care for him, but her family is still at risk.

Zafer Karr spent five months tracking his wayward proxy, and once he acquires her, he tasks himself with winning her trust and proving she's safe with him. He believes he's succeeded, and she weathers her first omegan heat without fear, so he's mystified when she disappears again. He won't let her go without a fight, because he loves his stubborn human and wants to make her his mate forever, not just a year.

Seven years ago, the Faction agreed to save Earth from the Vorathan invasion in exchange for Earth women giving them one year of proxy rights to act as a surrogate, since the aliens of the Faction faced a dwindling population. With the Vorathans feared throughout the galaxy as bloodthirsty, vicious marauders, the Earth's government agreed.

That doesn't mean the women did.

Sometimes, you want to read about the entire alien empire and all its myriad twists and turns, immersing yourself in hundreds of pages of intrigue. And sometimes, you want to skip the frills and get to the main event. Juno and Aurelia are pleased to bring you a series of short, steamy romances about untouched human women making babies with their truly alien mates.

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