



ALIEN ALPHA MATES BOOK ONE

**CRAVING**  
**THE ALIEN**  
**VAMPIRE**  
A SCI-FI ALIEN ROMANCE

**RO SINGH**

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**R O S I N G H**

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*For all the sunshine girls that fall for brooding,  
misunderstood, and monstrous males ...*

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# PLAYLIST

“Sirens” — Fleurie

“NFWMB” — Hozier

“Miserable Man” — David Kushner

“War of Hearts” — Ruelle

“Way Down We Go” — KALEO

“Power Over Me” — Dermot Kennedy

“I Want It All” — Cameron Grey

“Into It” — Chase Atlantic

“Arcade” — Duncan Laurence

“Home” — Edith Whiskers

“Grace” — Lewis Capaldi

“Infinity” — James Young

Till Forever Falls Apart — Ashe & FINNEAS

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Craving The Alien Vampire Book Playlist by rosinghwrites

# CHAPTER 1



# MAYA

**“F**uck you,” I spat at my captors.

The insect-like aliens were attempting to drag an unconscious female alien out of our cage.

“Leave her alone. She can’t even stand up.” I squared my shoulders and faced the two insectmen, despite my hunger and fatigue. The shorter one sparked his cattle prod thing, emitting an irritating buzz. I flinched, remembering the pain from the shock when I was first thrown into this prison two weeks ago.

“She’s a feisty one,” the trigger-happy insectman commented to the tall one.

He grinned, or what appeared to be a grin, with his mandibles. “She’ll fetch a decent price at the auction.”

Ignoring me, they moved to grab the other female alien again. I stepped between the pair, stopping them.

The tall insectman snarled. “Step aside, female.”

“No. Leave her alone. We need something to eat and drink,” I demanded. I clenched my hands together to keep them from shaking. They failed to bring food or water—something needed to be done. Since none of the other females would say anything, or even talk to me, I had to at least try. Without warning, the trigger-happy insectman backhanded me, throwing me hard against the wall. My head banged on the rough concrete, and I fell to the ground, my cheek throbbing. My whole body ached.

Gingerly, I touched the back of my head. *Ouch*. I pulled a bloody hand back. Quite suddenly, I became hyper aware of the chill on my back from the cold concrete and the damp, gross odor of the cell was overwhelming.

The insectman loomed over me. “You don’t make demands, female,” he snarled. He smelled like a rotting corpse.

He proceeded to kick me in the gut, his sharp claws digging into the soft flesh of my stomach. Oof. All the air whooshed out of my lungs. His grimy foot drove into my gut again. And a third time for good measure.

“Enough,” the tall one cut in, impatience souring his tone.

Despite my pain, I stared at the bastard who hurt me with fire ablaze in my eyes.

His beady black, venomous eyes reciprocated my stare. “You have no power. Remember that. We’ll be back for you.”

The two of them left, leaving the other female alien behind.

I groaned, checking my injuries. How is this my life right now? One day I was on Earth with my boyfriend, Samuel, at his family cottage, the next, I was abducted by these insectmen and thrown into a cell. I would do anything to be back at the lake, staring at the sunset instead of metal bars.

Ignoring my pain, I pulled myself over to the female. “Are you alright?”

She let out a pained moan.

“Her species needs sunlight to survive,” another female alien said in a raspy drawl from the cage across the hall from us. She had blue skin with tentacles growing from her head, like Medusa. I was shocked. It was the first time any other female had spoken to me. From snippets of conversation I’d gathered they didn’t recognize my species, so they were wary of me.

“There’s nothing you can do for her.” Medusa sighed.

She spoke to me again! I pulled myself up to sit against the wall.

“Do you know what he meant about an auction?” I asked. Hope bubbled up in my chest; maybe she would give me some answers.

She eyed me and scoffed. “You know what he meant.”

“No, I don’t.” I shook my head but stopped when the small movement sent shooting pain from the back of my skull to the base of my neck. “Before I was abducted, I didn’t know there was life beyond my planet. All I know is that I’m really far from home.”

Medusa frowned. “You’re not part of the Intergalactic Alliance?”

“The ... what?” I furrowed my brow. What was she talking about?

I glanced around at the other females exchanging uneasy glances, which didn’t bode well for me. I gulped.

She cleared her throat. “We’re being auctioned to the highest bidder. We were all sold or stolen. Some males want to fuck you, some want to claim you ... some want to eat you.”

My stomach dropped, skin crawling.

“E—eat?” I stuttered. She was joking, right?

Medusa shrugged her dainty shoulders. “Literally. Or drink your blood; some species do that. Y’know, there’s this one species that have these tentacles and they ... ” she went on, but my thoughts were racing a mile a minute.

Oh, God. Maybe I’d be bought by a good alien, someone who wanted me to be a maid or babysitter or something? But it wasn’t like I’d ever been lucky. My boyfriend—well, ex-boyfriend now—sold me out to aliens for technology for his company. I always fall for the wrong guy.

I drew my focus back to Medusa’s voice. “... your best chance is to get a male that doesn’t hurt you. But the males that come here aren’t good males.”

“Right.” I bit down on my lip. “So there’s nothing I can do?”

“Try and escape once you have your new owner.” She waved a hand. “That’s what I did, but I was snagged and landed right back here.”

Maybe it was better when they weren’t talking to me. I didn’t want to know all this. I ran my thumb over the bump behind my ear. I assumed that was my translator because I understood what everyone was saying as soon as I woke up. Some words didn’t translate, but I guessed those were words that didn’t have an Earth translation.

The clicking of mandibles sounded—the insectmen were coming back. I forced myself to my feet, gritting my teeth through the pain.

Without comment, they grabbed my upper arms and dragged me out of the cell. I struggled as they pulled me down the hallway, but their grip was too strong. They threw me in a room with two older women.

In a blur, I was hosed down, redressed, and beautified into whatever aliens found more appealing. They didn’t treat any of my wounds, but instead covered them up with makeup and who-knows-what. Alien shit. I stayed silent through it all, disconnected from my body.

Shortly after my makeover, the two insectmen came back and pulled me down a hallway.

The auctioneer’s voice rang out through the hall and seemed to reverberate against the ache in my head. “And the Flickbuhn female is sold to the Wefrun male in the back row for a whopping 500,000 credits! Highest auction this month.” Applause thundered.

I blinked, the loud noise pulling me back to the present. I struggled against the insectmen’s hold, but the two aliens held firm.

Without warning, they shoved me through a door and I stumbled, almost twisting my ankle in the high heels I was put in. At the last second, I managed to right myself.

Shit. Bright lights glared into my eyes and I raised a hand to shield them, seeing spots. I was on some sort of stage.

Glancing down at my body, I realized I'd been dressed in a small strappy bikini. Thin fabric flowed down from my breasts, covering my midriff. Feeling more than exposed, I moved one hand to cover my breasts, the other to my stomach.

I peered out at the hundreds of strange eyes all focused on me. I stood there, staring at the sea of alien men like a deer in the headlights. At least deer could run—I was stuck here.

“Next, we have an exotic female from the far reaches of the galaxy. One of a kind!” the auctioneer’s voice boomed as he addressed the crowd.

“Move forward, spin for us!” the auctioneer told me, his deep baritone playful.

Sending the auctioneer a venomous look of my own, I crossed my arms in defiance. I raised my chin, gazing at the masses of unfamiliar creatures of all shapes and sizes. Not creatures, people. Aliens.

The auctioneer ignored me and gave the people a dazzling smile. “The bidding begins at 10,000 credits!”

Within minutes, the number was up to 100,000. I forced myself to stand tall, analyzing my potential owners. I scanned the males but kept returning to the same male. His presence was magnetic, but he hadn’t bid for me once.

A slug-like alien continued upping the ante, offering more for me every other bid. A group of females surrounded him, collared and scantily clad. Ugh.

My price went up to 500,000.

The slug-like male raised his hand. “One million credits.”

The onlookers went silent. My knees buckled. One million?

Nonono ... who would outbid that? My chest tightened, and I couldn’t get in any air. Why couldn’t I breathe?

A lone hand lifted, his fingers tipped with razor-sharp claws. I followed his gray hand, down his muscled arm, to his chiselled face. It was the male I couldn't stop staring at. Why was I so drawn to him?

His gaze met mine, crimson eyes mesmerizing me—the red of his irises were so dark they almost appeared black. But it was his sinful voice that truly captivated me.

With a seductive smirk on his blood-red lips, he made his bid. “Five million credits.”

# CHAPTER 2

# TORIN

“**F**uck you,” I griped as we strolled into the auction house, flashing our forged credentials.

“Fuck me? In your dreams,” Killian’s mouth curled upwards. He never took anything seriously, even threats of bodily harm. “All I’m saying is that you’re a massive softie. You act all cold but look, you’re here helping out Cap with—”

“Quiet,” I commanded. I winced as a sharp pain ached at my temple. It must be from dealing with him.

Killian grumbled but followed me through the smoky auction house.

We couldn’t just discuss our mission to help the captain find information on his missing brother, Draug, out loud. Killian knew that. Cap was too recognizable to come here, so he asked me, a ghost. And Killian has never done anything to attract attention, so he was a fresh face that wouldn’t be flagged.

We walked with purpose; we were a clear foot taller than most males here and the size of our gait demanded space. The scum of the galaxy. It made my skin crawl being among them. I used to hunt them down. And that meant I knew how they thought.

Absently, I rubbed an ache near my abdomen. Maybe I ate something off? But it felt more like pain from a wound—I was well acquainted with those. Yet I hadn’t been hurt. I brushed it off and ordered two strong drinks from the Wefrun waitress. She passed over two tumblers of glowing green liquid.



I shoved one into Killian's hand and downed the other. He gaped at me. I raised a brow. Just because he couldn't hold his liquor didn't mean I couldn't. I needed it to get through tonight without vomiting.

The auctioneer called out the first sale.

I stalked to a seat at the back of the auction house, choosing one in the shadows. We didn't need to draw any attention.

Killian inclined his head. "How do we know who to bid on?"

"Intel says they've got an exotic one, whatever that means. We offer on her; she leads us to the same gang that got Draug," I said in a hushed voice.

I ordered another drink and sipped it as the night went on, welcoming the familiar burn down my throat.

Female after female was paraded across the stage and sold to the highest bidder.

The last female stumbled into the spotlight. I could only make out the barest details from so far a distance, so I pulled up her profile on my holo. I zoomed in, memorizing every detail from her warm, brown skin to her long, dark hair tied in a braid with a red ribbon.

She was like no being I'd ever seen—perhaps she was like the Rhodinians, but without wings, fangs, or claws. She was soft and defenseless.

I gripped the armrest of my chair, claws descending and ripping into the plush leather. My time in the military had honed my control but she tested my restraint. I wanted to sink my fangs into her neck and drink her sweet blood. But I fought against my base impulses—I only needed synthetic blood, not the real thing. I repeated that to myself.

Something about her called to me—unlocked some primal instinct. She stared out at the crowd with fire in her eyes, uncowed.

“Next up, we have an exotic female from the far reaches of the galaxy. One of a kind!” The auctioneer’s voice boomed.

I stiffened: this was the female. I smirked as I watched her refuse to comply with the auctioneer’s inane request to spin.

Killian gave me a sidelong glance, and I returned a slight nod in response.

The auction began. She tempted me like no other.

Of course, Anwir, a slimy drug lord, was bidding for her. He always had to have the best for his collection. Her price skyrocketed, as expected. Anwir heaved his lump of a hand up, signaling his bid. “One million credits.”

But that didn’t faze me. I knew what I had to do.

I raised a hand and ignored everyone, focusing on her. Focusing on her strength, her grace, her fire.

I wouldn’t let anyone else touch her. She was mine. I craved her blood, her touch, and her surrender to me.

“Five million credits.” I couldn’t help smirking.

“Five million credits?” the auctioneer repeated, his six eyes bulging out of his skull. “That’s—that’s unheard of!” he spluttered before composing himself.

I crossed my arms, waiting not-so-patiently for him to get on with it.

“Alright, last call.” The auctioneer cleared his throat. “Six million credits, anyone?”

Of course, nobody raised an appendage.

“Going once ... twice ... sold to the Sindy male!” the auctioneer called out. Her room number popped up on my holo screen, informing me of the details of my purchase. *Human*.

The room exploded with noise. Ignoring the masses, I stood, intent on finding my female and securing her. Killian was hot on my heels.

“Five million credits, Torin?” Killian cried out once we were out of earshot. “We don’t *have* five million credits ...

unless you've been hoarding a stash of money somewhere. You know what, you probably have been, but—”

“Not now,” I hissed. I had five million credits, but I wasn't going to give it to these leeches. I want her to be mine, so I will do what I have to do, damn the consequences.

After weaving through a crowd of overly eager winning bidders, we made it to her room. “Watch the door,” I told Killian before striding into the room to claim my female.

# CHAPTER 3

# MAYA

**T**he big alien male who won the bid stalked into my room. He towered over me, at least a foot taller than my five-foot-eight frame. I drank him in like the water I was denied, from his gray skin to his red tattoos to his ivory fangs. He wore low-slung leather pants with an open vest showcasing his bare chest and weapons draped across his back. His hair hung past his shoulders, silky white.

I couldn't help but step back, lowering my eyes as I covered the awful strappy bikini with my arms. Why did my captors have to dress me in this thing?

I gulped. He had such a commanding presence, so different than when he had been so far away.

He dropped his weapons to the floor with a resounding clang, and his nostrils flared as he stalked closer. I backed up, bumping into the metal wall behind me.

“Why are you bleeding?” he asked, muscled arms bracketing me against the wall. His crimson gaze darkened when he saw the gash above my eyebrow. He scanned the rest of my body, and I fought a blush.

“And you're bruised.” His voice was rough, like the rest of him. “Who did this to you? Tell me.”

I forced myself to square my shoulders and stare into his intimidating red eyes.

“Why do you care?” I snapped. “All you want me for is my blood—that's why you bought me, isn't it?”

This guy seemed like a vampire with his sharp fangs and scarlet eyes. He must've been the blood-drinker species Medusa had told me about.

“Believe me, I want much more than your blood.” His tone went gravelly. “I want to possess every inch of you.”

My head spun.

“Why?” I breathed out.

“Don't you feel what's between us?” His expression was serious as his eyes locked on me.

My chest warmed at his heated admission. He felt it too. I was inexplicably drawn to him, enthralled. I couldn't deny it.

Some thread bound us together here in this alien world and a part of me relished in the comfort.

“Yes,” I whispered. Slowly, I stood on my tippy toes and he bent closer. Fuck it. I wanted him. Without thinking I followed my instinct and captured the alien male's mouth with mine.

He froze with shock for a second before kissing me back with barely reined control. His tongue traced the seam of my lips. His broad palms lifted me up by my ass. I wasn't worried about his sharp claws. At some point, they'd retracted, leaving normal-ish fingers.

Without thinking, I wrapped my legs around him, his hard cock grinding against my core. I gasped against his lips, revelling in the feel of him.

My hands tangled themselves in his silky locks, and I held him like a lifeline.

His mouth left a trail of fire down my neck. He paused at my pulse, red eyes flashing up with some unreadable emotion. Was he going to bite me? Drink my blood like Medusa had said?

“I crave you, your taste, everything,” he all but growled.

I shivered at the desire in his voice.

Instead of sinking his fangs into my neck, he kissed the tender skin as his leather-covered cock stroked my clit until I was quivering. He adjusted until he hit the spot that made my body hum, all sensitive and wet.

“Your heart is racing, I can hear it. Just begging for me to take you over the edge,” he said, voice low and seductive.

He gripped my ass tighter as he held me against the wall. All I could do was moan as he thrust his hips forward and backward, hitting a perfect rhythm.

I came pathetically fast from only this dry humping. The orgasm ripped out of me as he slowed his thrusts. He groaned with pleasure, and I panted hard, face buried in his chest. My senses didn't register the roughness of the wall against my back until I came down from my high.

Did he ... I peered up at him with big eyes.

“I've never come in my pants before, but there's a first time for everything,” he admitted, blood-red lips curled upwards in a satisfied smile.

Something akin to pride surged in my breast. I liked that I was the one to bring him satisfaction.

He brushed back a strand of my hair. “I'm Torin. How do you prefer to be addressed?”

My gaze narrowed on him. “Why?”

Torin's mouth flattened. “Can you ever give me a straight answer?”

I raised a single brow.

He smirked. “You know what name to call out when I make you come, and I'd like the same courtesy.”

I blushed all the way down to my toes. “Maya.”

“Maya.” My name left his lips in a delicious purr. I shivered, every nerve ending alive.

“Do you want more?” His voice was rough and hoarse, pupils blown out. Torin made me feel safe, protected.

“Yes, please,” I begged, aching for more. So what if he bought me at an alien auction? If I could find some kind of pleasure here in this foreign place, I’d take it.

Torin ripped away my strappy bikini, the fabric tearing.

I was already wet and slippery and happily welcomed the blunt pressure of his finger against my slit. I lost my breath as I adjusted to his singular, long, thick digit.

Torin proceeded to pump two fingers into my cunt. A third finger followed, filling and stretching me in an achingly incredible way. I moaned his name over and over as his hand fucked me.

His thumb hooked to find my clit. Bliss struck as his thumb rubbed circles around it, sending me over the edge. I went rigid as my core squeezed his fingers in another orgasm.

Mid-orgasm, Torin bit my neck, without breaking the skin, catapulting me into a mind-blowingly amazing orgasm, coming harder than I ever had. I whined and whimpered as ecstasy flooded my system.

Still boneless from my orgasm, I slumped against him, his hard body keeping me up. Torin lapped at his bite on my neck, soothing my skin; I was a puddle in his arms.

Torin pulled the red ribbon off the end of my hair, freeing my dark waves. He pocketed the ribbon, keeping it, but I felt too good to care.

His head dipped down, lips brushing my ear. “Now, tell me—who did this to you?”

“One of my captors. A short, insect-looking male,” I breathed out, still blissed out from the orgasms. “They tried to drag this lady out of the cage for an auction, but she was so weak that she couldn’t stand. I told them to fuck off. They didn’t like that.” I shrugged.

Torin pulled away, redressing and strapping his weapons back on. I grabbed a random pair of pants from the room and tugged them on. Better than the bikini bottoms.

“Where are you going?” I asked, wary.



“To kill the male that touched you. I’ll start by cutting off his hands. Come with me.” He held out his hand, his scarlet lips curled upwards into a dark, sexy grin. Torin waited with his hand outstretched.

# CHAPTER 4

# MAYA

I took his proffered hand and followed him out the door but stopped short. There was a demon leaning against the wall outside. I barely held back a gasp. He had motherfucking horns sprouting out of his skull!

Whereas Torin had slate skin with red tattoos, this man, or alien, had crimson skin with obsidian tattoos. Like Torin, he only wore leather pants. Did none of these men own shirts? Not that I was complaining about Torin's lack of a shirt. It showed off his washboard abs. But this alien was nearly identical to a devil, a thing of nightmares.

I couldn't help but flinch back from him.

He gave me an easygoing smile like he was accustomed to that reaction.

"Greetings." He bowed his head.

"Um, hi," I squeaked back, half hiding behind Torin. But that seemed pretty silly, considering Torin was comfortable around this guy. So I eased out from behind him.

Steeling my nerves, I stretched out my hand. "Sorry, I was rude. I'm Maya. What's your name?"

"Killian." He didn't move to take my hand. I held it out, waiting. Killian glanced at Torin, brow furrowed.

"Do you not shake hands? It's a handshake. Back home, we shake hands when we meet ... each other ..." I trailed off at their bafflement.

Killian stared at me with pitch-black eyes. “Everyone in the Intergalactic Alliance inclines their head in greeting. Are you saying your species isn’t a part of the Intergalactic Alliance? I don’t want to think about the implications of that because it means—” he rambled.

“Shake my hand already,” I cut in, not understanding a lick of what he was telling me. I still held my hand out, waiting. My arm was starting to get tired.

“You actually ... touch in greeting?” Killian said, hesitant.

“No, I’m holding out my hand for fun,” I deadpanned, getting a coarse chuckle from him.

He reached out and took my hand, clasping it like I was a porcelain doll. I gripped back and pumped his hand up and down, shaking it. I had a tight grip but was mindful of his sharp claws. His gaze widened. I let go.

“There you go, a human handshake.” I gave him a small smile. His lips curled upwards in return.

“I never got one of these hy-oo-men handshakes,” Torin rumbled beside me, frowning. Was the guy capable of smiling? I’d make it my mission to get a grin out of him.

“We were already *touching* when I introduced myself,” I smirked, remembering our compromising position. I blinked up at him. “Or do you not remember?”

He stepped closer, eyes heated. “How could I forget?”

Killian’s gaze widened as he examined us, nostrils flaring. I froze. Could he ... smell what we had done? No, he couldn’t, right?

“Did you two—nope, you know what, I don’t want to know.” Killian rubbed a hand down his face. “I hope you have a plan, Torin.”

Torin nodded, focusing again. “Killian, make sure nobody touches her.”

He nodded. “You have my word.”

Something solemn passed between the two before they went off down the corridor. I scrambled to keep up.

Killian stopped. “He’s in here. I found the layout while you guys were doing ... whatever you were doing. Gimme a sec, and we’ll be in.” He knelt next to the control pad by the door and pulled out a gadget that made the door whoosh open.

Torin stormed into the room. He stalked forward, cornering the lone insectman. It was the short, trigger-happy alien from earlier who slapped and kicked me.

The insectman stumbled back, eyes wide and mandibles clacking.

Now, this was a nice ass room. Insectman got this while we got a dank cell? The room had no metal prison bars and was much more luxurious with a plush bed, ample food, and a fully stocked bar. The door slid shut behind us, Killian bringing up the rear.

The insectman squared his shoulders, looking up at Torin.

“Where is Draug?” Torin growled. “We know you captured him.”

“The wolfman?” The insectman laughed, a high and deranged sound. “You’ll never find him.”

“I won’t need to find him because you’re going to tell me exactly where he is.” Torin grabbed him by the neck and shoved him up against the wall in one smooth maneuver.

The insectman gurgled.

“Feeling more talkative now?” Torin asked.

The insectman nodded desperately. Torin let him fall to the ground, gasping for air.

“He’s on the Gladiatorial Circuit.” The insectman gasped, mandibles gaping like a fish out of water. “The Wolf’s skilled at it too, the bastard. Makes my father a lot of money. He was a sound investment.” He made his way to his feet, grinning like a little dipshit.

“He is a person.” Torin gritted out. “Where is he?”

“I told you. He’s on the Gladiatorial Circuit.” He shrugged, mandibles clicking. “Location changes every week. Well, maybe not every week. They change it up to stay away from people like you.”

Torin turned to face me, eyes icy cold and flinty. “Is he the one who hurt you?”

Before I could reply, the worm, with no sense of self-preservation, replied. “Who, your bitch?” The insectman sneered. In a flash, he pulled out his cattle prod. I flinched back.

“Yeah, I touched her.” He stepped towards me. “Should’ve had a taste, too. Such a—”

The next thing I knew, the insectman’s head rolled on the floor, blood spurting. Torin fucking decapitated the insectman with one of his battle axes. Whoa. Inky, sludgy blood oozed from the stump of his neck.

I stumbled backwards, and Killian steadied me.

Torin killed this male. He was violent. He could hurt and betray me, too, like Samuel had. I couldn’t trust my instincts. He was too aggressive and dangerous for me. All I wanted, all I needed, was to go home.

Killian’s wrist-watch-thing beeped, and he went to fiddle with the door’s keypad. He glanced over his shoulder at Torin. “We’ve got company, boss.”

The doors blasted open, and a group of insectmen came in, led by the tall insectman from earlier and an older, hunched and decrepit looking one.

“Brother!” the tall one cried, running over to the headless body.

The older one stayed where he was, folding his hand-claws over each other as he took in the scene before him. Torin moved in front of me.

The older insectman made a tsking noise with his mandibles. “You bought the female; you owned her—she was

your property. Yet now you murdered my son, making the auction deal null and void. Hand her over.”

Torin stared the male down. “She’s not my property. She’s my wife.”

His what?

# CHAPTER 5



# TORIN

“Your wife?” Dookur echoed, shock contorting his features. He showed more emotion than when he saw his younger son lying dead. When he stepped towards Maya, a bloodlust overtook me—one I hadn’t felt since my youth. But I couldn’t dwell on that now.

I walked past them as they stood confused and motionless.

Dookur’s eldest son, Dookix, sprung up before me from his spot beside his dead brother, stopping us. He lowered his face to Maya’s. “You bitch, you did this somehow!”

I froze, only just holding back my fury as I moved Maya further behind me. “Careful how you speak to my wife, Dookix. Disrespect my wife like that again, and it’ll be the last thing you do.”

“Father, you can’t allow them to live!” Dookix yelled, mandibles clacking. “They killed—”

“Silence.” Dookur drew out the word, waving a hand. “Let them pass.”

Dookix spluttered. “But Father—”

“Do not disobey me, Dookix.” Dookur sent Dookix a cutting glare. And then his eyes took on a calculating look. “Sindyr males mate only once for life. They only take one wife. While he still draws breath, he has rights to her. Those are the Alliance’s rules.”

That wasn’t how I saw the sacred act of taking a mate, taking a wife, but I knew it was the only way they would

permit us to leave unscathed and without payment.

Dookix reluctantly stepped aside.

The three of us passed, Killian leading and me bringing up the rear behind Maya.

“I’ll see you soon, Torin Carver,” Dookur hissed, ever an evil brute of a male.

I didn’t acknowledge his statement.

But, as we walked the halls of the auction house, out to our stolen ship, one question haunted me ... how did he know my true name?

I couldn’t think about it now because Maya was raining questions down on me as soon as Killian opened the door to the craft.

“Who is Draug? Why did you kill that guy? Who are they? And what do you mean that I’m your wife?” She threw her hands in the air, making a scene when we needed to salvage a discreet exit.

“Come onto the ship.” I motioned for her to join me and Killian. She was close enough that I could still breathe in her intoxicating scent. Again, I fought the impulse I’d never had before—to mark her and sink my fangs into her neck. To taste her blood.

I clenched my fists and tried to hold my breath instead. That had to be easier than the torment of her scent.

“No.” Maya crossed her arms, frowning. Her gaze fell to the ground. “I—I can’t trust you.”

I stiffened. Something in me ached at her statement, but she was correct: she couldn’t trust me. I wasn’t worthy of anyone’s trust, but right now I was all she had.

“Come, you’re hurt and need food—you’re malnourished. I’ll answer your questions after you eat.” I turned and walked farther into the craft, hoping she would agree. And I couldn’t bear to see her turn away. How could I already care for her so much?

Her soft footfalls followed me as the ship's door whooshed shut behind her. My shoulders slumped in relief, but I straightened them before Maya or Killian noticed. The craft wasn't much to look at, pretty barebones, but it fit our cover and got us from point A to B.

Forcing my muscles to relax, I continued to the room I'd claimed and Maya followed. I trusted Killian to navigate us back to the others. He merely had to dock this stolen shuttle craft on our main ship. Moving on autopilot, I grabbed the med kit and rummaged through it.

"You'll need a more in-depth scan later, but I only have this handheld scanner." I held it up to her. "May I scan you?" I requested. Don't think about her scent, Torin. Or the blood coursing through her veins.

She shrunk back. "Is it going to hurt?"

"What—no," I spluttered. Had she never had a scan before? Then, it hit me. "I forgot that you're not part of the Intergalactic Alliance. This isn't normal for you. My apologies."

"It's alright, scan me." She bit her lip as I scanned her. "I didn't know aliens existed until they abducted me two weeks ago."

I stared at her, gobsmacked. "Your kind believed you were the only sentient beings in the universe?"

"Erm, well, uh ... " she trailed off, looking anywhere but me. "What does the scanner thing say?"

I checked the screen. "You're dehydrated and malnourished, as I suspected, but no lasting damage. A *numbda* bandage should work for the cuts on your head and the bruising on your abdomen. The scan also tells me what food is acceptable for your physiology."

"I'm going to disinfect your wounds," I continued as I brushed back the hair that had slipped past her ears. The mere brush of her skin sent shivers down my spine. She sucked in a sharp breath at my touch. We both ignored it and went on. "Administering the disinfectant now."

Maya sat still. “Hm, that doesn’t sting.”

“Sting? Why would it—” I cut myself off. “Right. Not from the Alliance. Your planet is rather primitive, then.”

She pricked at that, sniffing. “We do well enough.”

I undoubtedly put my foot in that one. I cleared my throat. “Disinfected and *numbda* applied. *Numbda* is a bandage that speeds the healing process,” I made sure to explain myself this time. I couldn’t know what she did and didn’t have available on her home planet. If her disinfectant still stung, I doubted they’d developed *numbda* yet.

She lifted the gauzy fabric that shrouded her midsection.

I sucked in a sharp breath. Her torso was covered with mottled red bruises with bluish-purple and black sections. I remembered earlier—the scent of the blood on her temple from where her captors had hurt her both tempted and angered me. Stars, I wished I hadn’t already killed that male so I could kill him all over again.

She must’ve seen my murderous expression because she dropped the cloth, hiding the bruises away. “It looks worse than it feels. It’s—it’s not so bad. I’ve had worse.”

“You’ve had worse?” Was that supposed to be comforting? I curled my hands into fists, wanting to smash the face of the male who did “worse.” She was a soft, defenseless female—who would hurt her?

“Oh, not like that. I have three older brothers. I can roughhouse better than all of them. I’m great at wrestling, and I’ve gotten my fair share of bruises.” She gave me a bright smile that lit up her whole face. How was she still so positive after going through so much? This human was a complete mystery to me.

“Your brothers injure you?” What kind of planet was she from? I bit back a growl. The males in her family should have protected her.

She groaned. “Not like that. Like, in a playful way, you know?”

Hm, alright. “Like sparring?”

“Yeah, sure, that.”

I got the sense she was trying to appease me. Why would she spar with her siblings? She only left me with more questions about her culture.

A gurgling noise pricked my ears. I narrowed my gaze on her. What was that? Did it come from her stomach? Did she have a parasite?

# CHAPTER 6

# TORIN

**T**he gurgle rumbled again. My mind went to worst-case scenarios. We weren't equipped for a sentient parasite. Oh, Stars—

“I'm hungry!” Maya blurted out. “My stomach grumbles when it's hungry. When I'm hungry,” she clarified.

My muscles uncoiled. I nodded. At least something made sense. Gingerly, I placed a small *numbda* patch across her temple and went to the fabricator. My heart rate slowed from the scare.

“Any preferences?” I asked.

“Whatever the scanner suggested, please.” She sat at the table in the room, taking in its emptiness. “No dietary requirements. I'd kill for some roti right now, though.”

“I don't have roe-tee in my database, apologies. I can try to make it when you're not hungry.” I don't know what possessed me to offer that—everyone knew I was shit at anything other than the fabricator. I shook my head and refocused. “The scanner recommended a balance of protein, vegetables, and carbs. This should work well.”

I brought her over a *vobu* sirloin with smashed *breha* and steamed *trefil*.

Her eyes lit up! “Steak, mashed potatoes, and asparagus! I could kiss you right now!”

I turned away, back to the fabricator, pretending to clean the self-cleaning machine. She could kizz me? What was that?

From her tone, she meant it positively.

“This is amazing, Torin. Thank you! Different, but delicious.” She moaned, and I was glad I was still facing the fabricator because that moan made my cock stiffen. Stars, between her moans and delectable scent, who could blame me?

“You’re most welcome.” My voice came out strained.

Maya let out another sinful moan as she ate. My cock hardened further if that was possible. I had to admit, this was the best torture I’d ever felt.

“Aren’t you hungry too?” she asked around a mouthful of *vobu*.

I shifted. Yes, I was. “No,” I replied instead. Consuming blood made other species uncomfortable.

She set her fork down, eyeing me. “I already know you drink blood.”

I turned back to her, surprised and hopeful. “You also have people who consume blood on your planet?”

“Oh, no.” She shook her head. “We have stories about it, though.”

I frowned. “Stories?”

“You know, make-believe.” She speared another piece of steaming *vobu*.

I gave her a side-long glance. “Interesting.”

Some part of me hoped she was like me and needed to consume blood as well. Another part just hoped she’d accept that aspect of me. I blew out a breath, deflating. Who was I kidding—she’d never accept me.

“So go for it.” She waved a hand and leaned toward me. “I’m curious.”

I didn’t bother getting the blood. It’d freak her out. It’d already happened enough times; I didn’t want to see that fear on her sweet face.



She pursed her lips, tilting her head to the side. “Can you shapeshift into a bat?”

“A bat?” I frowned. I didn’t know what that was.

“A flying animal with wings. It’s small and black.” She held her arms out, showing the animal’s size. She had such odd questions.

I shook my head. “No, Sindyrs can’t shapeshift into anything. We only drink animal blood for sustenance. Sometimes we drink our partner’s blood, during intercourse to enhance the experience. For pleasure.”

“Do you want to drink my blood?” she asked, feigning nonchalance.

Absolutely, I wanted to. I smirked. “Only if you want me to.”

She chewed her bottom lip, looking at me through her eyelashes. “If you bit me, would I turn into a vampi—I mean, need to drink blood too?”

I frowned again. “No, you need to be born Sinyr. You can’t turn into another species.” How did her species come up with such stories?

“Okay.” She pursed her lips. Was she considering letting me bite her? I hadn’t let myself dream about that; it was too outlandish. Even others in the Alliance, people who knew of the Sinyr species, were wary of us.

“Can you see yourself in mirrors?” She waved her fork around.

I paused, frowning. “Yes. Can you not?”

Concern blossomed in my chest. How could she not see herself in mirrors? I’d have to get Lorian to check her vision.

She snickered. “Of course, I can! I wondered if any myths I knew about vampires applied to you. I guess not.”

I tried to think of traits of my species. “All Sinyr are allergic to *geortic* root? Is that one of your stories?”

She brightened. “Kind of! Vampires hate garlic. In stories, humans would wear it to ward them off.”

“Wearing *geortic* root would kill me,” I said dryly.

“I’ll be sure not to do that.” She laughed again, the sound light and twinkling. “Go get your blood, don’t let my interrogation stop you. Do you drink blood out of a fancy goblet or something?” She ate more of her food.

I cracked a smile, shaking my head no. I turned back to the fabricator and had it make me a bag of blood. “A goblet wouldn’t work. We don’t drink it. The blood is siphoned in through my fangs. It’s best to bite down,” I explained, letting my fangs descend lower.

The fabricator chimed and opened. I grabbed the sack and returned to the table.

She watched in rapt fascination as I bit into the pouch, draining the blood. I kept my eyes on her the entire time, captivated by her dark brown eyes and counting the flecks of gold in them.

She squirmed in her seat. Fuck! I shouldn’t have done that. I cursed myself. I knew she’d be uneasy.

Her cheeks flushed as well. Hm. I paused, inhaling her unique scent that I’d smelled once before.

I curled my lips into a smirk. She wasn’t uncomfortable—she was aroused.

Maya’s gaze widened. “Do you smell me?”

I didn’t have to reply.

“Oh my God and that’s what Killian did earlier! He smelled what we did!” She wiped a hand down her face. “Fine, I’ll fess up. Watching you turned me on. So sue me, I found it hot, okay?”

“I admit that your display while eating was arousing as well. Your moans tested my restraint.”

“My what?” She covered her face with her palms as the realization dawned on her. “I haven’t had edible food in two

weeks because all the insectmen would feed us was this gross-ass mush that tasted like old, chewed gum, and so when you gave me that, it tasted so delicious—”

“Don’t be embarrassed.” I set a hand on her arm, calming her. “We both did the same thing.”

She pulled her hands away from her face. Alarm shot through me. Her face had changed color!

I rushed to her side, kneeling next to her. “Are you alright? Are you ill? Are you dying?” All my panic from before came crashing back. I couldn’t lose her; I just found her!

She grew more and more confused with each question.

“Your cheeks, they’re red,” I said, slowing my speech. Maybe this illness was affecting her brain? “That can’t be good. Was it the food? Can hy-oo-mens not digest it? Are you allergic?” I drew in air to yell for Killian. I was desperate enough to ask him for help.

“Wait, wait!” Maya grabbed my shoulders, stopping me. “I’m not sick. When I get embarrassed, my cheeks turn rosy. It’s normal, I swear.”

“Why have they not returned to normal yet?” I was skeptical. Did she want to avoid medical? Some of my soldiers had refused medical help when they had grievous injuries.

“Because now I’m mortified that you thought I was going to die!” Maya threw up her hands. “I’m not dying, you’re not dying, and we’re both well-fed. Now—it’s time for you to answer my questions.”

But I couldn’t trust my own judgement—I knew that. I failed before at protecting my old team; how could I ever protect her from all the dangers of the galaxy? I didn’t want to fail Maya. I couldn’t fail her.

I cleared my throat, past the lump that had formed there. “Draug is my captain’s brother. We believe the same males that took you, took him. And we confirmed that when Dookur’s dead son told us that Draug’s been forced into the Gladiator Circuit. I was at the auction to gather intel. By bidding on you, that gave me access to Dookur. I killed that

male because he touched you. And I told them you were my wife to get you out of there—it was the only valid claim on you I could make.”

She paused, digesting everything. “What do you mean, ‘valid?’”

“They could all scent me on you and vice versa. My words made them believe you were my wife.” I frowned. We’d have to legalize the marriage to keep her away from them.

“You mean everyone has that sense of smell?” She blinked at me.

I nodded. “Most males, yes.”

“Most males,” she echoed. “And ... you can only take one wife? That was what he said, right?”

“Correct. But you only need to stay with me long enough for Dookur and Dookix to forget about you—until you’re safe.”

“You’d do that for me? You’d give up a chance at having a real wife?” She peered up at me, eyes round.

Of course, I would. Some emotion choked my throat. “I have to—to use the fresher,” I mumbled.

I stumbled in, shutting the door. I took the opportunity to clean up the mess in my trousers from earlier. Fuck, that was embarrassing.

I scrubbed a hand over my face. God, Maya tempted me. Tempted me for more. But she was so bright, so pure, so light. I couldn’t taint that.

I didn’t deserve forgiveness or happiness, only punishment. I gripped the cold sink in the fresher, bending the metal. I didn’t have feelings for her. This was a passing infatuation. I was too set in my ways and I liked being alone.

“Torin?” Maya called out with a tremor in her voice. “Who are these people?”

I rushed out to her.

# CHAPTER 7

# MAYA

**H**ow could Torin give up the chance of having a real wife, at real love, for me? My mind spun as I ate the rest of the meal he prepared for me. It tasted like sawdust in my mouth now. At the same time, I warred with the thought that the only reason Torin saved me from the auction was to gather intel. But it was for a good reason—to help save his teammate.

The door opened with a whoosh, and two men, er, aliens, strolled in.

My chest tightened. I stood, gripping my knife and fork. I backed up away from them until my back hit the wall. I held out the cutlery in front of me. They wouldn't be taking me anywhere.

The male with golden eyes spoke first. His tone was subdued and soft like he was calming a spooked animal. "Be calm, female. We mean you no harm."

"That's something someone who meant me harm said!" I darted a glance over at the door Torin had gone into. "Torin!" I called, my voice shrill. "Who are these people?"

Who could blame me? There were two strange, imposing males here. What if they were working with the insectmen? The golden-eyed male was unnaturally pretty, his features almost wolf-like. The other alien was more machine than male. They could squash me like a bug. What was I gonna do with a flimsy knife and fork?

Torin burst out of the washroom, or what I assumed was the washroom. His red eyes landed on the males, and all tension left his frame.

Killian poked his head into the room, deciding to make an appearance. “What’s all the commotion?” he asked.

Torin seemed to grasp the situation first. I knew Torin and Killian trusted these males from their body language, but my body wouldn’t move out of fight mode.

“They are a part of my crew. We docked this cruiser on our primary ship. You’re safe,” Torin said as he approached me. He stood in front of me, filling my view. “Can you give me the cutlery, Maya?”

I forced my fingers to unclench, dropping the knife and fork into his waiting hands.

“Sincere apologies for startling you, ma’am,” the metal male piped up.

The ma’am jolted me out of my fear. I snorted. “I’m no, ma’am. If anything, I’m a miss.”

“Miss,” he amended, with a serious tone.

I couldn’t help the giggle that bubbled out of my throat. My giggles turned into full-on belly laughs. I doubled over. How was this my life right now? Kidnapped by extraterrestrials, sold to another alien who I let finger me, and now I was surrounded by a bunch of hot otherworldly males with impeccable manners who called me ma’am. What was life?

“Are you good?” Killian glanced at me. I was gasping for air between howls of laughter.

“Is she good?” he asked Torin when I didn’t reply. Torin shrugged his broad shoulders.

“Sorry,” I gasped out. “This is all so weird.”

“Believe me, you were not who we were expecting either,” the golden-eyed male commented, eyeing me up and down.

Torin opened his mouth to explain, but the other male held up a hand. “Killian already filled us in.”

“So you know we must get married as soon as possible?” Torin crossed his arms. “Can we stop planetside to find an officiant?”

“No, and no.” He shook his head. “As your captain, I have to ask ... is getting married the best idea? Yes, you’ll keep her safe, but you—”

“She will be safe. That is what is important. And, respectfully, you are my captain. My marriage is my personal decision. Our decision.” Torin stepped beside me.

The captain didn’t look happy, but he said nothing else. I hated using Torin for protection, but I needed to. I was in a foreign place with foreign customs, and it seemed like marrying Torin would be my best option until I could return to Earth.

“I’m certified by the Intergalactic Alliance to officiate marriages,” the metal male offered.

“Thank you. We’re all here now; should we do it?” Torin asked me.

“Sure?” I nodded, even if my voice was unsteady. I always imagined a white dress and rings but this, whatever this was, would have to do.

The captain sighed. “Let’s at least go to the cockpit instead of this junker if you’re certain you want to do this.”

“I’m sure.” Torin didn’t hesitate.

“We’re sure,” I added. In the spur of the moment, I grabbed Torin’s hand, threading my fingers through his.

Surprised, his red eyes flickered down at me, but he didn’t say anything.

“Then let’s get this marriage started,” Killian smiled, strolling out. We all streamed out of the shuttle, entering the hangar of a new, bigger ship. A lot bigger. Wow.



Before I knew it, we were in the giant cockpit with a gorgeous view of space.

I gaped at all the high-tech panels and equipment, but the real showstopper was the view of motherfucking outer space!

We passed a bright purple planet with blue land masses. A field of orange, shiny asteroids floated past. Stars twinkled in the distance.

“I’ve—I’ve never seen space.” I gawked.

My chest tightened. The vastness of space was so foreign and overwhelming but also wondrous. I pressed my hand up against the smooth glass, staring out. So amazing.

But I snapped myself out of it. We had shit to do.

I turned to the cyborg male, who seemed to be the wedding expert. “What do we have to do?”

“In traditional Sindy culture, the bride is kidnapped by potential suitors until the final suitor fights off the rest,” he paused. “To the death.”

I paled. “We don’t need to do that ... right?”

“No,” Torin cut in. “That’s from ages ago. We just have to sign some forms.”

Right. I could do that.

“I’ll pull them up now.” The cyborg went over to the computer.

“What’s your name?” I asked him, fiddling with my odd outfit of stolen black pants and the bikini top with the gauzy tankini part. “I feel like I should know the name of the guy who marries us.”

“Lorian, ma’a—miss,” the cyborg said with a gentle smile, bowing his head.

“I’m Drax,” the golden-eyed male said from his spot against the wall with his arms crossed, tilting his head like a whole millimetre. “But most people call me Cap.”

“I’m Maya.” I inclined my head as well. At least I knew one alien custom. No handshakes, only head tilts.

“What’s your full name for the registry?” Lorian didn’t look up from the computer, moving a mile a minute.

I cleared my throat. “Maya Narine.” I turned to Torin. “Would it be alright if I kept my last name?”

“Keep your last name?” His brow furrowed.

Oh. I guess not. I shrugged. “It’s alright. I can take yours.”

Torin shook his head. “What do you mean, take mine?”

“Isn’t that what you want? On Earth, some women take the man’s last name. That’s usually the default, I guess. It’s fine.” I had always wished to take my husband’s last name, but I wanted to take his name out of love, not duty.

“I would never ask you to change your name,” Torin seemed offended. All the other males appeared perplexed. “It’s your identity.” He made it seem like that was obvious.

“Oh, okay. Cool, thanks.” I stared down at the floor.

“You don’t have to thank me for that.” Torin’s voice was gruff.

“All you must do is sign right here.” Lorian held up a clear tablet and pen.

Torin signed it, his giant gray hand enveloping the pen.

I fumbled with the stylus and hardly remembered my own signature but got the scribble out.

“Your marriage is now official in the Intergalactic Database. You’re now a citizen of the Intergalactic Alliance and all the protections that affords you, including protection from being sold at auction.” Lorin set down the device. “Congratulations.”

Killian came up and slung his arms over our shoulders. “Congrats to the happy couple!”

Torin shoved him off and Killian let go, laughing good-naturedly.

When they started talking amongst themselves, I leaned toward Torin. He lowered his head, and I brushed his white, soft hair away from his ear.

Fighting a blush, I whispered. “So, do we need to ... consummate the marriage?”

# CHAPTER 8

# MAYA

All the other males went quiet after my question.

Crap! If they all had super smell, they probably all had super hearing too. Shit on a stick.

Drax pushed off the wall. “I’ll go research Maya’s species, see if any of my contacts know how she was taken. Because the goal’s to get her back home, right Torin?”

Torin straightened. “Yes, sir.”

Drax left, taking his rather dark cloud of a presence with him.

“I need to go, uh, count inventory and recalibrate the, erm, um, my appendage.” Lorain stuttered as he backed out of the room, clearly lying. His mechanical arm seemed to work just fine as he slammed the button to open the door.

Killian laughed, the full sound echoing in the cockpit. He didn’t try to lie. “You didn’t ask my opinion, but if you’re married, you might as well enjoy the benefits.” Killian wiggled his eyebrows.

“You’re right: we didn’t ask for your opinion.” Torin’s voice was dry.

I mean, Killian wasn’t wrong. Torin and I had chemistry. What was a little sex with a fake marriage?

“Have fun,” Killian said with a two-fingered salute, whistling as he walked down the hallway.

I rocked back on my heels. Wowza. I knew how to clear a room.

“Well, now that we scared everyone off, do we have to consummate the marriage?” I asked again, scratching the back of my neck.

“No, of course not. We don’t need to.” Torin stepped closer, filling my senses with his unique spicy scent. His red eyes consumed me. “We never have to do anything we don’t want to do.”

A mixture of disappointment and happiness swirled in me. Maybe I kinda wanted an excuse to jump Torin’s bones. He was one fine specimen of a man, er, alien.

But he was dangerous and I couldn’t forget that. He killed a person without hesitation. A little voice on my shoulder piped up, saying he did kill him for you, but I ignored it. I was so gullible with Samuel—I believed whatever anyone told me. I couldn’t be so naive. Even though my gut said to trust Torin, I couldn’t rely on my instincts. I had to use my brain.

My brain said he was helping me with this whole fake marriage thing. My brain also noted that a little pleasure wouldn’t hurt anybody as long as we didn’t get any feelings involved. I could do that.

“What if ... ” I trailed off.

“What if what?” Torin raised a brow.

I blurted it out. “What if I wanted to? Have sex, I mean. Do—do you want to?” He found me attractive, yeah? In fact, I was ninety-nine percent sure he did from his reaction earlier.

“That’s not even a question. Of course, I want you.” Torin’s gaze was searing hot. I knew he wasn’t lying. “But I’m dangerous. I’m not a good male; you can’t trust me. I can’t pull you into my world. And now ... I’ve married you—I’ve doomed you.” He backed away, hands fisted at his sides.

How had marrying him doomed me? We only got married to protect me. Did Torin think that me being with him would put me in danger? That couldn’t be true. I was safest with him.

I stepped closer, a hair's breadth away from him. I tilted my chin up to meet his eyes. "No, you saved me. My captors can't get me now. That's because of you."

"You saved me," I repeated, voice soft. "Can I kiss you?"

"You can do whatever you want to me," his reply was immediate, his voice hoarse.

I bring my hand up to brush his cheek, taking my sweet time this go around. Savoring the moment.

I tucked a stray strand of Torin's white, silky hair in his face behind his ear. Pushing to my tiptoes, I leaned in, pressing my lips to his in a tentative kiss.

He yanked me closer, moulding my body against the hard planes of his. I twined my arms around his neck.

Torin's big hands moved to grip my hips and lifted me onto someone's desk. I gasped against his mouth.

His lips parted, inviting me in. I took the invitation and eagerly slipped my tongue in, teasing every corner as he stayed still, mindful of his dangerous fangs. Torin's tongue flicked mine, and I couldn't help but imagine it flicking somewhere else. Somewhere wet and warm and currently empty.

My core clenched around nothing, greedy. I moaned and dragged my tongue down one of his fangs, careful of the razor-sharp tip. He let out a sinful groan that shot right to my clit.

I squirmed, rubbing myself against him. His fangs retracted, and he bit down on my lower lip, eyes hot and heavy.

Abandoning my lips for other conquests, he began to leave a trail of hot kisses, pressing his nose against the vein in my throat. I shuddered, moaning as each touch ignited nerve endings I didn't know I had.

Some primal part of me wanted him to sink his fangs into me, despite not knowing what his bite would do.

Our lips found one another again in a bruising embrace. I dug my nails into his head, and he gripped my hips harder.

I pulled back for air, breaths coming in ragged gasps.

Torin panted along with me, desire burning in his eyes. “What is this mouth mating called?”

“Mouth mating?” I repeated, openly blinking at him. “Like when our mouths touch?” I clarified.

“Yes.” He nodded.

“Humans call it kissing.” I played with the locks at the base of his neck, still intertwined with him.

“Kizzing,” he tested out the word, rolling it around on his tongue. “I like this kizzing.”

“I like it too, husband.” I tried out the new word. It felt right.

But my word made Torin step back. My arms fell to my sides. I hopped off the desk, still buzzing with arousal.

He cleared his throat, rubbing his palms on his pants. “Are you hungry? There’s a fabricator in here. The scanner said your physiology likes confectionery food—maybe dessert?”

“Uh, sure.” I felt whiplash from the sudden subject change. “I have a sweet tooth.”

Torin pressed some buttons and presented me with a lump of something translucent and pink, akin to hard candy.

“I think it was supposed to be in the shape of a flower, but that’s the first time I’ve ever made it. None of the team likes sweets much.” He frowned, staring down at the treat. “I can try again—”

“No, it’s perfect.” I grabbed it from him before he could take it back. To my surprise, it split like butter and melted in my mouth.

I was expecting a sugary sweet taste, but the flavor was different than I anticipated, like the meal he’d given me. Chocolatey goodness exploded on my tastebuds.

It was complex, like a mix between dark, milk, and white chocolate. My eyes rolled back as I let out a satisfied moan.



Torin made some noise in the back of his throat, muscles tight. I blinked at him.

“Do you want dessert too? You can have the other half?” I held it out even though I wanted it for myself.

In a second, Torin’s restraint snapped because his eyes darkened as he stalked closer, caging me against the desk.

I stared up at him, breathless with anticipation.

His lips curled into a sexy smirk. “I’d rather taste you for dessert.”

# CHAPTER 9

# MAYA

**T**orin swept everything off the table, sending it in a heap to the ground. He picked me back up, setting me on the edge.

“Can I taste you?” he asked, timbre husky. He stood between my spread legs.

Fuck, I wanted his mouth on me. I wanted anything, everything from Torin. But I bit down on my lip, hesitant. I lowered my head. Samuel’s words replayed in my head. *It takes too long—I don’t have all night here. Let’s move on; we’ll both be happier.*

He sensed my shift in mood. “What is it, Maya?” he asked, voice gravelly and rough. “Look at me.” His fingers tilted my chin up and his voice softened. “I meant what I said. We don’t need to do anything at all. I understand—our marriage can merely be in name only.”

I shook my head. “No, no, it’s not that.” I forced the words out. It was embarrassing. “My boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, told me it took too long, not that he ever made me come. It was too time-consuming. I get it if you want to move on to the main event.”

His jaw was tight, hands flexing at his sides as his mind was elsewhere. God, he had such big hands, and I imagined those hands pinning me to a wall as he fucked me.

His gaze snapped back up to my face. “This is the main event. And any male who didn’t want to taste you was an idiot.” Torin scoffed.

He could say that again. An idiot who sold me to aliens.

He gripped my chin. “Forget him. Do you want my mouth on you?”

His words alone made me wet. He made my knees wobble and my cunt throb. “Yes. Please, Torin,” I whispered, eyes only on him. Thoughts only on him. Consumed by him.

I lifted my ass, and he ripped off my pants. The junction of my thighs was hot and aroused. I needed the feel of his skin, of him, so I yanked him close. Our lips clashed, and I raked my nails down his back, frantic for more of him between our kisses. I didn’t want to take my time. I wanted it all, and I wanted it now.

Torin dragged his mouth to my ear. “If we don’t stop, I’m going to take you right here on the desk.”

That sounded like the perfect idea. My cunt was begging to be filled. I rubbed myself up his leather-covered cock, letting out a needy moan. I was undone by him.

“Fuck,” Torin bit out. “Is that what you want? You want me to fuck you on Cap’s desk?”

“Oh, yes. God, please, Torin,” I begged. His voice, his touch, his presence set me aflame. I squirmed forward to the edge of the table, needing more.

He knelt in front of me and pulled my legs apart. I was drenched for him.

“Is this all for me?” he asked, tone low and barely controlled.

I bit down on my lip and nodded. All for him. I got obscenely wet with his eyes on me.

He breathed in deep, inhaling my scent. His gaze flashed up, red eyes hot with desire. “I don’t know how anyone could deny this. Your scent is straight out of my fucking dreams.”

His finger traced my slit, circling my clit. I moved to touch him, but he stopped me.

“Keep your hands on the desk.” The command turned me on more than I wanted to admit. Pulse thrumming, I gripped the desk.

A high, needy moan pulled from my mouth as his lips found my cunt. I held tighter to the table as he devoured me, licking and sucking. I was gushing for him, and he didn't let a drop go to waste.

His grip on my thighs tightened, and I relished in the feel of his hands, his tongue. I watched as he feasted on me, desire climbing. He followed my moans to find the pearl at the top of my slit.

He stopped teasing and directly circled my clit with the flat of his tongue. I clenched my thighs around his head, drowning in bliss. He sucked and circled as I coiled tighter and tighter.

I couldn't help it. I let go of the desk and grabbed his silky white hair. I gripped two fistfuls, keeping him there—ah, there, so good.

The pleasure was overwhelming. I arched into his mouth as I came, toes curling, and seeing stars. An incoherent mess of words came from my lips as my core clenched down on nothing. His mouth was still on my clit as I rode out my orgasm, and I felt his hands grip my shuddering thighs.

Slowly, my senses came back to me. I gazed down at him with parted lips, panting. He'd finished me with nothing but his tongue.

My pussy fluttered, empty. He'd done all of that without even a finger in me. He left me gaping, aching for his cock.

I pulled at him to stand, and he obliged.

“Please, Torin.” I pressed against his chest, looking up at him.

He gripped my chin again, thumb rough and calloused. “Tell me what you want. Exactly.”

I wanted him buried deep in me, and he already knew that. But he needed to hear me say it, and I was all too happy to oblige.

“I want your cock in me.” I peered up at him through my lashes.

His eyes flared with heat.

“That’s what I want.” My lips curled into a wicked grin. “Exactly.”

Smirking, he grabbed me, lifting and wrapping my legs around his waist as he walked to the door.

His voice was rough and full of promise. “I’m not fucking you for the first time on a desk.”

# CHAPTER 10

# MAYA

**T**orin carried me to his room and laid me on his soft mattress. He stood above me like a Greek god, and his gaze made me feel like Aphrodite.

I propped myself up on my elbows, taking him in. I wanted nothing more than to climb him like a tree.

His crimson tattoos stood out on his gorgeous gray skin, accenting his scarlet eyes. His face was strong but sharp, rough but refined. My dumb brain wondered what our kids would look like. Would he be a little boy with brown eyes like me? A little girl with slate skin like Torin? A mini-Torin would be so cute. But I shoved those thoughts away.

Jesus, why was I thinking about this? I was not interested in having kids at the moment. I'd never eyed someone and thought, "I wanna have your baby." Nevertheless, if Torin asked me ... my core tightened, despite just coming in the cockpit.

The notion made arousal build in me again, hot and aching. But the idea was just that—an idea. This was a fake marriage for my safety, after all. But I'll enjoy whatever bliss I can find.

I focused on Torin again. He towered above me, his broad shoulders strong and his big hands ready. Big hands I wanted on my body, in my cunt.

I crawled across the bed to him and scratched my nails down his chest. He hissed in pleasure.



He smelled like all the things I held dear: the cinnamon in my morning tea, the rosewood of my guitar, the pages of the old books on my shelves. The spicy, satisfying aroma that was all Torin. Home. I craved to wrap myself around Torin and let his scent envelop me while he fucked me home.

In one smooth motion, I pulled off my top, releasing a shaky exhale while waiting for his reaction.

“Fuck, I want you. I’ll savor every moment of surrender.” His voice was low, barely controlled.

Torin’s gaze widened at my bared breasts. He looked at me like I was a buffet he hungered to devour and had to pick somewhere to start. His gray hands came to cup my breasts. Torin’s thumb swirled my nipple, sending shivers down my spine. His tongue was quick to follow.

“I’ll never get enough of you, no matter how much I take. The taste of your skin is everything I need.” he said between open-mouthed kisses.

If his scent was heaven, his touch was sin. I threw my head back as he lavished my nipples. But he was wearing too much clothing.

“You’re a tad overdressed,” I said, sending his leather pants a pointed look.

His hands didn’t move from my breasts. His red eyes flashed to mine. “Take what you want.”

I tugged down his leather pants, freeing his hard dick. My eyes widened. He was thick and long.

His dick had to be at least eight inches, gray with crimson veins similar to his red tattoos. Was it ... ribbed? And his cock had another part to it that was hooked at the base. What was that for?

I licked my lips. I wanted to taste him. But more desperately, I needed him in me. My cunt throbbed at the thought.

When I wrapped my fingers around his dick, they didn’t meet. But that didn’t stop me from pumping him from root to

tip, relishing in the feel of his hot, hard cock. Torin groaned, his attention on my breast faltering. After several pumps, a bead of precum dripped from the head.

I dipped my head to lick it off, swirling my tongue around the tip of his cock. He tasted tangy, and I wanted more. Forgetting my plan of getting his dick in me, I moved to take him down my throat, but Torin pulled back.

With one hand, he squeezed the base of his cock. “Do you want me to come in your pussy or down your throat? Because any more and it’d be the latter.”

“In me,” I breathed, pride swelling in my chest at bringing him pleasure. I fell back onto the bed, and he was above me, hot and heavy.

“Where?” he asked, teasing me when he knew the answer.

“Here.” I brought two fingers down to circle my slit. Pleasurable shivers ran down my spine. I dragged my digits through the wetness and brought them to my mouth, sucking them clean.

“Fuck, that’s hot,” he growled, pulling me in for a searing kiss.

His hand replaced mine, circling my slit. His big, rough fingers felt so much better. At the same time, he nipped at my neck, soothing the skin with hot, open-mouthed kisses. It was the perfect sensory overload.

A thick digit slid into me, and I clenched down on him. His thumb hooked around to play with my clit.

I pressed scorching kisses down his jaw as he added a second finger and a third. I trailed my lips down his neck, blunt teeth scraping his throat.

Torin thrust his fingers slowly, teasing me and taking his time. I sucked at his neck, deliberately leaving a hickey. Some possessive side of me wanted to see him marked as mine.

He sped up his rhythm, fingers hooking around and finding a spot inside me that I hadn’t known existed.

When his fingers kept hitting that spot, oh so right, I gasped as my orgasm crested, washing over me in a haze of pleasure. I moaned as Torin pumped his hand, riding me through my high. “That’s it, good girl.”

I’d never had those two words used before in bed, but it scratched some itch I hadn’t realized I had. I panted as I came down from my bliss.

# CHAPTER 11

# MAYA

**T**orin's hard, hot cock pressed against my thigh as he stroked my sweaty hair back from my face. God, sex with Torin was the best workout ever. And I still wanted more.

I'd had sex before. Enjoyable sex, too, not with Samuel. It left me satisfied but never ignited the craving I felt for Torin.

This was different. This was so much more, even if it couldn't be. Even if we both agreed to keep this marriage fake.

Torin rocked his body against mine, cock brushing my clit, slow and torturous. I needed him to fill me.

I fisted the bedsheets. "Please, I need you!"

Knowing I was desperate and on the brink, he lined up his cock with my cunt and unhurriedly sunk in, inch by inch. I sucked in a gasp, feeling that perfect stretch. With a mind of its own, my core clenched around him.

I moaned Torin's name. "Don't stop."

He kept going, groaning. "You're taking it so well."

He pushed until fully seated, fitting as if he was designed for me. Slowly, he dragged his dick out and back in, every ridge sliding against my walls in an indescribable way. I keened, high and needy. God, he felt so great.

"That's right, you're doing a good job. You're so wet for me," Torin praised. I practically preened under him.

And that hook I'd seen at the base of his cock rubbed perfectly against my clit as his thrusts sped up and he pounded into my cunt.

"God, I love the way you fuck me," I said, pleasure shooting up my spine. My breasts bounced with each thrust, and I was on the verge of losing control again. I traced the tattoos on his neck with my tongue, following the raised skin like a treasure map.

And then his dick started vibrating, taking everything to the next level. I swear, he was designed for me. I gasped into his hard chest.

"Where do you want me to come? I'm close," Torin said, muscles taut.

"In my pussy. I have an implant," I panted, coiling tighter with every thrust. I needed his lips, so I captured them with mine, and his hips didn't stutter. My beaded nipples brushed his chest as that feeling rose in me again, the fourth time today.

Bliss ran down my spine all the way to my toes. With a scream, I exploded, gushing over his dick. I might've blacked out for a moment, totally lost in ecstasy.

Torin's thrusts became wilder, choppy. He roared with his release, hot cum filling me. He repeated my name over and over like a prayer and, for a second, I swore his eyes were glowing. He buried his cock in one last time and emptied into me, dick still vibrating.

I was still coming, pleasure washing over me in waves with the strongest orgasm I'd ever experienced. Pure and utter bliss. Slowly, he pulled out of me, mindful of my overly sensitive core.

I dropped flat onto the mattress, boneless. Torin collapsed next to me, arm sliding beneath me to cushion my head. I curled into his warmth. His hand traced designs on my back as I nuzzled into him.

I glanced down at the junction of my thighs where Torin's silver cum dripped out of me. Silver cum.

Damn. I had the best sex of my life with an alien vampire.

Without leaving the bed, Torin grabbed a warm washcloth to wipe away the mess from my thighs. He set it aside, and I placed my head down on his chest, listening to his heartbeat.

Feeling his eyes on me, I turned back to look at him. The stoic male had the closest thing I'd seen to a smile on his face. I grinned what I was sure was a dopey, happy expression. He was a drug, and I was addicted.

“Can I stay here tonight?” I asked, hesitant. I wanted to be here, safe and nestled in his arms.

He nodded, pressing a soft kiss to the top of my head.

I curled closer, my exhausted body dropping off immediately.

But I swore I heard Torin whisper before I fell asleep.

“Stay forever.”

# CHAPTER 12



# TORIN

**S**lowly, awareness crept back in. I cracked my eyes open. I'd slept better than I had in all my recollection: no nightmares, no cold sweats.

Some primal instinct in me was sated. All night I had to fight the impulse to drink her blood, but Maya was worth it. I'd never do anything to harm her. But I had to admit, it felt good to breathe in her scent and not have to hold back. To take her and claim her.

I glanced down at Maya's sleeping form. Her dark hair was strewn across my black bedsheets. I gently squeezed her little hand that had never left my chest, her warm brown skin a gorgeous contrast to my gray.

I didn't move a muscle. My arm was asleep under Maya's head, but you couldn't pay me to shift it.

After a while, I yawned and rubbed a hand over my face. My dick was hard like it usually was in the morning, but I was starting to think I'd be walking around in a constant state of arousal with Maya around.

She lazily blinked her eyes open, yawning and stretching as if she sensed I was awake. I caught her hand and brought it back to my chest.

"Morning, husband." She blinked up at me, clearing away the sleep.

"Morning, little wife," I replied, voice low and husky. When I first heard her say "husband," it startled me and made this all real. But now I craved the word from her pink lips.

“Are you alright? Sore?” I asked. I cursed myself while I remembered the events of last night. I was probably too rough with her delicate frame. I lost control.

I had wanted to go slow and savor everything, but as soon as I sunk into her warm heat, something primal overtook me.

Her mouth curled into a satisfied smile as she stretched again. “I’m sore in all the right places.”

“Are you sure?” I frowned. “I can bring you pain medication and get Lorian to check you over. He’s our medic and—”

“Torin, I’m fine, really. Better than fine.” Her smile turned into a full-blown grin as she changed the subject. “So, how do you know all these guys anyways?”

“We work together. Cap took me in after ... well, he took me in. His brother, Draug, and Lorian were already with him, doing supply runs. Then we found Killian. Cap picked us all up like strays. We’re usually above board, but sometimes we do some smuggling. But don’t worry,” I quickly added, “we won’t while you’re aboard—don’t want to attract unnecessary attention.”

“So, it’s Captain Drax and his band of misfits, huh?” she asked, tone teasing and eyes sparkling.

“Well put,” I agreed, not denying it. We were all lost before Drax found us.

Maya went quiet for a beat. She met my gaze again, her brown eyes wide and vulnerable. “Last night was ... wow, right?”

“Wow, doesn’t do yesterday justice.” Last night was the best sex I’d ever had in my life. Maya knew exactly what I needed and said precisely what would make me combust.

“You’re so different from human men. You have that hook that hits my clit, you’re ribbed for my pleasure, and you vibrate.” She listed it all out on her fingers. My chest swelled with pride. “Like all of my toys in one.”

“Toys?” I thought I knew what she spoke of, but I wanted to hear her say it. I schooled my face into an innocent expression.

Maya turned bright red. “You know ... Toys for when I wanna get off on my own.”

She absentmindedly traced designs on my abs, changing the subject again. “Do you know your eyes glow when you come? That’s pretty cool.”

I froze. “No ... they don’t.”

They never had before. My eyes never glowed. I would have known. I would have known, right? But if she saw my eyes glow, there was only one reason ...

“Oh? I must’ve been seeing things.” She shrugged.

My mind whirled. Stumbling, I rushed out of bed. “I’ll be back,” I mumbled, rushing into my office.

Glowing eyes could only mean one thing. When someone found their soulmate, their eyes would glow. It’d been thousands of years since the last recorded case of soulmates. The little I did know about them was from bedtime stories my mother told me as a youngling. Everything made sense now. When she hurt, I hurt and vice versa—the soul bond.

My other half.

My one true love.

Mine.

Fantasies of the life we could live played out before my eyes. Kids running around with little claws and rounded cheeks. A male youngling with a heart-shaped face like Maya. A female infant with red eyes like mine. A dwelling on Sind filled with love.

But Maya wasn’t the same species as me. She wasn’t even part of the Intergalactic Alliance until our marriage union!

Yet this made everything clear. She was drawn to me; she desired me because she is my mate. That was the reason she was attracted to me.

She'd still be better off without me. I'd find a way for her to return to her planet or people. That path would be best for her, no matter what some delusional part of my brain craved. The part that believed she could be mine.

Cap commed me, drawing me out of my thoughts. I answered.

“Torin, I've found other human females. They're with the Rhodinians. I have an old friend, Ronan, who married one of the females. I'm forwarding his information to you.”

Any hope of Maya being with me slithered away. I nodded. “Thank you, sir.”

“Of course. You know I'd do anything for you; you're my fami—team. You're my team.” Drax ended the call.

My chest ached. All my fantasies were harshly destroyed by reality. Shoulders hunched, I stared at nothingness. But this was my life. I didn't deserve happiness.

I scrubbed a hand over my face and set to contacting the Rhodianian male, Ronan. I'd figure out how to get Maya home or reunited with other humans. She couldn't stay with me.

# CHAPTER 13

# MAYA

**T**orin abruptly got up from the bed and disappeared into an adjacent room. I took the opportunity to go to the washroom. Miraculously, I figured out the shower and resorted to brushing my teeth with my finger.

I slipped out of the bathroom, noticing Torin was still away, and walked to his drawers, snagging a huge white T-shirt. The male did own shirts, then. I laughed to myself, pulling it on and dropping the towel. It hung at my thighs and enveloped me in his comforting scent.

I looked around the room wondering what I should do when my stomach grumbled. I padded over to a machine that looked like the one Torin used to make dinner yesterday. I followed the pictures, but the only thing I could figure out how to make was that chocolate-like candy.

The machine popped out a bunch. Shrugging, I ate a handful. I could get behind sweets for breakfast every day.

Torin came out of the other room, shoulders slumped and eyes downcast.

Something was off. I swallowed the candy in my mouth. “What’s wrong?” I asked, brow wrinkling.

“Hm?” He jolted out of his thoughts. “Nothing.”

Liar.

I tried guessing the issue. “Do ... do you regret the marriage?”

I couldn't blame him. In his culture, he could only ever take one partner, and I ruined his chance to have a real wife one day.

His red eyes shot to mine. "No! Not at all, no. I'll never regret marrying you," he reassured. But then he hesitated, "Do you regret it?"

"No, we did it to save me," I said, but some part of me knew I'd blown past not caring about him. I wanted the marriage to be real, no matter how unrealistic that was.

"Yes. To save you." His voice was flat, eyes dull.

"What's wrong, Torin?" I stepped closer, placing my hands on his chest. "Tell me. Please."

He closed his eyes at my touch, shuddering.

When his eyes opened, they were devoid of warmth. "We got married to protect you from your captors. That is all—a marriage in name only."

"Yup." I force false cheeriness into my tone. "And sex with no feelings involved. Enjoying all the benefits of marriage, just like Killian said."

"Precisely. The only reason you want to touch me is because you're my mate. Anyone else would be disgusted by my scars." He waved a hand at his face and his red tattoos. Those were scars?

But I didn't follow what he meant. "What do you mean, 'mate'?"

"My mate. By Stars, we're designed for one another. I only knew when you told me my eyes glowed—that only happens with mates."

I didn't understand. "Like some biological imperative for us to like each other?"

He bowed his head. "Indeed, something like that."

That hurt. That stung more than I should've allowed it.

"So that's what we are to each other?" My voice tightened with every word. "Perfect fuckbuddies?"

He winced at my crude language but answered, “Yes. That’s all.”

Something in my heart raged. “So we could have sex right now and not feel anything at all—just sex?”

I pressed on his chest, and he let me push him back. The back of his knees hit the bed, and he stumbled backwards onto the mattress.

“Just sex,” he echoed, watching me from the bed, eyes hot. His cock was already hard.

I pulled up my white T-shirt—Torin’s white T-shirt—baring my cunt. I tried to convince myself I didn’t feel anything for him. Nothing at all, simply biological attraction.

“Touch yourself,” Torin commanded. Even though I wanted to hate him right now, hate this mate-biological-imperative thing, I obeyed his command. My hand found my clit, drawing circles around the sensitive bud. I shuddered, dragging my fingertips through the gathering wetness.

I must’ve made some noise because his eyes turned molten. “Yeah, you like that?” The words were rough, guttural.

I slid two fingers into my cunt, the sound wet and obscene. I moaned, pleasure shooting up my spine. A third digit joined, my other hand going to my sensitive bud. Biological attraction.

But my fingers weren’t thick enough; they weren’t right. They weren’t his. I whined.

“Come for me.” Torin’s eyes glinted.

I worked my clit as fast as I could. I was close. Biological attraction, biological attraction, biological attraction, I repeated like a mantra. Yet all I needed was another word from Torin to push me over the edge and—

“Stop.”

His command made me pause. I whined again, a breath away from coming.



“That’s a good girl.” Even in my rage, he managed to command me from below, lying on the bed.

If he wanted to play dirty, I could play dirty too.

I crawled up his body, stopping at his leather-covered cock. Remember, this is just sex, Maya. Sex because we’re biological mates. If I trusted him, he’d betray me like Samuel.

I paused at his waistband, looking up.

“Yes,” he rasped.

I undid his pants and shoved them down. He kicked them off the rest of the way.

I pumped his dick, using the wetness already on my hand. He groaned with satisfaction, hissing my name. But I stopped, right on the brink, giving him a wicked grin.

I sat up, wet cunt aching to be filled. I poised myself above his hard cock, ready to sink down.

# CHAPTER 14

# MAYA

I reached down to wrap my fingers around Torin's cock, lining the dark red head of his dick up with my core. He pushed forward as I sunk down, walls clenching in response.

We let out matching groans of pleasure, fitting together like puzzle pieces. I breathed in his scent, his warm, familiar scent. But this was just sex.

I savoured each staggering inch, stretching my sore muscles in the way I craved. His ribbed dick dragged against the throbbing between my legs.

"Just ... fucking ... right?" I said, breathless. Torin filled every inch of me so well. Even though I was on top of him, in his lap, he maintained full control with his hands on my hips, his cock thrusting up.

His gaze darkened. "I'm gonna take you hard and fast," he growled as he bottomed out in me. "Fuck you until you can't remember your own name."

I met his gaze. "Make me come."

Torin smirked, knowing that wasn't a challenge for him. He pistoned in and out of me, vibrating and hitting my clit with every thrust. And with every thrust, my breasts bounced. Torin lifted his hand and teased my nipple, pain melding with pleasure.

He pounded me into bliss. Torin gave me what I needed, even if this was just a hate fuck.

His large, calloused hands gripped my thighs, pulling me closer to grab my ass while I bounced on his cock. This wasn't soft and gentle lovemaking; it was hard and rough fucking. And I'd never been this bold. Most of my exes wanted to stick with missionary. But Torin made me confident.

His grip on my ass tightened, and he swivelled his hips. I moaned, and he found a spot inside me that made my eyes roll back. "That's the spot," I gasped.

"Yeah?" He hit harder and harder, again and again, looking up at me with heat in his eyes. "You like that?"

I panted into his neck, core clenching down once again on him as I bounced on his lap, chasing that high.

"Fuck, I'm cumming," I screamed as my orgasm surged. My toes curled.

Torin fucked me through my peak. "Scream for me, just like that."

I convulsed around him as he thrust in and out of me. He shouted my name as he came, cum pouring into my cunt as he emptied into me. And then—

He slipped out from me, and I fell beside him on the bed. I grabbed a washcloth and cleaned up as the high dissipated.

I stared at the headboard, not trusting my voice to work if I looked at him. For all that I had said, I was falling for Torin. But he didn't feel the same way.

"You're telling me you feel nothing?" My hands trembled, my voice breaking. "This is just sex?"

I wanted him to say it wasn't. I wanted him to say he craved me. I wanted him to say he was mine.

"I don't feel anything for you." His face was stone.

I shoved off the bed, tears gathering in the corners of my eyes. I blinked them away as I pulled down Torin's shirt. Why did everything have to torment me with his scent? I ran out of his room, not knowing where I was going.

Furiously, I wiped at the tears falling down my cheeks. I shouldn't cry over him.

I shouldn't have pushed. Torin wasn't the guy for me. I was falling into the same pattern again—trying to make someone who didn't want love fall in love with me.

# CHAPTER 15

# TORIN

I fought against every instinct screaming for me to chase after her. Fuck, I felt her pain in the depths of my being.

My whole body burned with pain—the soul bond screaming for me to fix this. The bond, me, whatever it was, it wanted me to run after her.

Seeing her in pain and hearing the ache in her voice was horrible. I wanted to take her in my arms and promise to fix everything. But we couldn't be fixed.

Maya needed to return to her people, and I needed to return to my life. I found another human for her; at least Maya would be happy with her and the Rhodinians.

I didn't deserve Maya.

I knew that. But it didn't make it hurt any less.

Killian commed me to say she was with him, so I knew she was alright.

I scrubbed a hand down my face forcing my mind to business. I checked my comm with the Rhodian, Ronan. They were stopping to refuel at the same service planet as us on Abroxan. She could go with them then. Be with another human woman and honorable males. Rhodinians were known throughout the Alliance as a respectable race with an elite warrior force. She'd be happy and safe with them.

I clenched my fists. I couldn't sit in my room surrounded by Maya's scent. I pulled on my workout clothes and went to the gym on the lower deck. I ran on the treadmill, not setting

the holo screen to anything. Blank darkness surrounded me as I pumped my legs, feet pounding the machine.

When that wasn't enough, I went to the punching bags until my knuckles ached and sweat poured down my back.

Cap pinged my comm, telling me we were landing on Abroxan to refuel soon. I hated that red planet, but it was the closest stop.

Sighing, I grabbed a towel and ripped open the door to the shower. My body moved through the motions, showering and dressing. Within minutes, I met the others in the hangar.

Maya stood next to Killian with a bright grin as she laughed at something he said.

I walked up, inhaling. Why did she have another male's scent on her? My eyes scanned her outfit. She wore Killian's clothes, refabricated to fit her better.

Seeing her in another male's clothes made me irrationally jealous. I had no real claim on her, but that didn't stop the burning in my heart.

“What are you wearing?” I growled.

Her smile dimmed when she saw me.

“Clothes,” she said, eyes dull. “Killian fixed them for me. I needed something of my own to wear.”

Shame burned in my chest. I should have provided for her, not him.

The rest of the crew melted away, off on their errands to give us privacy.

Maya was quiet for a beat.

“You know, my ex-boyfriend turned me over to the insectmen in exchange for new technology for his company. I was standing on the porch of Samuel's lake house and the insectmen came for me. Samuel even admitted to it all, right there and then. It wasn't like I could tell the police—the insectmen took me without any chance of escape. Next thing I knew, I was in that prison with the alien females.”



Rage made my blood boil. “He what?”

She shrugged. “Samuel’s company was going under, and he got this offer—trade human women for new technology. I guess I was the easiest to hand over. I trusted him, after all.”

I stood there, shocked. How could her partner do that to her?

“He made me feel small, unimportant, undervalued.” She squared her shoulders, the same fiery female I’d seen at the auction. “And I won’t stand for that again, Torin. I won’t be strung along and betrayed.”

She pressed her little hands against my chest. “So tell me you don’t want me. I don’t believe you don’t feel anything!”

A dam broke in me, and everything I’d been holding in for years poured out. “My entire team died, and it was my fault.”

She sucked in a breath.

I continued, replaying the events that had tormented me. “I was a commander in the Sindy military. I trusted intel from a source that I shouldn’t have. We were ambushed, my entire team was slaughtered, and I was the only survivor. I should have known what was going to happen and prevented it. I can’t trust my own judgement.” I gripped her shoulders. “So it doesn’t matter if I want you more than life itself—you’ll be safer with the Rhodinians.”

Maya froze, stepping back. “What? The Rhodinians?”

“They’re an elite warrior race.” I fought the urge to step closer. “They have a human female. She married a Rhodian. You’ll go with them. You’ll be protected with them, with your own people.”

Her voice caught. “And you’ve decided this for me?”

“I already commed them. They’re waiting for you at their ship; it’s docked in Port sixty-seven.” My stomach roiled.

Maya crossed her arms. “You don’t care about what I feel?”

She scoffed before I could answer. “Right, it doesn’t matter what I feel. None of it’s real, right? Just that biological mate thing?”

It was real for me. Everything was real from the moment I saw her. But I couldn’t get the words out of my mouth.

“Fine. I’ll go. I hope you realize you deserve happiness too. You don’t need to keep punishing yourself for the past. Bye, Torin.”

She turned and walked away, leaving a gaping hole in my chest as she took my heart with her.

# CHAPTER 16

# MAYA

stumbled away from Torin, tears streaming down my face once again.

I was right about love. I only knew how to pick men that didn't want me back. We only liked each other because of some dumb bond.

Not feeling anything, I walked down this sidewalk-looking thing. I understood the Port numbers. I passed fifty-one on my way to sixty-seven, where Torin said the Rhodinians docked. I didn't take in this whole new alien planet—the vibrant stalls, the new smells, the number of eyeballs all the different species had.

All the newness was lost on me. I couldn't bring myself to care.

Maybe this was all for the best. It was stupid to open my heart again. I'd start over with these Rhodinians. Be friends with this other human female. My life would go on.

But that didn't help the coldness in my core, the ache of missing Torin already.

I paused, double checking that I was going the right way. Suddenly, two arms grabbed me from behind and dragged me into an alley. A hand covered my mouth, and the other encircled my waist.

I kicked against his hold, biting down hard on the hand at my mouth.

“Fuck!” he cursed but didn’t lose his grip on my mouth or midsection.

I screamed, but his hand muffled the sound. Desperately, I bucked, trying to get free. But the ports were too loud with ships landing and taking off for anyone to hear the struggle.

I managed to free an arm and threw an elbow, snagging him in the gut. He slammed my head on the wall, disorienting me.

I crumpled to the floor. I raised my head, finally getting a look at my attacker. Dookix.

“Why are you doing this?” I moaned, holding my bleeding head.

“Your price has gone up considerably. Human females are a hot commodity. I’m going to get more than enough credits from handing you over. Enough that I’ll be able to disappear to a pleasure planet.” He brandished his brother’s cattle prod, crouching to breathe in my face. “Carver killed my brother. What better way to get revenge than to take his lover?”

“But Torin married me. I’m his wife. I’m a citizen of the Intergalactic Alliance! You can’t take me!” That’s what Lorian had said, right? Our marriage made me a citizen of the Intergalactic Alliance and was safe with all the protections that afforded.

“I don’t answer to the Intergalactic Alliance—I answer to the Empire. And they don’t care that you’re a citizen in the little Alliance.”

“But—but your father!” I tried to stand, but the world was spinning around me. “He said to let us go!”

His lips curled into a sinister smile. “Who do you think sent me here?”

My stomach dropped. “Torin’s going to come for me!”

Torin might not want me, but he wanted me out of harm’s way. He wouldn’t allow me to go back to the auction.

“I intercepted his comms, female. He thinks you’re safe and sound with the Rhodinians. Nobody’s coming for you.”

With that, he shocked me with his cattle prod until I passed out.

# CHAPTER 17

# TORIN

I watched Maya walk away until she was nothing but a speck in the crowd. And then I stood there stone-still until my comms buzzed with a message from Ronan saying she'd arrived at their ship.

Turning on my heel, I stalked to my room. My chest ached like a weight was pressing down on me the farther I got from her.

Was I right about love? Did I not deserve it?

I sunk onto the mattress, Maya's scent enveloping me. Memories assaulted my senses. Her dark locks strewn across my pillow. Her moans when she ate the food I prepared for her in the fabricator. Her playful smile when she drew me to bed. Her soft snores in the early morning. Her goodness.

Was Maya right? Did I deserve happiness?

I saw her everywhere I looked. The little candies she created in the fabricator. The ribbon she'd used to tie back her hair. The light she left behind.

I took a good, hard look at my life. How many times had the crew tried to include me, and I brushed them off? How many times had I helped them and refused their help in return? I'd been selfish and unseeing of all the loyal people around me. Instead of pushing them away, I should have been grateful. Just like I should have appreciated Maya.

I thought back to my first conversation with Maya.



“Don’t you feel what’s between us?” I had asked her, knowing I had already felt a magnetic pull between us.

“Yes,” she had said, the word breathy and soft.

The Stars brought us together. Who was I to deny fate? Especially when it had been giving me exactly who I wanted. Who I needed.

I raked my fingers through my hair, chest caving in. Oh Stars, I was so wrong to push her away. Had I lost her forever?

I straightened, forcing myself to focus. I had to figure out how to win her back. To show her what I felt for her went beyond the mate bond—that I loved her. I wanted her. Mind, body, and soul.

But how? I rubbed the heel of my palms against my eyes, thinking.

I stood. I knew who to go to: the male who had saved me from my darkest times, who always knew what to do.

I went over to the door to find Drax. But when I opened the door he was already there, hand raised to knock.

“Cap?” I said, brows shooting up.

“Torin!” he said, startled. “I was just coming to speak to you.”

I let him in the room, the door shutting behind him. “I was about to do the same thing.”

“I was wrong,” Drax admitted, honest as ever. “Now that I’ve seen the two of you together ... Maya is great for you. I know you still blame yourself for what happened with your team, but you’re a good male. You’ve been with the crew for five years and saved my ass more times than I can count. You’ve helped all of us, but you never let any of us help you. You need to forgive yourself,” he finished, looking like he’d been rehearsing that speech for a while. He braced himself, waiting for me to disagree like I do when we both are drunk enough to breach the topic of our pasts.

All I did was nod. “You’re right.”

“What?” Cap’s mouth fell open.

“I said that you’re right.” I nodded again. “And that’s the last time I’m saying it.”

He cracked a smile at that.

The weight on my chest lifted. “I love her, Cap. I want her with me, forever ... ” I trailed off, wondering if I should tell him. Drax already knew all my secrets, so I went for it. “She’s my mate, Drax. My soulmate.”

Cap staggered back, sitting down in a chair at the table. Knowing we were mates gave anyone who found out power over me. According to the stories I’d heard, when one mate died, the other did too. If Maya died, I already knew I’d want to die also.

But I also knew that I could trust Drax not to tell anyone. He’d proven that.

He shook his head, disbelieving. “But ... I thought mates were a myth. Are you sure?”

“One hundred percent. My eyes glowed when we were together for the first time.” I wished I had a better reaction when she told me. I wished I hadn’t told her she was my mate in anger. I wished for a lot of things right now, but there was only one thing I could do to fix it.

“Can you help me win her back?” I asked Cap. It was hard asking for aid, but I needed it. I didn’t have to do everything alone.

“Of course. Where’s Maya? With Killian?” Drax assumed. The two of them got along best because he was with me when we first met. Cap hadn’t liked her, so he wasn’t approachable for her, and Lorian was a bit shy. It made sense that he’d assume Maya was with Killian, but I knew she wasn’t.

I sighed. “She already left to go see the Rhodinians.” This would make things harder. If they’d departed the planet, we’d have to follow them; I was hopeful Cap would make the detour.

His gaze turned to concern. “What do you mean? I was at their craft visiting Ronan. She’s not there.”

My stomach dropped. Maya never made it to their ship. Suddenly, my head ached and it wasn’t my pain—it was my mate’s. My whole body tensed. Stars, Maya was hurt.

Where the fuck was my wife?

# CHAPTER 18

# MAYA

I woke up with my arms chained to the wall. As I slowly came to, the throb in my head became more pronounced. Hell, my whole body ached. My feet grazed the ground, making my shoulder joints bear the brunt of my weight.

Shivering, I took in the cold metal surroundings. Old blood stained the floor and a putrid smell filled my nose. Ugh.

The wall behind my back hummed, which was a telltale sign I was on a ship. At least I was still wearing my clothes, the ones Killian had shrunk down for me.

I hung there for what felt like hours. No food, no water, but I'd become accustomed to that. It left me time to think.

What I had with Torin was rare. In all the time I'd known Torin, he treated me with respect and kindness. He made me feel important, as if I was the sun, and he was caught in my orbit.

Torin wasn't like Samuel—he cared for me, protected me, killed for me. He wasn't violent without reason. Thinking back, Dookix's younger brother had been brandishing his cattle prod, threatening me. It wasn't like Torin killed an unarmed, innocent male. He killed the male who had hurt me and wanted to harm me again.

Torin was worthy of my loyalty, of my love. I loved him, and I ran away. Now, I might never get the chance to tell him how I feel because I was too scared. Tears burned behind my eyes.

As the realization that I may never see Torin again hit me, the door clanged open. Tears fell down my cheeks, and I couldn't wipe them away with my arms chained.

Defenseless, I held my chin high as Dookix slithered in.

"Aw, the bitch is crying," Dookix teased, mandibles clicking.

I gave him an icy stare, channeling my inner strength.

Dookix frowned, not liking that. He marched closer. "I can give you a real reason to cry," he hissed, sparking the cattle prod. His breath reeked like decomposing flesh beneath dirt.

The comm on Dookix's wrist beeped, but he ignored it. Yelling and banging and screaming from somewhere in the ship bled through the walls. Guess Dookix didn't run the tightest ship if the crew was fighting with each other.

I cleared my throat, steeling my nerves. "You're selling me to the Empire," I said, whatever that meant. "So you can't kill me. I'm too valuable."

He ripped the sleeve of my shirt off, dragging a claw up my arm. "Doesn't mean I can't have a little fun with you first." His tongue darted out to lick his lips.

My stomach curdled in disgust. Ew, ew, ew.

He leaned in closer, wrapping his hand around my neck and squeezing, cutting off my oxygen as he choked me. With what little breath I had and the close proximity, I bit his ear, ripping it off with a sickening crunch. I spit it out, the gape at the wound spewing blood.

Dookix cried out, releasing my throat and clutching his ear stump as he fell to his knees.

"You're gonna pay for that, you bitch." His tone was high-pitched and whiny, defeating his threat's menacing nature.

"Fuck you," I spat, voice hoarse.

Just then, the door burst open and I could just make out Torin's frame, silhouetted by the light from the hallway behind him, dripping in black blood. "Keep your hands off my *wife*."

“Torin!” My throat hammered as I called out to him. His sharp gaze snapped to me. He scanned my body and his red eyes darkened when he spotted my bruised neck.

Before he could approach me, Dookix scrambled to his feet and stood between us. “Here for your bitch?” he taunted.

“You touched her, so that means you die.” Torin stalked in, releasing a roar as he swung his battle axe.

But Dookix was more skilled than his younger brother. He blocked it with his cattle prod.

They were exchanging blows so fast that I couldn’t keep up. Both of them lost their weapons, fighting hand to hand, battling for their lives.

From the blood smeared on his body, Torin had already fought through several other insectmen, and Dookix lost his ear, so they both had disadvantages.

“How did your father know my name?” Torin threw a punch.

Dookix evaded him. “Something you don’t know? Pity.”

“Tell me,” Torin ground out as he stepped back, avoiding Dookix’s kick.

Dookix sneered. “Father’s in the Intergalactic Alliance. All he had to do was use your face to pull your military records when you bought the female.”

I guess corruption wasn’t exclusive to Earth governments.

Torin froze and in that split second Dookix landed a blow against Torin’s face. Torin reciprocated with three sharp punches to Dookix’s gut, aggravating where I’d elbowed him earlier. Ow, my cheek started aching.

Taking advantage of Dookix’s compromised state, Torin twisted Dookix into a chokehold and snapped his neck with a resounding crack. Dookix’s limp body fell to the ground.

Panting, Torin pushed himself to his feet and came over to me.

He unchained me, catching me as I slumped forward. Weakly, I wrapped my arms around him. He held me up, and I sobbed into his chest, my relief overwhelming. His familiar scent enveloped me, holding me safe.

“I’m sorry, Maya. I’m so sorry,” Torin kept murmuring in my ear as I cried.

I pulled back to look at him, wiping the tears off my cheeks. “Sorry? Why are you sorry? You saved me again.”

“But it’s my fault you were here.” He took my hands in his, rubbing my raw wrists. “If I had taken you to the Rhodinans myself or—”

“How could you have known?” I interrupted. “And how did you know that Dookix, who’s apparently also an Intergalactic Alliance official, had me? He said he intercepted your comms.”

“Yes, you’re right.” Torin nodded, acknowledging that not everything was his responsibility. “I got a fake message saying you were with the Rhodinians, but Drax was there and knew you hadn’t made it.”

“But how did you manage to find the ship?” I held onto his hands, relishing in the feel of his skin. Torin was real. He was here.

“After Draug was kidnapped, Cap had us all sew trackers into our clothes, including the set of clothes Killian refabricated for you. Dookix’s craft had security protections, but Lorian managed to track the signal here,” Torin explained.

I smiled. “Remind me to thank Killian for letting me steal his clothes.”

Torin lowered his head. “I owe him an immense debt. I owe my whole team—I wouldn’t have been able to fight my way through without them. But once we were on the ship, the mate bond led me to you.”

I slumped at that. Right, the mate bond.

Torin noticed and lifted my chin with two fingers, forcing me to look him in the eye. “Maya, I let you believe the mate



bond was some biological imperative. But it's not. It's been thousands of years since the last recorded case of soulmates. You are my soulmate, my other half. We're connected in so many ways. Like, is your forearm hurting right now?"

"... Yes?" I stared down at my unblemished arm. "Although, I don't remember injuring it. It might've been from when I was unconscious, though. Dookix wasn't the most accommodating host."

"I'd kill him again if I could," Torin seethed before refocusing on me. "No, your arm hurts because mine does. I was hit with a shock stick here." He held out his forearm, showing his reddened skin. Whoa.

"When you hurt, I hurt—it's the soul bond. A mate is one's other half in the universe. My true love. You." His red eyes shone with sincerity.

My whole body hummed with happiness. Yet there was still one dark cloud. I chewed my bottom lip. "But is this all just the bond for you? What if you wake up one day and, poof, the bond is gone? I wanted you from the beginning, before all this mate stuff."

Torin gathered my face in his hands, holding me like glass. "I wanted you before I knew we were mates too. And I still want you if you'll have me. You already have me—mind, body, and soul."

"You're mine and I'm yours, Torin." I leaned forward and kissed him; a kiss filled with promise. We didn't have everything figured out, but I knew we'd figure it out together.

Without warning, the door opened, and we pulled apart.

The rest of the team came in splattered with black blood. Some more than others. Killian was especially messy with a feral grin on his lips. Of course.

"You two lovebirds ready to get out of here?" he asked, smirking.

# CHAPTER 19

# MAYA

“I love you,” Torin said from his spot on the bed, tangled in the sheets.

I'd returned to the ship exactly one week ago, after he killed Dookix, and we'd spent most of our time locked away in his room, christening every surface. 'I love you' were Torin's three new favorite words, and I couldn't say I was tired of him saying it.

“And I love you, but we need to go meet Aanya and Ronan. We're already running late.” We've been talking with them over the comms since my return. It was nice to speak to another human, and it was also nice to hear how the Rhodinians were combatting the growing rebel Empire.

So far, nobody could figure out a safe way to get us back to Earth. But I didn't want to go back. The life I was building here with Torin was better than anything I had back on Earth.

I'd grown to like helping Lorian in the med bay, bothering Drax in the cockpit, and hanging out with Killian in the gym. But nothing could top what I did with Torin in the med bay, cockpit, and gym. And other places.

We were meeting Aanya and Ronan at an upscale restaurant, so I had Lorian help me fabricate a red dress that hugged my curves in all the right places.

“Come zip me up?” I asked, and Torin came over wearing only his boxers.

I drew my hair over my shoulder so he could get to the zipper. I shivered as Torin's fingers brushed my spine. He

planted a kiss on my sensitive neck, and I couldn't help the moan that sighed out of my mouth.

Torin growled. "You look gorgeous. I need to have you."

He pressed hot, open-mouthed kisses down my throat knowing it was my weakness.

"We don't have time. I still need to do my hair," I weakly protested

"We'll be quick, promise." He grinned, pulling me over to the bed. I let him.

"When are we ever quick in bed?" Torin loved to take his time, dragging orgasm after orgasm out of me.

From the glint in his eye, I knew he considered my question a challenge.

I fell onto the mattress as he kissed me, our lips locked together. I folded my legs around his waist, hiking up my dress. He trailed little pecks of kisses down my neck, paying special attention to the sensitive skin on my throat. My core grew soaking and tight with every touch.

"Stop teasing me," I moaned.

I heard him chuckle from somewhere around my abdomen and relished the warmth of his fingers toying with the lace of my underwear. Suddenly, he ripped them away in one smooth motion.

"Hey!" I fake protested.

"I'll make you more." Torin kept designing new things with the fabricator. Not that I was complaining, he was the best out of the entire team at using it.

"Please, touch me," I begged.

He dragged two fingers through my wet curls, slickening his fingers before finding my clit. Knowing precisely how to set me aflame, he circled my sensitive bud and dipped two fingers into my core.

"Can I mark you?" Torin asked, voice rough.

Last night, in the middle of who-knows-which-round of sex, Torin told me that Sindy couples bit each other's necks to show their commitment to one another.

"Yes." I wanted his mark on me.

My hands fisted his hair as he bent his to take me. His tongue flicked my clit expertly while his hand thrust in and out of me at a steady rhythm.

He sucked on my clit with single-minded focus and I came embarrassingly fast, calling out his name as my legs shook and my heart raced. He rode me through my climax, guiding me to bliss. "Just like that, good girl."

Those two little words intensified my peak as I convulsed under him.

He kissed his way up my body, savouring and devouring me. Pausing at the pulse of my neck, he nipped at the sensitive skin and looked up at me. God, I was a lucky woman.

Eyes glowing, he sunk his fangs into my neck. Pain turned to pleasure as I arched off the bed. His bite prolonged the strongest orgasm I'd ever experienced. The bliss was so intense it was overwhelming, and I lost consciousness for a moment. Torin had that effect on me.

He withdrew his fangs, licking the already-healing wound. I sprawled there in sated pleasure, fingers rubbing up and down his bare back.

As soon as I recovered, I was on him. He was laid out in front of me like a feast I wanted to devour. I paused at his waistband, looking up beseechingly. He nodded, smirking at my eagerness.

With a playful smile, I pulled his hard, pulsing cock out of his boxers. I slicked my hand with my own wetness and pumped his dick. He sucked in a sharp breath and groaned.

"Tell me that you're mine." I watched him through my eyelashes as my hand dragged up and down his cock with just the right amount of pressure to drive him crazy. I couldn't bite him with my dull teeth, but I wasn't any less possessive of him.

“I’m yours. Always,” he said between pants.

I swirled my tongue around the crimson tip of his dick, and he hissed with pleasure. He rocked his hips forward, and I used the flat of my tongue to taste his pre-cum. Musky, bitter, and all Torin.

I wrapped my lips around him again, his cock slipping into my mouth easily. Torin grabbed a fist of my hair but didn’t pull me down. He let me find my own rhythm, bobbing on his hard flesh as I breathed in through my nose and out my mouth. I traced the underside of his dick with my tongue.

“So good,” he groaned as his cock hit the back of my throat. I couldn’t fit all of him in my mouth, so I pumped him simultaneously with my hand for added pleasure. I dragged my eyes up his rigid body to meet Torin’s scorching gaze.

He threw his head back, lips parted in pleasure. “Fuck, I’m gonna come.”

I kept sucking and pumping, wanting every drop that oozed out of him. At last, he came with a roar, cock growing as hot streams of cum shot into my mouth.

I watched as he lost control, his intense orgasm tearing through him. When he softened he slipped from my mouth, and I swallowed his cum.

Torin laid there, boneless. “You’re amazing, love.”

“I know,” I smirked, proud of my breaking him apart like that. Me and only me.

I let him lie there for a minute before tugging him to his feet. I shoved him towards the washroom.

“Okay, okay, I’ll get ready.” Torin’s grin turned wicked. “Are you sure I can’t convince you to bathe with me?”

I rolled my eyes. “Go shower already!”

The shower switched on, and I popped into the bathroom to brush my teeth.

I left the washroom and sat at the desk to fix my hair into two braids with little ones interspersed throughout. I touched

up my makeup, completely reapplying lipstick. At some point, the shower shut off. I stood, grabbing my makeup pouch, and walked to the table by the door where my purse was.

The bathroom door opened. “Ready?” I asked, placing the pouch in the clutch and rummaging through it to ensure I had everything.

“Ready.”

I turned around to find Torin on one knee holding out a gold engagement ring with a blood-red gem the same shade as his eyes. I dropped the clutch and gasped, hands flashing up to cover my gaping mouth.

“I’m ready to spend eternity with you.” He gave me a crooked smile. That had to be the cheesiest thing to come out of his mouth, but I loved it.

He looked up at me, gaze filled with love and adoration. “Will you marry me, Maya Narine? The human way?”

I rushed over, dropping to my knees and kissing him.

I pulled back, love swelling my heart completely. “Yes, Torin Carver. I’d marry you every time—the alien way or the human way.”

He slid the engagement ring on my ring finger.

I marveled at him, a grin splitting my face in two.

I broke out in laughter, my sides aching. “You know, I guess we did follow your culture’s marriage traditions. I was kidnapped, and you killed them for me.”

“Indeed. And I’d do it a hundred times over for you.”

I was so ready to spend eternity with this male.

# CHAPTER 20



# TORIN

“I love you,” Maya said as I handed her the treat I’d made for her weeks ago, the choh-ko-lat, as she called it.

She grabbed the treat and bit into it, moaning as she savoured the sweet. Aanya had told me weddings were stressful for brides, so I was doing everything I could to make it easy for Maya, including delivering chocolate.

She’d taken over our room on the ship and kicked me out. I ended up in Drax’s room to get ready.

She sat down on the edge of the bed in her dressing gown. “You know, it’s bad luck for the groom to see his bride before the ceremony.”

I blinked at her. “That can’t be true. I thought Aanya made that up when she told me?”

Maya laughed, full of light and joy. “Good thing I’m not superstitious.”

“It’s just like how she said someone could *object* to our wedding?” I couldn’t believe that it was real when Aanya told me. “Not a soul could take you away from me.”

Maya waved a hand. “I know; I told her to remove that from the ceremony. It’s an old tradition. And nobody could take you away from me either.” She pressed a kiss to my cheek before shooing me out of the room. “Now go. I have to put on my dress. I want *that* to be a surprise; I worked hard on it.”

Maya insisted she learn to use the fabricator to make her attire, though I could’ve done it for her.

“I’m going, I’m going,” I said as she shoved me out the door, which whooshed shut behind me. I retreated to Drax’s room to get dressed in my traditional Sindyr wedding attire—black trousers, a dark gray tunic, and a red cloak. I’d always thought the cloak was a little much, but Mother brought me one.

I passed Killian as I made my way to Cap’s room. He was in charge of fabricating the wedding cake. “Hey, Torin, are you sure this is how the dessert is supposed to be built? It keeps ... falling over.” He scratched his head.

“Yes, three tiers. Try using support sticks,” I suggested.

Maya had asked Killian to escort her down the aisle. He was honored and volunteered to help with anything wedding-related. He got stuck with dessert duty. I got the sense that beneath his happy facade he was melancholy. Not unhappy that me and Maya were getting married, but sad he didn’t have a mate. He’d wanted a mate for as long as I’d known him, which was many years because we had found him as a youngling.

“Are you sure you aren’t making all this up?” Killian narrowed his eyes on me, snapping me back to the conversation.

I nodded. “I commed Ronan and his wife, Aanya, and asked her what human customs would be. They’re real.”

“You sure it was them?” He snickered, referring to when Dookix hacked my comms.

I shot him an unamused look, the corners of my lips twitching.

“What? Too soon?” He doubled over in laughter.

I sent him a rude gesture with my hand and continued to Drax’s room.

I walked in, and Cap rushed over to me. His hands were shaking. “It’s Draug—I think we have a lead on where he is.” Cap’s voice faltered. Thank the Stars! We’d been looking for him for over a year.

I grabbed Drax's hand and tugged him into a hug. He froze with shock, but wrapped his arm around me too.

I held him tight. "We're gonna get him back, Drax."

He pulled away. "I know we are. Thank you for finding out he was on the Gladiatorial Circuit. That truly helped."

"And I wouldn't have gotten Maya back without you."

Drax shook out his hands. "Enough about that. Today is a good day and meant for you and Maya. Did Killian finish the dessert?"

We made conversation while we both got ready. It was the most we'd talked to each other sober. Prior to Maya, I stayed away from everyone.

Before we knew it, we were in the empty hangar we'd converted for the ceremony. Flora lined the walkway. Lorian almost accidentally brought a carnivorous flower, but Cap nipped that in the bud, as the humans back on Maya's planet Ayerth would say. We kept the ceremony small with only the team, my mother, Ronan, and Aanya.

Apparently, Maya found Ronan's wings interesting. I guess that was fair—she'd never seen a winged being before. I wasn't jealous at all, she was marrying me, not him. My palms grew sweaty.

I proceeded to the front of the room, waiting for Maya to walk up the aisle. Why were my palms sweating?

I blinked, and Maya stepped into the hangar with Killian escorting her. She was a vision in her white dress; I was a lucky male. She had curves like the Stars had a plan and executed it just for me. Maya glowed as she made her way to me.

My heart swelled as she stood across from me. I took her hands, needing to touch her.

Aanya cleared her throat. "Thank you all for coming to share in this wonderful occasion. Today we are here to celebrate Torin and Maya's love."

Killian whistled, cheering. Maya shook her head at him, grinning.

Everyone was attentive as Aanya spoke, but I couldn't take my eyes off my bride ...

“Do you, Torin Carver, take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife, to live together in matrimony, to love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, to have and to hold, from this day forward, as long as you both shall live?”

Maya peered up at me, and I saw my future in her eyes.

“I do.” Even in death, nothing could keep me from Maya. But I wouldn't interrupt Maya's human traditions.

Aanya repeated the vows for Maya.

She nodded, eyes glistening. “I do.”

We slid our wedding rings onto one another's hands—simple gold bands.

“By the authority vested in me by the erm—” Aanya's voice caught. “By me and Earthlings? I now pronounce you husband and wife! You may kiss your bride!”

I grabbed hold of Maya's frame, dipped her and kissed her, pressing a soft, chaste kiss to her warm lips. But with her in my arms, desire escaped my control and I deepened the kiss.

Killian whistled louder than before as everyone clapped.

We kissed, holding each other—mind, body, and soul.

# EPILOGUE

Torin

**A**s human tradition called for, I carried Maya over the threshold to the pleasure cruiser. She'd protested, claiming she was too heavy, but I easily picked her up. I loved everything about her—especially her curves.

Aanya and Ronan lent us their ship, equipped with a helpful computer navigation system, Carren, who directed me to the bedroom. The ship would take us to Sind for our hun-ey-mun, another human tradition. I'd take any excuse to have Maya all to myself.

I set her down once we crossed the threshold into the sleeping quarters.

As much as I enjoyed the vows, the rings, the speeches, cake, and hugging, I was dying to taste her.

I drank in every inch of her in her white dress, amazed by her beauty. "You're so fucking gorgeous."

She gave me a playful smile. "I look better out of the dress. But I'll need some help getting out of it." She turned, giving me her back. My lips found her neck, kissing and sucking the delicate skin.

I traced the line of small buttons and went to undo them, but my thick fingers fumbled with the delicate things.

The delicious scent of earthy honey and warm vanilla invaded my senses, making me forget how to use my fingers properly. My dick hardened in my pants.

I accidentally tore off a button in my attempt to undo it; this was taking too long. I ripped the dress open, buttons popping off. The gown pooled onto the ground, revealing ruby-red silk lingerie.

I growled. She knew how to tempt me. I imagined that ruby bra on her breasts while she bounced on my cock, pink lips open in pleasure. I dropped my ceremonial cloak to the floor, desperate for her skin to touch mine.

Maya gasped when I spun her around and threw her on the bed. Her thighs fell open, and I crawled up her body. She was everything I'd dreamed of for years. Everything I didn't dare to hope for. And now she was all mine.

She tugged at my tunic, pulling it over my head and casting it aside. She proceeded to yank me in for a kiss, hot and demanding. She'd become more comfortable with my fangs and kissed me with total confidence.

Her kisses traveled down my neck. She always devoted time to worshipping my red scars, knowing they made me self-conscious. I ground my hips against her wet heat, achingly hard.

I could've spent hours letting her tongue explore, but I craved her sweet pussy.

"Can I taste you, little wife?" I asked, voice husky.

She smiled against my lips, knowing what I wanted. "Yes, husband." Her mouth curled into a wicked smile.

I tore off her bra and caressed her nipples, sucking and toying until she was writhing underneath me. Smiling, I descended her body, caressing her soft skin.

My eyes and lips roved over every inch of her exposed body like I was seeing her for the first time. I didn't have words for her perfection. And her moans only made my cock harder in my pants, if that was possible.

I reached the junction of her thighs. Her underwear was ruined, soaked through, all for me. I ripped them away, the slip of fabric joining her bra on the floor. Her gorgeous pussy was on display for me, glistening with her arousal.

She writhed, wanting more right away. But I needed this slow. I wanted to remember every moment. A moan escaped her as I slid a thick finger into her slit. She clenched around me, hot and needy.

I fingered her, watching her face contort with pleasure. My cock ached to dip into her slit.

“Tell me this pussy is all mine,” I growled, a second finger joining my first.

“All yours, Torin.” She gasped as my thumb flicked her clit. “Everything, yours.”

My name on her lips was the best fucking sound I’d ever heard.

I gazed up at her to find her warm brown eyes watching me with unbridled passion. She bit her lip, face flushed as she held back a moan.

My gaze slid down to the bite mark on her neck, pleased satisfaction coursing through me at the sight. I grew impatient. I needed a taste.

With a growl, my restraint broke as I ducked my head and replaced my fingers with my tongue. I dipped into her sweet slit, tasting her desire. It’d be criminal to let a drop go to waste.

My slick fingers toyed with her clit as my tongue fucked her. She gripped the sheets, breaths coming in soft gasps, and I realized I could spend ages worshipping her with my head between her thighs.

“Fuck, don’t stop.” Maya clenched a fistful of my hair and arched her back off the bed. Her words alone almost made me come undone.

I wanted to tell her how gorgeous she looked. How delicious she tasted. How much I fucking loved her. But all I could focus on was her taste on my tongue and her hands in my hair.

My thumb played a rhythm on her clit that I knew would make her body sing. I felt her pussy flutter against my tongue.

My tongue curled in her slit as her thighs tightened around my head.

She screamed as she hit that crescendo, words devolving into a chorus of mindless praise. I rode her through her high, pleased and proud.

“Bite me, please, Torin,” she begged, brown eyes hot on me. “I want to feel you. I want it all.”

Who was I to deny my wife?

THE END

Want to read the bonus extended epilogue? Subscribe to my newsletter at [www.rosingh.com](http://www.rosingh.com) and get it delivered right to your inbox!

Book Two is also available for pre-order now!

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Now, I can't wait for the next book ... anyone like sinfully sexy alien werewolves?

# GLOSSARY

- Abroxan — a service planet that appears red from space
- Breha — alien food similar to Earth's potato
- Empire — a secret organization that is attempting to dismantle the Intergalactic Alliance
- Fabricator — a machine that can be programmed to make objects such as clothes and food
- Flickbuhn — an alien species
- Fresher — washroom
- Geortic root — alien food that causes severe allergic reactions in Sindy
- Gladiatorial Circuit — a travelling group that organizes underground, brutal fighting events for public entertainment
- Holo — a handheld device that is similar to a smart device on Earth
- Insectman — an alien species
- Intergalactic Alliance — an alliance formed by many planets to establish interplanetary codes of conduct and to enhance the rule of law that governs behavior of the citizens of those planets
- Numbda — a bandage that speeds the healing process
- Pleasure planet — an entire planet that is dedicated to providing a vast number of pleasurable and entertaining experiences for visitors
- Rhodinians — a species in the Intergalactic Alliance
- Sind — Sindy's home planet where Torin is from
- Sindy — Torin's species. They are alien vampires and consume blood to survive
- Stars — used to emphasize an emotion, similar to (Oh My) God.
- Trefil — alien food similar to Earth's asparagus
- Vobu sirloin — alien food similar to Earth's steak
- Wefrun — an alien species

# MEET THE AUTHOR

Ro Singh is a twenty-something lover of happily ever afters, alpha heroes, fated mates, and smutty alien romance books. She wants to create stories about alien alpha heroes and the abducted human heroines that bring them to their knees. All of her books are for lovers of fated mates, sunshine heroines, and brooding heroes with a heart of gold.

Ro is currently a full-time college student with dreams of becoming a full-time author. She's studying business with a focus on marketing but usually spends most of her time alternating between her Kindle app and scrolling on TikTok. Keep up with Ro by signing up for her [newsletter](#). You'll get updates, book recommendations, and somewhat coherent ramblings from Ro.

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