

# **Shifting Lust 1: The Chamelyon's Curse**

## **Lexxie Couper**

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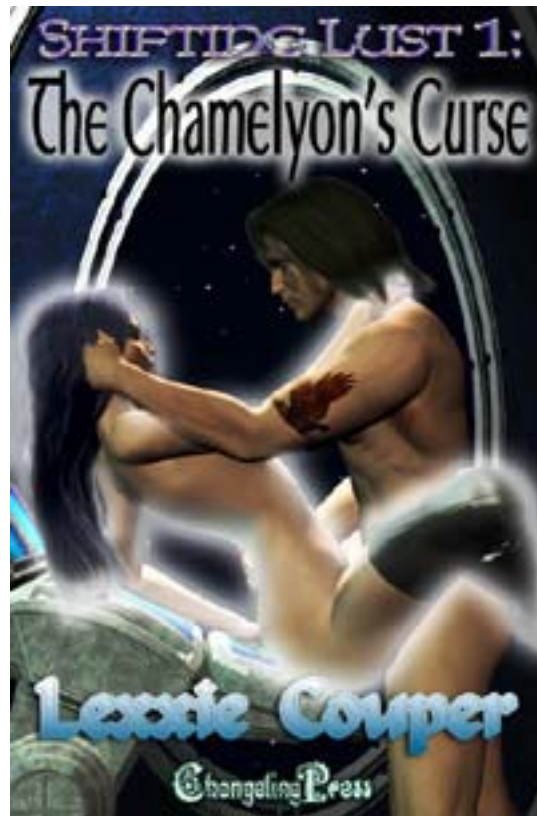
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## Prologue

*Solar Year 4673*

Raiven a'Tor rested his elbows on the grimy bar ignoring the naked Jaxian hooker next to him who was trying to get his attention.

The bartender approached, wiping his upper hands on a filthy towel as his lower hands poured a shot of vivid red liquid into a tiny glass.

Raiven took the drink, downing it in one mouthful. The bartender raised his eyebrows, grunted once and turned to walk away. Raiven stopped him. "Leave the bottle."

"Need some company?" The hooker slid closer to him, sending off waves of musky pheromones.

Raiven poured himself another shot. "No."

"Come on, baby." She trailed her upper fingers along his hard jaw, her lower hand skimming his black leather-clad thigh. "I'm the best there is." Her dancing fingers slipped to his crotch and squeezed his cock. She murmured in delight at what she found. "Impressive."

A'Tor grabbed her wrist and turned his flat grey eyes on her. "Go away."

The hooker gave him a filthy glare. "Take it up the ass, do you?"

Raiven shifted his weight, moving his hand to rest on the butt of the weapon slung low on his hip. The Jaxian whore dropped her eyes and the colour drained from her purple face as she spied the lethal Terran gun. She shot Raiven a frightened look, and he suppressed a grim smile. Now she knew who he was, she'd fuck off and leave him alone. They always did.

"Raiven a'Tor?" she whispered, backing away from him quickly in a fearful bow, her four arms wrapped around her naked torso. "Forgive, sir."

He turned back to his drink. Delekian firewater was famous for burning away reality, so why was he still so fucking aware of the emptiness in his heart?

*It doesn't matter. You'll find her. It's what you do.*

"A'Tor?"

An oily voice addressed him and he shot a look to his left at his new companion. The Palon was small and wiry. Shifty eyes darted around the crowded bar, nervous. Raiven poured another drink. "Who's asking?"

The Palon ignored the question. "You lookin' for the Chamelyon female, yes? The one with the black eyes?"

Raiven's chest tightened. "Yes." It had been so long. Had he finally tracked her down?

The Palon's beady eyes locked on him. "Someone else was also lookin' for her." Fear and apprehension wavered in his voice, with good reason. It was common knowledge throughout the six systems what happened to someone foolish enough to piss off the Terran bounty hunter. "They got to her first."

The constant ache in a'Tor's chest turned cold. "Who?"

"The Murukhan warlord. She's dead."

## Chapter 1

*S.Y. 4675 - Two Years Later*

Kyra Issarei traced her fingers lightly down the princess's bare arms, the feather-light touch sending a ripple of excitement through her. It was always this way just before a shift. Her fingertips continued their journey of exploration, down long, smooth thighs to bent knees, then back up to a toned flat stomach where a sparkling moon-diamond studded the princess's navel.

A shiver whispered down Kyra's spine. *Wait*, she told herself softly. *Wait. It will come.* Her body responded with a throb of hot anticipation between her legs. Eager. Impatient.

She looked up into the princess's beautiful face. Eyes the colour of blue ice regarded her. Warily. That wasn't surprising. What she and the princess were about to do was the stuff of dreams. Legends.

"It will be fine," she whispered, listening to her own voice, knowing in just a short moment it wouldn't sound like hers anymore. "Relax." Her fingertips worked their way to the princess's collarbones, neck, temples. "I'm told it is *very* pleasurable. Like --" Kyra paused. She was about to say "an orgasm," but the princess wouldn't know what she meant by the comparison. The Princess of the Five Moon's royal virginity was famed throughout the six systems. "-- like slipping into a bath of Elixia Ambrosia," she finished instead. Surely the princess would understand that comparison. Only royalty was permitted the sinfully exotic liquid.

Another hot pulse fluttered between her thighs, this time stronger. *It's coming. It's closer.*

"You understand what this means?" Kyra whispered, her question husky. She needed to ask. Before it was too late. "The High Priestess told you what I'm doing?"

"Yes." The princess's voice was just as husky. "Cy told me everything."

"Good." Kyra drew in a trembling breath, feeling the wave building. *So close.* She moved her hands quickly, burying them into the princess's thick, silky hair, the midnight strands slipping between her fingers. *The shift!* The hot pulse between her thighs was almost unbearable. It had been so long. *The shift! The shift!* A sharp gasp burst from Kyra's throat and she threw back her head, her neck and spine arching as the shift began. *Oh, gods of Kaius! The shift!*

Faintly she heard the princess cry out, a sound ripe with pleasure and release that bounced around the cavernous Temple of Calis. That must be a first, Kyra thought vaguely. The shift was still occurring and during the change her mind was a tidal pool, filling her with the thoughts and dreams of her client in a rush of emotions and senses that left her gasping, panting and trembling.

Her muscles tensed as the shift rolled over her. Her flesh became liquid, hot and cold, burning, icy, as the change continued. Her limbs became longer, her breasts fuller, heavier, the nipples pinching into rock-hard nubs as the cold temple air kissed them. She rolled her neck, feeling long hair flowing from her formerly close-cropped scalp feather across her bare butt, the sensation like the touch from a lover's tongue. The end was near; Kyra could sense it in the almost desperate mounting of pleasure rolling through her. The best, however, was yet to come.

*Here. I'm open.*

She relaxed her mind, preparing for the most exciting but dangerous part of her job. Exquisite stabs of scorching heat burst through her as her mind filled with Princess Xia's psyche -- her *id*. Without it, the shift would fail and the client would die. Immediately and painfully.

The princess twisted into her personality, burying, seeking. *Here she is.* It was then, as a rush of hot, powerful lust flooded through her body, Kyra realised she'd been deceived.

She sucked in a breath, staring hard at the panting princess. *How has she kept it a secret?* Shaking, she removed her hands from the princess's tousled hair, struggling to

control her breaths as the new sensations of Xia's psyche made themselves known in her mind. Her flesh.

"It's done!" the princess gasped.

Yes, it was. Kyra looked down at her sweat-slicked body, seeing limbs bearing no resemblance to her own. Feeling a hunger craving to be filled swell in her gut. Her pussy.

"Oh, gods, I'm free!" the princess cried, joy and elation in her voice as she leapt to her feet.

Kyra stared at the laughing woman. *How has she kept such a sexual appetite a secret?* "Princess?" She fought to ignore the want surging through her. "How?"

Xia turned, blue eyes no longer wary. Now they were supremely victorious. She knelt before Kyra, hands snaking out so her palms smoothed over Kyra's swollen breasts. Her fingers pinched at Kyra's tight nipples in quick, practiced movements, sending molten pleasure to her very core. *Oh, gods!*

"Tell anyone, shape-shifter, and I will kill you," Xia whispered savagely, twisting Kyra's nipples painfully. A gasp of raw pleasure escaped Kyra's throat and the princess smiled. "It feels good, doesn't it? The High Priestess taught me everything." Her fingers twisted and flicked again, sending another spasm of agonising pleasure through Kyra's body, flooding her slick pussy with wet heat. "Everything."

"But, you're a virgin." Kyra's words were just a breath as she fought with the lust roaring through her. Commanding her. Trying to take over.

*Fuck her. Lick her pussy. Suck her tits.*

"Am I?" The princess raised one dark eyebrow. She leant closer, full open lips lightly brushing Kyra's mouth. "You tell me, shape-shifter."

Xia kissed her, tongue hot, wet and insistent. Licking. Flicking. Sharp teeth biting at her lips. The princess's animal lust -- now a powerfully undeniable part of her own consciousness -- welled through Kyra, crashing over her. *Fuck her*, it demanded. *She wants it. She wants it all the time. And now, so do you. Fuck her.*

She reached out, knotting her fingers in the hair at Xia's nape and jerking her mouth free of the sweet invasion. She glared at the princess. "This was not part of the deal."

"What are you complaining about? You got paid." Blue eyes regarded her. "Besides, I'm sure you'll find it very... *pleasurable*."

Kyra went for her gun. Then remembered she was naked. Curse it!

The princess laughed, the sound throaty and far from virginal. "It's a shame I have to go. The situation is making me very horny. I've always wondered what it would be like to fuck a shape-shifter." Her eyes skimmed over Kyra. "Almost as much as I've wondered what it would be like to fuck myself."

Kyra lunged for Xia's throat just as a massive explosion shattered the serene stillness of the temple.

Xia stumbled, falling out of her grasp. "Thanks, shape-shifter." Laughing, she grabbed Kyra's long jacket from the nearby marble altar and slipped her naked body into the worn, black leather. "Give my fiancé a kiss from me." She turned, and with only a few steps, disappeared into the darkness of the temple.

Kyra began to follow, but a deafening hollow boom filled the air, followed by a blinding green light. She flung herself to the ground, instantly recognising the cause of the explosion. *Fuck! Sub-Alliotic bombs! Gods, no! The Murukhans!*

Debris rained all around. Chunks of the temple smashed onto the marble floor. Kyra curled into a ball, doing all she could to protect her naked frame. Through the cacophony of destruction came the sound of trampling feet. Soldiers.

"Here. She's here." A harsh, guttural voice rose above the devastation. "I found the princess."

Kyra raised her head, shielding her eyes against the falling rubble as she squinted toward the voice. Cold dread sank into the pit of her stomach at the sight of four heavily armed Murukhan soldiers running toward her.

*Oh, gods of Kaius. Help me.*



Yet, even the sure knowledge of her fate did not stop the hot hunger sweeping through her, swelling her pussy and filling her with uncontrollable lust. She licked her lips. *Males.*

\* \* \*

"I want to fuck her."

The guttural voices came. Fuzzy. As though through a shroud of Jy mist.

"Lord Mur'dek doesn't want her touched."

"How will he know?"

"What? Are you mad? She's a virgin!"

"I've never had me a virgin." There came the sound of a metal buckle being fiddled with. "Fuck it. I'm goin' for it."

Kyra struggled to open her eyes. Where was she? What was going on?

*Remember the shift!*

Oh, gods. The princess. The princess had deceived her.

"Spread her legs."

"What? You not gonna wake her up?"

"Fuck, no!"

She moved -- barely -- but it was enough to feel the cold manacles on her wrists. Someone had chained her. The Murukhans! Like a shot, she sat up, eyes flicking around the room. *Shit, I'm in trouble.*

A sudden movement to her left grabbed her attention and she spun her head. Two Murukhan soldiers stood beside the bed, weapons drawn. "Your Highness," one said, his scarred reptilian face turning into a leer.

*That's right. They think I'm the princess.*

Kyra turned away, taking in the grim situation. Typical soldiers' quarters, grime, filth and squalor. On the far wall hung a faded poster of a naked Ferrellian sex-slave, pussy shaved and glistening mouth open. Like Kyra, the Ferrellian was chained to a bed. Unlike Kyra, the bed was clean.

A gust of stale, dry air blew against her from an overhead duct, alerting her to the disconcerting fact she was still naked. That bitch, Xia, had taken off with her favourite jacket. Kyra clenched her jaw. She loved that jacket.

"Hey, Your Highness."

She ignored them easily. Not as easy to ignore was the warm twinge fluttering into raw life between her legs. Already the musky scent of sweaty men was worming its way into her senses, twisting the princess's licentious hunger tighter. She needed to get free. The manacles were not only keeping her captive, they were making her horny. If only she could shift back. Resume her true form. But she couldn't. Not until she made physical contact with that slut Xia again, and only the gods knew when that would happen.

*Unless...*

Kyra twisted the chains around her wrists. There was another way to shift, if only for the briefest moment, but could she do it?

*Do I have a choice?*

"Hey, royal bitch."

For a fleeting moment, fear tried to worm its way into Kyra's head, but she shoved it aside. She was an intergalactic body decoy, for Trayza's sake! She'd been in tight spots before. She could handle this. In hand-to-hand combat, Murukhans were sloppy fighters. Lazy and too reliant on weapons.

*Ah, but they're fantastic lovers.*

She had to get out of these manacles.

"Ignore me much longer, Your Highness, and you'll be sorry." A Murukhan, the larger of the two, leant toward her, hard muscles rippling under his green scaly hide as he shifted his weight. "I've never had myself a virgin. 'Specially no royal one."

"Don't do it, Cri," his companion implored, slitted yellow eyes nervous as he hitched his gun up further and shuffled on the spot. Kyra noted his unease. Dissension in the ranks? Could she use this friction to escape?

She shot Cri a look, unable to miss the naked lust in his eyes as they roamed over her breasts. Her body responded to it, her new hunger for sexual release building so quickly she almost gasped. Licking her lips, she turned her heavy gaze to Cri's partner. *Two at once? Why not?* The thought sent a hot pulse straight to her pussy, and she felt those satiny lips swell.

*Perhaps it's the only way to escape?*

Then again, perhaps it wasn't. She didn't really care anymore. The princess's *id* was in charge, and all she wanted was to feel their hard soldiers' bodies crushing hers, their cocks thrusting into her. In her mouth. Her cunt. Her ass.

Kyra's pussy grew wet. Eager to be fed.

Turning back to Cri, she played with her nipples, the heavy chains clanking as she moved. The sound sent a ripple of pleasure through her; it was then she realised the princess liked it rough. Which meant now she did too. There was no way she could prevent Xia's *id* from taking control. It was the shape-shifter's curse.

*This is no curse*, a deep, dark thought rose in Kyra's mind. Hers, but not hers. *To feel like this is no curse.*

She raised one hand to her mouth, sucking noisily on her index and middle fingers before returning them to her tight nipples, pinching hard. Spasms of heat shot through her. Cri stared at her busy fingers and Kyra was delighted to see a huge cock spring to life in his leather uniform trousers. The Murukhans were known for their sizeable cocks, and it seemed to Kyra Cri was a prime example of his species. She smiled. *Yes, that's it. Give that to me.*

"Are you going to join me?" she invited, raking her nails across her breasts. Her clit was a swollen tip of ache and she wanted something rubbing against it so bad she thought she would explode. She spread her legs wider.

Cri seemed to read her mind. He tore one glove from his clawed hand with sharp, yellow teeth, throwing it over his shoulder where it slapped his stunned partner in the face. "Hey!" the other Murukhan yelled, indignant. Cri didn't seem to care. He

climbed onto the bed, leering down at Kyra as his fingers plunged into her wet, wet pussy, short blunt claws sending shots of ecstasy through her. *Holy fuck!*

Grunting, struggling with his uniform with his free hand, Cri shoved his face against hers. A long pointed tongue flicked out and licked the perspiration from her top lip before his mouth covered hers. Kyra shoved her hips against his hand, grinding her throbbing clit against the hard ball of his palm, wanting more.

"Your cock," she growled when his mouth moved to her neck, his teeth biting into her with exquisite pain. "Fuck me with your hard cock."

He leant back a little, fumbling with a compartment on his belt. With a triumphant gleam in his slitted eyes, he pulled out a small key. "I'm going to unchain you, Princess." He reached for the manacles on her wrists. "Don't get any ideas."

There was a gasp from the other soldier. "Cri!"

"Shut the fuck up, Mit," Cri snarled at his companion, never tearing his eyes from Kyra's face as he released the lock on first one wrist, then the other. "Either shut up or fuck off."

"I'm not going anywhere, Mit," Kyra panted. "All I want is to be fucked." She turned the princess's blue eyes to the hovering Murukhan. "By both of you. Now."

Cri's trousers dropped to the ground, an impressive, pulsing member rising from a mass of wiry hair. "Take this, Your Highness," he said between heaving breaths, shoving her legs apart with his knees. "I'm about to give you a right royal fucking."

For a split second, Kyra froze. *Are you sure you know what you're doing? It's been so long since you orgasmed. And the last time was with...* Then the princess's psyche took over again, fuelled by the smell of sex in the air. Unable to deny that demanding hunger, Kyra lost herself to wild abandon.

Cri pumped into her, slipping in and out of her dripping pussy as his hands mauled her breasts. *Oh, gods of Kaius!* His teeth sank into her naked flesh, his fingers twisting and pinching her nipples so painfully she gasped. It wasn't enough. She wanted more.

"Mit," she called, voice husky and raw. "Mit."

Over Cri's shoulder, she saw movement. *Yes!* Mit stepped into view, naked, his cock a long, solid shaft pointing straight to the heavens. He approached the bed, eyes glued to hers. "Turn me over, Cri," she demanded. "Turn me over now."

Cri did as he was told, flipping Kyra onto her stomach. He grabbed her hips and yanked her ass from the bed. Heat flooded into her cunt as she crawled further onto her knees, presenting her ass to the Murukhan. Mit shot a quick look at Cri. "What if Grak and Dal find out?"

"They can find their own damn virgin," Cri grunted, sliding his fingers over Kyra's sodden cunt up to her anus. "Besides, they've got to fly the ship."

Kyra turned her hot gaze on the hesitant Mit. "Come here," she ordered, smiling with satisfaction when the Murukhan stepped closer. She took his pulsating shaft into her hand, running her tongue slowly over her parted lips as Cri shoved his cock into her pussy.

Mit stared down at her. "Don't worry," she whispered. "This won't hurt a bit."

## Chapter 2

Raiven a'Tor walked into the throne room, black metal-heeled boots clanging on the cold marble floor. The room fell to silence, every pair of eyes on the man as he crossed to the throne. It had been centuries since a Terran had been in the presence of the King of the Five Moons, but that wasn't the reason for the stunned silence. Here was Raiven a'Tor. Here amongst them. *Raiven a'Tor*. The feared bounty hunter.

A hundred pairs of eyes studied him, taking in everything; the deadly-fit body, the black, black hair, the battle-scarred black leather trousers, the famous tattoo of a mysterious black bird in flight on the biceps of his left arm.

The man was a legend. Until that very moment, many there in the king's court would have gone to their grave swearing he was a myth, conjured up to frighten weak men and arouse any woman. Rumour surrounded him. It was whispered he had a death wish; that he didn't fear death. That he *was* death. Some said a mysterious female had broken his heart, others, that he had no heart. Whatever was true, women lusted after him. And he *never* disappointed. His skill as an inter-galactic bounty hunter was matched only by his phenomenal and unequalled sexual prowess. Depending on their sex, whoever saw that black bird swoop down on them either begged for mercy, or screamed in ecstasy.

Raiven approached the king, right hand resting loosely on his gun. To be armed in the presence of Zarx, King of the Five Moons, was a crime punishable by death, but no one had the courage to ask a'Tor for his weapon. Trying to remove the famed Terran gun from Raiven a'Tor was as good as asking for certain death. Slow, excruciating death, so the legend said, and those in the king's throne room immediately believed it to be true. They didn't have to see his cold, grey eyes to know a'Tor was a man not to be messed with. The way he walked said it all.

"Greetings, Raiven a'Tor, last of the Terran." The king spoke grandly, his voice booming around the room. "We are humbled by your presence."

"What do you want, Zarx?" Raiven's deep voice was devoid of ceremony. "My time is too precious to waste on self-centred kings."

A stunned gasp ricocheted around the court.

The king blanched, smothering an uncomfortable cough in the arm of his royal robes. "The Lunarian System needs your celebrated skills. We are in our darkest moment."

Raiven cast a look around the room. "Everyone leaves." His order carried without effort. "Or I do."

A young Lunarian stepped forward, dressed head to toe in purple Delekian velvet. "How dare you speak to the King of the Five Moons thus!" he exclaimed, his thin body shaking with indignation. "Who do you think you are?"

Raiven turned his eyes to the king.

Zarx's fleshy face reddened with embarrassment. "My Lord Pax," he stammered, "please be still."

"But, Your Highness --"

"Shut up, Pax." Raiven cut the blustering fop's protests short. He raised a black eyebrow at the king.

Zarx stood. "My friends," he addressed his astonished court. "We ask that you take your leave. We have much to discuss with our revered guest."

"The fop stays," Raiven instructed, his voice silencing the departing crowd. As one, they turned and stared at Lord Pax before averting their eyes and shuffling from the room.

"That's better." Raiven ascended the steps leading directly to Zarx's throne, cold eyes boring down into the king. "Now, what do you want me to do?"

"My daughter has been kidnapped." Zarx's voice trembled. "I need you to return her to me." He waved his hand slightly toward the silent Lord Pax. "And her fiancé."

Raiven's gaze never wavered from the king. "Who has her?"

"The Murukhan warlord, Mur'dek."

At the name, Raiven felt his body stiffen. Mur'dek. Red fury surged through him, but he ignored it. It would serve no purpose to linger on dark memories. Not now. He let his gaze flick to Zarx. "When?"

"Two moons past."

"Why?"

The king choked back a wretched sob and dropped his head into his hands, leaving Pax to supply Raiven with his answer. "Mur'dek demands King Zarx abdicate. If he doesn't hand over rule of the Lunarian System to the warlord, Princess Xia will be killed."

Raiven gritted his teeth as fury threatened to consume him again. He knew all too well what the Murukhan warlord was capable of. He cared little for the foolish monarch before him, even less for the snivelling fop, but for a time Xia had warmed his bed. If not his soul. He adjusted his stance slightly, feeling his gun against his thigh. "When will he kill her?"

Pax pulled a silk handkerchief from his sleeve and patted his eyes. "By the end of this cycle."

Five days. Not a long time.

"It's worse than you know, Lord Pax," Zarx moaned. "He doesn't plan to *kill* her. He has avowed to make her his slave even *if* I obey his command."

Raiven watched horrified realisation dawn on Pax's pallid face. "No!" the Lunarian burst out. "My king! Her virginity!"

Raiven cocked an eyebrow. *You don't know the princess that well*, he thought dryly.

"He demands rule of my kingdom and promises never to return her to me," the king wailed. "Our choices are few. She either becomes his bed-whore, or..." He sobbed openly "...or he will give her to the sex-slavers of Ferrellian Ten."

"Virgins are few and far between in Murukha," Raiven said flatly. "And Murukhan soldiers are not known for their high morals. Your daughter has probably already been fucked."



The king wailed again, beating his head with his hands. "Oh, my Xia, my Xia."

"No," Pax shouted, fists bunched. "My princess would fight to the death before she succumbed. She would bite and kick and scratch."

Raiven suppressed a dry grin. *Oh, she bites all right. In all the right places.*

The king leapt to his feet, staring wildly at Raiven, his face flushed with crazed anger. "Will you return her to me, a'Tor? What price do you charge to save my daughter from such a vile fate?"

Raiven shifted his weight, touching the smooth grip of his gun briefly. *Let's see how much he loves his precious daughter.* "Four thousand chits."

"Four thousand!" Pax nearly choked.

"Five if I return her to you before Mur'dek gets his hands on her." Raiven paused, looking at the stunned lord with cold eyes. "Or would you rather she come back 'used'?"

Zarx's face turned white, and for a brief moment, Raiven thought he was going to collapse. Instead, the king raised his chin. "Ten thousand chits if you return her to me untouched."

*No chance of that, old man.*

"Done." Raiven spat on his palm and held it out.

"Done." Zarx spat on his own palm and smacked it against Raiven's. "Now bring my daughter home to me before that Murukhan grutt-fucker sticks his cock in her."

\* \* \*

Kyra looked at the two Murukhans, rubbing her wrists as she stepped around them. Her body tingled, her flesh still burning with cold fire.

She reached down and retrieved Cri's discarded uniform jacket, slipping her bare arms into the stiff Palon-hide leather. The jacket skimmed her butt, rubbing gently against her naked skin. Her pussy clenched at the contact, but Kyra forced the inviting sensation aside. She could fuck no more tonight. She cast a look at her two companions. Even if she were to submit to the princess's insatiable lust, Cri and Mit were useless to her.

She quickly crossed the filthy quarters to Cri's pulse blaster, hefting it to her shoulder. She was only vaguely familiar with the Murukhan weapon, but it would be enough to take control of the ship and get her back to the Lunarian System.

She shot another look at the two soldiers spread-eagled on the floor.

She'd tried to control herself. Had fought the rolling spasms as they wrenched through her hot, wet core, but Cri's cock had been too insistent, Mit's clawed fingers too wild, his long tongue too persistent, and her orgasm had erupted with such force the shift had been instantaneous.

Picking up Mit's blaster, Kyra slung it over her other shoulder, once again that of the princess's. The orgasm-induced shift was always only brief -- yet it was enough to shock the shit out of any unsuspecting partner. Poor Cri and Mit had thought they were fucking a Lunarian princess, but suddenly -- for a few wild, explosive moments -- they'd found themselves pumping into a slim female Chamelyon shape-shifter. Stunned confusion reigned for but a second, but it gave Kyra the chance to act. And she only ever needed one.

With lethal speed, she was on her feet. The orgasm had been powerful, but her need to get away, to not wind up in Mur'dek's clutches was more so. Anger and disgust had driven her. Controlled her. Cri's neck was broken and Mit's throat slashed by the time she'd reverted to the princess's voluptuous form. For the span of the short, intense climax, she'd been herself again. Wholly and completely. Free of Xia's lust.

Yet not her own. *He* was in her head. Grey eyes burning with desire. Gods, she missed him.

However, by the time Mit crumpled to the floor in a bloody mess, Xia's psyche was back in her head. Forceful. Commanding. As her flesh rippled into the princess's, Kyra felt that all-consuming hunger spread once more through her body and her aching memories disappeared.

For that, Kyra was grateful. Until she found the princess again, until she made physical contact with her and reverted, she was in dire trouble. She couldn't afford distracting memories of the bounty hunter when she had her own problems to deal

with. She now knew Xia had no intention of ever marrying her fiancé. And from the explicit images flashing through her head, the High Priestess hadn't wanted Xia to either. What better way to slip away from an unwanted situation than sucker in a shape-shifter known for saving females in distress. The pair of them were probably on the other side of the six systems, laughing their asses off by now.

Kyra's lip curled in a silent snarl. The princess had set her up and that pissed her off. When she tracked the bitch down, she was going to beat the shit out of her. After she took her jacket back, of course.

Without so much of a backward glance at the two dead Murukhans, Kyra stepped into the ship's dimly lit passageway and headed for the bridge.

Now she had to contend with Grak and Dal.

At the thought of the two remaining soldiers, her pussy contracted. "I'm going to kill you, Xia," she growled, slowing her steps as she drew near the bridge. She'd spent the last two years hopelessly trying to forget one particular man, and now, here she was, thanks to some randy princess, lusting after every male who came her way. "I'm going to kill you," she repeated, releasing the safety on Cri's blaster and trying to ignore the seductive sound of metal on metal. She was going in firing. The last thing she needed was to be distracted by her greedy cunt.

The bridge door slid open and Kyra sped in on silent feet, Cri's jacket slapping her bare butt, his blaster drawn.

Murukhan pulse blasters have only two settings -- stun and vaporisation, and Kyra had set hers to the latter. The two soldiers at the command station didn't hear her, but the larger of the two felt her presence. The iridescent bolt of proton energy hit the soldier at the base of his ridged skull, instantaneously evaporating him in a screaming puff of black smoke.

Immediately, alarms screeched through the ship. *"Alert One. Weapon Fired."*

"No shit," Kyra muttered. She cocked the blaster and aimed it at the second Murukhan who, just as quickly, was aiming his weapon at her.

"Move and die, Princess!" he yelled over the screaming ship's alarm.

Kyra fired, cursing when her shot vaporised the control deck's navi-station just to his left. *Come on, Kyra. Focus!*

"Don't do it, Princess," the Murukhan warned, his own blaster levelled straight at her chest. "Those tits are too perfect to destroy."

Kyra kept her weapon on the soldier, staring at him over its sight. "We have a standoff, Murukhan," she called. "But I have the upper hand. I *will* fire if you make a move, but you're dead if I die."

The soldier curled his lip, sharp yellow teeth slick with saliva. "I can always tell Lord Mur'dek you killed yourself."

"True," Kyra acknowledged. "But that's still not going to keep you alive. Your illustrious leader will have your stinking balls for breakfast if anything happens to me." The soldier didn't move and Kyra had to admit she was impressed. Slightly. It seemed he wasn't just the typical dumb Murukhan grunt after all.

"Where's Cri and Mit?" His eyes bored into her over the barrel of his blaster.

"Indisposed."

"You mean dead."

"That's another way of putting it."

He spat out a stream of harsh guttural snarls. "You bitch. Mit was my brother."

Kyra tightened her grip on her weapon. "He was also a pathetic fuck."

The Murukhan opened his mouth and screeched, the sound so high-pitched it drowned out the screaming alarm. Unable to stand it, Kyra dropped her blaster and slapped her hands over her ears. *Holy gods, that hurts!*

She fell to her knees, her head vibrating with the Murukhan's battle cry. She was flung backward, kicked in the chest so forcefully her back smacked against the cold metal floor in a breath-stealing thump. "You bitch!" He stomped on her shoulder. White-hot pain streaked through her. "Fucking bitch." He reached down and grabbed a hank of her hair, jerking her savagely to her feet before belting her in the face with a rock-hard fist.

She fell to the floor, a metallic taste on her tongue and lips. Struggling to her knees, she spat, a wad of blood hitting the floor in front of her.

"Get up, bitch," the Murukhan growled, standing over her.

Kyra looked up, her head, shoulder and chest a single agonising throb of pain. If only she could shift. Xia's body wasn't made for fighting.

"Get up, cunt."

Kyra dropped her head, desperately searching for a weapon. She'd started with two. Where were they?

The Murukhan snatched another fistful of her hair, heaving her to her feet again. "So," he growled, yellow eyes narrow. "My brother was a pathetic fuck, was he?"

Kyra glared back at him through a shroud of red pain. "The most pathetic I've ever had."

A low grumble sounded in the Murukhan's chest. "Nice try, Princess." His thin lips curled into a cold smile. "But you fucked up." His low chuckle sent waves of dread through Kyra. "Or should I say, you *didn't*. The Princess of the Five Moons is a virgin. Everyone in the six systems knows that." His eyes dropped to her naked body only partially hidden by Cri's jacket, travelling over her flesh with deliberate malice. "And while I'd love to show you what a fuck feels like, Lord Mur'dek wants you untouched." He yanked her face closer to his, sour breath curling around her, suffocating. "Once he's finished with you, though..."

"In your dreams," Kyra snarled.

The Murukhan's smile grew even colder. "No, Princess. When I'm finished with you, dreams will be all you have." He hurled her across the room, smashing her against the command deck. The last thing Kyra saw before blackness engulfed her was the Murukhan aiming his blaster at her, that cold smile still on his scaly face.

Then there was an excruciating burning pain.

Then nothing.

\* \* \*

Light stung her eyes, piercing through her closed lids.

Kyra rolled her head, barely aware of anything except the dull pain throbbing in her shoulder and chest. Why was she in pain?

Her head felt as if it were stuffed with wool. Where was she?

*Come on, Kyra. Snap out of it. You're in trouble, here.* She shook her head, dragging her hands through the princess's thick mane.

Or at least, trying to. The thick, heavy metal manacles attached to her wrists wouldn't let her.

Her eyes snapped open. *Oh, for Trayza's sake, not again!*

"So you've decided to join us after all, Your Highness," a deep, familiar voice said to her right. Kyra spun her head around and cold fear filled her. The Murukhan standing beside her hadn't changed since they'd last met. His imposing body still a mass of scarred and tattooed scales. His narrow yellow eyes still burned with sadistic lust. Kyra sucked in a breath. *Mur'dek.*

*Calm down. He doesn't know who you really are.*

He gave her a smile of great concern; so hollow even a blind beggar would see its insincerity. "We were beginning to get worried." His reptilian eyes travelled over her body, and a hideous mix of repulsion and depraved craving swept through her. "I do apologise for Captain Dal." Mur'dek continued to smile as he unfurled a long leather whip, its tip studded with small, steel teeth. "But he couldn't let you escape now, could he? Especially after what you did to his brother."

Kyra shot a look around her. She was chained, spread-eagled, between two enormous marble columns, her wrists and ankles clamped by solid steel shackles. The room was opulent, obviously the private chambers of the Murukhan warlord. Which meant she was three systems away from Lunaria, in a whole lot of trouble.

And, of course, she was naked. Again.

## Chapter 3

Even as the woman's lips moved over his fevered flesh, Raiven knew he was dreaming. He could bring it to an end; all he had to do was wake himself. But he didn't.

She raked her nails down his bare chest, leaving a red trail as his skin scored from the exquisite pressure. His breath came in ragged bursts, hitching and catching every time her teeth bit into his nipples. *Holy shit, that's so good.*

Every night. He had this dream every night.

It didn't matter if he'd already fucked his brains out with another woman. The moment he fell asleep, empty and exhausted, *she* came to him. Black eyes smouldering with desire, smile sultry and seductive, hot, tight sex enveloping his rigid cock.

Every goddamn night.

And like he did every night, he cursed his mother for being a Darzian. Terrans might not bond for life. Darzians did. If it weren't for his mother's blood in his veins, he wouldn't be dreaming of the mysterious Chamelyon who'd stolen his heart. If it weren't for his Darzian blood he wouldn't be an empty, hollow shell now -- longing for a woman he couldn't have. Yearning for a life he couldn't live.

Except in his haunted dreams.

*His cock was a straining, pulsing rod. Its red and swollen head brushed against his sweat-slicked abdomen, waiting eagerly for the touch of her fingers. She would soon be holding him, her pressure just right, guiding his burning, throbbing cock into her mouth.*

A'Tor moaned in his sleep. He should stop this. It did nothing except leave him in wretched self-disgust. Yet it was the closest he could get to peace -- this tortured, painful memory. The closest he would ever get. So he continued to sleep, wishing he'd never wake.

*The fine sheen of perspiration on her skin made her look as if she were made of warm gold. He gazed at her, his heart thumping in his chest, his breath short and fast as he tangled his fingers in her silky white hair, admiring the feel of her skull under his palms. Her mouth continued to suck at his cock, her tongue gliding over its long, hard length, flicking at the glans, sending him mad. If she didn't stop soon, he was going to come all over her. But she did. Every night. And every night he fell more in love with her.*

*He looked into her shining black eyes, so rare for a Chamelyon. "Why'd you stop?"*

*Her returning smile was soft. Seductive. "I want more than just this. Don't you?"*

*His heart skipped a beat. "Yes."*

*And he did. His Terran blood wanted it. His Darzian blood cried for it. More than just simple sex. A wild week of passion with the mysterious female had filled him with more warmth and peace than he'd ever thought possible. What was meant to be strictly nameless R & R between two strangers in a seedy spaceport had become something so much more. He wanted to go to the next level with her. Regardless of what it meant. He was ready.*

*The woman moved to his neck, her teeth and tongue travelling along his jaw line, heading for his ear. She sucked his earlobe and whispered in that throaty, husky voice of hers, "I think I'm falling for you."*

*The second those words passed her lips he knew he was in love with her. That he always would be. After death and into the next life. It was the Darzian way.*

*He pulled away from her a little, just enough to see her face.*

*"What?" She smiled, fingers gently tracing the outline of his tattoo.*

*"What's your name?"*

*Her eyes sparkled. "Why do you want to know?"*

*"Because I love you. Stay with me, forever."*

*Midnight-black irises stared at him and his heart knew her answer, felt her rejection, before the words even began to form on her lips.*

*That was when he woke up. As he did every sweetly torturous night before this.*

*"Fuck," he growled, flinging himself from his hard, narrow bed.*

*He grabbed his trousers from the side bench, ignoring his aching hard-on as he dressed savagely. For the last two years he'd suffered the same. Wanting the woman of*



his dreams and hating her at the same time. There was no release and there never would be. No matter how many women he screwed, no matter how hard he tried to fuck her out of his system, she'd always be in his heart. His head. His soul. Making love to him. Rejecting him.

If she were alive, he'd have found her and *never* let her go. Not until she admitted she loved him as he did her.

But she wasn't.

Lord Mur'dek had killed her.

Raiven stormed through his dark, silent ship, heading for the bridge. He'd just entered the Murukhan system and the warlord's time was up. A bleak smile crossed his face. "Get ready, Dek," he growled. "I'm coming."

\* \* \*

The warlord studied her. The whip trailed through his fingers, blunt claws caressing the smooth, black leather like a lover's touch. Kyra wished him dead.

"Your father's yet to agree to my demands," Mur'dek stated, almost offhandedly. "Which surprises me. Perhaps the threat of giving you to the sex-slavers meant nothing to him. I'm beginning to wonder if he truly loves you." He lifted her chin with the whip's grip. "Or does he think I'm bluffing?"

"Please," she wept. "Don't hurt me. My father will reply."

Playing the virginal princess wasn't easy. It wasn't in Kyra nor the princess's nature to grovel. Xia's psyche, however, was turned on by Kyra's predicament, not incensed. While Kyra wanted to rip Mur'dek's perverted black heart from his vile body, the princess's insatiable lust wanted the Murukhan to shove the long stiff handle of the whip deep into Kyra's cunt. Or ass. Or both.

"Zarx is a fool if he thinks I'm bluffing." The warlord gave her a cruel smile, keeping her chin up as his eyes bored into hers. "Many a corpse has learnt that lesson the hard way."

"What do you want from my father?" Kyra wailed, trying her best to sound like a petrified virgin.

Mur'dek laughed, the ribald sound bouncing around the room. He leant closer still, scaly, pointed face almost touching hers. "Everything."

Kyra swallowed, her stomach and pussy both clenching at the same time. "My father will pay. Please, don't."

Mur'dek laughed again. "Pretty little virgin," he murmured, sliding the whip's grip down her neck and circling her left nipple with its hard end. The small nub of flesh reacted immediately, pinching into a tight pebble of flesh. "Oh, look what we have here," he cooed, harsh voice all the more hideous in his excitement. "Looks like someone wants to play."

Kyra closed her eyes. She had to do something. She knew Mur'dek. He wouldn't be satisfied with just a little feel-up. Especially not after noticing her body's reaction to his attention. Any second now he would go for broke. She'd have his tongue down her throat, his cock in her cunt and most likely, the whip handle up her ass. Unfortunately, with Xia running around in her head, Kyra knew she'd want it all, and then some. The danger was, if she orgasmed -- and she didn't doubt she would -- Mur'dek would see exactly who he had in his possession.

And there was nothing the Murukhan warlord wanted more than to kill Kyra Issarei, the Chamelyon shape-shifter.

"My Lord!" She flailed her body about in the shackles, pretending to be terrified -- and to an extent she was. She wasn't ready to die yet. There was still someone she had to find. A question she had to ask. "My Lord, please. Don't. I beg of you."

She remembered all too easily what pressed Mur'dek's buttons. Pain. Subservience. The more she begged for mercy, the more she begged to be left alone, the hornier he would get. What she had to do was get him down on his knees, between her thighs, but how in the name of Trayza was she going to do that? Especially when she was meant to be a cowering, virginal princess?

Mur'dek leered at her, a silver thread of drool slipping from his lip as his grin stretched wider. "Don't what?" He reached out, flicking hard at her left nipple. "This?"

A wave of hot, sickened pleasure rolled through her and she blended her moan into a cry of despair.

"This?" Mur'dek flicked her other nipple as he pinched the first, blunt claws piercing the sensitive flesh.

"Oh, my Lord. Please." She let her unwilling pleasure seep into the cry.

"Or this?" He slowly scratched his index claw down the length of her ribcage, past her navel and into the small black thatch of her pubic hair. Kyra sucked in a breath, struggling with the waves of surging heat rolling through her as his blunt nail slid over her swollen clit.

"Lord." Gods, she wanted to kill him. "Please."

Mur'dek chuckled. "I'm going to enjoy this," he purred, driving his meaty finger further into her wet cunt. "Virgins are always so..." he slicked his tongue from her jaw to her ear, burying its tip into her ear cavity, "...delicious."

He stepped back, and Kyra shuddered at the expression on his face. She knew that look. She didn't have to guess what was coming next.

*Hiss!*

Hot pain lashed around her bare ass and hips. She squealed. The manacles on her wrists and ankles bit into her skin as his whip tore across her flesh. The chains rattled in her ears as she bucked wildly.

*Crack!*

Again. Hot explosions filled her pussy with every lashing contact.

"You're dripping." Mur'dek wiped at her sodden cunt with his hand, a deep chuckle in his voice. "Mmm." He licked his palm. "Just as I thought. Delicious."

Kyra glared at him, trying to hide her hate and fury in a mask of confused fear. If he thought he was turning on a petrified virgin, he would be easier to manipulate, and she needed to manipulate him into doing what she wanted. If he sensed he was being played... She drew in a shaky breath. "Please, my Lord. Don't hurt me."

Mur'dek stepped closer, running the butt of his whip across her hips before brushing it over her pubic thatch. "Pain and pleasure are so close, Princess," he

murmured against her ear. A clawed hand skimmed lightly over her tender ass, the sensation sending a shiver of contradictory excitement through her. As much as she despised the feel of his hands on her body, her body loved it. Kyra knew she was in trouble.

*Get him to his knees. Hurry.*

"My Lord," she beseeched. "Please. I can take no more."

"Oh, I think you can." He latched onto her nipple with his mouth, sinking his teeth in.

Hate rolled through her, fighting with the princess's wanton appetites. All too easily she remembered being mauled like this before. Her flesh had never felt the Murukhan warlord's touch, but her mind had.

Just over two years ago, Mur'dek's child bride, Trista Et, had died in Kyra's arms. The beautiful Lappian, the only daughter of one of Mur'dek's slaughtered enemies, had suffered such atrocities at the warlord's hands she was on the verge of suicide. Unable to stand it any longer, she'd sent out a plea for help to the mysterious Chamelyon she'd heard whispered about by the local town-girls. A shape-shifter who could save her from her husband's sadistic lust. Help her disappear.

Kyra had just finished a job assisting a Ferrellian sex-slave flee her cruel master. She was exhausted -- physically, emotionally and psychologically -- but when she'd heard the plight of the young Lappian, her heart wept.

She'd slipped into Trista's suite in the warlord's fortress three days later. A feat much easier to accomplish than she'd expected. Just a quick flash of her breasts at the soldiers standing guard and a murmured story about being a passion-master sent to educate the warlord's young wife in the art of pleasuring, and she was in. The shift would take place in the early hours of the following morning while Mur'dek slept off his usual drunken stupor in his own chambers.

Everything had gone to plan. Until Mur'dek barged into the room.

Trista screamed and cowered away from her bellowing husband, breaking the shift's vital physical contact in mid-psyche transfer. Kyra had rippled back to her true

form just in time to grab Trista as the Lappian's life force evaporated. She'd shoved her trembling hands against the young girl's skull, desperate to reconnect, to give back Trista's *id*, but there was nothing. Only an empty, comatose shell. She had Trista's tortured memories. Trista had nothing.

The liquid state of her skin saved her life. That and her fast feet. Mur'dek's snatching hand had slipped off her wrist as she fled, his snarling, screaming voice chasing her as she ran.

Yet the brief contact with his wife had been enough to fill Kyra with nightmares of Mur'dek's sick sexual tastes. And now, here she was. Living them in person. And fucking Xia's psyche was getting off on it.

"Oh, please," she whimpered, as he shoved his driving fingers further into her tight, gripping pussy.

"Please, what?" Mur'dek panted.

"Please."

"You want this," Mur'dek growled against her cheek as he rammed his insistent fingers in and out of her pussy, grinding his thumb against her burning, swollen clit. "Say it."

Kyra tightened her muscles. She was close. Too close. She needed to get him on his knees. She needed his face buried into her cunt. Soon. Or it would be too late.

He dropped his whip and clawed at her breast, squeezing and pinching. "Say it."

*Get him between your legs. Now!*

"I want it."

Mur'dek sank his teeth into her neck, slurping her flesh with his tongue. "Of course you do," he whispered hoarsely into her ear. She could hear the gloating triumph in his voice.

Heat boiled through her. Heat and disgust. *Hurry up!*

"Please, my Lord. Take pity on me."

He chuckled. "Why should I?"

Kyra dropped her head and gasped. "What is happening to me?" she panted. "Oh, gods, I feel so..."

"So what, Your Highness?" His fingers plunged into her pussy, delving and seeking. Her skin began to burn fire and ice.

"You bastard," she ground out. "Don't make me beg." *For Trayza's sake. Control it.*

An evil glint appeared in his eyes and Kyra saw his muscles clench. "I can do whatever I like, Princess. I'm in control here." He shoved his fingers harder into her wet cunt. "I'm the one who says what you do." Fingers drove deeper. Faster. Filling her with frenzied pleasure. "Me. You do what I say." He moved his hand, withdrawing a finger. Kyra let out a moan. *No, no, no.* His eyes drilled into hers and his lips curled into a cruel smile. "I want you to beg me for mercy, bitch," he whispered in her face, breath hot on her fevered skin. "I want you to tell me every filthy, perverted, twisted thing you want me to do." He slid one long nail up to her ass. "I want you to scream it." He plunged his finger into her anus. "Now."

Her body began to shudder. *Oh, gods! It's almost here!*

"What, Your Highness? What do you want me to do to you? Stick my cock in your cunt? Your ass? Tell me."

Desperation rolled through her. "I want you to suck me out!" she screamed, thrashing her hips and whipping her head from side to side. The air filled with the sound of her chains, rattling and clashing against the marble columns as she writhed against Mur'dek's thrusting hand. "Please, my Lord. I want you to suck me out with your mouth. I want to wrap my legs around your head as you lick my cunt with your tongue." Gods, she hated herself. And with the hate came the escalating tension. She was almost coming.

"That's better," Mur'dek purred, slowly sliding his fingers from her ass and cunt. "That's what I wanted to hear." He took a step back, a leering grin on his face.

Kyra flung up her head, her heart threatening to burst in her chest. Her flesh was beginning to ripple. She couldn't control it anymore. If she didn't get him on his knees,

she was dead. "What are you, a fucking wimp?" she spat, glaring at him. "Either fuck me now or get someone else who can!"

Cold anger filled his eyes. "You little bitch." With a snarl, Mur'dek dropped to his knees. "I'll show you who the fucking wimp is." He snatched at the chains on her ankles, giving them a savage jerk, yanking her pussy closer to his face. With a sharp crack, the chains pulled free of the pillars, marble dust spitting into the air. He curled his fingers around her ass and wrenched her feet off the floor, burying his head into her heat.

Kyra hissed in a breath. *Thank the fucking gods!* Heart rapid, skin on fire, she wrapped her legs around his shoulders as his long pointed tongue began lashing at her sodden cunt. Rasping against her clit with bestial fury. Sucking the small button of flesh from between her swollen lips. Biting it.

*Holy fuck!*

She closed her eyes and her orgasm was upon her. Kyra jerked against him, feeling that hot, tight explosion building in her very core until she thought she was going to erupt in a flood of cum. Her skin rippled. A million pinpricks of fiery ice rained over her limbs. She grabbed at the chains holding her arms aloft, twisting them around her wrists and lifting herself from the floor, driving her pussy harder against Mur'dek's licking tongue as she clamped her thighs around his head.

*Here it is! Here it is! Here it is!*

The shift was immediate. In an instant, she was Kyra Issarei again.

*Oh, gods.* Her orgasm rolling through her, she looked down with hate and disgust at the Murukhan slurping at her throbbing cunt, readying to snap his neck with a flick of her hips.

And saw him looking up at her.

*Oh, fuck. No!*

Stunned recognition dawned in Mur'dek's yellow eyes, but before he could jerk away, Kyra moved. Fast. Thigh muscles clenched, she whipped her hips to the left.

There was a dull pop, and then Mur'dek's body went limp. His eyes rolled back in his head and he hit the floor with a heavy thud.



## Chapter 4

A'Tor stalked through the opulent rooms of Mur'dek's main fortress, ignoring the deafening sirens screeching around him. Scaly-assed Murukhans -- soldiers and officials alike -- ran in all directions, confusion clear on their ugly faces. Something was going on, but unless it interfered with his purpose, Raiven couldn't care less. In fact, in all the chaos, his presence seemed to have gone unnoticed. Which was just fine by him.

A cold smile stretched his mouth. Somewhere in the vast array of chambers was the Princess of the Five Moons. Once he'd safely energized her to his orbiting ship, he was going to hunt down Mur'dek and slit the bastard's throat.

"Hey!" A mewling voice rose over the sirens. From the corner of his eye Raiven noticed a Murukhan grunt running toward him, waving a disrupter in his direction. "Hey! Who are --"

The Murukhan's chest exploded, blood, bone and gore splashing everywhere.

"No one." Raiven returned his gun to its holster and continued walking.

He knew exactly where the princess would be. Mur'dek's private chambers. If it weren't for the commotion, he suspected he'd have found them fucking each other senseless. Either that, or Mur'dek lashing her with his goddamn whip. For some reason though, the warning sirens were screaming and had been before he'd energized into the fortress. Who knew where his prey was now.

He continued down a long corridor, which, according to the holo-schematics aboard his ship, led to the warlord's private wing. Bitter hate and revenge roared through his blood. For the last two years he'd thought about killing Mur'dek. Today he was going to do it.

A group of Murukhan soldiers ran toward him, guns drawn. A'Tor pulled his own, the lethal Terran weapon ripping them to shreds before any could fire. The further

along the corridor he went, the more corpses he left behind. Green blood dripped from the walls, bodies slumped over bodies. Soon he heard his name screamed in terror, soldiers trying to warn their fellow Murukhans of his approach. "Holy fuck! It's a'Tor! Run!"

Cold death roared through him. As always, he welcomed its chilling embrace.

At last he came to a large, gilded door. His smile was deadly as he raised his gun. "I'm here, you fucker," he whispered.

He entered silently, senses pricked. On edge.

The room was empty.

He looked around, stopping his stationary search when his eyes came upon two enormous marble columns. It wasn't the columns themselves, however, that caught his attention, rather, the chains attached to them. Two high, two low. Wrists and ankles. Mur'dek had shackled someone here. Raiven didn't need to be told who.

Being chained up was exactly what got the princess's blood pumping.

He turned to leave the room when something odd caught his attention. The leg chains were broken, as if wrenched from the columns, yet the wrist chains hung still intact. Raiven crossed the room, his senses tingling. The shackles were all closed. Locked. He narrowed his eyes. Why lock the shackles after the person had been released?

He drew a long breath, a musky smell of sex filling his lungs. He could taste the lust on his tongue. It tasted like --

For a split second, his heart stopped.

The Chamelyon?

Raiven pulled another breath, searching the air for that intoxicating scent he inhaled every night in his dreams.

Nothing. All he could smell was the princess. And Murukhan sweat.

Raiven spat. "Mur'dek."

Gun cocked, he left the room, heading back down the long corridor littered with mutilated dead, ears pricked for any sound that might lead him to the princess or Mur'dek.

Room after room, empty. He could smell Mur'dek everywhere, but not a whiff of the princess. Impatient anger began to heat his blood and he stalked through the fortress, obliterating any opposition encountered without slowing his stride.

*Where is she?*

The warning alarms started up again and Raiven scowled. "That's really getting annoying," he muttered as he rounded a corner leading into a narrow corridor filled with shadows.

Where he stopped.

Kyra crouched low in the shadows, hidden. Waiting.

Surely the Murukhan soldier couldn't see her?

Unless he had night vision, and Kyra knew Murukhans didn't -- thank Trayza for that -- all he should be able to see was darkness. So why in the name of Kaius was he stopping?

She desperately wanted to peek around the corner. Wanted to see if the corridor was clear. She needed to get going. Crouching lower, she wrapped Mur'dek's jacket tighter around her body. She was getting a little sick of relying on dead men's clothes to cover her body, but until she got off this forsaken rock and tracked down the princess, she had no other choice.

Abruptly, the alarms started again, shattering the suffocating silence. Kyra cringed, gasping a little at the ear-piercing sound.

"I heard that, Princess," a very familiar voice called over the alarms, and immediately her nipples pinched into rock-hard tips. "You can come out now."

*Oh, gods of Kaius! It's him!*

Raiven stood still and waited, his palm resting on the butt of his gun. He didn't have forever, but he was going to make her come to him.

"Come on, Princess. You know I'm not patient."

For a moment -- nothing. Raiven scowled. If she made him go in and get her, he was going to be very unhappy. And Zarx would be getting back a daughter unable to sit on her ass for at least a cycle.

"Princess."

Movement in the far reaches of the corridor brought another small smile of satisfaction to his face. "Hello, Your Highness."

The princess emerged from the shadows, her long jet-black hair a tousled mass of waves, her ice-blue eyes unreadable as she walked toward him. She was naked, with the exception of a blood-red Murukhan jacket which barely hid her voluptuous sexuality. He flicked his gaze over her body. Long smooth thighs, small, trim bush, flat stomach. Full, heavy breasts peeked at him from behind the Palon hide, deep, rosy nipples pinched into hard little nubs of enticing flesh. Effortlessly, he remembered how well those breasts filled his hands and his cock twitched at the memory.

He tilted his head, frowning. They'd spent many a day hidden away in the Temple of Calis fucking each other senseless. He knew every dip and curve of her body intimately. Something, however, didn't seem right. His eyes flicked to her face and for the quickest of moments, he thought he had it.

*She's hiding something.*

She drew closer. He sucked in a silent breath, her musky scent filling his mouth and lungs.

*There's something wrong here.*

In a blur, his gun was in his hand, aimed straight at her heart.

The princess stopped, arching one dark, shapely eyebrow. "Now, Raiven," she pouted, putting her hands to her luscious hips. "Just what exactly do you plan to do with that?"

"Shoot you."

The words were deadly calm, but the very instant Kyra saw a'Tor everything came back to her. Every wonderful moment she'd tried to forget. Every smile, every laugh. Every kiss, every caress. A smile tugged at her mouth. Seven days of the most intense passion imaginable wasn't easily erased from her mind, especially when she'd irretrievably lost her heart to him. Never in a million years would she forget Raiven a'Tor. It just wasn't possible.

But then Xia's psyche caught up, drowning her in a crashing wave of the princess's memories. Kyra's smile froze as an image of the two filled her head -- naked, sweaty. Fucking.

*That bitch!*

Cold, numb pain swept through her and for a split micron, she hated him. For betraying her.

*For Trayza's sake, don't be so stupid. You left him, remember? He never even knew your name!*

She shoved her pain and aching memories aside. They would serve no purpose now except to get them both killed. And wasn't that the reason she'd fled from him in the first place, all those years ago?

She gave him a calm, level look and his eyes roamed over her thoroughly, appreciation burning in those familiar grey depths. She felt her pussy flutter at his hot inspection, and she had to remind herself it was Princess Xia's shapely form he was admiring, not her own. "Shoot me?" She assumed a sultry pout and caressed her hips with her fingers. "Why would you want to shoot me?"

He said nothing. But his eyes held hers and his gun never wavered from her chest.

Kyra knew he was the most successful and lethal bounty hunter in the six systems; she'd experienced his phenomenal perception first hand. Did he sense something now? Something different about the princess?

Faintly she heard a group of Murukhan yelling at each other somewhere in the fortress. She heard Raiven's name, shouted like a curse, harsh voices filled with hate and fury and fear. It seemed she was no longer their target. He was.

Stomping footsteps echoed down the corridor, bouncing off the cold marble walls and floor. Coming their way.

*Come on, Kyra. There'll be time for explanations later. Just get us both off this planet.* More shouting curses filled the air. Louder. Closer. *Now!*

She ran the tip of her tongue over her bottom lip, watching Raiven's gun -- and his probing eyes -- on her.

*Convince him there's nothing suspicious going on or we're both dead!*

She stepped forward, Mur'dek's jacket slipping from her shoulders as she slowly pushed his gun aside. She pressed her naked body against Raiven's hard one. Like a flood, Xia's psyche flowed through her. Hot, horny. Hungry. Remembering and welcoming a'Tor's touch all too easily. "Come now, lover," she purred, trailing her fingertips up his smooth, muscular arms. "Surely you haven't forgotten this."

She raised herself up on her toes and kissed him.

Heat exploded throughout Raiven's body, the cold rush of the kill roaring through his veins mere moments ago instantly scorched away by a surge of lust. The sound of the approaching soldiers faded into the background as the princess's tongue rolled over his. Her hands tangled in his hair, tugging at the strands in painful little jerks that sent scalding ribbons of steel straight to his cock.

Raiven suppressed a moan. He'd been wrong. It *was* the princess. He would recognise her insatiable lust anywhere. Three months had passed since their last coupling in the Temple of Calis, but he hadn't forgotten how ravenous she was. Or how well she used that sensual body of hers. She moved her hips and he felt his growing erection grind against her pelvic bone with splendid friction. She wrapped one long leg around his hip, forcing her sex closer. His cock responded. If it weren't for the Murukhan soldiers shouting and screaming around them, reminding him just exactly

where they were, he'd have stripped off his trousers and taken his fill of what she so eagerly offered.

He reached for her wrists, the urgent need to return to his ship on his mind, but she bit his earlobe and flicked her tongue at the tender flesh. "You didn't really want to shoot me," she whispered.

Taking control over his body, he finally snared her wrists. "We have to go, Your Highness," he growled, stepping back from her slightly.

Xia gazed at him, eyes heavy with passion, and for a split second he thought he saw them change. From blue to ink-black.

Just like the Chamelyon's.

He sucked a sharp breath through his teeth.

*You're losing your mind, a'Tor.*

A bolt of iridescent proton-energy shattered the wall behind them just as a soldier charged round the corner. "He's here! I've found him!" A triumphant grin split the soldier's face. "And he's got the --" Triumph turned to stunned pain as the Murukhan's chest exploded.

Snarling, Raiven quickly re-holstered his gun and whipped his arm around the princess's bare waist. "Hold on." He yanked her closer to him as he hit the energizer activator hidden in his jacket. "This always hurts."

A blinding kaleidoscope of light filled his head and then every molecule in his and the princess's body instantly tore apart.

## Chapter 5

Kyra stared at herself in the polished steel door of the *Raptor's* cockpit, unable to look away. Skin-tight shiny black leather covered her from breast to ankles. A snug boned bustier pushed her breasts up so much they threatened to spill out of their confines. The pants hugged her legs so well they looked like they were painted on. Even the spiky-heeled boots wrapped all the way to mid-thigh were crafted from the black hide.

The outfit made her horny.

*Hornier. You've been horny ever since the shift with Xia.*

She ran her hands over the tight curve of her butt, liking the way the shiny leather felt under her palms. She didn't know how Raiven had come by the erotic outfit, nor if it was, indeed, the princess's, but she didn't care. The second she'd covered her body with the cool, smooth hide her flesh had come to life and her mind had turned immediately to Raiven a'Tor.

She wanted him. Her body ached for him. She could feel his hands on her skin, between her thighs. She could feel his lips on her flesh, and the desire pulsing through her like a live current had nothing to do with Xia's psyche running rampant in her head.

A tingle of warm excitement wriggled through her and Kyra scowled. She had to get a grip on herself. She was trapped in the princess's body, horny as all hell, soon to be heading back to Lunaria and Xia's fiancé -- not exactly what she'd had planned when she'd accepted the job -- and was now thrust back into the company of the very man she rejected two years ago.

With a deep sigh, she turned away from her image and the bridge door. Raiven was on the other side and she desperately wanted to go to him. However, the very



moment their bodies had reenergized two hours ago, he'd stormed off to the cockpit, telling her flatly to leave him alone. Whatever had been going on between him and the princess seemed to be over now, which meant he wanted nothing to do with her. Just when she'd found him again.

She walked through the quiet ship, its powerful hyper-accelerator rumbling in the background.

What if she told him? Told him who she was?

Kyra stopped. Why *couldn't* she tell him?

The reason she'd fled was now dead, left on the floor with a snapped neck. Mur'dek was no longer a threat to anyone. A grin split her face. With the warlord out of the picture, she was no longer a hunted woman. It was time to do some seducing.

Raiven heard the cockpit door slide open and he bit back a curse. He'd told her to stay away. He didn't want to see her. Not with images of the Chamelyon in his head. Not while his body ached with desperate, miserable longing.

"Go away, Your Highness," he ordered flatly, staring out the main view screen at the passing stars. He'd come to the cockpit to prepare for his return to Murukha's surface, to ready himself for the hunt for Mur'dek, but the ever-present memories of the Chamelyon had rolled over him and he'd sunk into his seat, raw emptiness and unending yearning eating him up. He didn't even have the comfort of knowing her name.

*Would that make it any easier?*

He heard the princess move closer and he clenched his teeth. He knew what she wanted -- what she *always* wanted -- but he couldn't do it. If he did, he would be fucking her only as punishment for not being someone else and would hate himself even more than he already did.

"Thank you for my outfit. Do you like it?"

Her husky voice came from just behind his shoulder. He closed his eyes, taking in a slow, deep breath.

She stepped closer. He could feel her warm breath on his neck. Could almost hear the steady beat of her heart.

"Go away, Xia."

He'd spent two years screwing almost every female who threw themselves at his feet, desperate to scour away his empty pain in their arms. It hadn't worked. All he'd achieved was cold self-loathing and a death wish. Finally, he'd found himself at the Temple of Calis on Lunaria. In an attempt to purge his soul of the self-disgust that consumed him, he'd entered the Goddess of Purity's sacred building. Instead of salvation however, he'd been seduced -- and royally fucked -- by the Princess of the Five Moons.

More than once, in fact.

"Look at me, a'Tor." The princess threaded her fingers through his hair, the touch sending a reluctant shiver of animal excitement through his body. He kept his eyes pressed closed and began to count to ten.

The fingers in his hair turned into a soft fist and she tugged his head toward her. "I won't ask again, Raiven."

He turned his head just in time to watch her straddle his legs, her breasts coming to rest just in front of his nose. He sucked in another deep breath and, like on Murukha, his nose filled with a scent branded into his heart.

*It's her. The Chamelyon.*

His eyes snapped to her face, sure he would see laughing midnight eyes looking down at him. Instead, he met Xia's ice blue ones. And they burned with passion.

*Damn it, a'Tor. You're losing your mind.*

"Touch me, Raiven," she commanded, reaching for his hands and lifting them to her full, round breasts. The flesh was warm and soft under his palm and a moan slipped past his lips. She slid his hands down the smooth curve of her ribcage to the hot juncture of her thighs, pressing his fingers firmly against her crotch. "Touch me here."

She rolled her hips slowly, moving her heat against his fingers. Her eyes held his, refusing to let him look away. She took a long breath, the action swelling her breasts

until the soft flesh brushed his chin. Despite himself, his cock began to do its own swelling.

"Make love to me, Raiven."

"You don't know what love is," he growled.

She looked back at him and for a moment he swore her eyes shimmered from blue to black to blue again. "Yes," she whispered, reaching behind her back, "I do." There was a faint click as she released the fastening of her bustier and, at once, her full, heavy breasts spilled free. Without thought, he took one rosy peak into his mouth, latched his lips around it and sucked hard. She threw back her head, her hands tangling in his hair as she drove her nipple harder against his mouth. "Bite it," she ordered.

He complied, nipping the taut nub of flesh between his teeth. The sound of her sharp gasp filled his veins with heat, burning away the cold emptiness of his pain. He smoothed his hands up her back as he pulled her into the action, his cock now an aching rod of steel. She gasped again, throaty and deep, unlike any sound he'd heard the princess make before. It triggered something, an animal lust he couldn't fathom. He flung her back against the command deck, shooting to his feet and yanking her legs up around his hips. He quickly pulled the small knife he wore strapped to his left thigh out of its sheath and sliced through her pants just below her exquisite navel, cutting the soft leather until her neat black mound was exposed. The sight of her pubic hair sent a carnal jolt through him. He dropped his mouth to the flat line of her stomach, following it with his tongue until his lips found one of her nipples. He sucked it into his mouth, biting and licking as his searching fingers parted the downy hair between her thighs, seeking the tiny nub of flesh hidden in her wet heat.

"Holy gods!" The cry was hoarse and raw as it ripped from her throat, and Raiven smiled against her breast. She arched her back, rolling her head from side to side on the control deck, as his fingers rubbed backward and forward over her swollen clit.

His cock was straining against the confines of his trousers, impatient to be released. Despising the time it demanded, he unclipped his buckle with his free hand. He hadn't felt such powerful lust for two years, but it consumed him now. He wanted

to bury himself in that hot, slick passage. He wanted her gripping, sopping pussy to drown his misery again.

Kicking away his trousers, he tore at his vest, ripping it from his body and flinging it across the cockpit, a growl sounding deep in his throat. The princess gazed up at him and her eyes seemed to shimmer. *It's just lust fucking with your mind, a'Tor.*

"I want you inside me, Raiven."

He didn't need to be told twice. He gripped the torn remains of her pants and yanked them apart, revealing her glistening, swollen lips. Grabbing her legs again, he spread them apart. She dug the spiky heels of her boots into his flesh as she planted her feet on his shoulders. He gazed at her pussy, tracing the velvet lips with his fingertips, slowly parting them until he found her clit. He wanted to run his tongue over it and began to drop his head, but she placed her palms on his chest, stopping him.

"No." Her breath was short. "I want to see your face when I come."

He couldn't stop his dry smile. "Fine by me, Your Highness."

For the quickest instant, a slight frown crossed her face, but before Raiven could wonder why, she gently grabbed his rigid shaft, squeezing it and kneading the glowing head as she guided it to her pussy.

He slid into her, the tight flesh enveloping his cock like a slick sheath. She raised her hips, meeting him in the middle, her breath short and ragged. He ran his hands over her arched body to her breasts, pinching her nipples. Flicking them, pinching them. He held her gaze with his own, squeezing the full weight of her breasts with his hands, the soft feel of them making him giddy. Exquisite pressure rushed through him, hot and squirming, like a pulsing vein of concentrated energy. He felt as if he was going to erupt. He shifted one hand, squeezing it between their grinding pelvises, finding her clit and stimulating it even more with the rough pad of his thumb. "Oh, gods! Oh..." Her pussy clenched. He could feel her muscles spasm. He threaded his fingers through hers and pinned her hands to the control deck as he plunged in and out of her. His balls slapped with pleasurable pain against her cunt. *Soon. Very soon.*

Hips rocking in wild rhythm with hers, he rode her harder. Sweat dripped from his forehead, ran down his spine. He threw his head back, ready to lose himself, to fall over the edge, but before he could, she slipped her boots from his shoulders and wrapped them around his neck, forcing him to return his eyes to hers. Midnight black eyes stared up at him.

"Look at me," she pleaded.

And as his orgasm surged through him, he did.

Burning ice, liquid heat. Her skin felt alive, her body on fire.

The release was so powerful she could barely breathe, the shift so forceful it felt like her flesh was being stripped by an inferno. "Oh, gods of Kaius!" she cried out, and it was her own voice she heard.

Her orgasm continued to roll through her. A wave of pleasure that kept going. Building. Crashing over her, scorching away any remnants of the princess. She was Kyra again.

And Raiven saw.

He stared, grey eyes wide, broad chest heaving. "What --"

She shook her head. "Please," she panted. "I'll only stay like this for a brief moment. Just look at me. See *me*."

"I do." His voice was hoarse. His grip on her wrists tightened as his eyes burned into hers. His breath came through gritted teeth, his hips losing their rhythm as the last of his climax crashed through him. Kyra felt his seed pump into her in frenzied spasms and with it came the final wave of her own orgasm.

*No, no, no. Not yet.*

Yet all too soon those exquisite waves subsided, ebbing away until, with the last faint clench of her pussy, her skin rippled and she returned to the princess's form once more. Panting and gasping for breath, she slipped her legs from behind Raiven's neck to the floor. She closed her eyes, preparing herself for whatever was going to happen next.

The silence was long and heavy.

When he finally spoke his voice was low. Almost deadly. "What's going on? Who are you?"

She opened her eyes again, meeting his gaze. "Two years ago you told me you loved me, Raiven a'Tor. I am Kyra Issarei." She paused. "I'm a Chamelyon shape-shifter."

Raiven was motionless, grey eyes piercing. Intent. "I see."

Kyra felt her blood chill. This wasn't turning out how she'd hoped. He was meant to be holding her close by now, smoothing his warm hands down her back as he whispered words of love in her ear, their hearts beating in rhythm. "I can explain," she said, her body missing his heat already.

One dark eyebrow cocked sardonically. "Can you?"

A lick of anger curled through her and she narrowed her eyes. "Yes, I can."

"I thought your kind were extinct. Wiped out over a century ago."

She raised her chin. "Not all of my people were slaughtered. Some survived." A stab of pain sliced through her chest at the thought of her ancestors' brutal extermination. "But like you, Raiven a'Tor, last of the Terran, I am now the last of *my* kind."

He studied her silently, arms folded over his muscular chest. She could see his heart beating under the smooth skin and wanted to place her palm there. But didn't. Not until she knew what he was going to do next. She couldn't forget he was a hunter, a predator. When a predator was cornered, they usually attacked.

"Why do you look like the Princess of the Five Moons?"

"I work as a body decoy. I was helping her escape the Temple of Calis." She let out a slow breath. "She deceived me."

A'Tor's eyes were unreadable. "Why do you look like the princess *now*?"

A blush heated Kyra's cheeks. "A shape-shifter reverts to their true form for the duration of an orgasm."

He was silent for a long moment. "Why can't you revert permanently?"

"I need to make physical contact with the princess to do so. The shift is more than a physical transformation. I take on the client's psyche while in their form." She gave him an arch look. "I learn their memories, their thoughts. Their appetites... They all become mine as well."

He didn't move and Kyra suppressed a sigh. This wasn't going anywhere near to plan. "Okay, first things first. I didn't want to leave you two years ago. I left to save your life."

He still didn't move.

"I had a price on my head. I knew Mur'dek was hunting me, I just didn't know when he would find me." She paused, waiting for Raiven to say something. He didn't. "Then, when you told me... told me how you felt, I panicked. Not because of what you said, but because of how I felt."

Silence.

Kyra sighed. "You weren't the only one falling in love. I know it was only meant to be sex, but you made me feel complete. The week we spent together, shacked up in a tiny room in that seedy spaceport... you made me feel... substantial. Real. Shape-shifters rarely feel that way. I did. Because of you. Your laughter, your sense of justice, your passion and tenderness, everything you are made me fall in love with you. But Mur'dek's bloodlust was so great I knew he wouldn't stop just at me. Anyone I loved would be slaughtered. If Mur'dek had killed you, I would have died inside. As it was, leaving you was the hardest thing I've ever done."

"And yet you still ran." His voice was so calm a shiver ran down her spine. "You didn't think I was capable of looking after us both?"

Kyra shook her head. "I had no idea who you were. No names, remember? It wasn't until months later I discovered you were the famous Raiven a'Tor."

"So why didn't you come looking for me then? The universe isn't that big."

"I did. Six months later I had you tracked to the Darzian system." She paused again. "Then I learnt of your other fame."

Finally, Raiven's hard features changed. A dark flash of shame crossed his face. "I see."

Kyra folded her arms across her naked breasts and gave him a level look. "Exactly how many females have you slept with?"

*Too many. Way too many.*

Raiven looked at the woman standing before him, seeing the Princess of the Five Moons -- feeling with every other sense in his body the woman of his dreams. He could smell her in the very breath he took, taste her on the air, feel her silken skin under his palms and hear her joy in the words she spoke. She was the only woman he would ever -- *could* ever -- love. His life-mate. How could he possibly explain his actions of the last two years to her?

Before he could say anything, she shook her head. "No, don't tell me. I really don't want to know. We've both done things neither of us is proud of." A faint blush coloured her cheeks and for a split second overwhelming jealousy engulfed him. But then his own sordid past rushed back at him and he thrust his jealousy aside. Life began anew from this moment. There was no need for jealousy. "Whether you want to believe me or not," she continued, the blue eyes of the princess looking at him, "those are the reasons I ran."

He studied her, wanting to take her into his arms and lose the last two years in her body. But he didn't. There were still things he needed to know. "So what's changed? If we hadn't made love here, I'd still have no idea who you really are. You could've just kept pretending to be the princess."

"Mur'dek is dead. I killed him just before you found me."

The way she said it, flat and final, told him she didn't want to talk about it. Still, he had to know. "How?"

A deep red blush heated her cheeks. She dropped her eyes.

"How did you kill him, Kyra?"

She raised her chin and looked at him. "I snapped his neck."



An image filled his mind -- ankle and wrist chains strung between two marble columns, the ankle chains shattered. He remembered the heavy smell of sex in the air and all too easily he pictured Mur'dek on his knees in front of the chained princess, her legs around his head, his face buried into her crotch -- except in Raiven's head it wasn't Xia's pussy the warlord was licking and sucking, but Kyra's. *His Kyra.* "I see," he said.

"Raiven." She held his eyes. "It was the only way to escape."

*Did you enjoy it?* he wanted to ask. Yet it would be one question too many. It didn't matter. Not now when she was here with him.

*Is she? Or are you just making assumptions?* He frowned. It seemed there was one more question to ask after all.

His chest constricting, he looked at her intently. "Are you through running, now?"

Kyra looked him straight in the eye. "Yes."

He swept her into his arms, her warmth seeping into his body, melting the ice that had coated his heart for the last two years.

His lips found hers, crushing against them in a searing kiss. Her tongue met his, rolling and twisting, licking and flicking. He slid his hands down her back, fingers sliding under the torn leather of her pants as his hands cupped her ass, kneading the rounded flesh. His cock stiffened into a solid shaft of steel, pressing against her belly. She moaned her appreciation, her nipples tightening into rock-hard pebbles against his bare chest.

He closed his eyes and the blazing image of her true form filled his head, as it had every night since she'd fled. As it had every time he fucked another woman. Except this time it really was her, in the guise of someone else.

Tugging her hips closer to his, he pressed his erection against her soft heat, wanting her to feel what she did to him. God, he loved her.

His body on fire, he slid his palms up her back and around her ribcage, filling each hand with her heavy breasts, touching her tight nipples lightly with his fingertips. A deep moan rumbled in Kyra's throat, the sound so carnal Raiven almost shot his load

there and then. He answered with his own growl before placing his lips around one of her rosy nipples and biting hard, enjoying the way she moaned in response. He moved his mouth to the other nipple, circling it with his tongue, hearing her suck in a sharp breath.

"Gods, Raiven." Her hands knotted in his hair. "What are you doing to me?"

He raised his head and looked into her face, watching her eyes blur from blue to black to blue. "Does it hurt when you shift?"

A slight frown creased her brow. "No. Why?"

He slid his hands down her body, finding her swollen clit with one finger as his others spread her slick lips apart. "Because, tonight I'm going to make you come so hard, so long, and so many times, you'll forget what the princess looks like."

And to prove his point, he pushed her back against the control deck and thrust his cock deep into her in one smooth, fluid movement.

She arched her back, her nails digging into his shoulders as a raw cry of pleasure tore from her throat. He thrust harder, feeling her muscles clench and grip his driving cock with each penetration. The sensation was mind-blowing and he closed his eyes, driving deeper and deeper into her glorious sheath. Her hands slid around his neck and she pulled his head closer to hers, her lips taking possession of his eager mouth. Her nipples brushed his chest, the feather-light contact searing his flesh like a brand and he groaned, plunging his tongue into her mouth again.

"God, Kyra," he murmured against her lips. "You have no idea how much I've longed for you."

"As much as I, you," she whispered, trailing her fingertips to his small nipples, flicking at each. His growling response pleased her, and she smiled as only Kyra could.

*It's her. This is real. This isn't a dream.*

The thought was a bolt of concentrated pleasure. Two years of dreaming and here she was, in his arms, her hot sex enveloping his throbbing cock, her heart beating against his.

*This isn't a dream.*

The exquisite tension rolled through him like a wave of molten lava, building, growing. Swelling. He fought for control, so near the edge all it would take would be one more grip of her pussy for him to fall. He wanted this feeling to never end. It was *her* he wanted to see, however, not the princess. It was Kyra he wanted to hold. And to do that, he had to bring her to the edge with him. He dipped his head and suckled one of her nipples again, knowing how much she loved the feel of his lips and teeth on the sensitive tip of flesh.

“Raiven,” she panted in his ear, her nails scoring his back. “Raiven, it’s close. Look at me. See me.”

He raised his head as his seed pumped into her, moans of ecstasy echoing in his ears. The woman he’d love forever rippled and shimmered into existence in his arms.

## Chapter 6

Kyra lay on her side atop a scatter of soft Jyian fur hides, watching the stars blur by the porthole of Raiven's quarters. He slept beside her, arm draped over her ribcage, hand loosely cupping her right breast. Her chest rose with a deep sigh as she traced the black bird tattooed on his biceps with her fingers. Warm contentment washed over her. For three days now, they'd sped away from Murukha. In another three they would be out of the Murukhan system. A smile pulled at her lips and she snuggled closer to her sleeping lover, wriggling her butt against his crotch. Gods, she loved the feel of his pubic hair tickling her bare flesh.

Her smile deepened. The last three days had been amazing. Passionate love every night, wild sex every morning. Raiven was an insatiable lover. Just as she'd revert to the princess's form he'd run his hands over her rippling skin, find her heat with his incredible tongue or his insistent cock and before she knew it, her flesh would turn to liquid and she'd be Kyra once more.

When their bodies could take no more, when from sheer exhaustion they needed a break, they would lie in each other's arms, talking or nuzzling, or simply holding each other.

She sighed again. She was totally, utterly and irrevocably in love. There was no going back from this. Her heart didn't belong to her anymore. No matter where life took her, she would be in love with him. Forever.

A sudden chill swept over her. What if he didn't love her in return? Two years had passed since his declaration and despite the passion they'd shared since he'd rescued her from Murukha, he hadn't said those three words again. In fact, there had been no talk of the future at all, with the exception of finding Xia and the High Priestess. After that, there was an empty blank. The realisation stilled her. She was a

prisoner to the Princess of the Five Moon's form. Was she also to become a prisoner to love?

The feeling of warm lips on her earlobe wiped away her frown and she rolled onto her back, gazing up at the now awake Raiven. "Hello, lover."

He smiled. "Thinking of me?"

"Yes."

His smile turned playful. "Good. That's the way it should be."

Kyra let her eyes travel over his face, loving every hard plane, every stubble of growth on his strong jaw, every little scar marring his skin. "Do you still love me?"

Raiven's eyes grew serious. "Why?"

"Because I love you," she stated calmly, "and the rest of my life doesn't exist without you."

Grin returning, his white teeth flashed in the low light. "You shouldn't have given up when you tracked me to Darzia."

Kyra frowned, surprised and a little hurt by his unexpected change of subject. "Why?"

"Because you would have met my mother."

He watched her, eyes laughing. Kyra stared at him, confused and unsure how she was meant to respond. Then it hit her. Raiven's mother was a Darzian. Darzians fell in love only once, and bonded for life.

"Now." He chuckled, nudging her forehead with his as his fingers found her eager pussy. "Do you want to ask me that question again?"

\* \* \*

Kyra lay on her back, her body tingling with the warm aftermath of their lovemaking. Well, she definitely had her answer -- there was *no* doubting Raiven's feelings for her now. She closed her eyes and focussed on the tingling sensations licking through her. Raiven's fingers were dancing over her skin, sending soft waves of pleasure through her body. His fingers plucked at her nipples, teasing the taut peaks

until heat flooded to her cunt and she was hungry for him all over again. She smiled up at him, loving the way he looked. Smelt. Tasted.

He gazed down at her, face serious. "I almost found you once."

She frowned, but he continued before she could speak.

"You'd be surprised how many people remembered the white-haired Chamelyon with the rare black eyes. I knew I could never forget her. Every time I closed my eyes I'd see you." A soft smile played with his lips. "I tracked you halfway across the six systems before stopping."

Kyra stared at him, her heart thumping hard in her chest. "Why did you stop?"

"I thought you were dead."

She swallowed. "When?"

"Three months after you fled. I'd followed your trail to Jax."

Kyra dropped her gaze from his, her throat tight, constricted and dry. She remembered Jax all too well. It was one of the darkest moments of her life. "Mur'dek had chased me halfway across the six systems," she began, her voice flat. "He blamed me for his wife's death, you see. He'd put such a price on my head I was surviving from one shift to the next, paying anyone for physical contact who looked desperate enough. The scum I had in my head..." She shuddered. "I'd met a Jaxian pleasure-master on Delekia who agreed to travel with me to Jax aboard a Delekian merchant vessel. No payment, no questions asked. We would pose as brothers. All he wanted was one fuck when we arrived." She closed her eyes for a moment, the memory of her desperation making her sick. "Mur'dek's men were right on my tail," she said. "I had to get off Delekia any way I could. Three jumps into the trip I heard him boasting to the captain about fucking a 'real life' shape-shifter once we landed. After we reached port he dragged me to the nearest sex den. Before the shift had completed, his hands were on my ass and my breasts, his tongue down my throat. That's when Mur'dek burst into the room."

She stopped, not wanting to look at Raiven. Unable to resist.

His face looked like it was carved from stone and his grey eyes were unreadable, but his hand continued to smooth over her stomach and she drew comfort from the gentle contact. "I still don't know how he missed me, but the gods weren't smiling on the Jaxian." A dry snort escaped her. "He wanted a fuck when we arrived in Jax, well he got well and truly fucked. The force from Mur'dek's plasma gun knocked me into the wall and I passed out. When I came to I was naked, crusted in dry Jaxian blood and guts, covered in rubble and to my surprise, completely alone."

Raiven's hand paused on her belly. "What happened?"

Kyra shook her head. "I don't know. The room was dark. I can only guess Mur'dek thought he'd killed us both. Whatever the answer is, I survived and Mur'dek gave me no more trouble." She gave him a small, wry smile. "Until the princess job, that is."

He was silent for a long moment. Then he kissed her, his lips so tender Kyra's heart almost broke. Curling her hands into his thick, black hair, she held his head to hers, opening her mouth to his seeking tongue. With a low growl, he rolled on top of her and straddled her hips, pinning her to the floor as his stiffening cock nudged her abdomen. She thrust her hips upwards, stroking her moist pussy over his balls. He snared her wrists in his fists, yanking them above her head and holding them against the floor. "I love you, Kyra Issarei," he murmured, his breath hot on her cheek. "And I want to fuck you right now." He captured her wrists in one strong hand as his other explored her body. She pressed against him as his seeking fingers found her moist cunt, grazing the pad of his finger over her clit until a whimper of pleasure slipped from her lips. He dropped his head to her neck, nipping the skin just below her ear. Her shoulder. Her collarbone.

Kyra gasped, wanting his hot mouth on her nipples. "Raiven," she moaned, guiding his head to her breast. "Bite."

He did what she ordered. Hard. Shots of molten heat scorched through her, stabbing into her pussy. Her muscles contracted, wanting to grip his large, engorged cock. "Raiven. Oh, gods, Raiven."

He moved his mouth down her body, nipping at her hip bone, dipping the tip of his tongue into her navel, licking her fevered flesh in long, slow strokes before blowing gently on the damp trail until her skin rippled.

*How does he do this to me? How does he make me so fucking horny so quickly?*

His fingers found her creamy depths. He teased her swollen lips, filling her body with undulating heat before curling his hands around her thighs and shoving her legs apart. The cool artificial air of his ship flowed over her pussy like a kiss, seconds before his tongue delved into her cunt. Kyra bucked harder against his face and he grabbed her hips, holding her still as his mouth sucked and nibbled at her clit, sending spasms of tension deep into her very core. She tangled her hands in his hair, wanting him to stop. Wanting him to never stop. The princess's animal lust was a youngling's crush compared to the consuming desire surging through her right now. Icy needles of fire began to ripple over her skin and a cry of despair caught in her throat. *No. Not yet.*

She yanked his head away, planting the soles of her feet on his chest and pushing him slightly from her. "Not yet," she gasped, shaking her head. His chest heaving, he shot her a burning look. Rising to her knees, she took his stiff cock in her hands, rubbing the blazing red head with her thumbs then cupping his heavy balls and squeezing gently. She slipped her fingers to his tight anus, circling the tiny opening with one fingertip. A raw groan tore from his throat and she looked up at him. His eyes were squeezed shut, his head thrown back as he struggled to control himself.

She liked what she saw. Liked knowing she affected him as much as he did her. Licking her lips, she bent to his straining cock and took it into her mouth, sliding her tongue down the shaft as she closed her lips around its burning, rock-hard length. "Ah, holy fuck!" he cried as she sucked lightly, drawing him deeper into her throat. At the first drop of pre-cum, she slid the pad of her finger lightly into his ass. "Holy fuck!"

She felt his balls rise and contract. Knew he was close to coming. Swiftly, she shoved him flat onto his back and straddled his hips, her saturated pussy hovering over the swollen, glistening head of his cock. Her own orgasm was building and she wanted



eye contact with him when they both came. She stared down at him, reaching between her legs and cupping his balls once more, loving how they filled her hand so well.

Circling the base of his straining cock with her thumb and index finger, she impaled herself. With the friction of his sudden entry, a rush of blazing energy exploded through her cunt. She threw back her head, a primal moan of ecstasy tearing from her throat. He filled her so well. To perfection. It was as if their bodies had fused, become one. Kyra's heart swelled in her chest. An overwhelming sensation of being complete flooded through her. One she'd craved for the last two years. She was whole again. The mighty force of the twin suns paled into insignificance next to the potent energy radiating from their union. She was with Raiven a'Tor, where she was meant to be. He was inside her. Physically. Emotionally. Nothing else in the world mattered.

She looked down as the shift began and saw him gazing at her face. "Forever." His voice was barely more than a breath.

"Forever," she repeated, taking him deeper into her body, the erupting peak crashing over her at the very moment his thrusts became wild.

Wave after wave of heat rolled through her. Over her. Drowning her in ecstasy so sweet she could barely draw breath. Her flesh was fire and ice. Raiven's hands stroked her body, her skin's liquid state so responsive to his fevered caress another wave of hot spasms claimed her. Her pussy clenched so tight she could feel his seed spurting from the swollen head of his cock as he thrust into her. "Oh, gods," she cried in her own husky voice.

With a final body-wrenching jolt, his eyes never leaving her face, Raiven arched his back into a thrust deeper than ever. He gripped her hips with his hands and filled her so completely she felt the head of his cock nudge against the inner wall of her cunt. The contact was electric and her pussy contracted in a gush of warm cum that flooded over his cock and slicked his balls wet.

Her body shuddered. Orgasm after orgasm after orgasm consumed her.

Finally, as the last powerful wave crashed over her, she sensed her skin ripple once more. When she looked down at her body, breathless and dizzy, it was the princess's breasts and stomach slicked with perspiration she saw.

Raiven watched Kyra's skin become a shimmery silver liquid. Her slim, graceful body transformed before his eyes into the overtly sexual frame of the princess, the short white hair on her shapely skull growing into a thick, black mass of waves that tumbled down her back, her midnight-black eyes fading to ice blue. His cock was still inside her and he closed his eyes, wanting to hold the picture of Kyra climaxing in his head forever.

"Raiven?"

Her soft voice made him open his eyes and he looked up into Xia's face. He ran his hands up her smooth back, remembering how Kyra's soft skin felt under his palms. Wanting to feel it again. He drew a deep breath. "It's time we found the princess."

She gave him a smile. "Yes. It is." Lowering her head, she brushed his lips with hers in a teasing little kiss. "Know where she is?"

Raiven raised an eyebrow. "Maybe."

Kyra stared at him, stunned. "Where?"

The *Raptor's* alarm system screeched into ear-piercing life.

"*Intruder Alert! Intruder Alert! Intruder Alert!*"

Before either of them could move, the door to Raiven's quarters slid open. He shoved Kyra away, coming to his knees as a brutish Murukhan soldier stepped into the room. Raiven's hand whipped to his hip, reaching for his gun, before he remembered he was naked. *Fuck!*

The Murukhan aimed a disrupter pistol square at his chest. "Goodbye, Terran."

There was enough time for Raiven to think, *Shit, I'm dead*, before a searing proton pulse struck his body and his side exploded in intense pain. He was flung across the small room, Kyra's screams filling his head as he smashed against the far wall. He slumped to the floor, chest and side burning, blood pooling rapidly on the floor.

He heard Kyra scream again and fought to raise his head. She was running to him, face contorted with fear and grief. He tried to yell out, to tell her to get away, but nothing came out. Powerless, he watched the soldier grab a fistful of Kyra's long dark hair and yank her backward.

"Hello again, Princess," the Murukhan growled against her cheek, his low guttural voice reaching Raiven where he lay. "Or should I say, shape-shifter." He whipped an arm around her naked waist and slammed her against his body. Reptilian eyes blazed with triumph. Raiven tried to get up but he couldn't move. His body felt on fire. All he could do was watch as the Murukhan forced Kyra's head back, a brutal grin on his hideous face as he pressed the barrel of the disrupter under her chin. "There's someone who *really* wants to see you."

"Raiven!" Kyra ignored his taunt, fighting to break from his hold. "Oh, gods! Raiven!"

He tried to move, but his legs wouldn't work. Through a shroud of pain, he stared across the room, watching Kyra kick and fight to get free. Watching her grinning captor grab her breast in his large, scaly hand.

"Kyra!" His weak scream tore his throat. "Leave her alone, you fucker!"

The Murukhan gave him a quick smirk, tongue flicking at her cheek as blunt claws gouged into her flesh.

"Let me go, you fucking shit!" Kyra spat, eyes wild.

The Murukhan rammed his gun harder against her chin. "Time to go, shape-shifter." With one last sadistic sneer at Raiven, he activated the energizer on his belt.

"Nooo!" Raiven threw himself forward, already knowing it was too late. His body exploded in fresh, agonising pain and just before everything went black, he watched, helpless, as Kyra and the Murukhan's bodies shattered into a million pinpricks of swirling, fractured light. And then vanished.

Kyra was gone.

## Chapter 7

Mur'dek crossed the dim room in long strides, yellow eyes glowing in the murky light. Kyra watched him from behind the tangled, sweaty strands of the princess's hair, waiting for him to make his next move. How he'd survived their last encounter she didn't know, but she'd been on the Murukhan Sky-Destroyer for three hours now, held suspended by chains of proton energy in the ship's brig. Naked and in agony. The bastard hadn't as yet spoken a word to her, his whip doing all the talking instead. Blood seeped from her back, trickling down over her ass and the back of her thighs. He'd lashed her so often with the fucking thing even Xia's lust was silent, smothered by the excruciating pain screaming through her.

*Oh, Raiven.* The agony in her heart overwhelmed her. The horrific image of Raiven lying prone on the *Raptor's* floor, blood oozing from his body, haunted her. *I'm sorry, my love. I'm sorry.*

"I suppose we're even, now, shape-shifter." Mur'dek's smug voice cut through her misery. He gave the whip a slight flick and it curled gently around his ankle like a pet serpent. "I once foolishly thought you were dead, and you made the mistake of thinking one little twist of the neck would kill me." He ran his eyes over her. "You really have no idea how happy I am to see you. I must admit I was a little stunned after our last meeting. I thought I was giving a virginal princess the best sexual initiation of her life, and it turns out I was tongue deep in shape-shifter cunt." He flicked the whip again and Kyra tensed, readying to feel its bite once more. Instead, he gave her a leering smile. "But really, it's a win-win situation for me, isn't it? I still have my bargaining chip over that idiot Zarx. I have a nice, juicy cunt to fuck any time I want." His yellow eyes turned cold. "And I have the bitch who killed my wife."

Kyra glared at him, the proton chains around her wrists searing her skin as all her muscles tensed and coiled. "I didn't kill Trista," she growled. "If you hadn't barged into the room --"

*Crack!*

Kyra twisted in agony, squeezing her eyes as the whip ripped across her ribcage.

"Don't piss me off, shape-shifter," Mur'dek growled, watching her writhe. "You're in no position to get me angry."

She leant toward him, grinding her teeth as the chains stretched to their limits. "You won't hold me for long."

He gave her a cold smile. "Hmmm, we'll see. I've a lot of plans for you." He reached out with one claw, scratching a painful line from her neck to her navel. "Some of them you'll find quite enjoyable." He flicked at her pussy's lips. "Judging by your response last time."

Kyra bared her teeth. "Any time you're ready, Dek. Let's see who survives."

He chuckled, the sound evil. "You won't get me between those thighs of yours again, shifter, as much as I'd love to relive the experience."

"Afraid I'd finish the job correctly?"

He chuckled again, turning away from her. "There are other ways to satisfy myself with you." He crossed the brig and passed his hand over the locking panel. With a dull hum the door slid slowly open and Kyra squinted as harsh light flooded into the room. She watched the opening, wondering what the warlord had planned for her next, when a familiar Murukhan soldier stepped into the opening.

Her blood ran cold. *Gods of Kaius. No.*

"Welcome to the party, Captain," Mur'dek said to the new arrival. "Do what you want with her. I'll be watching."

"Thank you, my Lord." Dal fixed her with malevolent glowing eyes, a cold, cruel smile stretching over his mouth as he entered the room. "Hello, shape-shifter." His voice was almost a purr of glee. "Told you the time would come when I'd get to show you what a fuck is really like."

Kyra stared at him. *Oh, shit. I'm in so much trouble here.*

Eyes boring into hers he slowly, deliberately, unbuckled his belt. "I'm looking forward to seeing what you *really* look like."

"Like I said before," Kyra growled, her heart hammering in her throat, "in your dreams."

His smile turned brutal. "You don't know how right you are, shape-shifter. Since you tore my brother's throat out, I've done nothing *but* dream about this moment." He grabbed her chin, sinking his claws into the soft flesh of her cheeks, his clammy breath hot on her face. "Are you ready?"

\* \* \*

Raiven's eyes felt as if they were covered with grit. He opened them -- gingerly -- squinting against the red emergency light filling his quarters.

*Fuck, I hurt.*

He tried to stand, but his legs wouldn't move. Taking a long, deep breath, he forced his body to obey. Slowly, he got to his feet, unable to ignore the excruciating pain radiating from his side. He moved his hand to the burning, throbbing wound, battling down a wave of cold nausea. He should be dead. Either the Murukhan had fucked up the settings of his disrupter, or he couldn't shoot for shit.

Whichever was the case, Raiven knew he was damn lucky to be alive. He just hoped his luck would hold out until he got Kyra back.

Stumbling into the passageway, he made his way to the *Raptor's* cockpit, refusing to stop even when his body felt like it was going to tear apart. He dropped into the flight chair, pressing his hand at once to his ribs. The wound was serious, but not fatal and he'd tend to it later. After he'd tracked Mur'dek's destination. He didn't know how long he'd been unconscious, but he wasn't dead and that was the important thing.

A quick scan of nearby space detected a drillithian signature and a concentration of neo-drillithian five parsecs away. The Murukhan Sky-Destroyer had jumped into hyper-flight. Quickly, he calculated their trajectory, praying the *Raptor's* computer was correct. Jabbing in new coordinates, he swung his ship around. He had to get to the

Lunarian System before Mur'dek did. Not only to inform the King of the Five Moons his devious daughter was still on the loose, but because he needed Zarx's help. He didn't like asking, but he couldn't save Kyra without him.

Despite the risk, he flung the *Raptor* into immediate hyper-flight. His body burst into new agony, pain tearing through his limbs as the extreme gravitational leap thrust him violently against his seat, but he didn't care.

Kyra was back in Mur'dek's hands. There was no time to waste.

\* \* \*

Wrapped only in a sheet ripped from Mur'dek's bed, bleeding and bruised and aching, Kyra prowled the warlord's private quarters, waiting.

For three hours, Dal had viciously assaulted her body, his fingers, fists and cock savage tools of brutal sexual torture. Determined not to give him any satisfaction, she'd remained silent, staring blankly at the far wall, refusing to acknowledge he was even there. Her silence however seemed to ignite his depraved lust even more so, and by the end she was whimpering, tears trickling from her eyes as the nightmare grew more real, more sadistic.

"Told you I'd show you what a fuck was all about," he'd whispered in her ear as he withdrew his cock from her ravaged cunt. Tucking his spent organ into his trousers, he'd finally walked away, a smirk of satisfaction on his face. "Next time, shifter, I'll have you screaming." He paused for a moment at the door. "And you *will* change back to your true form. I'm dying to see what you really look like."

Kyra raised her head, glaring at him through her tears. "Promise?"

His departing laugh had chilled her bones. She dropped her head, weeping silently.

An hour later, two soldiers released her from the chains, dragged her to Mur'dek's quarters and dumped her on his bed, leaving her without food, water or clothing.

The only thing that had kept her sane over the last four hours was the knowledge that, no matter how hard he'd tried, Dal hadn't made her orgasm. Even the princess's psyche had shrunk away from his sick, perverted lust.

*Oh, Raiven.*

Her heart wept for her dead lover and she hugged herself tighter, gripping the sheet in her fists. What was she to do now?

*Escape. Get off this ship. Hunt down Dal and kill the fucking bastard.*

The last thought brought a bleak smile to her face. Ah, if only she could.

The main door to the room slid open and for a split second, absolute terror filled her. Before she could get to her feet, however, Mur'dek strode through the opening, a wide grin on his scarred face, his whip coiled over his shoulder.

"Now how did you enjoy that little romp?" he asked, approaching the bed. "I hope my captain didn't get too rough."

Cold fury roared through her. "No," she snarled. "Not at all."

Mur'dek chuckled, running his fingers up and down the grip of his whip. "I could tell you liked it. I must admit it was quite a show. I was very tempted to join in."

Kyra curled her lip. "Oh, I wish you had."

His responding grin was evil. "Yes, I know you do."

"What are you planning to do with me?"

"Oh, more of the same. Captain Dal seems to have taken quite a shine to you. I'm surprised really. After what you did to his brother I'd have thought he'd want your head, but he seems to be quite satisfied with your body." He stepped forward, lifting her chin with one blunt claw and fixing his eyes on hers. "You're going to be very popular around here, Kyra Issarei."

"Fuck you."

With frightening speed, the back of his hand struck her face and she was flung onto the bed, sharp pain exploding through her head. He was on her before she could move, leering down at her. Large calloused hands pinned her wrists to the bed. "Now listen very carefully, shape-shifter," he said in a low voice. "We're about to make a very



important call, you and I. The King of the Five Moons is just about to abdicate total rule of the Lunarian System to me. All he needs is a prompt from his precious daughter."

"Fuck you," she repeated.

Mur'dek chuckled again. "Unfortunately, we don't have the time. After we finish our call, though..." He left the sentence hanging.

Kyra struggled wildly, her efforts futile against his muscle-heavy weight. Laughing, he yanked her from the bed, murky-yellow eyes watching closely as she stumbled across the room. Her body screamed in pain from Dal's brutality, but she ignored it. Mur'dek was taking her from the room. If she were quick enough she might be able to get away.

As if reading her thoughts, the warlord curled his claws deep into her arm. "There is no escape, shape-shifter. You might have fucked yourself to freedom the last time you were aboard one of my vessels, but you won't be able to this time." He gave a dirty snort. "Even if I did let you go, what do you think fifty space-lonely soldiers would do if they found a naked Lunarian female hiding in their quarters?"

Kyra gave him a cold glare. "Your soldiers can't fight for shit. They're too slow, too lazy and too stupid."

"And yet you're in my possession right now."

"That's because *I* was too slow. Give me another chance."

"My men might be stupid. *I'm* not." His fingers dug harder into her flesh. "Now shut the fuck up."

He walked her to the bridge, passing numerous soldiers on the way. Kyra felt their eyes on her as they saluted their lord. With every hungry gaze, her fear grew. Even the princess's *id* had deserted her. The sight of so many males -- the possibility of so many cocks raring to go -- would once have made Xia's psyche scream out in wanton lust. Instead, Kyra found herself alone in her fear and misery. She couldn't even conjure up the image of Raiven to help her. Her lover was dead and she was defenceless.

The Sky-Destroyer's bridge was just as dim as the brig. Mur'dek strode into the large area, shoving her before him, casting an eye over his men as they snapped to

attention. Kyra stood still, counting the number of soldiers around her. Four. Four pairs of eyes travelled over her body.

Rage burned through her.

*Fuck you, Mur'dek.* She squared her shoulders and lifted her chin. *I will not cower for you or anyone.*

Mur'dek's laugh filled the bridge. "That's what I like to see. I thought for a moment Captain Dal had destroyed your spirit."

"Give it time, my Lord. I don't want to use her up too quickly."

The guttural voice came from behind and Kyra swung around, her blood chilling at the sight of Dal stepping from the shadows. Before he could react, she leapt at him, smashing her balled fist against his jaw. "You fucking bastard!"

He moved like lightning, snatching her wrists and jerking her arms behind her back. "Knew you'd be happy to see me," he growled, an insidious smile on his scaly face. "I'm looking forward to round two."

The surrounding soldiers cheered and laughed. Mur'dek applauded.

"Let me go," Kyra ground out, fighting and struggling against his hold.

He looked at her with slitted eyes. "Later, shifter. Then we'll see how well you can fight."

"Enough, Captain," Mur'dek interrupted, crossing the bridge to a large chair in the centre of the command platform. "Get her dressed. We have a call to make."

Dal flicked her cheek with his tongue and released his painful grip on her wrists. He turned and snapped his fingers. Wordlessly, another soldier appeared, handing him a short slip of white Ferrellian silk. "Put this on," he ordered, holding the material out to Kyra.

Glaring, she snatched it from his hand and slipped it over her head. The twin strips of silk clung to her body, plunging into a deep vee barely covering her breasts, let alone her pubic hair. A typical sex-slave's robe. It seemed Mur'dek wanted Xia's father to think his daughter was to be traded to the sex-slavers of Ferrellian Ten.

Mur'dek took a seat. "Open a channel," he commanded.

The viewing screen of the bridge changed, the blackness of space replaced instantly with the face of the flustered Lunarian monarch. "Mur'dek, you grutt-fucker," Zarx spat. "What have you done with my daughter?"

"Now, now, Your Majesty," Mur'dek pouted insincerely. "Must we resort to unpleasant name calling?"

"Where is Xia? I demand to see her."

Mur'dek's eyes turned cold. "Watch your tongue, old man. I'm the one doing the demanding today. And if you want to see your daughter, you'll do exactly as I order."

"I will not turn Lunaria over to you."

"Then you will watch your daughter's virginity taken here and now." Mur'dek turned his head, his smile evil. "Captain Dal?"

Kyra felt Dal move behind her and too late she saw the steel slave collar in his hands. He snapped it around her neck and propelled her forward, holding the end of the chain attached to the collar in one hand as the other grasped her upper arm, dragging her to stand beside Mur'dek at the command station.

"Xia!" Zarx cried, his face twisted in horror. "Oh, my Xia! What have they done to you?"

Dal's claws dug deep into her flesh. "Don't say a word," he hissed into her ear.

Kyra stared at the Lunarian monarch, her thoughts spinning. The Murukhan Sky-Destroyer had to be close to Lunaria for visual communication, which meant it was also close enough for ion cannons to destroy it from the planet's surface. If she could let Zarx know she wasn't his daughter... or if she provoked him somehow perhaps, in a furious rage, he'd order an attack on the vessel and blow it out of the sky.

*And what happens to me?*

Did it really matter anymore? With Raiven dead, her life was empty. Better she sacrifice herself to rid the six systems of Mur'dek than be at his mercy any longer.

"Xia," Zarx cried again. "My child, I'm sorry."

Mur'dek chuckled, obviously enjoying the Lunarian ruler's misery. "Let's see how sorry you can be, Zarx." He nodded his head. At the slight signal, Dal's hand

whipped up to Kyra's right breast and tore the thin silk material aside, his claws sinking into the heavy swell of flesh he'd exposed. A sharp jolt of pain shot through her and she yelped, twisting away. He yanked on the chain and she stumbled back toward him, heart pounding in her chest. "You see, Zarx?" Mur'dek voice dripped with vile glee. "You see what will happen to your daughter if you don't comply with my demands?"

On screen, Zarx sobbed. "Xia," he moaned. "Oh, my child."

"Zarx!" Kyra shouted over his wails. "Zarx, I'm not --"

Dal wrenched on the chain and jerked her back against his body, one hand clamping over her mouth, the other a blur as it burrowed between her thighs. "Don't."

"You have no right!" Zarx wailed, face red, eyes bulging. "You will pay for this."

Mur'dek's lip curled into a triumphant smile. "Abdicate. I don't want to shed blood, but I have no qualms about letting my men use your daughter any way they wish." He gave another nod, and to prove his point, Dal squeezed Kyra's breast again and ran his tongue up the side of her face.

It was the catalyst. Forcing her mouth open, Kyra sank her teeth into the flesh of Dal's unprotected palm, clamping her jaw tight. He squealed in surprised pain, jerking his hand away.

The split second of freedom was all she needed. In one smooth movement, she spun around, snatched his disrupter from its holster and pressed it against his forehead. Their eyes met and, finally, she saw fear in his. "Your brother wasn't the most pathetic fuck I've had," she said no louder than a whisper. "You were."

She squeezed the trigger.

There was a sharp crack and the top of Dal's head disintegrated.

Alarm sirens began screaming and the bridge was plunged into low pulsing red light as the ship's defence computer activated.

*"Alert One. Weapon Fired. Alert One. Weapon Fired."*

Kyra turned just in time to see Mur'dek leap from his chair. From the corner of her eye she saw the nearest soldier reach for his weapon, but before his hand could

reach the blaster's grip, Kyra fired Dal's pistol. In a splatter of blood and guts, the soldier's body exploded.

*"Alert One. Weapon Fired. Alert One. Weapon Fired."*

Mur'dek ran at her, a vicious snarl on his face as his whip lashed around his head. She threw herself over the navi-station, shooting at the closest soldier in mid-flight.

*Shit! I missed!*

Tucked into a ball, she rolled across the floor and then leapt to her feet, firing again. The Murukhan's head disintegrated as he charged at her, a headless body collapsing at her feet.

*"Alert One. Weapon Fired. Alert One. Weapon Fired."*

"Stop, you fucking bitch!" Mur'dek screamed, eyes blazing yellow hatred.

"Xia?" Zarx wailed in the background, face and voice confused and petrified.

"Xia? What are you doing?"

Kyra dropped to the floor again, ducking behind the navi-station as a bolt of electricity sizzled overhead. It punched through the air in the exact location she'd just been. The air crackled and the stench of ozone stung her nose.

"You fucking bitch!" Mur'dek screeched. "I'm going to fucking kill you, you shape-shifting cunt!"

"Shape-shifter?" Zarx shouted. Kyra shot a look at the large com screen. A grim smile stretched her lips as she watched the monarch's confusion turn to fury. Zarx's eyes bulged even more. *"Shape-shifter? What are you playing at, Mur'dek?"*

"Shut the fuck up, Zarx!" Mur'dek screamed. His furious voice was too close to Kyra for comfort. She gripped Dal's disrupter, readying to spring to her feet when the ship's defence computer shrieked a new message.

*"Alert One. Weapon Fired. Alert One. Weapon Fired."*

A loud crack, like a star exploding, cut over the chaotic noise and Kyra looked up in time to see another Murukhan soldier splatter out of existence.

"Kyra?"

Kyra's heart froze. *Raiven?*

She leapt to her feet, staring wildly around the chaotic bridge. "Raiven?"

Her eyes fell on him, standing in the far corner, his grey eyes ablaze, the deadly Terran gun in his hand tracking a fleeing soldier. "Raiven!" she yelled, leaping over the navi-station, pistol in hand.

"Got you, bitch!" Mur'dek snatched the chain of her slave-collar and yanked her back against his body. He grabbed her wrist and smashed it against the navi-station. Pain spiked through her and she let out a sharp hiss, her gun clattering to the floor as it dropped from her hand. For a horrific moment, everything became excruciatingly slow. She saw Raiven turn to look at her, saw the fleeing Murukhan soldier twist around and aim his weapon at him, saw another charge at him from behind. "Raiven! Behind you!" she screamed.

Mur'dek spun her about and smashed the handle of his whip across her face. "Shut up, cunt," he snarled as she stumbled to her knees.

"*Shape-shifter?*" Zarx boomed, his voice almost drowned out by the sound of two Murukhan weapons firing.

Mur'dek gave her chain a savage jerk. "Get up."

Kyra scrambled to her feet, her eyes darting around the bridge, looking through the smoking chaos for Raiven. Nothing. The bridge was empty. There was no sign of him.

Numb emptiness filled her. *Oh, gods. No.*

Mur'dek yanked her toward him, murder on his face. "You'll pay for this, cunt," he hissed, sour breath hot in her ear. He turned back to the com screen. "Don't be mistaken by what you see, Zarx --" he began, but the monarch cut him off.

"So a'Tor *was* correct!" Zarx's furious voice echoed through the bridge. "You thought you could deceive me with a shape-shifter, you Murukhan filth. Commander Etax, prepare to fire ion cannons!"

Mur'dek's eyes snapped wide. "Zarx! Don't be a fool. Your daughter --"

The muzzle of a very familiar gun pressed against his temple, cutting his threat short. "-- is not aboard this ship," Raiven finished.

"A'Tor!" Mur'dek spat.

"Ahh, a'Tor," Zarx spoke, suddenly totally at ease. "At last. You did take your time. You've missed quite a show. Your shape-shifter is quite a fighter."

Kyra stared at Raiven, her heart a wild beat in her chest. *He's alive. Gods of Kaius, he's alive.* His eyes caressed her, love and pride and desire smouldering in their grey depths. "You don't need to tell me that, Zarx. I already know she's amazing."

The monarch's face beamed down at them from the com screen. "We must thank you for your valuable intel, a'Tor."

Raiven grinned and gave her a wink, the gun against Mur'dek's head never wavering. "You're welcome, Zarx."

"Now, sir," the King of the Five Moons continued. "Will you kindly go and find my daughter, so I can blow this grutt-fucker's ship to oblivion?"

Raiven cocked an eyebrow. "Absolutely." In a swift smooth movement, he linked his fingers through Kyra's and pulled her from Mur'dek's hold. "Hello, lover."

Kyra smiled up at him, warmth flooding through her body. "Hello, lover."

*"Priority Alert! Incoming Fire! Priority Alert! Incoming Fire!"*

Raiven turned and gave Mur'dek a cold, flat look. "I've disabled your shields, Dek," he said, curling his arm tightly around Kyra's body, holding her close. "You have approximately ten seconds left to live. Enjoy."

Mur'dek's eyes flicked from the smug face of Zarx on the com screen to Raiven, and finally to Kyra. "You --"

But he didn't finish. At least, Kyra didn't hear him finish. Because just as he opened his mouth, Raiven activated his energizer and they were instantly transported from Mur'dek's ship.

Mur'dek stood on the bridge of his Sky-Destroyer, staring at the empty air where, seconds earlier, Kyra Issarei had stood. Even when the bridge door slid open and more of his men charged into the room, he didn't move.

"Don't think you can win that easy, shape-shifter," he whispered. A small grin of triumph stretched his mouth as he began to fracture into a million pinpricks of swirling light. "It's not over yet."

Then the first volley of ion fire struck the Sky-Destroyer's bow and the ship was destroyed.



## **Epilogue**

Princess Xia lay on her back, eyes closed, snuggled into the silken sheets of her luxurious bed, feeling the last of sleep's embrace drift away. Warm fingers smoothed through her hair, and she drew in a long, deep sigh, enjoying the erotic sensations rippling through her body at the sensual contact.

"Mmmm, that's good," she murmured, stretching her back as warm licks of pleasure darted to her pussy. The High Priestess was such an artful lover, it surprised Xia little how blissful she could make a head massage feel.

The fingers continued their slow movement, sliding through the strands of her hair, pressing against her skull. A wave of heat rolled through her body. She felt her clit begin to pulse, ready for Cy's skilful tongue.

The fingers moved in ever slowing circles, their pressure increasing until Xia felt an unusual ripple travel over her flesh, unusual and yet familiar at the same time. Her eyes snapped open and she stared up into her own face.

"Hello, Princess." Ice-blue eyes stared back at her, darkening to midnight. The fingers on her skull stopped moving. "Care to tell me where my fucking jacket is?"

## **The End**

*Coming soon... Shifting Lust 2:*

Surely being an intergalactic sexual assassin has to come with some perks? Jai'Enna of Trixia thinks this is so, and having the best sex of her life with Boundary Guardian Zeric Q'son fits the bill nicely. But when she discovers he may be the very target she's after, lust and duty clash, and orgasms are the only way to come to any decision.

## **Lexxie Couper**

Lexxie Couper couldn't exist without her husband's *Playboy* collection, her Sci-fi DVD collection, her Stephen King library, and her dog. If it's raunchy and set in space, she's either there, or on her way! That is, after she takes the dog for a run along her private beach on the east coast of Australia. Feel like joining Lexxie on one of her sizzling, out-of-this-world adventures? Contact her at [lexxie@lexxiēcouper.com](mailto:lexxie@lexxiēcouper.com) or catch the next flight at [www.lexxiēcouper.com](http://www.lexxiēcouper.com).