



TRAPPED

BY SNOW

CRASHING INTO AN ALIEN TRIBE
BOOK ONE

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Trapped by Snow

A SciFi Alien Romance

Alina Riley

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Chapter 1



Lexi

I check the engine again and restart it. Other than a grunt, there is nothing else. No movement, no sound... I used to hate the noise this ship makes, but now. I'd rather it be noisier than ever before.

I click the reboot button again, but there isn't even a warning window popping up on the screen. Just the flashing screen itself won't help a tiny bit.

No... this isn't working.

I kick the stupid driving panel and slump into my seat.

Fuck my life... literally...

I've told my boss more times than I can remember that this old piece of metal, trash, crap, isn't going to last for long. Even though they have it checked last week, it can still fail...

Dammit...

I gasp and kick the panel again, even though it won't fix the ship.

It is all quiet now.

The panel in front of me stares back with cold light.

Maybe it is a miracle that I'm not dead already.

I managed to find this planet and land without crashing when this stupid machine was failing. In the depth of the universe, things can be worse.

I squint at what's outside. Other than ice, there seems to be nothing. Among every other normal planet, this has to be a super cold place...

Why can't I land somewhere else? This is so stupid...

Maybe it is time to check out what's wrong with the ship. I want to be home already, not on this stupid planet.

The team is waiting for me to head back there. If I don't get this thing fixed in a day or two and get it flying, I will miss the portal and I will be stuck here until there's another opening portal. Worse, I may end up causing the team to also miss the portal and delay everyone.

My boss doesn't hate me and I'm a good researcher, but I don't plan on betting my luck on this.

It isn't even completely my fault. I didn't choose to fly this old shitty thing.

I stand from my seat, my heart is hammering in my chest, so much so that sitting around is only going to make it worse. I need some movement to clear my mind.

It is still warm here, so the temperature regulator is still working. But with the raging snow out there, it is hard to say how long the temperature here will last.

There should be some clothes for snowy days on the ship. With the snow outside, I doubt it counts as a snowy day, maybe a snowstorm day. Without going outside, it will be hard to know how cold it is, not that I'm very inclined to know about that now.

I should also check the food storage to make sure—

The panel beeps with a communication request.

I hurry back there to accept it. It is my boss, Mia, the research head. Better not screw things up with her. “Hello.”

“Hello, you aren’t on the designated path. Is everything fine?”

I rub my face. That’s the dumbest thing I have ever heard. “I am not sure how not fine it is. The engine went off during the flight. So I had to pull out of the path. I don’t know where I am at the moment and I haven’t checked the ship yet.”

“What? I’m sorry to hear that. We will check your location now and send help.”

My boss does sound worried, but she is the one assigning the ship to us and the reason I am with this pile of trash.

I clench a fist, slowly letting out a breath. My hands are shaking and I still want to scream.

Maybe I shouldn’t be mad at her. She doesn’t want this to happen either. She obviously didn’t know it will break down.

Well... but she is the one wanting to keep this old piece of metal going for longer.

Maybe I can still blame her some.

Research funding is tight, I know that. This ship passed all tests and trials just a while ago, I know that. But it doesn’t mean it is fine for it to break down like that...

“Lexi, are you still there?” My boss’s voice came again, now with a higher pitch.

“Yes, I’m still here. Sorry, was carried away.”

She sighs. “We will arrange help as soon as we can. Please stay safe in the meantime.”

All I want in the meantime is to smash something, maybe punch my pillow, and drink till I’m out. But that won’t help my situation at all.

I say, “I will try my best. I will check out the ship to see whether I can fix it, or what I will need.”

“Sure, I have to check the next available portal too, don’t think we will make it now. I hope we can get to you soon.”

“Thank you.”

We end the conversation. I end it as quickly as I can. I may end up actually screaming. She doesn’t need to hear that.

Now, the control room is all quiet again.

I’m on my own.

The gray walls seem to be choking me alive. I hate it here.

I grit my teeth before tears will spill out of me. They are brewing hot in my stomach, but they won’t help my situation.

Is it that hard to just go home safely?

Now work doesn’t seem as bad as it usually is. My small apartment also doesn’t sound that bad compared to this spaceship and the snow outside.

I blink at the window. The snow is still there; it is a raging snowstorm. I am on a planet that is a bit off the charts and not a usual location creatures will go.

What lives here?

I tap the screen of the control panel. At least there is still a connection here, so it isn't that bad. While this planet is off the common route, this planet is at least known and has a name on the search engine.

This planet, Irhevis, is a planet covered with ice and snow all the time, the whole thing, all year.

Um... then it is most of what there is.

Maybe researchers don't find much interest there. Who will even want to be here anyway?

I scroll all the way down, but there isn't much to read about the planet. It is cold, there is ice, and there are some creatures living here.

Just like most of every planet...except the ice.

At least it reads that there is air outside, so I probably won't die too soon.

Speaking of which, I turn off the air modulator in the ship and slide open the gauge that insulates the ship from the outside. With the cold outside, I need the heat on more than the air supply when there is air for me outside.

There isn't a lot of fuel left when this is supposed to be a short journey. It cost less to just keep the heat on. I can only

wish I won't be staying here for long.

I head to the storage area to look for a coat. The snowstorm outside is bad, but if I want to get out of the planet, I have to check from the outside. The initial scan of the ship itself shows that there's no dent or damage from the outside, but the mechanical parts inside...

At the door of the garage, the panel for me to put my palms on has... dust on it. We seldom put things inside, only heavy stuff and things we don't use a lot are inside, so...

I close my eyes and put my palm on the pad. I used to like it, but not now. A key or a card to swipe it will be good for me.

The door slides open. The boxes on the shelves aren't even all within the shelves. I duck away from two that protrude from the shelves as I go inside.

Deeper in the garage, behind a door with dust on it, there are wardrobes. There are some coats in one of the wardrobes that squeaks when I try to open it. No idea when was the last time someone wore these. I take one off the hanger and pat the coat.

The dust flies and I sneeze.

Everything is stupid today.

I scowl. Someone should have cleaned it or looked after items here.

There is fur in the inner lining of the coat. Looks like it will be a comfortable one and hopefully warm enough. I pat it a

few more times before it looks clean enough. I set it on the chair to the side for later.

On the shelf under the coats, there are two pairs of boots. I pick them up. One pair is for rocky land and the other for snow. I put on the pair for snow. I had my sneakers, but with how bad it snows, maybe I need the extra grip before I will fall.

I wriggle my toes and flex my feet. At least they feel like the fit.

After a few steps walking from one end of the garage to the other, it feels like this is a good pair.

I take the coat with me and head to the other storage area for gear and tools. It has been a while since I have to be the one fixing things. I know how to do most of those, but those are still never fun.

Inside the toolbox at the bottom-most shelves, there is everything I need, or say, I can need.

The scanner is functional when I turn it on. Hopefully, it can figure out what's wrong so that I can get this fixed without having to wait for the repair team. Who knows how long they will need?

As soon as I get out of the storage area and after its door closed, the gray walls are there staring at me again, as if they are mocking how I can't do a thing right.

It shouldn't be that bad. It is just a minor hiccup, nothing is wrong, and I will be home sooner than I know.

I walk down the corridor. It shouldn't be cold already when the heat is there, but it feels cold. I have never needed to travel with others on what's supposed to be a short trip...

The door of the ship opens after I pressed my palm on the pad to the side. I have to do what is needed to be done before I can collapse and cry. There is risk associated with space travels. I can't pretend to not know about that. But...

Why must that be me?

A cold breeze blew through and howls its way into the ship. I pull the zipper higher and put on the hoodie over my head before I go down the ladder. The less exposed the ship is to the wind, the better it will be. Most of the machines will probably stand the wind and the cold, but I don't need extra risk.

It is cold and windy, just like how it looks from the inside of the ship. I don't like this place at all. I already put on my boots for the snow, but it still seems like a false step and I will kill myself on the ice. This is a thick layer of snow, which seems to be growing by the second.

I slowly take a breath before the cold air will freeze my lungs. I shiver even in the thick coat. It has been a while since I was in a cold place. This place is beyond cold.

It is misty out there from the snow. I can barely see far enough. No creatures are out there. Better than if there are some.

I probably landed in the middle of nowhere. While this planet is cold, there should be somewhere for creatures to live

in; some creatures that I can communicate with. Maybe they will help me.

I turn around. Everywhere is white and filled to the brim with snow. I kick at the snow under my feet, under the thick layer of snow is ice. Maybe this planet as a whole is made up of ice. Everywhere is white, including the sky, but it isn't the bright white that will blind the eyes.

Before I will chill into ice, I hurry to the engine and the machinery. I reached out for the lid to open to the inside of the engine, barely stopping right in front of it. Now that it has been a while since I have landed here. Maybe the metal has cooled so much that it can stick my finger on it. That doesn't sound like fun.

I check the toolbox and put on a pair of leather gloves before I open the lid for the button. Even through the gloves that are cut-resistant, the metal is so cold that it sends a shiver down my spine. If I have touched it with my bare hand, maybe my fingers will fall off.

After the metal shell that shields the engine and machines lifts, I check it with the scanner. There are a few buttons on the handle and a screen above the hilt should be able to figure out what is wrong and can instruct me on fixing it.

I go from the top to the bottom. Everything is green on the screen. Something has to be wrong for the ship to—

The scanner beeps as if it hears me. There is a red area on the screen now. I follow the instruction to undo the nails and remove the cover of the metal box.

There are cables and mechanical parts inside, some of which I have never seen before. It is rare for something to go wrong there.

I check the scanner again. It shows that there are a few connecting points not working as intended. I glance at the power indicator to make sure the engine is off before I look into the finer parts.

It takes a screwdriver and a few other silly tools before I reach the gear that went wrong. The poor thing is bent beyond repair. Maybe it was from how the repairing team made a mistake in the checkup and it caught up to me.

I go to the toolbox, kneel and open it. There is snow falling from the lid already. There are partitions for different replacement parts. Some are gears, some are chips, and some are nails-like parts that I don't know the use of. I scan the bent part and move on to checking the scanner against all the available parts.

All are red.

This can't be it. I must have missed something.

I try again, slowly going through the partitions.

Every single thing in the toolbox is red on the screen.

I shiver when the wind blows and some snow finds its way into my coat. I cover my face when I take a deep breath.

This can't be happening. The part I need has to be somewhere and I should be able to fix this thing.

I check the scanner again and make sure I look at every piece of gear.

Red.

No, nothing matches what I need.

Hell, I don't even need the scanner to see that all the parts in the toolbox are different from the one that is bent.

Fuck... What does this even mean?

I take a breath, but it seems like the world blanks out for me. If there is no replacement part in the toolbox, there won't be any on the ship. So no one expected this part to break?

It is okay, Lexi. You can figure this out.

My hand with the scanner is shaking so much that I may drop it and break it. I'm not going to pay for its replacement. I put it back into the toolbox when a strong blow comes, almost knocking me off my feet despite I am in a relatively sheltered space when the ship blocks some of the wind.

This planet is so annoying...

I clench my coat, my hands are freezing even inside the gloves. I can't stay here for long. Staying here won't help.

No backup parts means no backup parts. It won't change no matter how I feel about it.

They will come and save me, I just have to stay alive.

The snowstorm is still going and I can see nothing far. This is clearly not a planet for a human like me...

Chapter 2



Zefarin

I take a deep breath and get off my bed. The wind howls from the outside, I don't even need to go out to hear it. The snowstorm is stronger now. This is the time of the year again.

Out of my house, my fellow creatures should be working hard in the fields. I rub my fur and smooth them after a night's sleep.

I pick up my necklace from the dwarf table by my bed. It is a fine leather strap with teeth of stralpons and beads of aroith, green stones that will bring good luck, or so my fellow believes. The green looks good with my sky-blue fur.

The teeth. It has been a while now, but that day remains clear in my mind. It was a bad storm season like the one that will come soon. Those beasts apparently failed to secure their own food and attacked our village. It takes effort and hard work, but we drove them away and I killed one with the help of my fellow warriors. Despite the nasty attack, it is one of the best storm seasons for my village when we had extra meat for the season. No meczi meat for the stralpons.

On a hanger to the side, I pick up my alxi, which is essentially a large piece of leather that will cover my... important parts so that we don't get hurt down there, and... well... shouldn't walk around naked. I wrap it around my waist and tighten the strap, tying a nice knot so it won't fall off me.

As I head out of my place, my battle axe smiles at me from the wall I've hung them on. It has been a while since anyone attacks us, so this is mostly for hunting, which isn't on the schedule today.

Hm... Ocia isn't in my front yard. That beast of a fenzzu is usually here, patiently waiting for me as he rests.

Maybe the hunting team is outside and that's why he isn't around. Sometimes, I miss his growls and how he runs to me on his four legs. Guess he likes hunting even more than me.

If he isn't here, then there's no feeding him at the start of my day. I shrug, someone will remember to feed him anyway. He is smart enough to remind others to give him food.

The sky is gray with the snow drizzling down. Looks like stronger storms are coming soon. This place snows all the time, but for a few months, it is worse than other times. It doesn't help when the storm will be so thick that you almost can't see the whole village. Even traders from other planets won't come. They have interesting stuff though we seldom need anything from them.

I go straight to the field. I am there to be with them even though they sometimes want me to sit around and do nothing instead.

"Morning, Zefarin. Done your work in the house?" It is Brutus. He has a stack of thofes in his arms and is on his way to the warehouses.

These thofes are nice and have full kernels, which marks a good year for them. Through the storm season, we will work on them inside the warehouses, taking what's in the kernels, grinding them into power, and making them into food.

I shrug. "There isn't a lot of work to be done there. You know I can be here with you guys."

He chuckles. He is a large male like me, but he prefers the farm to hunting. "You know you can take your time, but I guess the traders won't come here soon, right?" He points at the sky. "It is almost here."

I nod. It is pretty obvious. "I think so. We don't need much from the traders anyway. But I do like the food they brought. What's that called? Volbons?"

He nods. "The purple thing? Yes, I like the pies. Hope they will come here again after the storm is over."

Indeed. But we aren't that closely connected to the outside world, after all, so no idea who will want to come here. It has been a while since any one of us wants to go to another planet even though we can if we want to.

I ask instead, "Any prediction for this year's storm?"

"I think it won't be too bad. But you know it is the weather. Who knows?" He pats the stack he has. "We will be well prepared, though. This is a good farming year. We will have more than enough for everyone."

"Nice. I will help, as quickly as we can manage to bring all of these in."

He chuckles. He is always the optimistic one, but he is also big on preparing more than enough for everyone; still the perfect creature to lead the farming team. “Can’t stop you from helping, huh? Feel free. We aren’t in a hurry. There is no sign the storm will arrive earlier than last year.”

He points at the sky with his free hand, and I follow with my gaze. “Look at the clouds. Despite being gray and dull, there is still time. They are still getting ready.”

The sky getting ready for a storm that will swallow the field and make every other animal on the planet hide.

If we don’t prepare enough, the storm will wipe us out. But somehow, Brutus doesn’t find that threatening. Maybe he spends too much time sitting around, staring at the sky, thus the strange attachment to what can kill us all.

Not that I’m not grateful, even in the toughest year, we have enough for everyone. We are meczis after all, we are well prepared for everything that can happen on this planet.

Snow lands on me and soon slides from my fur. None bothers me. Even if food is short, we can still live on for long.

I ask, “How’s the progress? Is everyone doing fine?”

“We are halfway through. Don’t worry. I can do the job well. Zefarin, you are our leader, okay? Don’t concern yourself with small issues like this.”

“Securing food for everyone is the most important thing we can be doing this time of the year.”

“Yes, I know that.” Brutus starts walking to the warehouse, maybe I am taking up his time, and he has to pick up his progress. “But there are other things that can be as important, if not even more important, for you to be doing. Say, making sure the warehouses are checked before the storm and are strengthened enough. Or to prepare for our festival when the storm is finally over.”

There will be time anyway. My heart skips a beat. The festival, huh?

Brutus winks at me. “You know it can be your turn any year now.”

I shrug. I understand it is important for me to find a mate and get started training the next generation of leader for the village, but it isn’t that easy. There are a lot of very fine and great female meczis here, but... Maybe I am always busy, or I just don’t care about finding a mate.

“I don’t know. I don’t feel it.”

He chuckles. He is probably a few years older than me, but he already has a few young meczis. “Don’t worry too much. I’m not trying to pressure you. Maybe that’s also an important thing you can be doing instead of helping on the farm.”

Maybe?

“Zefarin!”

I spin around with Brutus, both staring at the entrance of the village. Kivea, my younger brother is running all the way to

us, or maybe me. He has a deep frown on his face and he waves for me to go over to him.

The storm is a bit too thick to see far from the entrance. I squint, but still can't see what he is supposedly shouting at me for or running away from. "What's wrong?"

Now, faintly, there are the figures of a group coming toward the village, probably the hunting team is back. "Someone is injured?"

But they are a dozen of the strongest warriors on the team, even if a few are injured, they should still be able to get back here without serious issues.

Kivea takes a deep breath, he is almost shaking. "I'm sorry... I..."

"What?" I grab his shoulder. If he can't tell me already, it has to be bad.

"I don't know where Ocia went."

"What?"

Ocia is a great hunter, but he also knows how to follow the team and attack when he is told to. He is our family's best buddy. This isn't the first time he goes out with the team. Ocia knows I'm the leader of the village. He also knows to listen to others, especially Kivea and my other brothers.

What's wrong?

"Ocia... We were heading home, he was following us. But then somehow, he growled and took off in another direction. A

few of us shouted at him, but he kept going and going. Then we chased him, but he was too fast. You know, four legs run faster than two. He disappeared into the storm and we couldn't find him. We have loot with us and have to head back before the blood will attract something else.”

I gasp. A battle ax must have sliced my heart. “No way. He has never done that before.”

“I know. I want to find him, but you know...”

I nod and head to the entrance of the village. With loot in hands, staying out there for long can be dangerous. We aren't the only creatures that know about the tough weather. Wild animals that live out there also know and will try their best to get some food.

“I don't care. I have to find him.” I barely halt when Kivea yanks at my arm. I glare at him. The longer we wait, the lower the chance of finding him.

“I will go with you.”

“No.” I shake my head. “You stay here and take care of the loot. There will be much to do. Ocia is smart.” If Ocia ignored Kivea, bringing Kivea with me won't help a ton. Ocia is closer to me. I have to be the one to look for him.

“Well... At least be prepared. You aren't really going to head outside like this, right?”

I am...

Well... yeah... I need to bring my ax with me, and maybe some food, just in case. I glance at the sky. You can never trust

it to behave and be on your side.

Chapter 3



Lexi

No!

I stare at the ceiling of the spaceship with my arms to the side of my bed. I sit up, my back is soaked with sweat.

Nothing is wrong, it is just a dream. A dream can't hurt me.

I'm sorry, Lexi. We are trying to locate a teleport that will get us to you. But apparently, those aren't showing up. We have contacted everyone we know who may be close to you, but no one is. We will keep trying.

My boss's call from a day or two echoes in my mind. The dream is fake, but the call isn't...

Maybe the dream won't hurt me but dreaming of me dying here as a block of ice...

I shiver. Maybe that has a chance to happen.

Portals are like that. They all just do what they want. They can warp space, making it quick to travel places. But they are also unreliable.

After a lot of years, we know what portals tend to be where and can do a prediction as to when they may open up. But still... no one knows and no one can control them.

I suppose my boss can fly all the way here without using a portal, but that may end up taking years. I would have died before they arrive.

It will be a week if those damn portals will show up...
but...

I sniff, and a few drops of tears land on the blanket. I can scream here, but no one is there to listen. It has been almost a month now. I see no other creatures at all.

Not that I like to talk to others or what, but I need some life forms existing here other than me. I don't want to be alone.

The gray metallic walls are still there despite time passes. Now it seems like they are jail walls.

The storm outside isn't helping at all. The spaceship is pretty much sealed, so from where I am, I can't hear the storm. But from the window... It is...

Oh... it isn't that bad today. I can see a lot further than I can yesterday. I can see... a whole lot of nothing.

Ice, snow, ice, snow, ice, and more snow...

Even if it is just a bird or something, it will be nice.

It feels like I am the only creature here.

I hate this.

Before I will kill myself with my ruminating thoughts, I get off the bed.

It can't be that bad.

My stomach rumbles. I'm never full since I crashed here. There is limited food here. I will...

I stare at the cupboard in the kitchen.

Something has to be wrong.

There is no way these are the last cans of beans. And noodles. And bread.

Maybe before I will die as a block of ice, I will starve to death.

There has to be something that isn't ice and snow on this planet, right?

I checked the log of this planet more than a dozen times by now. There are creatures living here. Unless they feed off ice and snow, there has to be something out there as food. Maybe I can try to find some before these cans completely run out. If not, by then, I will be hungry and maybe even weaker to look for food.

After I have my coat and slap on all the clothes, I can manage to find, I stand in front of the door toward the outside world.

There will be snow and ice out there waiting for me, and I hate the cold.

Maybe my boss and the rescue team will arrive before I run out of food.

I wince and shake my head. While I wish that's the case, it most likely won't happen. I only have to get something to eat. It can't be that hard.

The door opens and I get out. I shiver at the chilling breeze that threatens to make me an ice statue already.

I can do this. Something for me to eat.

The cold air almost freezes my lungs as I go away from where the wind seems to be stronger. My snow boots seemingly aren't good enough for all the snow here. Maybe if there is less, they will hold up.

There is ice around me, also snow. Sometimes, they look too similar for me to separate them out.

It may have been a while I have no idea. It feels like I am making progress at times, but sometimes, it feels like I'm getting nowhere.

Maybe this is harder than I thought.

A few more steps later, I turn to where I come from. The snow has already hidden my track, the storm has already...

I can't see where I came from...

I squint and head back there. Maybe this really isn't a good idea. I'm not suited for this planet. This place will kill me alive.

The wind howls at my ear, and the gray sky was there laughing at me. How can any creature manage to live in such a place?

Maybe there are no creatures here, they are probably all dead.

I move a foot in front of the other. Maybe I should stay in the spaceship and wait instead of being here.

I take a deep breath. Did I walk down a slope? Now walking back there seems harder than when I came here. The wind is blowing right on my face, pushing me back, as if it wants to force me to keep going away from the spaceship.

Fucking stupid storm...

Around me seems to be a plain of ice. There is nothing that will slow the wind. There are mountains in front of me, none of those look pleasant. I can look up, but still... all there is is snow.

On the ground, there is a tickle or two of green, probably grass or something. I can't eat those.

Maybe all the animals are smarter than me and they know not to be outside like this.

I think I walked back long enough, but I still don't see the spaceship. The storm surrounds me. There is...

A growl is coming at me.

I take a step back when a beast that looks like a wolf jumps out of the storm. It has a grayish white that is like the snow here. Those green eyes glare at me. This is bigger than a wolf. It is almost bigger than me when it is still on all fours.

Maybe starving to death and freezing to an ice block don't sound too bad now.

That beast howls when I turn to run. Within a few steps, it is in front of me again.

I stumble backward, and I land on the ground on my butt. Falling on the snow hurts so much that there are tears from me.

The beast hops to straddle me.

I close my eyes. Hopefully, it won't hurt for long...

Someone shouts something. The shadow from the beast that hovers over me leaves.

I open my eyes, only to see a hulky monster of a male standing there. He looks like a human, but with fluffy fur that looks like ice and snow — definitely not a human. He is half-naked with a skirt-like thing on him, so that isn't another animal, and is probably some kind of intelligent being on this planet.

But it doesn't mean he is coming in peace or is there to help. He is shouting at that beast while that growls. Maybe this is another hunter that won't be against having a human as dinner.

Before these two monsters get to tear me into pieces, I have to run. Maybe when they fight each other to see who should get me for dinner, I will have some head start.

My legs are wobbly and shaky. Maybe they are too scared to do me any good. The snow and ice aren't helpful for my run.

Despite my snow boots, I slip and fall. I try to slow the fall with my hand, but a sharp pain jabs through my wrist. My

vision blurs from it. I fall on the ice, even more pain echos inside me.

I gasp, but only end up with a mouthful of snow. This planet is so cold and...

Maybe it is the pain. Everything around me is blacking out. Am I dead?

Something picks me up from the ground. I will my eyes to open and for my limbs to put up a fight.

But it is too much.

They refuse to move...

Hm... someone turned off the light and...

Chapter 4



Zefarin

I hurry over to the tiny creature that fell. I have no idea where she came from, but... it has been a while since there is someone out there in the wild that isn't an animal.

She lay on the snow, not even moving. I poke her back. "Hey, are you alright?"

But there is no answer.

I pick her up when Ocia howls and circles me. "This is why you refuse to follow the team and go home?"

He nods. I still never understand whether he really understands my words. Sometimes, it seems like he does. But when we shout for him to stop asking for more food, he doesn't seem to understand us.

It didn't take long for me to find Ocia. Or maybe more accurately, he found me and kept nudging me to follow him. I told him we were going home, but he refused. He isn't a small fenzzu now, so it wasn't like I could pick him up and get us home. I followed him and here is this tiny creature.

She is small, about half my size. The hood of her thick coat covers part of her face. I lift that a bit to check. She has no fur. Her eyes are closed. This doesn't look good. I stroke her face. Maybe she will wake up.

Nope...

Her face is cold, so I feel her coat. The thing is thick, but the inside of it is a bit wet. Maybe she sweats when she ran. Doesn't seem to be able to keep her warm.

Anyway, while she is definitely not a meczi, it isn't like I can leave her here to die. She definitely needs help. I hold her in my arms. Somehow, she is so tiny that it feels like she can fall apart if I'm a bit too forceful. So I should hold her with care.

“Ocia, now let's go home?”

He starts off heading to the village. Maybe he really meant to find this tiny creature, but either Kivea didn't understand him, or he was too fast that they couldn't catch up with him.

I hate it when the storm blows against my back, but we still have to keep moving. There's no telling how long this tiny creature will last. Without fur, she will die in a blink. I hold her closer to me. Maybe this will help her a bit more.

As we head back, the storm grows even stronger. Not only the wind, the snow is also a lot denser. Soon we slow and even Ocia seems to struggle.

Sometimes, the weather changes a bit too quickly. The mountain doesn't make it any better.

“Ocia, maybe we aren't heading home for the night.”

It is getting darker. It took us a few hours to reach this creature. It will take almost the same time for us to go back there. I look to the sky. It is a lot darker than earlier. Even for the season of storms, this is changing a bit too fast.

Not a good sign at all.

Ocia stops and looks to me. From how the sky looks, it is only going to get worse.

If there were only Ocia and me, we probably could keep going, but with this tiny creature...

“Yes, Ocia, let’s go to the cave and spend the day there. Well, likely also the night. If the weather is better tomorrow, we will get back home.” With this tiny creature in my arms, I can only nod in the direction of the cave.

Ocia lets out a low groan. Maybe he wants to go home.

“Come on, we can’t go back there now that we have this one to take care of. And there is food in the cave. Let’s go.” I have no free hands, therefore I nudge him with my thigh.

He turns to head over to the cave. The cave is a natural one on the ridge of the mountain. The weather is always unpredictable, so when the weather is good, we will stock caves with supplies just in case we will need to stay there for a bit. Even though we are meczis, none of us is good enough to fight the weather.

The snow is growing stronger and stronger while the sky grows darker. With both, I can’t see through a few ax-throws. Just enough to keep going, but not enough to make sure there are no other animals around. They should know better than to come out in this weather, but who knows? Hunger can cause them to take more risks, understandably.

I let out a breath when we finally arrive. The cave is somewhere that is shielded from the snow most of the time, so the inside is mostly dry. For me, it is also warm, but for this tiny creature, I'm not sure.

Inside the cave, it is dark, but not dark enough that I can't walk safely. Maybe this is also a chance to check on stuff we have set up in this place, just in case next time, the whole team will be here instead of just the three of us.

Ocia follows me. His footsteps are soft, but not too soft I can't locate him.

Strange how he insists on saving this creature. I don't doubt his smell is a lot stronger than mine, but he doesn't need to save anything if he doesn't want to. Somehow, this creature is important to him.

I put her on the large piece of rock that we use as a bed. Not as comfortable as the ones I have at home, where I have extra leather as the bedding, but better than resting on the floor.

She still doesn't move a bit. Is she dead? How she fell looks bad. Maybe she has some internal injuries that have already killed her?

Ocia comes around and sniffs her. He licks her cheek, but she still doesn't move a bit.

I chuckle. "Ocia, we can't eat that one."

If she is someone that is intelligent like me, it will be wrong to eat her. Maybe it sounds strange when we have no problem

with other animals, but this one... can't be part of the menu for sure.

I reach a finger to her nose. She is still breathing. She looks like me. Maybe I can find a pulse somewhere. I lift her sleeves to feel her wrist. I shiver when there seems to be a spark when I touch her.

Now that I think about it, she is here pretty much unconscious and with me... alone here in a cave. Hm...

I shake my head. That's a silly thought. I frown as I focus on feeling her pulse.

Hm...

I gently rub her skin. She has smooth skin.

Her pulse...

I blink. It is rare that I keep forgetting what I am planning to do. Maybe I'm also tired from the storm. While it can be subtle, walking in a storm wears creatures out quicker than they can expect.

Finally, there is a light throbbing of what should be a pulse on her wrist below her thumb. Maybe it is my fur, the pulse isn't as strong as I would love to find. But she is only slightly larger than half my size, so maybe that's normal for her.

She is likely alive. But she still hasn't moved a slight bit. Maybe she is too tired. If that's the case, then she will need a rest for sure.

Now I have time to give a close look at her, at more than the essentials for me to know that she hasn't died. She has blonde hair and a beautiful face. I gesture my hand next to hers, both of us have five fingers, only her hand is a lot smaller. She is almost like a tiny version of a meczi.

No fur.

Somehow, I keep noting that. If she doesn't have fur, it most likely means that she doesn't originate from here. Her coat doesn't seem like something other tribes in this place will make.

She looks like one of those merchants that will sometimes arrive on this planet though.

Wait... If she is one of the merchants... she probably isn't alone.

I stare at the entrance of the cave. Will someone be looking for her? Or is she looking for her team?

I've never traveled to other planets, but I've heard that it can be dangerous going out there into the universe. Not only comets and the travel itself being dangerous, there will also be bad creatures trying to hunt for others.

If there really is someone looking for her out there, they're going to be worried for sure. Usually, no merchants will arrive here around this time of the year. Maybe this is a new merchant group that doesn't understand this planet.

Still strange, but I am still going to help her now that I brought her here. I can't let her out there. She isn't fit for this

planet at all. Hopefully, she will be fine enough soon and tell me how I can help her.

Hm... Now that I look at her longer, maybe she reminded me of the merchants because of her hair color and her probably smooth skin. Those merchants that arrived a while ago, there is also one that looks like her. I think that one is called... a human?

I pinch the bridge of my nose and rearrange my necklace. Where did she come from?

I am about to walk a bit to get my thoughts going when my stomach rumbles. Maybe it is time for all of us to have some food. Her coat is still wet, maybe she can use a fire too.

“Ocia, you look after her. I will get some food for us.”

Ocia still stares at her. I pat his head before I head over to the storage area. There is only hope that no other animal had come when no one was around and they didn't eat everything.

Chapter 5



Lexi

Something warm and wet tickles my face. I shiver and...

Wait...

Where am I?

Snow, ice, and a... monster flash in my mind. My eyes snap open to see the face of something like a wolf right there, right there at my face. That creature's heated breath lands on my face, those green eyes...

Fuck!

I scream and inch back on wherever I am on. I'm not outdoors now. Did this monster move me here when I was out?

I think I tripped and fell. Then... is this the home of this monster and it is ready to bring its family or something to chew me to death?

The creature is watching me, seemingly curious. Maybe this thing hasn't seen a human before. I don't think there are humans living natively on this planet.

I am about to run when there is a hairy beast... that looks like me, except for his fur. He is also almost double my size.

Definitely not a human.

That one says something and the large beast leaves me and heads to that male. The male has a bowl in his hand that has steam coming from it.

My stomach rumbles, and a stream of heat reaches my cheek. This cave is so quiet that he must have heard it. How embarrassing...

He comes closer with the bowl that smells like a meat stew. I stare at the bowl despite it is probably pretty rude to stare like that. If he is giving me food, does it mean that he is here to help me? I hope he isn't feeding me as if I'm livestock or something.

When he is a few steps away, I say, "Hello. Are you here to help me?"

He tilts his head to the side and says something that I don't understand. He has curiosity on his face and seems like a human like me isn't a common thing here.

"Um... Does this work?" I switch over to another language that is more common in the galaxy I live in, which is also the only other one that I know.

He still stares at me, saying nothing. So I guess he doesn't know my languages, vice versa. He still comes over and puts the bowl on the wooden stool next to the bed... the large piece of smooth rock that I am on.

He looks at my ears, but soon sighs.

I also silently sigh. It seems like he has met other merchants before if he knows to look. I have a set of earbuds that can auto-translate most known languages. But those are on the spaceship. I didn't expect to run into anyone on this planet. That would have helped a ton.

Like always, you never have what you need when you need it.

I blink as I stare at the bowl. It is then I realize that the cave isn't as dark as it probably should be. There are torches lit up that are pinned on the wall of the cave. There are also wooden cupboards and shelves here. This isn't just a random cave after all.

He gestures at the food. There are no utensils there, but that is the least of my problem.

What're the odds of running into another creature amongst the snow that has bear-like fur and intense gazes on me?

My stomach rumbles again. Now that it feels like I'm no longer in grave danger, my appetite, or more accurately, my hunger, is back. I can eat everything in sight. This is a large bowl, which fits how he is a lot larger than me. But I won't have a problem emptying it.

Now that he makes it clear the food is for me, there is no reason I should reject him.

"Thank you." I know he doesn't understand my language, but it feels like I should still say something.

He blinks, but he nods. Maybe he can guess what I'm trying to say.

I reach for the bowl. My heart is racing so much that it can jump out of my throat. Now I'm starving. I try my best to move my hands as slowly as I can make it so it doesn't look like I'm so crazy that I will snag food at once.

It is a warm and almost boiling hot stew that is brown like curry, but I don't even care whether it will burn my tongue. It is a bit too spicy to my liking, but it is food. Some steamy hot food that I haven't had for a while now. The food on the spaceship isn't bad, but it isn't freshly made like this one either.

There are dices of meat in the stew alongside pieces of something like bread. I gulp those down. It is so good to have something in my stomach.

Soon, the spice in it caught up to me and I cough. I barely put the bowl on the surface of the rock I'm on before I will spill it.

The creature over there laughs and says something. He has a deep voice. The way that sounds reliable and he knows everything around here.

I shiver, both from the warmth of the food and his voice. Maybe he is saying that I should take my time eating. Maybe.

He gestures for me to follow him, but I haven't finished my food yet. He points at my coat, then waves for me to go with him. I have no idea what he wants from me, but maybe I should go.

I get off the stone platform that I am on. Maybe this is meant to be a bed or something, not very comfortable to sleep on.

He takes off a step before he turns back to me, lifting his brows. He points at the bowl.

Maybe I should take it with me, which I would love to. Where does he want to bring me? Somewhere that has to do with my coat, but I should also bring my food.

Interesting.

I hold the bowl as I follow him, not without taking another mouthful of food. Despite wolfing down almost half of the food and the bowl isn't small at all, it feels like my stomach is still empty.

There is the faint light from the burning torches where we were, and some light on the other side of the cave where he is leading me to. In between, it is dim. I hold on to the bowl, making sure I won't spill anything. It warms my hands.

This is a dry and comfortable cave, maybe a place for his kind to stay in when the weather is bad. It seems like he is the only one here, not counting that big wolf-like beast.

Why is he alone? Most creatures live together one way or the other. He can't be just here to save me from the snow, right? There's no way he could know that.

Oh... there is a fire close to the exit of the cave. The big beast is resting at the entrance, facing the storm outside.

Next to the fire pit are a few stones with flat tops that are probably used as chairs. The male sits on one and pats the other by his side that also faces the opening of the cave.

I take that seat. Something about him... maybe it is how he is a lot larger than me... he is intimidating. Even more than

before now that he and I are so close to each other; not even at arm's length.

There is another warmth in my stomach that isn't the food. He is so close that I can almost feel his heat. There seems to be a spark in the air. Not to mention now it feels like the cave is a lot warmer than it should be. There is a fire in front of me, but this place feels even warmer than that.

I almost jump when he pats my shoulder. Could have dropped the bowl.

He nudges my coat and points at the fire. He doesn't mean for me to burn it, right? It is so cold outside that I will die without the coat.

He does that again, and he points at the other stool by my side.

I wish I can understand what he means.

He scratches his head with a deep frown. I silently sigh. Guess none of us can come up with an easy way to make it work.

He reaches his hand to me. He has a large hand compared to mine. There is only the wooden bowl with me, so I give him that. He takes it and put it on the stool by his side.

I stare at the bowl more than I thought I would. I am still hungry somehow. There is still food there.

He nudges me and I finally look at him instead. Sadly, I can't eat him. The stew is more attractive. He tugs on the zipper of my coat.

I shiver. What does he want to do with me?

I inch back when he frowns and leans closer. He says something, but he also knows I can't understand him. He points at the fire, then he rubs his arm with all his fur.

What is he trying to tell me?

Something that will need me to put the bowl to the side and has to do with my coat...

He points at the opening of the cave and rubs his fur again.

This is harder than riddles.

He reaches out to pull the zipper of my coat again. I let him. I have to know what he is trying to get me to do.

There is a strange warmth inside me. This male is trying to strip me somehow? Why do I let this happen?

He undoes the zipper and gestures for me to take off my coat. I do as he wants. I still have more clothes on me anyway.

He takes the coat and heads to another stool that is further away, resting the coat on it with the inner fur facing the fire.

Um... to warm the coat?

He seems to see my confusion, he points at the outside again, then he points at me.

I have no idea. Is he gesturing for the rest of my clothes?

Damn... This is a horny male, huh?

My heart skips a beat. He is a creature that's almost twice my size. Does this mean that his... well... his cock will also

be that?

He better not be planning that. I may die.

Wait...

A stream of heat reaches my cheeks. Why am I even thinking about that?

He turns to the bowl and gives it back to me.

It is still warm in my hand despite we waited. My heart hammers in my chest again. So... he was meant for me to take off my coat. But for what?

He is now staring at the outside.

I lift the bowl to my lips and gobble down more of it. Maybe it is that spicy for a reason. The warmth streams through me and spreads from my bloodstream.

Finally, it feels like I'm alive.

He stares at me and looks at the bowl, then he eyes my stomach.

I chuckle and pat my stomach. "Thank you. It is very nice."

He blinks, and he nods. He points at the bowl. Maybe he is asking whether I've had enough.

Hm... I think I can have more, but looking at the size of the bowl... I probably already had more than what I used to have on the ship for two days. If I eat more, I may feel sick later. Doesn't seem to be worth it.

I give him the bowl and pat my stomach with a smile. He watches me, probably trying to decide whether I want more.

Or maybe I'm thinking too much of it. He probably isn't going to give me even more food.

He goes to the opening of the cave. The beast there looks up at him. He stops there briefly, probably talking to that one. After he heads outside of the cave, the beast stands and comes over to me.

I shiver. That male won't feed me just to feed me to his pet, right?

The beast is a step or two in front of me now. It sniffs me despite I inch backward. If the male is here to help me, there is no reason his pet or whatsoever will hurt me. But this beast is almost larger than me, it is hard not to be worried. It has sharp teeth that are sharper than kitchen knives and those reflect the light of the flame.

It lies on the floor next to me, staring at the flame. Is he here to keep me company while the male is out there for something?

He is coming back here, right? The storm is bad. He won't be out for long, right?

Chapter 6



Zefarin

I shiver even though I have my fur, not like the tiny human female inside the cave. With the raging storm here, it is definitely not a good idea to be out of the cave.

The storm blows at my fur and messes with them, though most won't make it through. The snow is still annoying and may soak up my fur if I'm not careful.

I need to get out of the cave. It is a bit too hot inside. No idea why that is. I've been there more than once by now, but I didn't feel this way at other times.

If it is only my kind there, we may not light a fire. Most of us are perfectly fine under the storm. The cave is a nice place to be to spend a night or two and we can sleep comfortably.

But it isn't like we've never lit a fire there either. I still never feel that hot inside. It feels like I will sweat and soak myself up, just like that woman with her wet coat that is probably soaked with her sweat.

My heart is pounding inside me. If it isn't the fire... It has to be that woman. She is tiny compared to me, but she is cute with that face. The way she eats like one of my kind... I love how she gulps down food. She seems to love our food and I bet she will fit in nicely with us.

I shake my head. That is the exact reason I have to get out of the cave. The storm and the snow will help to quench my mind. Or they should.

She was a bit too close. Dangerously close when we were in the cave together.

I'm already standing in the storm, but my cock twitches thinking about her. I don't do that... Why would I see a female and already be feeling things? So strange...

I take a step to the side, away from the opening of the cave so that there is no way she can see me from the inside. She probably won't come out of the cave. It is too cold here that she won't like it.

After cleaning the bowl with the snow and making sure I bury the snow under other snow, hopefully, we won't attract other animals. From the mountain itself, I scrap some of the snow. Maybe my human will need something to drink.

Wait...

My cock twitches again, and my heart skips a beat.

She isn't my human...

Maybe I somehow picked her up from the snow when she could die soon, that doesn't make her mine...

But... simply thinking about her sends a pleasant spark down my spine. My body is burning so hot that something is definitely wrong. My fur keeps me warm but has never made me burn hot like this.

I stare at the sky that is almost swallowed by the storm and at the darkness of the clouds. It should be cold here, but it does nothing to quench me. I can only hope my alxi will hide my hardness.

It is probably also rude for humans if she sees how hard I am and how I'm... like a stupid male that can't think with a brain...

Chapter 7



Lexi

Where did that male go now?

The cave is a bit too big and I don't want to be here with a beast next to me. If that's a puppy, it will be fine. But this beast is almost bigger than me.

I stand and head to my coat. The beast's ears stand even though its eyes are closed. It is here monitoring me? What do these two creatures want to do with me?

I blink and can only hope that I'm the one fooling myself and scaring myself. It feels like they are trying to bring me places, but I don't know whether that's good news.

The male gives me food, which should mean good news. But what if they are hiding something?

I've heard of creatures that will kidnap and sell other creatures. I hope this isn't part of it.

I shake my head. How can I think of him like this? Maybe he has fur and he isn't human. It doesn't mean he is here to hurt me. Or more accurately, being human or not has nothing to do with whether he is a good creature or not. In my team, there are a lot of species and they are all nice creatures to work with.

Speaking of which...

I clench a fist, slowly releasing it. The team is still trying to get here and get me home, right? But it will mean I have to get

back to the ship. They can track the ship, but not me. If they don't find me there, they may think that I'm dead and will leave with the ship, but leaving me on this planet.

No! That can't happen!

I'm already here for longer than I want to. I can't spend the rest of my life here.

Maybe there will be merchants coming here at times, but I can't keep waiting. There has to be a way for me to get back to the ship and get home.

I grab my coat but the beast jumps and blocks my way with a low growl. I stumble backward and trip on my own feet. There is something fiery hot behind me.

Um... the fire pit...

Something nudges my back and shoves me forward. I hold onto the stool where my coat used to be on before I will fall on my face. The beast is in my face now, it stares at me without showing off its teeth for now. It sniffs at my face but walks off.

Maybe... it figures that it is scaring me and it doesn't want to?

There is a growl from the entrance of the cave. The big male is running into the cave with the wooden bowl still in his hand.

I flinch. Is something wrong? Are there monsters outside? I suppose other than the large beast next to me, there can also be other scary animals out there.

Given how the male and this beast are this much bigger than me, maybe whatever else that is on this planet is also a lot bigger.

Doesn't sound like a place I want to stay in.

The male comes close and shouts something at the beast. He points at the opening of the cave, then he points at me and says something to the beast. The beast gets up and heads there while the male glares at it with his arms folded.

Hm... What does this mean?

When the beast rests near the entrance again, the male comes over to me. He stares at me and he says something. I think he is asking me something, but he knows...

Maybe like me, he finds saying nothing at all strange even though we won't understand each other.

He gestures for my hand. Maybe he wants to make sure I am doing fine. Maybe it means that he saw me tripped and he is worried. If this is the case, then he probably scolded the beast.

I point at the beast and he scowls. He shakes his head and points at the inside of the cave. He gestures his bowl and points at my coat. Maybe he thinks that we should put the things back there.

How about the fire though?

He follows my gaze and frowns. He nudges me to get going. I suppose he doesn't care about the fire and would rather let it go off when it has done burning off the wood. I guess it can

work when this is a cave and there is nothing near the pit that can catch fire.

I nod. He quickly comes over and takes my coat from me. I suppose he wants to help me hold it. I smile and thanks him. He blinks and his eyes dart away. What's wrong?

He doesn't say anything or gesture anything, but he starts walking, so I follow.

We are back in the room again, if I can call it that. Now I have the time to look, there is more than one stone that is like the one I was on. Flat, smooth, and big stones that seem to be here as beds. Maybe because of his fur, otherwise, how can this be comfortable?

He points at the one I rested on before. I shake my head. Maybe I should be more tired after almost dying in the snow, but somehow I'm not. I'm fine and I want to explore this place, if he will let me.

He scowls and glares at me. I point at his bowl, which is definitely not from this room. There is nothing that looks like a bowl or kitchenware here.

He looks at the bowl but shakes his head at me. He points at the stone again.

"I won't go out of this cave. You don't think I will want the snow either, right?" I still have no idea why I feel the need to say something. Maybe the silence in the cave is a bit too much for me to bear.

His frown deepens, understandably.

“Hey!” I yelp when he sweeps me off my legs.

For him, I probably weigh like nothing. He holds me in his arm, bridal style, and he moves somewhere. I can only stare at the ceiling or his face. He has a handsome face, but I don't want him to carry me places. I'm not a kid and he can't do this to me just because he wants me to stay here. He should have talked...

Well, he can't... I won't understand. Maybe he has tried...

He put me onto the rock, which isn't comfortable at all. I sit up and he hisses at me, flexing his arms and those strong muscles at me. I definitely won't want to take a punch from him. I'm just a tiny woman compared to him. What am I going to do to him?

I run my finger along my skin and pat the stone. Can he understand that I don't like the stone? Maybe he does and finds it comfortable, I don't.

He moves to a wardrobe-like thing that is next to the wall of the cave and slides the door open. Inside hangs a few coats and something that looks like blankets made from fur and leather folded up there.

Do these creatures get cold? Or maybe it is for when they sleep, better stay warmer? I don't think they expect guests here.

He takes a blanket and tosses it to me. It is a large one, probably a fitting size for him. It is thinner than I expected.

He comes over and put it on me. He takes a step back to check on me, then he gives me another that is a bit thicker.

I fold up the first one to pretend as a pillow. He has a pillow in place, but it is another piece of stone.

Now that the warmth from the food is fading and I don't have my coat on, even with the blanket, I shiver. We are far from the fire here and... I'm not suited for this planet after all.

He watches with folded arms. He doesn't seem happy to see me shivering.

I pat the blanket. I'm probably fine, a bit of cold won't stop me from getting some sleep, if that's what he insists I should do. I can't even argue with him.

He takes the blanket from me, maybe he also finds out that it isn't quite enough. I suppose I can use two—

“Hey!”

He climbs onto the stone and before I know it, he wraps his arms around me and pulls me to him.

I kick and punch him, but he is larger than a brick wall. He doesn't even move a bit, but hisses and frowns at me. More annoyingly, it seems like he has no idea why I am kicking him and punching his chest.

He strokes my back and seems to try to get me to sleep... in his arms...

A stream of heat reaches my cheek when I remember he is a half-naked male. Maybe I shouldn't let him hold me like this.

But with how he is holding me, I may as well... rest on his chest. He is so much larger than me that he can be my blanket.

To be honest, he is warm and good to cuddle with.

But he is a male that I've just met maybe a few hours ago.

He can't hold me like this!

I push his arms, but he hushes me and hugs me tighter as if he is trying to wrap me up with his large body.

Now my stomach is brewing with a fire. Maybe he is trying to keep me warm when he seems to figure one blanket isn't enough.

The solution should be two blankets or let me have my coat back. I have no idea whether he is that dumb or he wants to hold me and take advantage of me.

I silently sigh.

It isn't like I can get rid of him. He is so inclined in holding me and he is so much stronger than me that... I may just be hurting myself if I keep trying to fight him.

Okay... after crashing onto an icy planet, maybe I can live with sleeping in another creature's arms for a night. If he is hugging me like this, maybe it means that he isn't trying to murder me or make me into his dinner.

I take another breath, slowly letting it out. Of everything that I can worry about, this shouldn't be one of those. At least this creature doesn't mean harm, not like the snowstorm that is

raging out there. He is warm and the cave is cozy, I would never be able to reach here on my own.

Now that I'm not struggling to get away from him, his eyes are closed and he seems to settle into his nice sleep.

He doesn't touch me other than his arms around me and my face is almost forced to be on his chest.

Maybe he is just a simple-minded creature that wants to keep me warm and safe. Maybe I'm the one thinking too much about it...

Chapter 8



Lexi

I blink when it gets hot. Did I turn the heat too...

Oh!

I almost jump when it seems someone is holding me. I thought I was still on the spaceship, while I am here with a creature that insist on wrapping me up in his arms.

He is fast asleep it seems. His arms aren't wrapped as tightly as they were when he first grabbed me. Maybe he is right that he would be warm enough, even hot.

I let out a soft breath. If I put aside how we have just met not long ago, this is pretty sweet of him.

His fur moves with my breath. I shouldn't, but I am stroking him before I can stop myself. He has soft fur that is very comfortable and warm. The ice blue will help him blend into the surroundings. Maybe he is also a hunter, therefore he has the beast here to help him.

Speaking of which, that isn't around, maybe it is watching the storm outside.

Storm...

I shiver. Is the storm over now? I want to be back on the ship so that the rescue team can find me there.

There is a groan. I flinch and look up at the handsome male who is now awake. He has a sleepy smile on his face. I have

no idea whether that is because he likes to hug me or whether he is happy that I didn't sneak off.

Or... how I'm stroking his chest?

There is a low hum and a gentle vibration from his chest when we are that close to each other. His eyes are dark and there is a fire in them.

I swallow with my throat dry. What does this mean? Now, is he thinking about something more than holding me so that I will stay warm?

There is another pool of warmth in my stomach that is different from the warmth I slept in.

I move slightly, only to feel his hardness press against me. Or to be accurate, since I'm sleeping on top of him as if he is my bed... Maybe I'm the one pressing against his hardness.

This male has a huge one...

I take a deep breath when he smirks. He whispers something. Maybe it is an ask or something. His warm breath lands on my cheek, sending fire down my spine.

What will happen if...

My hand moves down his chest to his almost perfectly sculpted abs. He is half-naked after all and it is getting hard for me to take my eyes off him.

His cock twitches when I stroke him lower. He grunts and holds me closer to him. His hands move a bit but stop soon.

Probably he wants to touch me, but maybe he worries that I don't want that.

I will be leaving here soon, so...

My cheek burns at the thought. With his size... will he break me?

Or will he...

Is that a promise for pleasure?

Or this is for research. I'm someone that goes from planet to planet looking at different creatures, plants, and animals after all.

Yup, I really should have a look at him to figure him out.

Yes, for research, and that alone.

He rests a thumb on my cheek and pecks a kiss on the tip of my nose. I cover his hand with mine and guide him to my body. He squints and rolls around to put me under him. He straddles me. With that hulky body, I can't see anything else.

I reach for the knot on his leather skirt when he holds my hand. He doesn't want this? Maybe I'm curious, but if he doesn't...

His large hand slid under my clothes and he smirks. Maybe he wants to touch me before he will let me.

I roll my eyes. "You have to be a naughty creature, huh?"

He says something, his voice is filled with lust, but soothing at the same time.

It doesn't take long before he manages to strip me, but he won't let me try and get the leather thing off him.

I shiver from the cold in the cave despite he is this close to me, which he soon solves with his hands.

He runs his hands along my body, cupping my boobs in them. There is a spark in his eyes with how he is so interested in my skin that has no fur. I stroke his chest, feeling his warmth while he licks my nipple.

“Mmm...”

He has a rough tongue, so close to making me bleed, but also stirring pleasure in me.

Maybe he doesn't understand my language, he has no problem understanding my moans.

I tried to tame myself, but his tongue is so hot and, fuck, he flicks my nipple and squeezes the other one with his fingers. If he has never touched a human before, he is learning quickly.

He smirks as he watches me squirm and gasp. Now his hand moves to my stomach and lower. His fur fingers tickle while his touches send sparks through me. His hands are lighting me on fire.

I part my legs for him. I want to feel him. This is the first time I have ever been with someone that's not a human. His fur... I gulp. Now I wonder how his cock looks.

He rubs my pussy, and he soon moves to look at it. I would rather have his tongue on my nipples, but he starts rubbing my clit.

“Yes, this is so good!” I arch for more of his touch. Maybe he needs a note somewhere to keep going.

He let out a soft sound, something that sounds like he is impressed. Maybe females of his kind don't look like this.

“Ah!” I scream when his tongue reaches my pussy. He flicks my clit and slides a finger inside me. How is it possible that he already knows how to play with my body?

His lips and his tongue kiss me and suck my juice. I can't even believe how wet I am. He holds my legs, parting me as he devours my pussy. I was the one having the meat stew. I don't remember seeing him eat. Maybe he is hungry for me.

My heart races and my body throbs in heat. He is such a huge male, and he is now between my legs, tasting me. I'm just a tiny woman, but it seems like this creature loves my body this much. I don't care even if he only cares about my body and that may be because of how I am different from his kind.

This feels good and is... almost surreal.

I never have anyone going down on me like this.

He knows how to pleasure me, nudging me closer and closer to my high with every stroke of his tongue. His fur finger moves in and out of my cunt. I contract so hard to have more of him. He has a thick finger that is so good at rubbing my wall.

He moans when he finally leaves my pussy. His eyes narrow on me as he licks his lips. I don't care how he never let me

strip him. I'm going to try again.

My pussy is contracting so hard that his finger is no longer enough. I need something more and he better give me that.

He chuckles and lets me pull on the knot of his leather cloth. My fingers are shaking so much that I can't figure out the knot. He tied something strange that is too much for me when my whole body is burning with lust. He seems to keep doing things to me that I've never thought to be possible. It is so silly that I want and can't wait to get his cock. Not that I didn't like some good sex, but I'm never like this either.

This fucking annoying fur male is watching me struggle. Maybe he enjoys how much I want him, so annoying.

He licks his lips, watching me fumble to undo the knot while none of my attempts are working.

He says something with that deep and thick voice that stirs waves inside me. He tugs on the knot and the cloth slid down him.

This knot must be rigged!

My eyes lock on his cock. He has a monster, huh?

He stands there with a proud grin, definitely enjoying how I can't stop staring. I don't want to give him that satisfaction this easily, but I can't take my eyes off his erection. He is a lot larger than I even imagined, maybe I should have caught a hint when he has that huge body. But geez... How will that fit inside me, if it is even possible?

My pussy pulses with heat. It doesn't care about whether it is possible; it wants to feel him. Or... I want to feel him despite he may break me with that.

“Akunme.” Among the sentence that he has just done saying, which I have no idea what that's about, that word, if I can call it that, sticks with me. He leans closer. His cock is that close to my empty pussy.

“Yes?”

His cock also has fur like the rest of his body and has a nice curve up. He is right there in front of me, but stops as if he is waiting for something. “Akunme?”

I reach for his cock and stroke him, maybe he is as thick as my forearm. I wrap both of my hands around him. The fur on his cock is even finer and smoother than the fur on his chest. He is so hot that he can burn me. Not only is he huge, but he also has the length that can dominate me.

His cock twitches in my hand, and he lets out a moan. He squeezes my boobs and nudges me to lie on the stone for him. I shiver. Is this really happening? I...

I let him nudge me back on the stone while he rubs his length along my entrance. He feels even larger than he looks, thicker, hotter, and longer. His fur rubs and tickles when my juice wet him.

He probs my entrance with his large tip. My heart is almost jumping out of my chest. What if this won't work? There is no way—

He presses his tip into me, slowly. He lets out a moan and his cock twitches. I spread my legs wider for him. He stretches me a bit too much, so much that maybe...

His gaze locks with mine, fanning the flame inside me. He slowly presses in, pulling some before he moves deeper into me. The lust in those eyes is burning me. His fur rubs my wall when he moves inside me, rubbing better than anything else I had before. He stretches me so much that if he is a bit larger, I may break.

He grunts and hisses something. His voice shakes me. It is just his voice, but the fire burns even hotter inside me. As he moves, I slowly grow to accommodate him.

No idea how this is even possible.

My pussy sucks him harder, enjoying the extra rub his fur gives.

I wrap my arms around him. He is a big creature and so comfortable to hug and bury my head to. I like it when he leans in and rests his chest on my boobs.

He slowly moves inside me, pulling some while getting deeper into me. I stare at that huge monster as he makes his way more and more into me. The stretch is amazing and he rubs my wall with his burning meat.

How is this even possible?

He is larger than any other male I had been with before, not that I had been with many. More importantly, I had never been with a creature like him that's this huge.

Maybe it is the lust inside me talking. I want to feel more of him and I want him to take me even harder. I want him...

He doesn't hurt me as much as I thought he would. He lets out a soft grunt and starts moving inside me.

Fuck! This is so good!

His fur rubs me better than anything else and his size—!

I grit my teeth to stop a moan, I don't want to look as if I am enjoying this a bit too much.

He picks up speed and starts thrusting faster. A growl escapes from his throat as he rams me harder and deeper.

“Oh my god...” My back arches off the bed as he slams in again and again. So much for trying to hold back a moan. I may die if I try that any longer.

This is a fucking cave with a snowstorm outside, no one will be there to hear me.

I moan loudly as he pounds into me. “You're so big.”

He chuckles and his cock twitches inside me. Bet he doesn't need to understand my words to know how much I am enjoying him. He grips my hip and moans as he fucks me over and over.

The pleasure bubbles inside me until I burst.

“Yes!”

My body shakes from the orgasm he hammers into me. I clench onto him, feeling his hot body on mine. He is that strong a beast with all the stamina...

He lets out a low growl, picking up speed as if it is even possible. His cock hammered into my sensitive spot. It's almost as if he can sense what I need and wants to give me exactly that.

I moan so much that I'm almost out when his cock twitches and he pulls from me.

No!

I wrap my legs around him and pull him close. This may be dumb, but I want him.

He grunts and says something, I refuse to let go of him. He smirks and pounds deep into me again and again until his cock twitches again. His hot cum pulses into me, soon filling me up. His large body shudders as he fills me even more. He closes his eyes, seemingly enjoying this.

My heart races so hard that I can die from the pleasure. I may as well be melting from the inside. My body has never been this hot before. This is so good.

There is a tinkling down my spine, spreading through my body. Maybe it is the sex. He is a bit too amazing and too good with my body.

He wraps his arms around me again, pulling me close and nudging me to rest on his chest.

Yes, I want this. I can have more of this.

I won't stay on this planet long, but I won't regret meeting him for sure. This may as well be my best experience ever. Something inside me, it feels like there is something more than

I can imagine inside me that screams for more. I have no idea what that is.

I'm happy and he is also happy, that's probably all that matters.

Chapter 9



Zefarin

I open my eyes to see this woman in my arms. There is a warmth in my stomach again. Her eyes are still closed, she seems to be in a sweet dream. I take a breath, trying my best to not wake her when she is here resting on my chest. Maybe she is still tired.

My cock twitches when how she moaned and screamed flashes in my mind. I don't understand what she is saying at all, but... I shiver when her voice echoes in my mind.

Who needs to know what those words mean when she clenches onto me and arches for more?

There's never been a female that stirs me this way. It used to be I have fun, it is over, back to the next day I go. But this female...

She shivers as if she hears my thoughts. She opens her eyes and grins at me.

The warmth that has been there grows stronger. It is a bit too nice to have her here, for me to wake up to see her face,

and for her to give me a grin the moment she wakes.

Maybe she really enjoyed what we had together a while ago. I hope that didn't end up tiring her even more, which isn't why I hugged her and pulled her to me in the first place.

Yeah... the point should be to keep her safe and warm, not for my own enjoyment.

My cock twitches again. Fuck...

There is a mischievous glint in her mesmerizing eyes. She chuckles, says something, and strokes me.

I am still naked here with her. That small warm hand...

I shake my head and let out a soft groan. "No, we can't do that now. We have to keep moving. Here is safe, but we have to figure out what to do with you. You don't belong here."

She stares at me with a slightly blank look. Maybe she is still trying to understand what I said.

Maybe I am mean to say that she doesn't belong, but that is what it is. She isn't from this planet and she probably shouldn't stay here. She doesn't understand my language, that's why it feels fine to say what I said. Somehow, it feels like I should say something.

I pat her back and nudge her to get off of me so we can see what we can do for the day and check the weather outside. I should be there with my other creatures, not staying here in a cave doing nothing. The season of the snowstorm is coming up soon, we can use every single hand in the preparation. I have to be there.

She blinks and rolls off me, letting out a groan when she lands on the stone. She winces and rubs her ass, definitely not liking it here.

I don't like the bed here too. It isn't as comfortable as the one back in my place, but this is a cave for emergency use. Between dying in the storm and a less comfy bed, it is easy to choose. She doesn't have fur, maybe that will make the bed even harder for her and pain her.

I rub her side and she chuckles, maybe she finds my fur ticklish. My heart skips a beat when I now have a full view of her naked body, not that this is the first time I see her naked, but she still stirs me a bit too much. Strange.

She moves to pick up her clothes in a way that looks stiff. Did I fuck her so hard that she can't move normally?

My cock twitches again. She has a tight pussy that squeezed me a bit too well. I won't mind spending more time—

No, that's not what I should be thinking about. Not right now.

I move to pick up and put on my alxi. Better get my lust for a cute woman in check for now. She doesn't belong here and doesn't belong to me.

Hmm... there is a numb ache in my chest when the thought flashes by. Am I... disappointed?

There is a growl from Ocia, the growl grows stronger by the second he comes to us. He must have found out that I'm

awake and he is ready for food now. Speaking of which I can also use some food, probably also for this woman.

Ocia soon shows up and rubs his back on me. I pat him and rub his back, the way he loves. He goes to the woman, but she takes a step back. Ocia is almost as large as her, maybe she is scared of him. I wish I can tell her that Ocia doesn't mean harm and he is a gentle fenzzu. Maybe she will find out about that soon.

When I look at her, she is already clothed. I understand she is cold. But I want to see her naked for a bit longer. How she only has soft skin is still... interesting to me despite I know she isn't the only species that are like that. Staring isn't nice either, but I can't help myself.

I didn't feel the need or the interest in staring at a woman when the merchants arrived a while ago. There was also a woman, but I really didn't feel the urge to stare.

Now, even though this woman right in front of me is clothed, I still want to stare and I somehow keep wanting to see her naked...

Ocia nudges me again, shaking me out of my thoughts. How rude...

I gesture for the woman to follow me. She comes over at once. Maybe she can guess that we are getting breakfast. She seems to enjoy the stew I got her last evening, so hopefully, other food we have here will also suit her.

Inside the storage, I open the cupboard to reveal all the dried meat. Those are the easiest to prepare after all. There are a few wooden containers with bread to the side, I take two pieces of bread for us. Ocia won't be interested in those anyway.

I give Ocia a piece of meat, he holds it between his teeth and walks off to the opening of the cave happily. At least as happy as I can imagine him to be. He probably understands that we are in a shelter cave, and there won't be the freshest cut for him. That also goes for the storm season, nothing very fresh and juicy.

I give the bread to the woman and tear off a chunk of meat for her. She says something and takes the meat, putting it on the bread that is larger than her hand. She has small ones after all.

She takes a bite with a wide grin. Then the bread and the meat disappear quicker than I can blink. I stare at her stomach. How is it even possible for her to eat this quickly? She must be hungry. Is she still hungry?

I point at the container. She shakes her head and pats her stomach. She is so cute with that smile. I won't mind giving her more food if I can get more of her smile. She has a way to warm me more than a fire pit.

Now that I think about it, I don't want to keep calling her the woman in my mind. She has to have some kind of name.

She is standing here waiting for something; maybe for me to decide on what we should be doing next.

I want to know her name, maybe before we see if we can get out of the cave. Will be a bit challenging to ask.

I take my portion of food and gesture for her to follow as we move to the entrance of the cave. Next to the fire pit, where the fire is gone already, Ocia had already finished his food and is resting there.

I point at him. “Ocia.”

She looks at me, then at Ocia. She tilts her head to the side. “Lexi.”

Oh, that’s her name? That sounds cute like she is.

She pats my shoulder, probably her way of asking. I point at myself. “Zefarin.”

“Zefarin.” She repeats.

I nod. She chuckles. Now my heart skips a beat. What does that mean? She likes it? She finds it silly? I have no idea what kind of name humans have. I don’t meet enough of them to know their norms, if there are some.

I probably don’t have to care about what she thinks about my name, but... I want to know what she thinks about me.

She stands on her tiptoes and reaches her arms up. I lean down for her and she wraps her arms around me. She pecks a kiss on my cheek. My heart hammers even harder now. She says something in her soft and very beautiful voice. I like her voice and I pretend she is saying something nice.

I hug her and nudge her to the outside of the cave. She walks a few steps but then stops with a deep frown on her face.

The snowstorm is still there. The sky is grey despite it should be in the morning by now. The storm is still there, but it isn't as bad as it was when we had to hide inside the cave. If we are quick, we can make it back to the village without much of an issue.

Ocia is by my side now, peeking outside. He goes out a few steps, from his shadow, it is definitely in the morning now.

I gesture for Lexi to come here, we should get going. She looks at me, then at the outside of the cave. I guess the storm isn't that inviting, but this is normal on this planet, nothing I can do to make it better. The storm is a storm, after all, it doesn't care.

“Lexi...”

She takes a deep breath and finally follows me. Her hands are in a pair of gloves now. Those look to be thick ones, maybe they are for keeping that cute little hands warm. She points at the outside with a frown.

I nod. Yes, we are going out of there. We have to keep going when it is better now. The storm season is coming up, it will only get worse.

She nods and follows me out of the cave. Ocia is in front of us, sniffing around.

“Ocia, we aren't hunting, just go home, okay?”

He sniffs around a bit more before getting back on track. We aren't that far away from the village and the storm isn't that bad for now. Afar, there is the faint figure of the village down the mountain. May take two hours to head down there, but if we are quick—

“Where are you going?” I spin around to see Lexi wandering to the other side.

She turns to me and points in the opposite direction. That's the path heading up the mountain, where's she going?

I point to where the village is. I am not sure how good humans can see out there, but she probably will understand.

She shakes her head and points to the side she is heading to again.

What is there? That side is where I found her yesterday, but there should be nothing there.

I've been living here for as long as I was born. Our village has been around for longer than my family can remember. No one lives over there. The mountains are tough to be on. Everyone else lives further away from the mountain. My village is the closest one there.

Well, someone does live over there, but that's all the way to the other side of the mountain. I don't think she comes from there.

She starts off walking to that side. Ocia growls and goes to her. I hiss for him to stop. Maybe there is something out there.

I don't think she is fit for the planet and there's no way she will show up on the mountain just like that.

“Let's see what she got there, Ocia.”

I follow her as she struggles her way uphill. She looks around at times, seemingly having no idea where she is going. I gently squeeze her shoulder and nudge her to go with me instead.

She shakes her head again, and her frown only grows. She is looking for something, but...

I take a few steps in front of her, which will block off some of the wind and snow for her. It must be hard to push against the wind for her. Ocia follows behind her and me, making sure she is following.

The higher up the mountain we go, the slower she is going. That is even when Ocia nudges her from the back at times.

There is nothing here. We may as well be running in circles. She shivers some and there are tears in her eyes. It pains me to see her upset, but there isn't anything I can do to help her. I have no idea where she is trying to go and I have no idea what she is looking for.

Ocia lets out a soft moan. I spin around to see her sliding to the ground while Ocia tries to keep her upright.

I grab her before she falls and hugs her tight in my arms. She is shivering and shaking. I stroke her cheek while holding her up with an arm. Her face is cold. I have no idea whether her body is also cold.

She punches my chest. Probably not happy that she doesn't get to walk on her feet now. But her supposed-to-be punches are merely ticklish. She lets out a sigh herself and her arms drop to her side, which I carefully hold.

“Let's head to a safe place instead. I don't know what you are looking for, but we won't find it this way. Maybe there will be someone that can help you back in the village.”

She stares at me, tears swelling in her eyes still. She sighs and nods. I just feel the need to say something even though she won't understand me.

I hold her closer to me. This little human...

Ocia watches me and huffs. I nod to where the village is. “Let's go back there before the weather gets worse.”

It pains me to watch her fighting to stay awake. She must be exhausted trying to walk in the snow with those tiny feet. I have no idea whether she will end up dead if I let her fall asleep. I nudge her on the way while trying my best to stay focused on the path. Even though I am fit for this planet, stupidity can still kill me.

If it is up to me, I want to be here and watch her all day, but she shudders more as we walk. I speed up, so much that Ocia let out a low howl at me. If I breathe too fast, the cold air can hurt.

The village is close, but she is also getting closer and closer to falling asleep.

Chapter 10



Lexi

There is a warmth spreading from my toes to my feet, slowly making its way up to the rest of me.

Where am I?

There is darkness around me. My head and my face are still cold while my body seems to be warm.

Um... I shiver. I was on the mountain with a huge creature, um... Zefarin, that should be his name. I was with him, walking with a wolf, then...

What happened?

Am I dead now?

If this is how death feels like...

I still don't want to be dead!

I snap my eyes open. There are four creatures that are like Zefarin around me. They also have blue fur and dark hair. These are the females though, their leather clothes cover more than the bottom half of their bodies.

They smile and say something that I don't understand. But they are clearly happy that I'm not dead.

I blink and wriggle my toes when...

Fuck! I'm naked!

Oh... not exactly, I am in my underwear in a house with a ton of creatures around me. My feet are in a wooden tub of

steaming hot water. The water is a strange deep green, it is thicker than just water, and smells bitter, like some herb.

A female gives me a towel that is soaked with that strange green thing. I take it to be polite. I have no idea what this means and what the green is. I would rather be here with Zefarin. Where is he?

There are only females here, maybe they are trying to help me after... I don't even know what happened.

I rest the warm towel on my lap and rub my temple. A headache seems to be creeping up on me. Maybe I caught a cold when I was outside.

A female that is larger than the rest of them says something. Then another says something back to her. All the females look at each other with frowns on their faces. The larger one, who is probably their leader, looks at me again. She probably wants to ask me something, but can't figure out how.

“Um... I'm not cold now, thank you.”

The female squeezes out a smile.

This isn't going to work for sure.

She lets out a sigh and points at my clothes. All my stuff seems to be there on a chair in the corner, not that I have a lot. I never planned for my supposed-to-be short trip to end up being in a house with a lot of other creatures.

This room is a pretty big one, looks like an indoor swimming pool. I am in a corner of the room with a large rectangular swimming pool-like thing in front of me that has a

step made of stone, caving into the ground. It looks to be empty for now. I can't see the bottom of the pool when I am sitting here.

Either this is a place for these creatures to take a bath, or this is a place to swim. There are only the four of us in this room, while this place probably can house twenty creatures that are like them. Can fit even more humans, for sure. Maybe this isn't the time for taking a bath, therefore few are here.

Faintly, there is steam coming from the pool-like thing. There isn't the smell of stuff burning, though.

Maybe it is a hot spring or something like that. There isn't a smell of rotten egg here, so there isn't a ton of sulfur in the spring if there is any. It will be interesting to look into what's under the crust of this planet.

Hot spring will mean that there is heat somewhere inside the planet. But this place is so cold... and from the records I got from the spaceship, the whole planet is always covered by snow.

I shiver. Somehow, the four creatures are watching me. Maybe they want to make sure I am fine. So maybe this isn't a time to think about research and studies. Or maybe it is time to get to know more about these creatures and their lifestyle.

I nod at my clothes and stand. But before I can move a step, a female that is by my side nudges me to sit. They give me another towel, this time, a dry one, so I wipe myself dry, mostly my leg and I make sure I clean myself out of those messy green water.

They then clothe me and don't let me do it myself. Among these bigger creatures, I feel like a kid despite I am a grown adult.

Now that I think about it, it is cozy and warm here, not like the snowstorm that is probably still raging. I turn to the window as one of the females lifts the sleeves for me to put my arms in. I am not a kid... Maybe humans are smaller, I'm not that young...

The sky is still gray out there, slightly better than the night I spent in the cave with Zefarin. That probably was yesterday, but I wasn't sure. I was out for a bit and I can't be certain this is the next day. I could be out for longer.

I shiver. Out for longer... Or maybe... out for forever... Doesn't sound fun at all.

The leader wraps her arms around me and says something.

"Um... I'm not cold. I'm fine..." I pat her back; the only thing I can do when she is that much larger than me.

I really am warm. My clothes are still working, and this room is warm, probably from the steaming water. Strange how big a difference it can make.

The female grins and nods, finally releasing me from the bone-crushing strong hug. Maybe instead of thinking I am a kid, she should remember she is strong enough that she can crush me easily.

When I am about to tell them I want to leave, there's a knock at the door.

The one that is closest to the door says something and heads there. She opens the door to a narrow gap and says something to whoever is outside. She is far away and when the others are pouring the green water somewhere.

The door eventually opens and Zefarin is there. He grins at me, so he is a real creature and not an illusion from how hungry I was when I set out to look for food.

He waves for me to go to him when he can come to me. Or maybe he shouldn't come in here? Only females allowed here?

I go to him. He is the only thing, if I can say that about him, other than my clothes that is remotely familiar. At least he feels that way. He squeezes my shoulder and says something.

I swallow. Seeing him... when I get close to him, I remember how much larger and taller he is compared to me. I am only as tall as his chest, which is kind of embarrassing. At least those females are also slightly smaller than him. But still not that small.

A female chuckles and says something. Zefarin nods and gestures for me to follow him. I wonder what that's about. I quickly put on my boots again and follow him. I won't find out unless I go and have a look.

The moment I step out of the house, I want to head back inside again. The snow is still bad outside and maybe my clothes aren't working as amazingly as I hope they will. Zefarin lifts the hood of my coat and puts it over my head. My heart skips a beat. Maybe he is a kind and gentle creature.

I gasp when I pull my eyes from him. I'm in a village of these creatures, it seems. In front of me is a circular clearing with a pole at the center. Despite the dim gray sky, there is a faint shadow of the pole on the floor. There is nothing near the pole. Maybe it is there to be used as a clock?

The small clearing is formed because of the houses that are built around it. Those are made of stone, reasonable when the snowstorm seems to be bad, and may always be there. They are all short with only one level, but maybe they have built something underground, which should be easier than building taller houses. These houses are boring gray, the gray is so dark that it is almost black. No decoration whatsoever from the outside, every house looks the same. None of those are lit either. Maybe it is early in the day and most are working somewhere.

There is a group of four males with batches of some kind of plant that looks like barley or wheat under their arms. One of them has a necklace that is like the one Zefarin has now.

I don't remember whether Zefarin also had it in the cave, I didn't pay attention at all. It takes a while before I can tear my eyes off his half-naked body when we were in the cave, noticing the necklace wasn't high on the list.

All the males are in the same leather skirt thing, and all of them are half-naked. Maybe they really don't feel cold. It looks like the leather is also only there to cover them up instead of providing warmth.

For once, maybe I hope I have fur on my body.

I am wrapped up from head to toe in my clothes, but somehow, it still feels cold out there. These creatures definitely don't feel the same way.

The one with the necklace gives Zefarin a nod. He has a wide grin when he sees me. He says something to Zefarin, which, as usual, I don't understand a thing, other than Zefarin's name.

Zefarin shakes his head and despite his blur fur, there seems to be a blush on his face. He glances at me before pointing somewhere else. I follow his fingers. He is pointing at a cluster of buildings at a distance. Those are gray like the other houses but larger and wider.

The male with the necklace chuckles and heads that way. The other three males look at me for a bit longer before they follow their leader. One of them still has his eyes stuck to me for a bit longer before he turns around, and before he bumps into others.

I shiver. There is a reason I choose to be researching and doing field studies on different planets instead of picking a job that I will be watched and looked at all day.

Zefarin wraps an arm around me and pulls me to him. He hugs me so tight that I almost can't breathe. I don't mind him hugging me. We already fucked each other. A hug won't break me, but why hug me here and now? We are still in the open and there can be other creatures...

Wait... is that the reason he hugs me like this? Because he knows those other males are looking at me?

My heart flutters, and the flame that was in my stomach seems to be back. Is that what that's about? Zefarin wants everyone to know that... I'm... his?

He hugs me so tightly that I almost run out of breath. I hug him back and rub his fur. He is so warm and... I know I am safe with him. I like how his arms and his body seemingly cover me completely. I snuggle to his chest, which is everything I can feel when he hugs me like this.

He murmurs something. His voice alone almost set me on fire. He better keep—

His arms are off me now... He gives my shoulder a squeeze and gestures for me to follow him. I reach for his hand and he holds me. He has a big hand that can be a good glove.

Those other males are nowhere to be seen now.

There are mountains around this village, while the village itself seems to be built from the pillar at the center, forming circles and circles around it. We are heading in the opposite direction from those creatures that are heading to the warehouse.

We turn a corner and arrive at another alley. There are more of those similar houses. If I walk alone here, maybe I will get lost.

Is Zefarin walking me to his home? I won't mind visiting there, but with him alone in a room or a house sounds like we will be inviting trouble.

Those creatures that pass us by earlier and we are now passing by all glance at me. It sure feels like I am a special species or something. It seems like only Zefarin's kind lives here. Guess no one else likes this cold and freezing planet other than these furry ones.

We stop in front of a house that I swear I can't distinguish from the other houses. Zefarin knocks on the door. It squeaks open, and he heads inside, greeting someone. I follow behind him, but I don't know what to say to greet the one inside. The word sounds like it is "ricoshe".

No one opened the door for us, so it probably is opened by remote control or something. One would think less visited planets are less developed in terms of technology.

Am I here investigating a planet with a blue semi-human specie? I bet some will love to work on this topic, but not me.

I frown at the strong scent of fresh soil. These creatures use nothing to pad the ground. These are houses built right on the soil ground. They only got rid of the snow and called it a day.

Inside the house, there is a door on the side that leads to another room. In the center is a wooden table. There are a few packs of chips on the table. In a way, those don't fit the scene at all.

This village feels like somewhere remote from a busy city or other planets, but these chips suggest that they have a connection with other planets, not that I can't guess from how Zefarin looked at my ears when we found out we didn't understand each other's languages.

There are a few chairs on the sides. Those are stone ones like those in the cave. These don't look too different from those humans or other creatures use.

Maybe I am expecting to see something special which I have no idea what that should be.

There is a window on the other side of the door, which is a narrow one, maybe specially designed to survive the storm. It is dim inside when there are no candles and no torches here.

Zefarin shouts something. There is a frown on his face, as if he is expecting someone to be around. I rub the back of his hand with my thumb. He turns to me with a weak smile. It seems like he has been thinking through something important. And maybe we are meant to be here to meet someone important.

It takes a while and some shuffling noises from somewhere in the house. From a room to the side, a creature comes out to the living room. He is a small one compared to Zefarin, but he doesn't look like a kid. Well... this one is small compared to the rest of his kind, but almost the same size as an average human.

He nods to Zefarin and bows his head. Zefarin gestures at me and says something. That male looks, and me and says something to me. If Zefarin only meant for me to meet this one, he would have told him that our languages don't work, then this one won't talk to me.

I ask, "Um... Hello? Are you here to translate for me?"

The male rubs his wrist with a frown. He says something more to me, but I still don't understand him. I already know two different languages, but those still aren't the right ones. Sometimes, I hate how everyone speaks different things.

Zefarin says something. I think he is trying to see whether this is working, but he is smart, so he probably figured out that this isn't working.

The male shakes his head and says something. He points at the window, or the outside, shaking his head. Maybe he means for me to wait for some merchants to arrive here and that they will be able to understand me.

Merchants will. They know that they will meet other creatures and they will be smart enough to have the translator earbuds or something with them that will make communication possible.

Or I just have to make it back to the ship...

Well... I tried, and that didn't end well. I have no idea where the ship is. When I first met Zefarin, maybe I stood a chance, but now... After he carried me to the cave and us making it to his village, there is no way I can find my way back.

I sigh. "Zefarin. Thanks. I understand it isn't that easy for this to work."

Zefarin frowns and nods. He probably can guess, or I will pretend that he can guess. He squeezes my hand and probably

thanks the other creature before we leave the house. The male picks up the pack of chips at Zefarin, but he shakes his head.

There is a tension inside Zefarin that spikes when he stares at the sky outside. Something must be wrong.

I stare at the sky with him. It is gray, boring, and seemingly sinister... The storm feels like a monster that is trying to swallow us and the village full.

And... the spaceship...

Chapter 11



Zefarin

It is a nice day after I am back from the cave. Finally, I am here with my fellow. I fix my necklace as I head out of my house.

At the door, Ocia is chewing on a piece of bone. The hunting team has been working hard to treat the game, so Ocia managed to snag one for himself.

He turns to me and lets out a huff; his way of greetings. I stroke his head and he is back to working on his bone.

I give my house another glance before I head off to the field. Same as the day I tried to help but was interrupted by Ocia missing, I would try to help my fellow.

Lexi is still asleep, at least she was when I leave the bed. I wish to stay with her longer, maybe the whole day, but I shouldn't.

Strange how that woman grows on me. I go down the path when I meet a few of the hunting team, they are carrying dried meat and sausages.

Now I am hungry, but it isn't mealtime yet. No food before some work is done.

In the field, Brutus is there harvesting with the team. I take a deep breath as I stare at the field that seemingly leads to the horizon. It will take about half an hour to walk from where I stand to the other side of the fence and that's the narrower side.

At a distance from the square tiles that form the field when combined together, all the white blends together and forms nice waves when the storm blows against them. The team has already harvested the left side of the field. About two dozen creatures are all busy slashing their curved daggers at the thofes. It is nice to be here with my guys.

Brutus waves his dagger at me in the field with a grin. If I am not here on the higher pile of soil, I wouldn't even see him; the thofes are that tall. There is already a stack of harvested thofes by his feet. I head down the fields to reach him.

He gives me a spare dagger that is tied to his belt. "Good morning, hopefully, you've spent a nice night with your female."

My heart flutters. A stream of warmth surges inside me. It was a nice evening indeed. I loved how she moans and screams. I didn't need to understand her words to know that she was having fun and enjoying herself.

"Zefarin..."

"Oh, what?" Did I miss something?

Brutus chuckles. "Well, if you aren't careful, you will chop off your finger."

I blink. I haven't even started with the harvesting... How dare he say this to me?

"I'm fine. You don't have to worry about it. I have been harvesting with the team for longer than I can remember." I bunched up a handful of the thofes, cutting them off, leaving

almost half of the stalk in the land. We don't need the whole plant, only the head of it for the grain and part of the stalk that will make it easier to carry them.

“I never expect that you will come back with a female. She is a human.”

I nod. Yes, she is a human. This isn't the first time the village meets a human, yet everyone stares at her. The warmth in my stomach turns into a flame. I don't like that. Only I get to look at her all the time.

I swallow and focus on slashing down the thofes. I am here to work, not to wonder about her.

Last night, she clenched onto my fur so hard that she may be able to tear some off. It hurt, but...

No, work and get stuff done.

“She doesn't belong to this planet.” Brutus's words stuck in my mind for longer than they should have.

I'm about to slash at another handful, but I can't. My hand freezes in the air, not because of the storm.

Brutus shrugs and has his eyes on the thofes still. “I don't know. She probably ended up here against her will, like some kind of accident brought her here. Whoever she should be with will probably come here and look for her.”

That is possible. She was trying to look for something when we were getting back here from the cave. Was she trying to look for her friends or her group of merchants?

I lower the dagger before I will look too stupid with my arm in the air. I know she doesn't belong here and she will leave someday, but...

That isn't what I should be thinking about. She is here now and no merchant will be here during the storm season unless they are beyond stupid. If she is looking for other merchants, those probably are already dead in the storm.

This being said... Are there more stuck in the mountain?

But Ocia only found Lexi, it seems.

I found her and picked her up, does that mean I get to keep her for myself?

My cock twitches and I can only hope Brutus doesn't see it. He is busy with work, and my alxi should be able to hide it; it is made of strong leather after all.

It will be great if I can wake up to see her face and with her in my arms. She likes to be with me.

I chop down another handful of thofes when something moves on the higher land near the fence. I look up and Lexi is there. My heart flutters and I can't stop a smile. She seems to be confused.

I couldn't tell her to stay in the village because of stupid language issues, though I would much like she to stay there, away from some annoying gazes on her that aren't mine.

Brutus clears his throat. "Hey, do you still want to stay here in the field? She is probably here looking for you."

I shake my head. “Don’t think so. She is just curious. It’s not like I have a way of telling her to stay in my place.”

“Hm... you don’t want her walking around? Don’t worry about it, everyone knows she is yours.”

“Huh?” A shiver runs down my spine. I like how that sound; mine. But what is Brutus implying?

“Didn’t you hug her so tightly when you run into the team yesterday? That’s pretty clear you are keeping her.”

“Oh...” I want that. Now more than before.

When I first ran into her, I was planning to set her back on her way to wherever she was from. But now... I like how she snuggled against my chest when she fell asleep with a smile. Can I keep her as mine?

I say, “Well, no meczis has a mate that’s not our own kind.”

“There are no rules against that either.” Brutus puts another handful of thofes to the side, adding to his pile that is a lot bigger than mine, even taking into account that he has been here longer than me.

My cheek is burning by now. “They won’t accept it.”

“Who is they?” Brutus chuckles. He points at my necklace. “This alone, you can do what you want. You are our leader.”

I shake my head. That is even more reason that it won’t happen. I should be showing how things should be done. “I’m supposed to be finding a mate here, or in nearby villages.”

Brutus shrugs and gets back to work. I think he is testing me. The village also values his opinion highly, he is wise and gives good advice. He probably also knows that it is not the right thing to do if I want Lexi as my mate. Keeping her is probably fine, for now. But then...

I stare at Lexi when she seems to be figuring out what we are doing in the field. I'm not sure whether humans do farming back there or if they have other means to get food. All humans I had met before are merchants, not many, but I suppose that is just one of the many job choices for them.

Chapter 12



Lexi

So here is where these guys work? Looks like some farmland.

Those planes that are white and maybe with a bit of grey sway in the storm. They look like wheat farms, but these are a lot more packed. It looks like they are also a lot taller than wheat. On this planet, everything is bigger, the creatures and the plants alike.

Zefarin is over there. I know how tall he is, these plants are tall for sure.

Zefarin is talking to someone when they harvest the plant. Maybe I can help them... carry some of these?

There are a few that are walking up the stairs to the raised land surrounding the tiles of crops. They all have batches of crops under their arms, just like the crew Zefarin and I met in the village yesterday.

The leading one grins and nods at me. "Ricoshe."

Um... "Ricoshe." This better means good morning, hello, or something like that.

He chuckles and nods. Apparently, he is happy to see me learn a thing or two about them. I would have learned more if there were someone that could teach me.

The others that are with him look at each other and greet me. Something doesn't feel right, but I can't point a finger at it. Maybe I am not using their language as intended.

They know they can't blame me for not knowing exactly what the word means, right?

I gesture to help them with carrying the stack while they shake their heads. The leading one nods to where they are heading. I think they mean I can go with them and they will show me around? Or do they mean that I should go back to Zefarin's place? Those are in the same area, away from the field.

They start walking, so I follow them. I have no idea where I am in terms of the village. While I stay here, I think I should try to help, but... I don't know how I can help these creatures that are larger and stronger than me.

When we are back in the plaza-like place in the center of the village, there is a ring of a bell. I look to where it is from when there comes a group of kids. They are small creatures with equally blue fur and with cute smiles on their face. Most of them are as tall as my waist, which is small compared to the adults.

They look at me with curiosity and a few come close. They surround me like the kids they are, but the only problem being they are stronger than they look to be. A few squeeze my hands and stroke my wrist, which is the only part of me that is exposed to the cold air other than my face.

There is a female who hurries over, saying something, loud enough that she covers every kid's voice.

The kids part way to the sides for her while she sighs and gestures for the kids to leave me alone. She comes to my side

and pats my shoulder. She points at the building where the kids come from, then she says something to a kid that is closest to me. That one turns around and shows me the backpack he has with him.

So these are probably students? If so, this female should be their teacher.

She takes out a book from the kid's backpack and shows it to me. I think this is her way of telling me that these kids are still young and they don't mean to scare me or anything.

She says something to those kids and gives that kid the book again. Those kids spread and go to different houses, probably back to their own place.

The teacher remains and greets me with a smile. "Ricoshe."

"Ricoshe." I still don't know what I am saying and I hope she knows that I have no idea what I am saying.

She points at the field, then gestures at the plaza. She then points at the school. I have no idea what she is trying to say. Not a single clue. She tilts her head to the side as she comes up with a way to let me know what she means. Despite the kids are gone, she is still here. Maybe she wants me to do something or go somewhere with her.

"Um... I can do what you want me to do. Though I have no idea what you want from me."

She blinks. She lifts a hand and has the other in a fist in front of her, then she motions the hand in the air at the fist. A few kids are heading back to the plaza. They don't have a

backpack now. Maybe they are here to gather for... oh... maybe this is a teaching day in the field?

The teacher points at the sky and gestures harvesting again. Or maybe it means that she is asking whether I will go help out in the field with the kids. Pointing at the sky probably means that the weather is getting bad so they have to hurry.

I nod and gesture the same motion. I also point to where those creatures that are moving the crop went. They are already gone by now, when I got caught in waves of kids. I'm a human, not someone that the kids will run into on a daily basis, so I understand their curiosity.

The teacher grins and nods. Let's hope we actually understood each other.



Zefarin

Lexi comes back to the field with the kids. I want to be there with her, but... I probably should be here with Brutus and the rest of the team. The kids always help out after they finish school, even more so when the storm season is approaching quickly.

While the team will harvest, the kids will cut down the stalk that we don't need and arrange them on the tiles. Later, the team will be back to bury all of those under soil and snow. When the storm is over, the land will be ready for us again.

She is there working with those kids...

Brutus clears his throat next to me. “Hm... Do you want to be there with the kids?”

I shake my head. “No, I’m just thinking about whether Lexi knows what is happening.”

“Ah, I have no idea about that. But she seems happy and the kids like her. They are of a similar size. Maybe she will feel more at ease.”

Oh... I haven’t thought of that before.

I stare at my hand with the dagger. I have my fur, not like her. Is it a bit too much to expect that she will like my fur? It is strange for a human to be with me, right?

Brutus’s voice shakes me out of my thoughts again. “Now that I think about it. Did we tell the merchants to come back again? I think they are happy with the leather and the meat we gave them, and they knew we are happy with the food and fresh produce. But did we make it clear we want them to be here again?”

I blink. “I think Cartzu did? I also talked to their leader. He is a pretty chill male with few words.” That one really was. He seldom finished a sentence and one of his team would jump in when things weren’t working well.

“Indeed, I think he has a human as his mate.”

My heart skips a beat again and I can’t stop myself from glancing over at Lexi again.

What does this mean? Why did Brutus bring that up?

I say, “Really? I only remember that leader with his yellow scale and one in his team has tentacles.”

Brutus blinks. “There is no way you don’t remember there is a human there. That female is very close to the yellow scale.”

“I don’t remember. That one isn’t the leader after all.”

“So is the tentacle, but you remember her.”

I bite my tongue to stop myself from talking. I probably won’t say a thing that will work well for me. “I will carry these to the warehouse.” I point at the two stacks beside him and me respectively. The collecting team may come later, but no harm in bringing these in first. It reduces clutter.

Brutus shrugs. “Sure, go ahead.”

I pull a rope from my belt and tie the stack, then move on to Brutus’s stack. I remember that female and that yellow scale, that nekrozzro? I don’t remember his specie well, that’s not something we tend to focus on anyway. They are definitely together. There is a ring on the female’s finger that matches the nekrozzro’s horns.

After the stacks are ready, I pick them up and hold them under my arms. The kids are still working on the stalks while Lexi is there with the teacher watching the kids. They are quiet because neither can understand the other. Just like Lexi and I, we snuggle and stick to each other. Sometimes she will say something. I like hearing her voice, but that’s all about it.

After I walk past them and probably out of their vision, I silently sigh. The more I think about it, the more... how a group of humans will arrive here after the storm is over stirs my stomach. I want her to stay... but she won't see this place as her home. Probably.

But I want her to stay...

I picked her up and saved her life after all...

Chapter 13



Lexi

It is a long day, so long that when I waved goodbye to the last kid, I couldn't even feel my arms and my legs.

Then I forget what happened. I end up in the house now. It is Zefarin's place. His battle axes are hung to the side. I don't remember walking back here, maybe he carried me here. He loves to carry me around. Makes me feel like a kid, but that has always been a comfortable ride, so comfortable that I probably fell asleep again. I blame his fur, which makes his body warm and makes him amazing for hugs.

Now I sit on the chair in front of the window and stare at the outside. The storm is still going. When I was outside, I had to dust off the snow that was on me often, before they may melt and made my coat wet. I rest a hand on the window, but it is so cold that I soon pull back. I am a coat less than when I was outside, but it is still chilly here.

When can I leave this place? I don't even know whether the storm will get better. The village doesn't seem to be very advanced when it comes to technology, I doubt I can find something that will help. I'm only here for a few short days but have never seen Zefarin with anything remotely involving technology.

I have nothing with me... I should have at least brought my phone with me... But there is no telling whether there is a connection here. The communication system in the spaceship

uses different means to connect than my phone, so even if that works, there is no telling if my phone will also work.

There is an ache inside my chest, I want to scream, but I don't want to worry Zefarin. He is probably out there doing stuff.

No idea where he is.

I don't want to see him at this moment. I want my own quiet time. I sniff and my vision blurs. I rub my eyes, hoping my tears won't freeze into ice.

I need to move some to clear my mind, but my legs are too tired and they refuse to move.

I slump on the chair, it is the wall of the window in front of me that stops me from ending up on the floor. The snow outside is storming down to the ground. It is so dense that I can't see far ahead.

In the distance, it seems there are a few creatures walking with stuff in their hands.

I have flown spaceships for a while now. This weather isn't good for landing, also not good for searching for someone. The ship itself will be fine with landing in a snowstorm. That is designed to survive small comets, so some snow won't bother it. But it doesn't mean that is ideal.

What is the rest of my team doing? Will they worry about me when I don't respond to any of their messages? Or... did they even leave me a message? Have they forgotten about me?

I still have research data with me that I should have handed in already, but maybe they would write that part off and pretend they need something else. It isn't like we must look into the planet I was on before I ended up here.

It would be easier to just call it a day, write me off as a lost cause and move on...

Funding for the research center has been limited, flying here to look for me will cost them extra. I have been a good researcher and employee, but not someone they can't live without.

The gray sky stares at me, seemingly laughing at how miserable it can make me. I guess it can always win and can always do whatever it wants to do.

Maybe my boss has already hired someone else to take my spot and she doesn't care about me anymore. Without supply or reinforcement, she knows that I will be dead here. I doubt there will be any consequence for her when she can say that my death is because of an accident, which she won't be wrong either.

I rub my eyes again, also my cheek. Maybe it will be easier if I were dead, but now I am here with some creatures that don't talk my language. Zefarin will... Well... Will Zefarin worry about me if I am dead or missing?

He holds me in his arms every night for the little time we have spent together. We had fun and enjoyment together, but that's probably it. Maybe for him, I'm a toy or some kind. It's

not like a big creature like him will care about me when I am barely helpful.

I stare at my hands. I am not good at their farm work. Those kids have bigger hands than me and they can slash down those stalks quicker than I can.

Something warm tickles my arm and I jump. There is a low moan from my side.

Ocia stares at me with those scary eyes. I shiver and move back into the chair. What does he want to do with me? I don't look like food and I don't look tasty, right?

He rests on the floor and rolls over, showing his stomach to me. I have no idea what he wants. This isn't a normal action I see him do though. Is he here...

He rolls over again and before I can blink, he licks my cheek.

I slap him to the side. He moans and walks off. Before he will be out of the room, he sits by the door and watches me.

My heart races. What is he trying to do?

I suppose if he is trying to eat me, he won't leave as soon as I slapped his face. He is still watching me. Maybe he is now further away from me, he doesn't look that scary.

This is harder than I can manage to guess.

I rub my cheek where he licked me. A few of my tears are back now. I sigh and turn back at the window. There is the smell of food from the living room, maybe Zefarin is cooking

something for dinner. Smells like the stew I had in the cave, but I'm not hungry. Or maybe I should be hungry after I worked the whole day. I have no appetite.

With how crazy the storm is, I can't even see a star in the sky. It can also be too early for stars.

Is anyone really trying to help me?

Something nudges me again. I am too tired to jump despite my heart still skipping a beat. Whatever that is...

It is Ocia, he watches me again after he nudges me with his nose. I glance at him, then stare at the window again. If he wants to eat me for dinner, he can have at it. I'm too tired to do anything to stop him.

He licks my hand, maybe sampling his food. He is such a large beast by my side. Maybe I should be concerned, but I can't muster the energy to be cautious.

I sigh. "Ocia, what do you want? I'm tired. You can gobble me up without spending a ton of effort."

He grunts and keeps licking my hand. I still have no idea what he wants to do. I stroke his muzzle and he snuggles closer. Hm... Maybe he wants to be here to keep me company?

"Ocia... you got bored? Has nothing else to do? I don't have food for you."

He lingers around me and rests his head on my lap. He must have forgotten that I'm a lot smaller than Zefarin, and he must

have never known that his head is heavy. But if he wants to keep me company, it will be rude to push him aside.

Ocia has comfortable fur too. I have nowhere else to put my hands now that he is on my lap, staring at me with those eyes.

Maybe something is wrong with me, but maybe he isn't that scary. I rest my hand on his side and stroke him. I have nothing better to do.

The storm is still raging while the sky grows dimmer. It is getting late now, so today, no one is here rescuing me.

Chapter 14



Zefarin

Something is wrong.

Lexi isn't enjoying her food at all. I know how she eats when she is happy. Today isn't the day. Her seat isn't facing the window, but she keeps looking that way.

I dip a piece of bread into the stew and give it to her. She blinks when I wave it at her. She takes it and takes a bite, but her mind is clearly elsewhere.

"Ocia seems to like her," Kivea says.

Indeed, Ocia is having his food by the corner, his favorite spot, but his eyes are glued onto her.

I saw him snuggling with her a moment ago, before dinner was ready. Sometimes, Ocia has special power with calming creatures, even though he is a formidable hunter. I have no idea how that works, but if Lexi enjoys him around, that's for the best.

I nod. "I think so. Ocia is the one saving her from the snow. He went to search for her."

Kivea sighs. "I wish I knew what he was trying to do. He was a bit too fast. Especially when we had the game with us. Glad he found her. She is alone?"

Lexi is staring at the window again. She is still holding the piece of bread, but she doesn't seem to want to eat it further. On any other occasion, this is so rude to Mother who prepared

the meal. But I have no idea what is on her mind. This also isn't the first day she looks like this. She has been this way since the moment I met her — looking for something or someone.

Mother frowns. “She can't be alone, right? Usually, merchants travel in groups.”

I shake my head. “I have no idea. I don't understand her language, vice versa.”

Father lets out a low groan. “Language... Cartzu?”

I shake my head again. “I've asked him. He says that it sounds like the language some merchants used, but he has no clue. Usually, it is the merchants that provide the means of translation.”

Father strokes his hair and dusts off a few scraps of the bread that ended up on him. “Maybe we should consider having a set of those handy earbuds with us. Has been a while now, or say, generations by now, but we never give that a thought.”

Mother chuckles and helps Father with a scrap on his chest. “Can't blame them when merchants are usually only here for a bit and will leave soon. Most of the time, we don't need a translator.”

Both of them aren't wrong. I can never foresee getting myself a female.

Hm... That sounds... That doesn't sound like how I intended when I first found her. But I like how that sounds.

It will be even better if Lexi isn't staring at the window. When I talk to others, she usually will watch with curiosity, but not now.

All she can manage to see seems to be the window and the storm, which is remotely interesting. The storm has been that way since she arrived here, getting slightly worse by the day.

Kivea says, "You think there is someone looking for her therefore she keeps staring?"

I also think that's the case, but I want her to stay here with me. "No idea. Maybe they will think that she is dead and won't be looking for her."

Mother sighs. "That is possible. Will be sad for sure. She must have people she cares for and misses. It will be a sad day for them."

I scowl. There is a pain inside me. I hope Lexi will be happy but at the same time... I want her here with me.

If only I know what was on her mind...

Kivea says, "Maybe we will have to wait until another group of merchants arrives here. They will be able to find out where she comes from, probably."

He is right, I also know that. Part of me wants her to be back with her creatures, but... I still want her here and it isn't like I can leave my creatures either.

I shudder when Lexi is now looking at me. There is no way she suddenly understands what we are talking about, right?

She lets out a soft sigh, but plasters a smile on her face. She finishes her bread and stands, even though there is still half of the stew left in her bowl.

I point at the bowl. She shakes her head and pats her stomach. I don't believe that she is full though. More like, she doesn't want to eat anything and has tried to eat some already. She squeezes my shoulder, nods to everyone, and heads back to her room, our room.

Mother sighs. "She isn't happy here. I wish we can help her."

It will be hard to not see that. But there is nothing we can do. I say, "I just wish I can know what's on her mind. It must be hard to be in a place where she knows no one and she knows nothing. Not to mention other than the basic stuff, there is no way for her to understand anything."

Ocia stands and follows her into the room. I want to go there with her, but I'm... not sure whether she wants me there. Maybe Ocia can do a better job than me.

Kivea finishes his bread and gulps down his stew. "I think I have to go check on the meat to make sure they are staying put there and smoking well."

Father nods. "I will join you to be safe."

Mother says, "Sure, be careful. Somehow this looks to be a tough year."

I frown. "Brutus thinks that this is similar to the past years."

“Maybe. Just a feeling, not from the sky. Brutus may be more accurate. It just feels like something is off for me. The two of you should get going now.”

Kivea and Father head to the door. They will go to their own place and grab their battle axe before heading to the preparation site.

Quite a long time ago, animals barged into the place to steal our food, which those on guard fought off. So bringing along weapons will be safer.

I am about to help with the dishes when Mother lifts a hand and stops me. She asks, “Son, you like that female inside, right?”

“What do you mean?” I didn’t look too suspicious during the dinner, right?

“I’m just wondering. You know the thing I’ve told you before?”

I know but I don’t want to acknowledge that. “That’s not an issue. I can hold myself together well. No one is against how I’m on my own. They don’t need me to have a mate before they will respect me.”

She squeezes the bread in her hand and it soaks up more of the stew. “I know. But I think she will help you when you find her.”

“Who she?”

Mother shrugs. “The female you will claim as your mate. Any idea?”

So she doesn't mean Lexi. Maybe I should be happy that she says nothing about Lexi staying in my place. "I have no idea. You know I have met others from nearby villages. Maybe having a mate isn't in my cards."

There is a nudge inside me and my cock twitches. Lexi's face flashes in my face again. I have no idea what that means though. She is a human.

Mother says, "But you know every meczi has their mate. Your mate is somewhere out there for sure."

"Maybe they aren't even on this planet. How am I supposed to know? How can I be certain my mate is somewhere in the villages?"

She let out a soft chuckle and swallows a mouthful of food. "You will know when you meet her. We don't know whether she is around in the villages, you aren't wrong about it. But you will meet her."

"You are so confident with it. Every meczi female I've met, I don't feel anything special for them."

"Hm... maybe that's not a meczi?"

"What?" I stare at Mother. Am I hearing things? "What do you mean? She isn't a meczi?"

"Who knows." Mother glances at the door to my bedroom, where Lexi is in. "I have never seen a meczi with a mate that is not our kind. But who knows? We have met merchants through the years, some of their mates aren't the same species as them."

I frown. There is no way Mother will say something like that. There is no way she is fine with Lexi being my mate.

My heart skips a beat. When did she begin to be my mate in my mind? I know I want to keep her, but I don't know whether I really should ask her about it.

Mother says, "But she has no fur."

So we are talking about Lexi after all?

I nod. "Yes... this weather is going to be tough for her."

Mother finishes the last bit of her food and lets out a soft sigh again. I hate to hear that, but in a way, maybe I can guess part of her concern. She is always someone with a big heart and is nice to everyone in the village.

From what Father tells me, he found her in the village across the mountain. He was there to meet with their leader to discuss the hunting season and where the villages should stay within.

We are friendly with each other, but making it clear before there could be issues is always the smart way to go.

It was in the village Father met Mother. She was amazing at raising livestock and she had a way with cooking. They are meant together. Father felt it in his heart, and so did Mother. When Father came back, they were together.

That is what I've heard from Father and sometimes from Mother. Father always talks about it with a grin on his face while Mother will blush with a chuckle.

I can remember the story they told me, but I don't understand how that will happen for me. I have been to all the places as I am now the leader of my tribe and as Father has decided to step back and let me and my generation take up the plaza.

Mother stands and picks up the bowls, so I follow and help her with them. She says, "I don't know how to describe the feeling. You just know."

"She has to be a meczi like me. This is what everyone expects."

Mother chuckles when she puts down the bowls next to the sink. "When did you start caring about what others think? If you did, you will have gotten yourself a mate. You can always find someone that suits you if it comes down to that."

"I thought I should wait for my mate."

"You know what that means. Someone that you enjoy and will commit to, and who you will work with and come out as a better male."

Maybe...?

Chapter 15



Zefarin

I head into my room when Mother has left. It is dark outside and the inside of the room is even darker. Not too dark I can't see, but dark enough that I have to be careful with my steps.

Something moves on my bed, Ocia is there, and he sees me. He lets out a low huff and slowly moves to the side. Lexi has already fallen asleep. Her arm slips and ends on the bed when Ocia removes himself. Ocia heads out of the room, probably back to his spot in the house.

Now I am here, staring at Lexi. Her smile is lovely, a lot better than when she is awake and upset. I head over to her. Now that Ocia isn't with her and she didn't remember her blanket, she will get cold.

I get onto the bed and pull the blanket. I don't exactly need one, but she does. Maybe this isn't enough for her even when she has a coat on her, which has been with her since I found her, at least it will be better than none. We have the leather, but I doubt that will be enough either.

I like her smile. There is a warmth in my stomach, so much so that it will melt me. Given the snowstorm outside, this is quite something. The blanket covers her small body. I already folded the blanket in half and it is still enough for her, at least for the majority of her.

She probably will still feel cold, so I slowly slide my arm over her. I tried, but she moves the moment my arm is on her.

She has a sleepy smile as she watches me. There is sadness in her eyes and there are hints of dried tears on her cheek. It hurts to see her cry, but...

She snuggles to me and pecks a kiss on my cheek. I think she likes this so I wrap my arms around her more.

My heart is pumping so hard that it may jump out of me. Having her in my arms feels right. Feels like I am with the right female.

She says something, her voice is so sweet and cute. There is warmth in her eyes, and it looks like she isn't as sad as she was.

She moves some in my arms and is trying to roll over. I loosen my arms to see what she wants. She turns to face the window and points at it. There is nothing special out there though. Just the storm, like it always is, and will stay that way for another month or so.

"What's that about?" I ask her even though she won't understand me.

She lifts her hand and gestures for something to land on the bed.

Maybe that is a spaceship? And maybe she means that someone will be here?

She strokes my chest and kisses me on the lips. I like how her lips taste. She is sweet like a cute little snack. While her body isn't as hot as mine, her lips are always burning hot. I like this, I want this to be my everyday.

Lexi wraps her arms around me. She still can't wrap me up in full with those shorter arms, but I like that. She is extra cute with her attempt. She strokes my back and pecks another kiss on my cheek. She points at the window again. She waves her arms in the air, almost punching my face at the start.

I have no idea what she is trying to say, but she looks happy, or more like, excited.

She stops almost out of nowhere with her arms still in the air. She murmurs some, then her arms drop to her side. There are tears shiny in her eyes and she sniffs.

I gather her in my arms. She doesn't push me away, but she doesn't hug me back either. She is sobbing now. I have no idea what is wrong and I have no idea what to do.

"Hey," I whisper, "It is all going to be fine. I will take care of you."

She is crying now, her voice cut deep into me. I know it isn't about me, but... I kiss her tears, but she cries more.

Maybe she was trying to tell me what she hoped would happen, but then she decided that it won't actually happen and thus was upset.

I stare at the window as I stroke her back. She is sniffing and murmurs something more. Somehow, both of us find it strange to not say something even though we know we won't understand each other.

"I hope you will feel better soon. If only I know what you want, you know that I will try my best to help you." My heart

aches as I say that. If I know that she wants to be home, will I still be eager to help her?

She looks up at me and says something. She can't understand my words, right?

Her hand rests on my chest and she rubs me as if she is trying to get under my fur. I don't dare to move an inch. Sometimes, I wonder what's going on in her mind. She probably has a beautiful one.

Oof...! I stare at her with my eyes wide when her other hand slides to my cock. I am still in my alxi, but she is over me and rubs me. There is no way it is a mistake.

She stares at me with those watery eyes. Even though the room is dim, I can see her clearly. I swallow. "Are you sure?"

"Akunme?" she whispers.

I shudder. I don't expect her to... Or she picked up a word or two. I doubt she knows exactly what she is talking about. She strokes me harder, quicker, so much so that my cock twitches and there is a weak smile on her face.

So... this is what she wants? My cock? And for us to have some sex to maybe distract her? I... well, if she asks me like that, I am happy to give her what she wants.

"Sure, Lexi."

She reaches for the knot on my alxi and undoes it with ease this time. She learns quickly.

I am going to roll over and put her on the bed, but she shakes her head. She tugs on my alxi and gets me out of it, then she holds my cock with her tiny hands. Her hands are so soft and warm. I like her clothed, and I like her naked even more.

The only thing I have to complain about her is how many clothes she needs to stay warm

She moves herself over me. Her hand is shaking as she strokes me.

I gently squeeze her arm. “Don’t worry. We’ll just do this in your time and when you are ready. Don’t be scared. You know you like this.”

She watches me and rolls her eyes. Maybe she can guess what I’m saying, or my face doesn’t hide much.

My cock twitches as she strokes me more. While I said we can do this on her time, I hope the time comes sooner than later. I’m so hard that it hurts. I want to feel her. She is so tight and she squeezes me well.

She takes a deep breath while I reach for her pussy. She is already soaking wet. From what I guess, this means that she is more than ready for me, good and ripe.

But she is still staring at my cock despite her pussy sucking my finger. I suppose if I want to get it my way, I can. I’m definitely stronger than her, or say, can tease her more. But then...

I also take a breath myself. Patience is hard at times. She looks up, there is a naughty glint in her eyes. Is she here teasing me? That's so mean of her. She knows that I—

She lowers her body and my tip graces her entrance. She is so slick and so hot that... I clench a fist. I should wait here, but laying on the bed waiting isn't something I do. Even outside of sex, I hate to be waiting and I hate to do nothing.

Her body is shaking, maybe she is scared of me.

I can understand when I have a large cock for her body. But as we had tested before, she can take me and she can enjoy herself with me. If she was hurt last time, there is no way she will come asking for me this time around and the times before.

This is my cute human.

She takes in my tip. Her wall squeezes me as she lowers herself more and more. Her breaths are rugged, probably like mine, though for a very different reason.

I rest my hand on her ass, but I stop myself from shoving myself into her. She shivers and rests a hand on my chest, slowly taking in more of me.

I may or may not have tried to make that quicker by arching and moving some. I let out a soft breath when I can feel that, I'm in the deepest of her, so tempting to start moving some. Part of me is still out of her and it is amazing how her body can take me well.

Her eyes are closed for now and her pussy wets some more, squeezing me more. It is almost like she wants even more of

me into her, if that's even possible.

Everything feels right. She is right here with me and for me. I still have no idea how I ended up meeting her. This almost feels like a miracle.

She lets out a small moan as she moves and takes my cock. She picks up speed slowly as she accommodates my size better.

This isn't something my kind does. I want to be the one holding her down and taking her hard. But watching this woman pleasuring herself with my cock on her own is another thing.

I shiver when she moves more, quicker, enjoying herself more. I hold her waist so she won't fall off. Her voice is golden, maybe I don't need to understand her language after all. Having her here with me is more than enough.

Warmth pools inside me until I can't stop myself from squeezing her ass, thrusting up into her, and releasing my seeds deep inside her. She moans and squirms with a grin.

I want her. I stare into her eyes when she slumps onto me, resting on my chest sweaty. Her eyes close as she pants and seemingly tries to recover from the high. Maybe, just maybe, she also enjoys this.

Is this how it feels to have a mate here with me? Is she my mate despite she isn't my kind?

Maybe I do need to understand her language...

I wrap my arms around her. There are tears in her eyes again. My blood almost runs chill, that's until there is a smile on her face. I am... I have no idea what this means.

Is she happy? Is she not?

Chapter 16



Lexi

I don't remember how long it has been since I arrived on this planet. I don't remember how long it has been since I met Zefarin either.

Two weeks have passed for a long time now, it seems.

The sky still looks the same, gloomy with the snowstorm outside. The storm today looks thinner, but it is still out there. I'm so sick of it by now.

At least I'm not sick of my handsome furry creature. Zefarin can always put a smile on my face. As much as he can manage when I want to leave this planet and get out of this snowy place.

He is a few steps away from the bed now. He is also staring out of the window, but he is in front of the window, in front of me.

Now I'm not sure whether I'm staring at the sky out there or staring at his naked butt. I take in a breath. I'm not that better either. I am still holding onto the blanket, covering my naked body. he probably doesn't know that I'm awake by now. I don't plan to interrupt him either.

Despite his fur, he has a perfectly sculpted back with all those strong muscles. He is always there helping other creatures in the village with the farm and with distributing food.

I don't know whether this is the usual for them, but I will often go with him to a storage place, get food there, and go to distribute those. Those creatures on the receiving end are capable of going to collect those themselves, but maybe Zefarin loves to chat with them.

Would be a lot nicer if I could actually understand what he said. I don't, they also know I don't, so maybe they cut their conversation short so that I won't be too bored.

They didn't need to. I can enjoy Zefarin's voice. He doesn't talk much to me, just like me. Sometimes we still say words although we don't understand each other. Maybe we just like the sound of each other's voices.

He turns around from the window and his eyes light up. He comes over, within a blink, I'm in his arms again. He is warm like always, sometimes, I don't even need the blanket.

He says something with concern in his eyes. His voice reminds me of the mountains. A steep, rugged place that is good for a strong male.

"I'm not cold." I rub his fur regardless. He can always comfort me. I wish I can tell him my thoughts, but when he doesn't understand, maybe it is good in some way. I like him, but I also want to get out of here. Sometimes I wonder whether he is more familiar with my crying noise than my talking voice.

He nods and gives another strong hug. He is still naked. I think he used to sleep naked, the leather cloth he has doesn't look too comfortable, that is a bit too stiff.

“Zefarin, you are still going to get some work done, right?”
I point at the window, then gesture to push at the grinder.

Since the weather seems to turn for the worse and the daylight becomes shorter, the villagers switch to getting those wheat-like crops ground into something like flour. All the crops have been harvested and stored up. Maybe this is the winter time for them, or otherwise, a bad farming season.

He nods and sighs. He pecks a kiss on my forehead and moves away from me. I grimace at the loss of his warmth.

I often help them, but with the grinder, it is tough for me. Everyone in the farming team can use the grinder without a problem, even those females and some older kids.

Not me though...

I've tried more than once, but I can't. It isn't designed for a human like me. It is a large windmill-like thing with arms that are blown by the storm.

All I have to do is to pour in the grain at the opening, close the door, then watch the thing goes around and around. There will be a shuffling voice like a grinder for my juice. When the noise stops, I will go and push a lever, which will change the angle of the arms. The wind won't hit them as hard and they will slow. When it is slow enough, I will insert a thick wooden pillar to stop the arm completely, then I can take out the ground flour.

But I can't lift the damn wood... It is almost double the thickness of my thigh, even when I am not a thin woman by

any means.

If it is shorter, maybe I can manage, but it isn't. It is longer than me, my whole body, almost doubling it. I have tried to hold the end of it, but I would lose the leverage and can't lift it high enough. Or that will put me too dangerously close to the windmill arms inside the towers that I would get shouted at and stopped by the others.

If I don't have to lift it high, maybe I can manage, but I have to lift it all the way up to my shoulders to get it into the right place... For Zefarin and even some of the kids, it is waist height, which will be a ton easier for them than it is for me.

I hate how I can't help them. All I can do is call someone when the grain is ready...

Sometimes I would rather stay in the house. Zefarin lets me walk around whenever I want. Everyone else seems to know that I'm his and they are all very nice to me.

Zefarin is at the hanger, taking his leather. He looks at me, so I move to his side and help him with that. He doesn't need my help, but he likes to let me clothe him.

I don't mind that either. But when we are that close to each other... I wrap the leather around him and do the knot by his waist. He pecks a kiss on the tip of my ear. The fire that wasn't in my stomach a second ago spread to my cheek.

"Zefarin... if you don't stop this, you won't be out there working with the crew."

He chuckles and reached for his belt. He gives me another hug, bids me goodbye, and off he goes into the storm and the village.

Now I am alone again...

It is quiet in the house. The stone and the window keep the house safe from the storm. After Zefarin closes the door as he leaves, it isn't that cold here. Maybe I am getting used to the cold.

Speaking of which, I put the blanket beside me and get dressed. So much for getting used to the cold.

I stare at the window again. Is the spaceship still out there in the mountain? If I stayed there, maybe I would have been swallowed by the storm or starved to death.

Has the team been there already? They can track the spaceship, but not me. Maybe for them, I'm missing and probably dead.

I sigh... If that's the case, they would have left the planet and wouldn't be searching for me anymore. I suppose I can wait for merchants to visit this planet...

There are tapping noises coming from the living room, heading to the bedroom.

“Ocia?”

The large beast shows up at the door with a low hum. He stands there at the door of the bedroom, staring at me.

I gesture for him to come closer. Maybe he has nothing else to do. I bet Zefarin doesn't walk him. Ocia walks around on his own, he always remembers to come back for meals.

My heart skips a beat as he rests by the bed and when I stroke his fur. What am I for Zefarin? Another creature like Ocia? Am I a pet for him?

That's not what I want, but I won't know what's on his mind either.

Ocia...

"Ocia, if only you can talk. Then I won't be this bored. You are good at finding creatures, right? Will you be able to find someone that can help me?"

He is quiet. What else am I expecting anyway...

Maybe that day Ocia ran out of the village for some reason and somehow stumbled into me. "Thanks, Ocia. If it wasn't for you. Maybe I'm already dead."

He huffs and his ears move.

"What should I do today? Stare at the window? Go to the tower to prove to myself how I'm not suited for this planet? Cry some more when probably no one is here to save—"

There is a loud bang of some kind out there. I flinch, while Ocia jumps and growls. He runs out of the bedroom and I follow him. I have never heard a sound like that. It can't be something good.

Chapter 17



Zefarin

There are shouts in the plaza. I barely set down the tray for the grain before I dash out of the mill.

What is wrong? Did some beast dash into the village for food again? That hasn't happened in a long time.

As I head to the plaza, a few others are also heading that way. The storm is still strong and doesn't help to see far ahead.

But beasts won't make such a loud bang. It can't be those.

It doesn't take long before a large black thing reveals itself from the storm. It is a large spaceship, and it parks its ass in the plaza. The wooden pillar for tracking time is knocked off by it, probably the reason for the loud bang.

How rude!

I growl while my fellow creatures are already there, all gathering around the ship with battle axes ready.

If these are invaders with spaceships, I suppose we need something stronger. Something that we store in the warehouse.

Brutus is by my side. I nod to him and point at where we stored our better weapons. He dashes off, and I hiss at the spaceship.

A machine voice says something that I don't understand — the language of whatever creatures that are inside the ship with dubious motivation. Not the best start.

I take a breath. “What are you guys doing in my land? Reveal yourself.” I am the leader of the village. If these creatures are trouble, I shall be the first in line to face it.

There is a squeak of a machine or something. The door of the spaceship opens. Those of my creatures that are facing that side evacuate just in case these strange creatures will attack us.

“We come here looking for a human.” Their leader is out here with a laser gun in her hand. She looks like Lexi, a human with brown hair and an even sharper gaze, but that doesn’t mean she is a nice one. “Where is she?”

There are a few creatures of different species with her. All with weapons in their hands. What do they think they are doing?

They have the translators on, so they know what they are getting into.

I growl, “Who are you? What human are you talking about?”

The woman who talked turns to me. There is a deep scowl on her face as she eyes me from head to toe. I snarl. Does this woman think she is better than me or my crew?

Brutus is already back with a crew with equal weapons as these people. Maybe we are a village. We deal with merchants and the first thing we get from the first group of merchants is weapons. Just like our battle axes, won’t live without means to protect ourselves.

The woman glances at Brutus and that team. She says, “Is this a threat? Did you kidnap one of my team? Better give her back to me.”

I insist. “Tell me who you are looking for. You landed on my land with weapons in your hands. What do you expect?”

The only human female here is Lexi. But I don’t know these creatures. What if they are here to hunt her or hurt her? I won’t let that happen.

The woman says, “Well, she is a human like me. Did you kill her or what?”

Brutus growls. “Maybe mind your manners. You think you can drive a spaceship here, destroy our stuff and pretend like you are the ruler of this land? If you don’t already know, we are all fighters here and we aren’t scared of a fight.”

The crew behind Brutus lifts their weapons. We are all fighters and warriors. Like Brutus said, no one gets to disrespect us.

The woman is about to say something when there is Ocia’s growl. I spin around to see Lexi running to the plaza while Ocia tries to stop her.

“Lexi!” I shout for her to stay in the house. But then... Lexi doesn’t have a translator, so she won’t understand me...

There is a grin on Lexi’s face. Her eyes light up bright when she sees that woman I’ve been talking to. “Mia!”

Maybe that’s the woman’s name...

Lexi says something else, but I don't understand those words.

The one that is probably Mia waves and smiles back. "Lexi! We found you!"

So... they know each other...

Are these people... here to take Lexi away from me?

Chapter 18



Lexi

I almost can't believe my eyes. Mia and the crew are here!

Mia is my boss and we aren't that close at any other time, but for now... I dash over to her. She spreads her arms and gives me a big hug.

I sniff and tears run down my cheek. "I can't believe you are here. I thought you would never come. I thought you would think that I'm dead and—" My tears choke me, otherwise, I would have said something more. I haven't talked to someone that will understand me for so long that all my words jumble inside me and none gets out.

Mia strokes my back. She is never a big fan of hugs, but I think today is an exception for her. "I'm so glad we find you. We found the spaceship buried in snow. Thought you were dead. But we searched and didn't find your body. We don't want to give up just yet. Found this village nearby and decided to come here. But these creatures don't seem too friendly. Are you fine?"

Zefarin's growl comes. He says something that I can't understand. But other creatures next to him are staring at me in disgust. What's wrong? These are the same creatures that taught me how to use their tools, I...

Wait...

"Mia, give me the translator. I have to talk to him."

Nahnall, another on my team, gives me his set of earbuds. I put them on. “Zefarin. I know these creatures, they are nice creatures. They don’t know the rules.”

Zefarin’s eyes light up, there is a weak smile on his face, but his eyes... It pains me to see the hurt in his eyes. He... is upset...

“Lexi... these are your friends?” Zefarin asks. “Are you in trouble? You can tell me.”

“They are my friends. They are the research team I am with before my spaceship crashed, and I ended up on this planet. I never planned to be here. You probably have that figured out.”

I can’t wait to be back with my team, but... Zefarin...

I go over to him and he wraps his arms around me. He whispers, “Are you leaving with them?”

That is the plan. They are here to help me either fix the spaceship or just tow it back home to get it dismantled. Either way, I will be leaving with them. I’ve been wanting to leave this planet since the day I arrived here. But now...

I meet Zefarin’s eyes. His arms and his body is warm as always. He is the one that holds me when I cry myself to sleep. There with me when I probably would have died and when there was no reason he had to care about me.

He lets out a soft sigh. “Well, at least I can now understand your words.”

“Same...” I rest a hand on his chest. I still remember the time when he scared me and when I first touched his soft fur...

He says, “I like your sweet voice. Hugging you feels right. I am happy that your friends are here to bring you back.”

Nausea storms in my stomach. Maybe I...

Mia’s voice comes from where she and the team are. “Lexi, are we leaving now? It is cold here. We have to put the pillar back for them. Get going.”

I... I turn to her. “Sure, give me a moment.”

Zefarin flinches. Maybe despite saying that he is happy for me, he isn’t.

I rub his chest. “I don’t belong here.”

His gaze drops to the ground and his arms leave me. “I know. You have no fur.”

“I’m sorry.” I reach for his arm but stop mid-way. It won’t make the farewell easier. “Thank you for everything you have done for me and how you saved my life.”

“Lexi... I am happy—“

There is a low growl from Ocia and he is running to me. There is sadness in his eyes. Maybe he knows I am leaving. I don’t think the translator can also manage animal language, but regardless...

He leaps at me and stands on his hind legs. I hug him and stroke his fur. He huffs and groans, definitely not a happy guy. When he is back on all fours, I hug him for a moment longer. “Ocia, thank you for saving my life. You aren’t as scary as you look.”

He moans and licks my face. I tickle his belly.

“Zefarin. I suppose I can come and visit. Then—“ I halt when he turns away from me.

“There’s no need for that. Like you said, you don’t belong here. I know that since the first minute I met you. You don’t have to come here. Humans won’t like the cold here. I understand. I am glad to have met you. That’s all about it. Your crew is waiting. You should leave with them.”

I shiver at how cold his words and his voice are. “Sorry, I don’t mean to hurt you or anyone... I—“

He lifts a hand and stops me. “Leave. You didn’t hurt me. I don’t care about you as much as you may think I do. I don’t. Leave with your team.”

“Ze—“

He turns away, and leaves with his arms folded. My gut twists, but I have no words. Is he mad? Upset?

Mia’s gaze is on me now more than before, almost burning my back. I wish the farewell would end up better, but...

I let out a sigh and head to the spaceship. The crew is ready to leave now. The group of Zefarin’s villagers with the weapons isn’t poised anymore. They will resume their daily routine soon after.

Mia waves for me to go quicker. “Lexi, we have to leave before the snowstorm worsens.”

“Sure...” I should be happy that I can be back in my place. There will be no need for the thick coats anymore. I can be at a beach, I can have ice cream. I shiver. That is absolutely not something I want to have here.

The crew each gives me a big hug and we move to the ship. I turn around one last time when the door is closing. Zefarin is nowhere to be seen. Is it too much to wish I can see him for a second longer?

Ocia is resting on the floor, staring at me with those now watery eyes. Aw...

“Come, Lexi, we have a ton to catch up with.” The Mia I know is back now, back to researcher mode and back to being my boss.

I don't absolutely love my job, but it is what it is. What else am I expecting?

Chapter 19



Zefarin

The spaceship rises from the ground and is soon swallowed by the storm. Within a minute, it is nowhere to be seen again.

Lexi is gone now.

I take a breath and the air chills me to the bone. I'm a meczi, I have fur, I suit this planet, I... shouldn't be cold...

Ocia is by my side now, he moans and rubs my leg with his back. Maybe he is also sad that Lexi won't be here anymore.

I close my eyes. There seem to be gazes on me, but I think my fellow creatures know better than to talk to me at this moment. Ocia moans. I stroke him some more. He must like her. It pleases me to see that Lexi is no longer scared of Ocia, but... now she isn't here anymore...

"Zefarin."

I turn and glare until I find out it is Brutus. I sigh. "What?"

"She's gone now."

"Yeah... you know that's better for her. She should be with her creatures. I should be here with you all. She has no fur, she doesn't belong here."

Brutus lifts an eyebrow. "Are you sure about that? She looks happy when she is here."

"No, she isn't. She just doesn't want to bother you all. There is no way she can explain herself to us. So... she doesn't want us to worry about her."

“She has a nice soul.”

Indeed. The tightness in my chest grows, bit by bit, it eats into me.

I rub my necklace. I want her to be happy. Now that she is with her team, she should be happy, therefore, maybe I should be happy for her.

But there will be no more waking up to her cute face and her sweet voice...

I shrug. “She doesn’t belong here. She will be happier to be with her friends.”

“I thought you want her as your mate,” Brutus says it at my back when I am more than ready to be back in my place.

Ocia stands in my path and refuses to let me go home. I turn back to Brutus. “Doesn’t matter. She isn’t my mate. You know that. She is a human.”

“Why does that bother you?”

I don’t know. It doesn’t feel right. She feels right to be here with me. I like her and I think she had fun when she was here, though she often cried. But she is a human. Having a human mate doesn’t feel right.

I shake my head. “No idea. She is gone anyway and she won’t be back. It is what it is. I know she will be leaving the first day I saw her.”

Brutus sighs. I have no idea why he is upset. Maybe he saw her around in the field for a bit, but that’s probably all of it. I

know she worked alongside the kids and tried to help in the mill, but as a tiny human, there is only that much she can do to help.

I rest my hands on my waist. The village is all quiet now. The spaceship is gone, and so is everyone. The teams are back to work. Laser weapons or whatsoever are back in storage. Now there is only me... Well, also Brutus, but...

Nothing will change now. I can stand here all day, but nothing will change. Lexi is gone, and that's it. "I'm heading back. If the team needs me, just let me know."

"Sure. Take care."

I spin around and scowl at him. "If I have the means, you know I will have already sent her home. I am fine and I will remain fine."

"Okay... I know you will be fine. You are always strong. I will go meet the team. We are getting the cheese ready. Come get some for dinner."

I nod and walk off. I don't care about those. Maybe I would have cared any other time; not now, probably also not a few hours later.

The plaza is all quiet. There are a few walking by, but they are also quiet. I should head home, but my feet move to the field. I don't bother to stop them.

There is nothing in the fields other than snow. There is always snow everywhere on the planet. Everything has been

harvested. If it isn't for the raised sides that mark the edges of the tiles, no one will find out.

I sit on the raised land. The field is almost quiet. In a way, it is dead there with snow. There are stalks of the thofes under the snow and a layer of soil, waiting for the slightly warmer season and for the land to be good for farming again. So, not exactly dead.

There is a snort next to me. Ocia has followed me here. He rests by my side, so I put my hand on him and rub the back of his ears.

“Ocia, Lexi is happy, right?”

He is quiet too, just like everything else.

“I'm missing her already. I don't understand. She...” I shiver when a cold breeze blows at my face. I shouldn't be out here in the storm, especially shouldn't be here sitting around. Even though I'm a meczi, not moving a bit in the cold isn't fun and is far from enjoyable.

Should I... find a way to reach her?

But how?

Chapter 20



Lexi

I roll around in my comfortable bed. The mattress is soft and comfy. The room is air-conditioned and at a nice temperature. The blanket is warm and wraps me up well.

But I can't fall asleep...

I have been rolling around for a few hours now, but I don't feel like sleeping at all. My stomach rumbles and it isn't happy. I have no idea why. I had some noodles and sausages for dinner, the same kind of food I have been having on the spaceship before I ended up on that planet.

Or maybe it isn't about the food and those are actually fine.

I sit up from my bed. It feels like no matter how long I roll around, I won't fall asleep.

My phone is charging on my desk which is on the other side of the room. They retrieved it from my old and beaten-up spaceship that was deep in snow when they reached it. Now that ship is in the parking lot within this one. I am safe here and I have gotten back everything I would have lost. But nothing is right, still...

I get off the bed and I shiver despite it isn't cold here. Compared to that planet, nowhere is cold.

Oh... Now, I won't have Zefarin here with me. There won't be his arms and his warm body there with me. Night after night, I cried to sleep in his arms. He probably didn't have much of a clue why I cried, but he always held me until I fell

asleep, until... I stopped crying because I was too tired to even keep up.

I go to the window and slide the metal cover of it to the side. I am in space now, there are stars out there. All the shining spots out there are staring at me. They are all too far away for me to tell which is which.

Zefarin is on one of those planets out there in the distance, right?

What is he doing now?

I don't know what time it is without checking. Out in space, time is always a blur. It is always dark out there except for the stars. Is it nighttime for him too? If so, he will probably be sleeping.

How is Ocia doing? He used to scare me with those sharp fangs and his scary large size. But maybe the beast likes me.

I rest a hand on the window. Space is so large that while we are flying, nothing outside seems to be moving.

Zefarin had been with me for so long, but I didn't understand him until it was time to leave him...

Am I bad for leaving?

He knows that I don't belong to that planet, right? Like he said, I have no fur. I don't live there.

I rest my forehead on the window, the coolness of the surface fails to chill me. There is a tingle under my skin,

slowly spreading through me. I don't like this even though this is how I have been working for a few years now.

Zefarin... if he was here, he would wrap his arms around me and hug me tight to him. His fur tickles me at times, but he is a great hugger.

I... Maybe I love him.

A warmth brews inside me. He also knows how to give me pleasure that I don't know I needed. He took care of me well.

Yet, I'm here now.

The walls of my room and my bed stare at me. The gray walls are a lot more intimidating than before. It feels like... I am living in a huge metal box and going nowhere.

I like my team and we do fun research on different planets, but now... Maybe I don't like that after all.

No, maybe I do like the research and investigations, but I like to be with Zefarin more.

Earlier, when my boss talked to me, she said that we will be heading back to our planned path soon. There will be a portal a few days out that will give us a head start.

I would be thrilled to know that before all this happened. Now I miss my fur male.

Wait...

After we pass through the portal... it will be too late to ask to go back. It will cost the team too much. They already dropped everything that was planned to save me, they can't...

Oh, right. They dropped everything to come to my rescue, how can I tell them that I prefer to be back on that planet now? It will mean I have wasted their effort and time; most importantly, research funding...

Fuck...

Before I know it, I am not in front of the window anymore, instead, I am staring at the door with my legs sore. Maybe I paced around a bit too much to my liking.

What should I do?

I get out of my room with my phone in my hand. I don't need it, but somehow it feels safe to have it with me. Out in the corridors, no one is there. I check my phone again. It is late in the night, so everyone is probably asleep.

It will mean I have to wait until tomorrow before I can talk to Mia. But I can't stay in my room either. I can't fall asleep no matter what.

The moment I close my eyes, Zefarin's dark black hair, his blur fur, and those intense eyes flash into my mind. Maybe when I tried to stay in bed, my body missed his warmth.

I take a breath when I walk down the corridor. Everything is the same, maybe I am the reason nothing feels the same.

Who will be out here in the middle of the night? I am just wasting time.

The lights are still on, like they always are. It is just... making the passage of time even more of an illusion and hard to figure out without a clock.

I am on the way to the kitchen for some water when I stop in the corridor that can lead to either the kitchen or the laboratories.

The labs are where I spent a lot of time doing the studies, completing reports, and all kinds of stuff. If I am going to ask if I can be with Zefarin, it will mean saying goodbye to everything that I used to be passionate about.

Maybe I should go and take a look at that place. I doubt anything has changed, but maybe I should.

There is a door separating the labs from the rest of the ship. I put my palm on the identifier pad next to the door itself. The red flashing light on it turns to green and the door slides open for me. As I walk down the corridor, the lights turn brighter, anticipating my visit. I am a room from reaching my room when there is a glimpse of light from Mia's lab.

What time is it now? How is she still there? Maybe this is one of the many problems when work is merely a walk down the corridors from bedrooms.

I look up at the red light above the door. It is off for now, so Mia isn't doing something important or risky that she doesn't want any distraction. Or maybe she forgot to turn off the light before she left and called it a day. After I came back to the ship and talked to her about what happened while I was on the icy planet, she left to sink into work again. She was here, I guess.

Maybe I will help her turn off the lights in the lab.

I press my palm on the identifier again and the door opens. I flinch when Mia looks up from her desk at me with a deep frown on her face.

I swallow, she better not think that I am here to mess with things. “Hello, didn’t think you will be here this time of the day.”

“Yes? And why are you here then? It is late already. Or is the planet you stayed on too different in terms of time and daylight?” There is concern in her eyes. “Or are you trying to get to your lab?”

I shake my head. “No, I remember where my lab and my room are. I’m just... I can’t fall asleep, so I decided to go there and have a look. But I see lights up here, so I think you may have forgotten the lights when you left.”

“Oh...” Mia let out a soft breath. “I won’t forget about the light.” She points at a row of Petri dishes. “Just so happen it is the time to do a swipe of the sample, that’s why I am here. How are things going? I don’t expect you to want to get back to work right now.”

I chuckle wryly. Getting back to work is the last thing on my mind at this moment. “Not really. Do you have some time?”

She waves for me to join her by the desk. I settle myself on the chair across from her. She asks, “Yes, tell me. Is everything alright?”

“Yes and no?”

My heart hammers in my chest again. Am I really going to tell her that I don't want to stay here anymore? And I want to be back on that planet?

Mia lifts her eyebrows at me. She is never someone with a lot of patience. "Move fast, fail fast" is one of her mottos. Before she asks me about that, I say, "I am thinking about a new research project."

"Oh? I thought we have just talked about it a while ago and you were happy to continue with the current line of work."

"Well, yeah...? I have no problem continuing that, but then... I think there are more things we can be doing on Irhevis. Don't you think it is impressive how those plants can grow in such cold and freezing weather? Maybe we can do some research on that. And maybe—"

Mia's hawk eyes are on me now. I swallow and stop. Maybe she isn't happy with the change of plan. She can always see through me, especially my excuses when I am late to work or messed up something.

She clears her throat. "Well, is that about the plants and the research only? I thought you said you hate the snow there. Why are you so inclined to go back there now? If you have a research interest in that, you would have brought it up a long time ago. I know you. What's wrong? You can tell me."

"Um... Nothing? Just... thought about it when I couldn't fall asleep. I mean, that is a planet with little record of it. If we can find a way to plant more in colder regions, we can—"

“Lexi.”

I shiver at her stern voice. I have no idea how, but it seems like she knows what I am thinking about, or at least she knows I am making up things to justify how I want to go back to Irhevis.

“Thank you for coming all the way to rescue me.”

“Yeah, you now want to go back there despite you telling me how much you hated the snow merely hours earlier.”

“Well, I mean... researches aren't meant to be a cakewalk all the time, so some hardship—“

“Lexi, do I look like someone you can fool with this easily? Stop looking for excuses and be honest with me.”

My gaze drops to the desk. I shouldn't. It will make it look like I am admitting fault, but I can't stop myself. She is right; I am trying to dance around the real reason and I am trying to not tell her about Zefarin.

“Lexi, it is about that creature who you talked to before we flew, right? The way he hugged you...”

A stream of heat reaches my cheeks. Yeah... There is no hiding that. I bet the whole team also saw that. Hard to not see that when everyone was probably staring, trying to figure out what was happening.

I nod. “Yes, it's about him. I think... I want to stay there with him.”

Mia has a deep frown on her face, and she taps her pen on the desk. I shouldn't need to ask for her approval when it comes to my relationship, but... Now I want to hide somewhere.

She takes a moment before she says, "Hm... when the two of you don't understand each other's language? Be careful. Are you sure about that?"

"Yes."

Her eyes narrow, maybe my answer came a bit too quickly, and looks like I didn't give that some thought.

I add, "Maybe we don't know each other's language, but we know each other. He took care of me and I know... Well... I know I want to stay there with him. He is their leader. He can't and he won't leave them."

"Hm... If you are sure about it, I won't stop you. I don't plan to overstep for sure. But for the research part, I will need to propose that if you insist on going back there."

So... she thinks that there is a chance this will work? I can stay there in the name of research?

But research will end someday...

I say, "I can get that for you, of course. I'm sorry how I asked for you guys to come to rescue me, but I want to go back there now. I don't mean to waste—"

Mia lifts her hand to stop me. "It's not a waste of time, or research funding, or any resources for that matter. You know I take it upon myself to make sure everyone in the crew is doing

well. Even if I failed to contact you at the first, I would still have gone to look for you.”

I swallow. Maybe I don't have a lot of trust in people... “I thought you would think that I'm dead when you couldn't find me in the spaceship.”

She lets out a heavy sigh. “We had considered the possibility of that. But... I couldn't stop myself from searching just because you were missing. With all the snow and the raging storm, I knew that it would be hard, if even possible, to locate your body, which was how I would be convinced that you were dead. Like I told you earlier, I had to keep searching and we decided to look for you in the nearest villages. I had no idea whether the map I managed to get was accurate, but we had to give that a try. The location on the map isn't exact, but enough for us to arrive there.”

I sniff. “Thank you. I was trying to get out of the ship to find some food, turned out... I would have died if they didn't run into me. I still didn't know how that happened, but Zefarin and the beast, Ocia, saved me.”

“You are extremely lucky, then. In the mountain, it would be tough to find a thing.”

I nod. Indeed. Maybe I have used up all my luck in my life for that, but it is worth it, especially when I get to meet Zefarin.

Mia stands and stretches her arms. “If you are certain, I can't stop you. Irhevis indeed is a relatively uncharted planet. I think part of it is due to how it is not very advanced

technology-wise. But I think there is value in getting to know more about the place.”

She turns to me with her almost signature gaze, the one that burns. “Are you sure?”

“Yes?” I really am sure, but maybe for her, staying with a creature on a distant planet on top of how I couldn’t understand his language for the majority of the time we spent together is absurd for her.

To be honest, I’m also surprised. I have never imagined to... fall in love with a creature that is this different from me. But I know it in my heart, he is the right creature for me. Even the thought of him lights a flame in my stomach. I want to be back in his arms already.

Mia nods. “Okay, I am happy for you. This time, when you are back, we will have you well prepared for the weather, the communication, the research, and everything else. We will also send a crew to check in with you at times. If something happens, don’t hesitate to ask for help.”

I grin. “Sure, I am glad. Thanks a lot. I will make sure to do my best in the research and all the projects. Zefarin knows the place, at least the mountain and maybe the nearby villages. He can help us.”

She chuckles. “I can only hope you won’t get distracted by that handsome male.”

My heart skips a beat. “No way, I’m not distracted and I won’t be.”

“Sure, sure. Now you think you can manage to get some sleep? We can head back and get back to the portal in time if we do it quickly. Maybe you should start thinking about the proposal and start packing up what you need to be there with that male before we send the first round of supply for you.”

I try my best to get out of Mia’s lab without running and dashing. There is warmth inside me again. I can feel it in my vein. It is different from the pure lust when I first met Zefarin, when I felt the twitch of his cock. This is better. He feels right, and he is the right one for me.

Chapter 21



Zefarin

“Hey...”

I blink and look up. Mother is staring at me with a frown on her face. Something... Well, did she ask me something or say something? “Sorry, I wasn’t listening. Can you repeat?”

She sighs and puts the ground cheese to the side while she picks up some vegetables for me to chop up. “It is a miracle you haven’t cut your fingers.”

“Yes?” I gather the bunch of long and green stalks of the juicy scrax, cutting it in half. “I’m fine.”

I put them into a basket on the side of the sink and reach for another handful. I hate raw scrax, they smell like soil and are bitter. It is also a miracle how good they taste after they are cooked.

She cuts a dried fish in half, put half to the side, and cuts the other into slices. “She isn’t here anymore.”

“Lexi?”

She nods. “Yes, I heard that her friends came here and she left with them. I wasn’t there when that happened. A big spaceship, some said.”

I nod. I wish that never happened, but it did. I try to forget about Lexi, but I never managed. Maybe it will take more than a few days. The pain in my chest has been lingering, so it isn’t like it can get any worse.

“Yes, I think she will be happy to be back with her friends. No more huge monster with ugly blue fur.”

“You don’t really think that though. Tell me you at least asked her whether she wanted to stay with you. She didn’t just disappear, right? You have asked her, right?”

I... I think I should tell Mother the truth that I didn’t ask Lexi. There isn’t a need to ask her. She wanted to leave, she had been wanting that since the moment I met her, and maybe already wanted to leave before that. She never liked here and this isn’t her planet after all.

Mother holds my hand before I pick up the knife for another handful of scraxes. She asks, “You didn’t even ask her to stay?”

“Well, why bother? You know she isn’t fit to survive it here. Why make it hard for her?”

“So you want her to stay.”

I do...

I shake my head. “I want her to be happy. Whether she is here or not, I don’t care that much.”

“Liar.” She hisses and I turn to look at her.

“I didn’t lie. She is happy with her friends and her team now.”

“How about you? You have been wandering around like a soulless creature for the past few days. There is nothing right about this and you should stop fooling yourself.”

How can she say something like that to me?

I remove my hand from hers. "I'm fine. Don't impose your opinion on me."

She sighs and goes back to working on the fish. "Maybe you have a point. Although I don't understand her language, I like having her here. She helped out with the kids and the harvesting. Although she is tiny, she helped in the mill. More importantly, she makes you happy."

I grimace. I know all of that and those are also the exact things I want to forget and never think about. Lexi is good for the village and also for me. But I can't make myself ask her to stay, I shouldn't take her away from her life. She has things she cared about before she ended up here. I can't make her drop everything.

I say, "Maybe you are right. But it doesn't matter now. She is gone and I'm not going to fire up the spaceship to look for her."

Mother remains quiet. Maybe she also wants Lexi to stay.

I am about to wipe my eyes when I barely remember to stop myself. I just touched those scaxes. If I don't want more tears, I should wash my hands first. My fur is good at fending off snow and letting those drop, but when I am cooking or have to wash myself, it isn't that good for me and will remain soaking wet for longer than I want.

"I'll go dry my hands." I wave my hand and try to squeeze off some of the water, but the result isn't great.

Mother sighs. “Sure, or maybe drying something more than your hands?”

Say... my eyes?

I shrug. “I’m fine. I’m still very ready and capable of leading us through the weather and to keep leading the village like Father did.”

I get out of the kitchen before she can say something more. I need a break. The talk stirs more than I would love to remember.

I sit in front of the fire pit with my hands out, hopefully, my fur will dry quickly.

Lexi...

Every night, my bed reminds me of how empty it is. There will no longer be a cute Lexi for me to gather in my arms and for me to warm. I love how good she feels when I can hug her. I... also love how she feels under me, or on top of me, whatever way she wants me. My cock twitches. Yeah... I enjoy my time with her.

“Zef!” It is Kivea running to the living room from the outside.

I spin around. There is a scowl on Kivea’s face, his dark hair in the air when he is running that quickly. I stand. “What is happening?”

This... feels like the day I ran into Lexi. Kivea dashed through the door and shouted about how Ocia ran away. I went

out to look for Ocia and ended up with Lexi in my arms when I headed back.

Kivea gasps. “There is a spaceship out there in the plaza. It is a smaller one, but still, a spaceship, are they back here asking for something?”

I grimace. I don’t want to see a spaceship in my life anymore. All of them now scream about how they take Lexi from me. “It is the season of the storm. Why will any spaceship be here? They have already picked up Lexi. Why will there be more?”

“Whoa! I don’t realize you no longer like spaceships. I understand that, I also think Lexi should stay, but then... Come on, it’s not like I can’t recognize a spaceship. That is a big silvery thing in the plaza, hard to not see. It just landed. I hurried to look for you.”

I don’t like how all of a sudden all spaceships are here as if they have no better place to go. The snow in the plaza never makes it easy for landing and I’ve heard that a storm makes it tricky to land safely. I understand that the black one was here to pick up Lexi and they would take a chance to rescue their friend, but what is this one about now?

Just in case that is here to pick a fight, I grab my battle axes. Laser guns will be better if they arrive here in a spaceship, but I feel safer with my axes that I have been using for my whole life.

I run out of the house with Kivea. Most of the other villagers stay at home. That’s the rule when we have

spaceships that arrive without an announcement.

A few merchants that we know will let Cartzu know before they arrive with a cute device we charge with a small generator. This one isn't one of those

When I arrive, the door of the ship is opened and there stands...

Lexi?

I stop on my track while Kivea bumps onto my back with a groan and some muttering under his breath.

Lexi sneezes and clenches her coat. She waves at me with that cute hand that is in a pink mitten.

What is she doing here?

Kivea's voice comes from my side. "Hey, Zef, I think you should put the axes somewhere first."

I... Well... Um... Em...

A pair of hands rest on the handle of my battle axes and nudge me to release my fists. I do that before I can think and the axes are gone from me.

I blink while my gaze is still glued to who should be Lexi. Even from a distance, I know that's her. I can feel it in my blood. It is Lexi, she is here. But why?

She comes over, now fully equipped with everything that seems to make her comfy in this weather. Maybe that coat will make her warm. I have no idea. That one looks thinner than the one she used to have but looks newer.

Before I know it, she is in front of me now. Still the cute female that is more than a size smaller than me.

Is this real?

Is this really happening?

Or am I dreaming?

She grins and pats my arm. “Hey, Zefarin.”

Oh... I can understand what she said, so this should be a dream.

I say, “Um... Hello.”

She lets out a small sigh. I like the way she looks up at me because of our height difference, everything about her is so perfect. She says, “Hm... Looks like you are a bit still today. Is it too cold for you?”

Haha, I’m a meczi, there won’t be a day that is too cold for me. Even though my hands are still moist, I’m not that cold. “Are you Lexi?”

“Well, yeah? I don’t look like Lexi?”

Hm... That sounds like...

“Why are you here? Have you left something behind? Are you here taking it back? Or am I dreaming?”

She chuckles and pats my chest. “Nope, you aren’t dreaming. Don’t be silly. But I think I did leave something behind when I left.”

“Okay? What’s that?”

She pats my chest again. “Left you here. I want to be back here with you. Hope you also want me to stay?”

I stare at her with my eyes wide. This sounds even more like a dream now. How is it possible that she will want to stay here?

Before I can say a word, she pulls my fur on my chest. I groan and catch her small hand. It hurts. “What are you doing?”

“You are still thinking this is a dream, huh? If it hurts, it isn’t a dream.”

“I’ve never heard about that. Why can’t it hurt in a dream?”

“Oh, it’s not a thing in your culture, huh? It just is a thing, don’t ask that much. Silly Zefarin.”

Now more villagers are here peeking. They shouldn’t, but there are no noises of a fight here to stop them.

If Lexi is real, I want my alone time with her without creatures looking at us. “Well, I will have to check whether you really are Lexi or whether you are some other creature that is trying to invade us.”

“Oh, a check.” She smirks. The smirk stirs a flame inside me. I want to hold her, I want to feel her. Things I want to do to her...

She continues, “How are you going to check me out?”

I snicker. Of course, I have my way to make sure I am getting the right female. “You will know soon. First, you put

your spaceship somewhere safe, then we will check every inch of you.”

“Sure!” She grins, squeezes my hand, and heads to the spaceship.

I follow her. Although this is a smaller ship compared to the black one, this is still a big one. There is light inside, but no one else has come out of it. “Lexi, you come here alone?”

She nods. “Yes, if you want to, you can visit my ship.”

Interesting. I seldom get on one.

We get inside. The light is a bit too strong inside. Maybe it is a human thing. I wince and rub my eyes. When my eyes feel better, she has closed the door. I turn to look at the closed door. “Hm... now it looks like you are trying to kidnap me places.”

She laughs. “Oh, I won’t mind traveling around with you for sure. But your creatures need you, so I guess that won’t happen.”

I also won’t mind traveling with her, but like she said, I have to be here with my people.

She gestures at the corridor. “Come here, I will show you around. Isn’t it good that there’s no snow here?”

I roll my eyes. “Well, there’s also no snow in my place.”

Her cheek colors with a nice pink. “Um... I guess you are right. But it is warmer here. Or is it too hot here for you and your fur?”

I smirk. “You think. You make me hotter than anything else.”

“Ah, naughty meczy.”

“Oh... you know...”

She shrugs. “Of course I now do. I have no means to tell you before, but I travel places and follow research projects.” She strokes the fur on my stomach. “I have looked you up on the ship earlier.”

I pick her up before she can fight me. She doesn't. She chuckles and strokes my chest again. “You know I can walk with my own feet.”

“I want to see your eyes better.”

She huffs and puffs her cheek. I peck a kiss on her forehead. If this is her attempt at looking angry, I should piss her off a bit more. She says, “Fine, I know I am shorter than you and tiny. But I'm an adult.”

Now she has the translator with her, she is a lot more talkative and I like that. I like her voice and also that naughty mouth. Now I can understand more than her moans, good.

“I know you're an adult. No doubt about it. You were talking about your projects.”

“Oh, yes. You are distracting. I talk my boss into letting me be here to take on a research project. My job is now investigating the landscape here, drawing a map, and maybe looking into some plants.”

Oh... “So I’m like an experiment animal or something?”

She flinches and shakes her head. “No! I don’t mean that! Not at all!”

“Well, sometimes I think other merchants think of us that way. Primal and maybe like historical animals for them.”

She laughs. “Because you walk around half naked and your favorite weapon is your battle axes instead of guns? No way, trust me they don’t see you that way.”

I don’t know about that. But no one can put me into clothes those creatures wear, I don’t want anything other than my alxi on me. “I don’t know whether other species do things like us. We have technology, but just...”

The silvery walls of the spaceship stare at me. Now I feel small here as if I don’t fit, or... I don’t deserve to be here.

The floor is cold, not snow, but slippery and smooth. My bare feet don’t seem appropriate here. Lexi has shoes on.

I continue, “Well, we don’t have a lot of these. We are a small village after all. So... not this advance, I guess. Are you sure you want to stay here? I bet it will be boring for you. We don’t have a ton of electrical devices here.”

“Those are electronics, silly. But I don’t care about those. I want to be here with you. I have brought everything I will need to do my research work. If you will let me stay, I’m staying.”

There is... a tension inside me. It feels like she is trying to ask me something, but she isn’t bringing it up.

I also have something I want to ask her, but I want to make sure we are on the same page. “Where’s your room?”

“Oh, you being naughty now?” She blinks but doesn’t seem too excited or eager.

A stream of heat reaches my cheek. That’s not what I mean. “I was trying to say that maybe we should be in a private place...”

“And? Put me under your huge body?”

I groan. Apparently, nothing I said is making this better. I’m not that hungry for sex.

That thought sends a shiver down my spine, and she chuckles at once. There is no hiding when I have her in my arms. I’m the one picking her up... I have no one to blame but myself.

She says, “We are alone here. No one is watching us. If you have something you want to say, just tell me.”

As if it is that easy...

Chapter 22



Lexi

I stare at that handsome face right above me. I like watching Zefarin like this, when I am in his arms. He is a handsome male after all. I like his dark hair and his fur, though it seems like he sometimes doesn't like those a lot. He should know I love him just the way he is.

He watches me for a moment longer than I expected. If he has something to say, he can tell me.

Speaking of which, my heartbeat races quicker and quicker as he looks at me in silence.

Is he... going to say the thing that's on my mind too?

I have no idea whether meczis will have a mate that's not the same as them. I want to be with him, but I don't know whether he feels the same. It will be great if I can be doing my research with him around, but it will be better if...

Zefarin clears his throat. "Well, where's your room? Or somewhere I can put you down?"

I silently let out a sigh. Maybe I am relieved that we aren't in silence now, but then... maybe he isn't thinking of what I have in mind. Maybe he doesn't feel the same way as I do.

There is a warmth inside me that is flickering. What if it is a wrong decision to be here? What if I'm just the one imagining a bit too much? Maybe like the beginning of the first night we ran into each other, he just wanted to help me and protect me, he isn't looking for a mate and I'm not his ideal mate.

Zefarin chuckles and kisses my cheek. “I see the panic in your eyes. What’s wrong? You aren’t patient, huh?”

I... Maybe? I don’t know what’s waiting for me, and that’s scary.

The unknown makes me curious and want to know more. This is what has been driving me through all the research projects, but now... about how Zefarin feels about me... I don’t know whether I want to know about that. What if...

Zefarin moves me slightly up and down in the air. “Hey, are you forgetting where your room is? That shouldn’t be such a difficult question, right?”

“Oh... you can put me down and I can show you where there is.”

He shakes his head. “No, tell me and I will get us over there.”

What is he planning?

“Okay, it is down the corridor to the left, all the way to the back. But the door will only recognize the crew’s handprint, so you will have to put me down regardless.”

“We will see about that.” He chuckles. I can feel the vibration from his chest. I rest myself closer to him and he holds me closer to him, maybe he also likes how I feel in his arms.

The ceiling starts to move, sometimes, it can make me dizzy when I stare up there. Maybe he should carry me more, one day, maybe I will get used to that.

But at the same time, I still don't think I am that easy to carry. But he likes to...

"Are we here now?" he asks.

"You have to put me down before I can figure it out."

"Well... But I don't want to."

"Why? I can walk with my legs. I understand when you think the snow is hard for me to walk through, but this isn't that. I bet you don't carry anyone else around like this. A meczi female should be a ton heavier than me."

"Hm... Maybe? I just want to carry you around."

"Silly Zefarin."

"Fine, I can be silly if it means I can keep carrying you around."

"Then we won't figure out whether we are at the right door or not. And you know if you want to put me down, you can do that at this moment."

He bows his head to look at me. "No. We will know when the door opens." He takes a step and lowers me some. "Put your palm on the pad."

Maybe he is cute this way. I move my hand to where I think the detector should be. I rest on something cool, but there is a curve to it, and doesn't feel like the detector.

There is a low moan from him. "You really have no patience."

Oh... Is that...?

My hand moves some more. That is cool though, so it isn't like it's his cock or something.

He grunts. "Yes, over my alxi. I can feel your hand."

"Oops, sorry about it." I stick out my tongue.

Maybe I'm not that sorry. I didn't set out to touch him, but I miss him so much.

Even after my boss agreed for me to be back here with my work, it still takes a while to fly here. A bit too long. Maybe like the time when I would have crashed into the middle of nowhere. I wanted to land already. Every time I closed my eyes, I could only see his face and almost feel his warmth.

I move my hand to the other side and touch something cool. This time, there is a light hissing noise when the door slides open. "Are we at the right place?"

He walks inside. "I think so. There is a bed, so this should be the right place to be."

I am about to tell him that there is more than one room here on the spaceship, but maybe I should let him put me down before we talk about it. I can't do much when I am in his arms, not that I'm complaining.

I land on the soft mattress with the blanket still on it. He watches me with a grin. "Smooth ride?"

Silly Zefarin.

"Yes, thanks. I have a great view of the ceiling."

“Oh,” he looks up, “It is great to look up at the ceiling? What’s there to look at?”

I laugh despite I probably shouldn’t. “I’m just messing with you. I can’t see a thing when I’m in your arms, okay?”

“Me?”

“Your chin, which isn’t that interesting after all.”

“You really don’t want me to carry you around.”

“I can walk on my own.”

He blinks. Maybe he wants to help me with something all the time, therefore he figures holding me around is a good idea.

I add, “Maybe when the snow or the storm is terrible, you can carry me.”

He grins. “Sure, I can do that.”

“Let me walk in the other times.”

He lifts an eyebrow. “I don’t understand humans. But if that’s what you want, sure.”

Silence falls when I am not looking. I stare at him while he also stares at me. My heart races again. “Zefarin... I...”

He swallows and lifts a hand. “Lexi. I want to tell you that... I have been wanting to, but last time when you were leaving, it looked like... you really wanted to leave, so I didn’t feel like I should ask you. Lexi... will you... want to be my mate?”

He spread out his arms. “I know I’m not a human and we met each other out of a complete accident. I also know you don’t come from this planet and you don’t like the cold. But... I really hope you will stay here with me. I can hold you all day and you will be warm. I can also—“

I jump from the bed and hug him tight. Standing on the bed, I am finally at the right height to rest my forehead on his. “Zefarin, I will stay here for sure. I want to be your mate and I want to stay with you. I regretted it the moment the door of the spaceship closed. Maybe I should have told my team to let me out of the ship and be with you, but I didn’t dare to when they had spent so long and so much effort to be here to rescue me. I’m sorry.”

I rub his back, his fur tickles me like always but as always, he is warm, almost hot, and the perfect hugger. “I want you just the way you are. With your fur, with how you love to carry me around, with how much larger you are compared to me.”

He hugs me tightly, so tight that he can squeeze me flat. Maybe, for now, he has forgotten that I’m a human, and he is strong enough to smash my ribs from his hugs.

“Lexi, I also regretted not even asking you. I knew I should try, but I worried about what you would think. I saw you were torn about that, I didn’t want to make it hard for you. I thought you would be happier with your team, but...”

“You should have asked. I should have said something. But now I have this spaceship here, have the promise that this

project may go through, and they promised to visit us at times in case we need something. Well, it is probably how my boss wants to check my progress at times, but then... They can bring special food that you may also like.”

“Food. Some merchants visit here at times. They bring stuff to trade with us. Some of them have good food.”

“That’s why you guys have those laser guns, right? That doesn’t look like something your village made yourselves.”

He nods and sighs. “Well, you see, this weather takes up all our time. I know we aren’t that advanced in terms of technology. So when you mention researching this planet...”

“The landscape and plants here. You guys are doing fine. I like you the way you are.”

He looks at me for another moment. I’m not sure whether he believes me or not. He says, “Maybe I should research humans at times.”

I blink. My cheek burns and I may need a spot to hide. Research, exactly what I told myself to convince myself that I could touch him when he was inviting me to the night we first met. It was for research that I should, well, have a try of him.

He pats my shoulder, so I let go of him and sit on the bed instead. He takes off his necklace and puts it on me.

There are some gemstones and something that looks like teeth of some kind on the necklace. The green gemstones look to be crudely polished, maybe they can be polished some more, then they will have a better shine.

Maybe it is by choice. There are edges on these stones, not sharp ones, but doesn't look like whoever made it had attempted to smooth those out.

He says, "This is a necklace they made me after we beat stralpons that tried to attack the village during the season of the storm. These are their teeth. They look bigger on you."

Indeed, those teeth are almost thicker than my thumb with sharp edges as if they are freshly torn off of that stralpon thing, which I have no idea how they look.

Zefarin says, "Stralpons have four legs. The body has fur like Ocia. They are gray with stripes that are deeper gray. Large beast."

"They hunt you guys?"

He shakes his head and traces his finger along one of the teeth on the necklace. "They don't. For them, we are also predators and they know it will be tough for them to get anything from us, both the food we have and us as the food for them. But the season of the storm is tough. In the worse years, they may have no choice but to take a risk."

I shiver. That doesn't sound pleasant at all.

He chuckles. "We are that different, huh? Meczis start training to be a warrior as young as we can pick up a battleaxe."

"Oh... I have never seen a battleaxe in my life. I mean, I see yours, but I have never touched one."

“You can touch mine. But I don’t think it will be safe for you to use it.”

I laugh. “I know better than trying to use your weapon. I can’t even help in the mill other than shouting some and trying to get a few there to do the actual work. When I help with harvesting, I’m also the slowest. I’m even slower than the kids.”

He hugs me again. “Then you can focus on looking beautiful and perfect for me. But to be fair, those kids have been practicing and helping out whenever we are in a rush to harvest, and also help in sowing the seeds, so it is normal for you to be slower than them.”

I rub his back and lie on the bed, now he is hovering over me. “And you guys have bigger hands.”

He smirked with that handsome face that I can’t stop staring at and maybe also kissing. “Do you want me to do something with my hands? And have I told you how much I love to hear your voice and how much I love to understand you?”

I grab a handful of his fur. “Same here. I love everything about you. You talk dirty.”

“Oh, you love that, huh? Now that you’re mine, you will have no end to that.”

“Are you threatening me with a great time?”

He chuckles and kisses me again and again. “Yes, and I’m going to threaten you all the time, just like how the storm threatens to swallow you every day.”

I shiver from the memory of the storm. “That’s not very pleasant. I would much rather cozy in with you. Not that I have a ton of experience with the storm after my chaotic adventure.”

“I guess so. I still never figure out why you were there. Something happened to your spaceship?”

“Yes, the engine gave out. I had to land somewhere. Made it here without dying. The day I met you, I was just trying to find some food. But I guess that wouldn’t work out unless I could somehow locate an animal and kill that. There doesn’t seem to be anything I can use as food.”

He nods. “Yes, when I found you, it was already getting close to the season of the storm, almost nothing is left as food out in the wild. Unless you count some trees that may still have nuts. But those won’t be there in the mountains. You are lucky nothing jumps out and eats you. You don’t look like their usual food, but you still smell like flesh and blood.”

I smack his shoulder. “Must you talk about me like I am food? I have no doubt those other creatures would love to have me as a snack.”

“I was out there looking for Ocia when he didn’t follow the hunting team home. I guess he found me a snack after all. Tasty, warm, and will keep herself warm all the time.”

“How dare you! Hey!” Before I can blink, he has me stripped and my clothes fallen to the side. “You are so unbearable.”

He rests a hand on my boob. His fur tickles and he is getting better and better at playing with my nipple. He licks my tip and I squirm for more.

I grab his hand and make him touch me. “Stop the tease.”

“You said I’m unbearable, have to live up to the name.”

I grunt and undo his alxi. “You love to mess with me, huh?”

I stroke his huge cock. His large furry body shudders. He rolls his eyes. “Your tiny hand.”

“Well, you know what you are getting the first day we met.”

“Mm...” He closes his eyes as I move my hand up and down his rod. Because he is this annoying, I am only stroking him with one hand, which I know he hates and leaves him wanting more.

He squeezes my boobs and goes on to rub my whole body. His fur tickles. I don’t even know whether it has to do with the static shock from his fur, his touches send sparks along my skin and down my spine.

The spaceship and my room are temperature-controlled, but he is setting a fire inside me.

“Zefarin... you naughty one.”

“Wait till I show you more.” He has that annoying, handsome smile on his face again. His hand slides to my stomach, then down, getting comfortable between my legs. “Hm... soaked.”

I gasp when he rubs my clit. When he pinches me, I yelp. He makes the pain good; so close to breaking my skin, but with so much pleasure.

I pick up speed stroking him. I need him quicker and now, but I don't want to beg him. If I do this enough...

He grunts and rubs his length along my pussy, taking up my juice. He is so heavy and huge that he scares me every time, but makes me want him more at the same time.

I moan when his tip teases my clit. "So slow, you need lunch or dinner first?"

He takes a deep breath. The lust in his eyes turns into something else. "I want to make this amazing. Now, you are my mate. I want to make this special. I have never imagined this day. Never imagined you will show up here and be with me."

I wrap my arms around him with my eyes close when he slowly enters me. I hate how slow this is, but I love how he wants this to be special.

"Zefarin... I also would never imagine this." I rub his back more. "I can't imagine I will be here with you too. I love every second with you."

He grins and presses himself deep into me. "You are only going to love me more."

I moan when he rubs my folds, and his fur does the extra tease. "You better keep up to the promise."

“Oh, you don’t have to worry about that at all.” He groans as he pushes deeper inside me. “Fuck, you are amazing. So tight and so soaked for me.”

I open my eyes wide and gasp. His words make my heart beat faster. “Stop talking, get working more.”

“Impatient, aren’t we? I love your naughty mouth, should have said more stuff earlier.” He kisses my neck and bites it gently before he continues. “You are mine now, forever.”

I bite my lip. “Yes, Zef, please... take me hard.”

His cock moves inside me. I moan with each thrust. He hammers in the pleasure that is so strong that he can almost break me. He grabs my throat with a hand while he pounds me.

I wrap my legs around him, pulling him closer. His hand makes it almost hard to breathe but only makes the burning desire inside me hotter.

“Zefarin!” I scream when an orgasm hit me.

He smirks. “Told you you will only love me more now.” He growls and hammers in even more before his cock pulses inside me and gives me his hot cum. “Mine.”

“Mine.”

Maybe crashing onto a planet that is filled to the brim with ice and snow isn’t that bad after all. And maybe this icy place isn’t that cold after all.

Remember the festival Brutus mentioned? Click here to see what's going to happen there. It is Lexi's first festival there with Zefarin and everyone in the village!

Thank you for reading. I hope you have enjoyed the book and will leave a review for it. Click here.

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