

A.O.E.M.: 4's Company
Eve Vaughn

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Chapter One

"It's a shame we have to leave this gorgeous island." Trina sighed, stretching out on the beach, letting the sun's rays tickle her body with their warmth.

Bayoh dropped a light kiss on her stomach. "I'll miss Chimera as well, but we've been absent from Lαιοcean for two weeks now. Our people are probably wondering when we're coming back." He chuckled.

"Of course they know we'll be back. Word was sent last week, but you so convincingly persuaded us to stay another week," Roar added.

"As if you're complaining. Besides, the first week didn't count." Trina pouted.

Roar lifted his blond head, his aquamarine eyes staring at her with confusion. "How do you mean?"

"Well, I spent most of the week fighting what I felt for the three of you so I didn't completely enjoy the full experience of the island," she reasoned.

Roar ran his hand along the expanse of her stomach. "You're gorgeous," he murmured. "Hmm, perhaps you didn't enjoy the first half of the vacation, but there were no complaints at night."

Trina giggled. "Yes, I suppose you're right. You guys gave me nothing to complain about at night. Speaking of which, shouldn't we go back to our bungalow if we're going to take this any further?"

Bayoh nuzzled her neck. "You're ready to fuck again?"

She shivered. Talh moved to her feet and began to kiss her ankles. Roar moved closer and fondled her breasts with large skilled hands. "We can't do this right here in the middle of the beach. Anyone could just walk up on us," she moaned, despite the delicious sensations coursing through her body.

"This is our private stretch of beach, remember?" Roar grinned, trailing his fingers along her stomach again.

Trina sighed, arching her back against their touches. She couldn't remember a time when she'd been this content. Her heart swelled with love for these three gorgeous hunks. Each had his own distinct personality. Roar was the lighthearted one and often the spokesperson for the group. He made her laugh and realize that life didn't always have to be so serious.

Bayoh was fiery. He shot straight from the hip and his directness sometimes took her breath away. He was a man's man. He had a way of making her feel like a woman. Then there was Talh. Though quiet and often serious, he was the most sensitive of the three. The intensity of his aqua gaze left her panting. He was always tender and gentle with her.

If someone had told her a few weeks ago that she'd fall in love with three men, she'd have laughed, especially since Trina had sworn off men after finding her live-in boyfriend in bed with her best friend. Her best male friend.

Her mind briefly drifted to Tim of the golden skin and long dreadlocks. He was handsome, and a good lay, but a good-for-nothing bum who apparently was also bisexual. She'd threatened to cut off his penis after catching him in bed with Twan. The last time she'd seen him, he was running buck naked out of her house. He was probably doing okay now. His kind always managed to land on their feet.

That didn't matter anymore. She'd be starting a new life with three men she was madly in love with. At times it was scary to think about how she'd fallen so hard and fast for them. She was still trying to reconcile the fact that they weren't human and actually beings called Manani, a people whose natural form was leonine.

It frightened her when they'd shifted in front of her for the first time, so after that one night they'd stayed in their humanoid form. It was something she'd grow used to in time, but for now she was happy to see them as two-legged men rather than four-legged cats.

Chimera.

Trina would miss this magical island that had brought them together. Who would have thought the free vacation would actually turn out so wonderfully? When she'd received a letter in the mail stating that she won a free vacation, Trina smelled a rat. People like her didn't win free vacations, not without a catch. Normally she would have thrown the letter away and not given it another thought, but because her life had been in disarray at the time of its arrival, she'd called the number in a weak moment.

She'd booked the vacation and was told she'd only have to take a survey at the end to tell the people in charge what she thought of the island. Things had been great in the beginning and she actually began to take the place at face value. The island was gorgeous, the staff courteous, and her accommodations were something right out of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*.

Then she began seeing things that just weren't supposed to be, like winged people, talking animals, men who looked like elves. That's when she knew Chimera was no ordinary island. Around the time of this discovery was when she met Roar, Bayoh, and Talh. They'd pursued her relentlessly until she lost the will to run.

The fact that they had tails didn't register until she'd already fallen under their spell. She smiled as she remembered that first night with them. It had certainly been something to remember.

Bayoh lifted one dark brow, his lips twisted in amusement. "What do you find so funny?"

Trina's smile widened, her eyes locking with his. "I'm just thinking of our first night together. You three probably thought I was a little bit crazy."

"Not crazy, just confused. We could hardly expect you not to be apprehensive as you've never known one of our kind before." Roar trailed his hand over her hot skin, his fingertips resting just above the top of her bikini bottom. Trina sucked in her breath in anticipation. She wanted to feel his fingers on and inside her pussy.

Obviously reading her actions correctly, Roar cocked his blond head to the side, a grin splitting his face when he undid the ties on her bikini bottom. Talh kissed and

massaged her feet and ankles while Bayoh bent his dark head to nuzzle one throbbing breast with the side of his face.

"Oh, my goodness," she moaned, wanting more.

Roar pulled her bikini bottom away, leaving Trina naked from the waist down. Her body shook with desire. She had to bite her lower lip to stop herself from screaming, not wanting someone to hear them.

"Don't hold anything back, Trina. Scream for us if you want," Talh whispered. A lock of dark red hair fell over his forehead as he ran his lips along the side of her calves.

"This may be a private beach, but what if someone heard us?" She groaned, finding it hard to concentrate when Roar's hand was steadily inching toward her damp slit.

"So what? Let them. They'll know without a doubt that you belong to us," Bayoh said, lifting up her bikini top. Her nipples sprang to attention, the warm island breeze gently caressing them. The lusty hunger she spied in Bayoh's aqua stare made her lose any further worries about discovery. So what if someone heard?

Trina tried to pull herself up on her elbows to see what they were doing to her, but Bayoh pushed her back down. She'd discovered over the past week that she enjoyed watching them in action. When they decided to stay an extra week on the island, the four of them were given a larger bungalow. Their new accommodations came with a full-sized mirror over a California King bed. She never grew tired of seeing their hands on her skin or their cocks working in and out of her holes, filling her, driving her to the brink of insanity.

Talh pulled her legs further apart and his hands were soon inching up her thighs. Trina's breath caught in her throat, her body quivering. She eagerly waited for the entrance of his fingers, along with Roar's. Being fingered was wonderful, but being fingered by two men at once was mind blowing.

Bayoh, however, would not be ignored. He lowered his head and captured a taut nipple between his teeth.

"Oh, Bayoh. Please," she begged at the overwhelming sensation. Her breasts were extremely sensitive and he knew exactly how to lick, suck, and nibble them. She let her head sink into the soft sand with a sigh. Just how much pleasure could one body take? She didn't know, but she was eager to find out.

No matter how many times she made love with these three, it always got better. Bayoh blocked Roar and Talh from her line of vision, but she felt their hands rubbing her outer labia and inner thighs. She threaded her fingers through Bayoh's dark locks, holding his head closer against her breast. He swirled and laved the throbbing tip, leaning over just enough to give the other nipple the same attention.

"Yes," she cried when two sets of nimble fingers delved into her pussy.

"Mmm, you're already wet for us. Are you that eager for our cocks?" Roar asked, his fingers rolling her clit.

Although she couldn't actually see his fingers tweaking the sensitive nub, she knew his touch. Trina was so in tune with her men that she could distinguish each of them by the way they touched her. It was almost as if their souls were connected.

Her love for them only intensified the feelings coursing through her right now. "I'm always eager for your cocks. That's goes without saying." She moaned, thrashing her head from side to side. The crash of ocean waves seemed to be synchronized with the pounding of her heart.

Talh slid two questing fingers inside her channel, pushing them as deep as they could go. With her feet planted firmly in the sand, she raised her hips to meet the thrusting digits. He increased the pace, fingering her just the way she liked. Trina wanted more, needed more. As though sensing this need, Talh withdrew his fingers, but not completely removing them from between her legs. He let them glide to the tight ring of her ass. Yes. This was what she wanted.

Roar let go of her clit and pushed his finger inside her, filling the hole Talh had just vacated. She ran her tongue over her suddenly dry lips. It felt so good. The redhead moved his slick thumb over her anus.

"Don't tease me," she groaned, feeling relief when he stuck two fingers into her ass. Roar and Talh's fingers worked in unison, moving with her, stretching her walls.

"Yes, you're definitely ready for us," Roar whispered. She could hear the smile in his voice.

Bayoh lifted his head and covered her lips in a hungry kiss, his tongue thrusting past her teeth. He grasped the sides of her head to hold it still as he explored every inch of her mouth. Trina moaned, loving the taste of him, the way he seemed to savor his exploration.

"Sweet, so sweet," he murmured.

"I love the way you kiss," she sighed in response.

"And I love you," he said simply before bringing his mouth back down to hers. He gentled his lips against hers, taking his time this go-round. "So beautiful." Bayoh planted kisses on her face. Her heart swelled with love. Not only did Roar, Bayoh, and Talh fulfill her darkest desires, they always made her feel loved.

Her body felt as though it would combust, she was so hot. Their torturous caresses were slowly driving her to the brink of an explosive orgasm. Roar and Talh worked their fingers in and out of her ass and pussy until she screamed her release. "Oh, dear Lord!"

Bayoh took her scream into his mouth. Talh and Roar removed their fingers from inside her. Seconds later, a tongue lapped at her dripping cunt. Talh's.

Trina wiggled her hips, smashing her pussy against his face. If she died right now, it would be with a smile on her face. She'd had her pussy licked many times before meeting these three, but nothing matched the sensation of a Manani tongue. For one thing, they had tongues like cats, long, rough, and hot. It could delve so deep within her that she'd cream herself with a mere flick.

Bayoh released her mouth and looked down at her with a smile on his face. "You smell delicious. I think I'll have a taste as well." He scooted down the side of her body, switching places with Talh, and proceeded to lick her cunt with long broad strokes.

Bayoh briefly lifted his head with a huge grin on his face. "Yes, it's just as tasty as it smells." Then he resumed lapping her wet sex.

She sighed, her body a whirlwind of sensation. Roar slid a damp finger along her bottom lip before sliding it into her mouth. She sucked on it, tasting herself. It wasn't unpleasant, and a little bit kinky, which only added to the moment. She twisted her head away to look at Talh as he slipped to the side of her body.

Talh circled one hard nipple with the tip of his index finger, tickling her skin. She purred in the back of her throat, the salacious hunger rippling from the very core of her being. Trina reached up to trace the scar that ran from Talh's eye to his jaw line. The scar, though old, still stood out, looking red and angry yet, oddly enough, it didn't detract from his rugged good looks. It only added to the character of his face. She loved every inch of this quiet warrior.

He nuzzled her questioning hand against his cheek, a slight smile on his sensual lips. Trina jerked in reaction when Bayoh's tongue stabbed into her. She knew he wouldn't stop until she reached another shrieking culmination, but this time his tongue wasn't enough.

The lustful cravings began to build within the pit of her stomach, making her yearn for more. Only with these men could she experience such passion. "Fuck me!" she demanded.

"We certainly won't keep you waiting then," Roar chuckled.

When she shifted her weight to her elbows, Bayoh lifted his head with obvious reluctance. The three men stood up, their tails swishing behind them. They wasted no time ridding themselves of their swim trunks. Trina's breath caught in her throat. Their magnificent bodies never ceased to amaze her. She sat up, her eyes greedily drinking in their forms.

They were all tall with Talh standing an inch higher than the other two at six foot seven. Their bodies were hard ripples and hollows, washboard stomachs and pecs to die for. The most mouthwatering feature on them was their cocks.

Trina ran her tongue over her lips in anticipation, the faint taste of her juices still clinging to them. She eyed their thick hard cocks, so long and so ready to fuck her. "What are you guys waiting for? I'm horny as hell. Don't just stand there." She laughed.

Talh bent down and took her by the forearm, bringing Trina to her feet. He pulled her against him, his erection digging into her belly. He tilted her chin up before bringing his mouth to hers. Roar pressed his body against her back and rained kisses on her neck. Bayoh stepped to the side of her, caressing every inch of exposed skin he could get his hands on.

They kissed, rocked, and ground against her until her legs felt like they'd give out. Talh and Roar gently took Trina to her knees with them; the redhead lay on his back. He grasped her hips while Roar gripped her shoulders, the two men placing her on Talh's cock.

Trina sighed with satisfaction. The deliciousness of the moment was too good to hold back a loud groan. Roar pushed her forward and knelt behind them. She shivered when he parted her ass cheeks. He rubbed the tip of his cock against her anus. "I love fucking your tight ass. And you love it too, don't you?" he asked.

"Yes." She didn't think to deny him.

"That's right. You're already wet back here. I'll have no trouble sliding into you," Roar whispered.

"How about less talking and more fucking," Trina teased.

She screamed when he thrust forward. "Oh, sweet Jesus." There was nothing like having a cock in your pussy and ass at the same time -- except a cock in your pussy, ass, and mouth. Bayoh dropped to his knees beside them, turning her head toward his jutting erection. Trina opened her mouth over his thick shaft.

Bayoh slid forward until the tip of his cock touched the back of her throat. The three men stilled, waiting for her to adjust to them, but Trina grew impatient. Bayoh, Roar, and Talh moved within her holes, thrusting, pounding, and claiming her. She was so delectably filled she didn't think she'd be able to hold out much longer.

"You feel so good, woman." Roar sighed behind her, his cock slamming into her ass.

Trina's mouth tightened around Bayoh's member. He gripped her hair, increasing the pace of his thrusts. Soon the three men were fucking her with frenzied motions, groaning, flesh rubbing against flesh. It was hot, kinky, and absolutely gratifying. As their bodies clung together, melding to hers, an explosion rocked her so powerfully that bright spots danced before her eyes. They shot their seed inside of her, one by one.

Trina didn't think it could get any better than this.

Chapter Two

The car halted in front of the gathering hall where their people held all their meetings and ceremonies. Roar, who sat to Trina's right, turned to her, giving her trembling hand a reassuring squeeze. "Here we are. What do you think of Lαιοcean?"

She gave him a tentative smile. "From what I've seen since we landed here, it's beautiful. It's like something right out of *National Geographic*. I mean, part of the land looks like a rain forest and another part looks like an African savannah. I'm sure the rest of it will be just as pretty."

Bayoh laughed. "Pretty? That's not really a word I'd use to describe the land, but we like it."

"Are you sure your people will like me?" she asked for the fifth time in an hour. Roar wished there was a way he could assure her that everything would be okay. It was still hard to believe this beautiful creature belonged to them.

As the Alpha Triad, it was imperative for them to find a mate. According to their customs the succession had to be assured, or they wouldn't be able to maintain their position of leadership.

Before venturing to Chimera, they'd decided if they couldn't agree on a mate they'd come back to Lαιοcean and settle down with Nika, a fellow tribeswoman who'd made no secret of her desire to join with them. Fortunately, they'd found Trina. Roar shuddered to think what life would have been like if they'd mated with Nika. He couldn't put his finger on it, but there was just something about her he didn't like.

Trina would make a fine Alpha to the females of the tribe. Roar knew, however, that his people would be slightly wary of humans after the fiasco with Tegor, Rain, and Geho, but he was confident in Trina's ability to endear herself to the Manani people.

He leaned over, giving her a kiss on the forehead. "They will love you. How could they not?"

Their driver came around and opened the door. Roar took a deep breath before stepping out of the car. Bayoh and Talh each took one of her hands while he walked ahead of them into the gathering hall. It felt good to be back on Liocean soil. As much as he'd enjoyed his stay at Chimera, there was nothing like his homeland with its majestic landscape. The colors seemed brighter, the air felt crisper, and the inhabitants were more in tune with the land than other places he'd visited. He felt as one with the land. Roar itched to shift and run, to feel the warm earth between his toes.

He looked at Trina with a sigh. She'd never voiced an objection to their leonine form, but he could tell it made her a little uneasy. If they were to create life together, they'd have to take her in their natural form. He figured she would eventually grow accustomed to it. She seemed happy at the mention of bearing their offspring so that was at least a positive sign.

On the plane she seemed very excited to see their homeland, letting them know she wouldn't fail them. Her enthusiasm pleased him.

Three men stepped forward upon their entry. "Welcome home, Alphas."

Roar and the other two Triad members nodded toward them and proceeded forward. The crowd parted, letting them pass. They stopped when they reached their chairs. He stood behind Trina and brushed his lips against her ear. "Don't be nervous," he whispered before stepping around Bayoh to stand in front of the crowd.

All eyes looked at them with curiosity. These were his people and he felt at home among them. He only hoped they would look to Trina with the respect due to her position. "It's good to be back," he began.

Shouts of welcome rippled through the audience. He held up his hand. When the room was silent once more, he continued. "As you are all aware, Bayoh, Talh, and I ventured to Chimera for a brief respite. While there, we found our mate to lead by our sides." Roar turned to look at a shaking Trina. Bayoh and Talh gently led her forward.

"But she's human!" a voice called from the crowd.

Roar's head snapped in that direction so quickly his neck hurt.

"Who said that?" Bayoh demanded.

Reyo, one of Talh's warriors, stood. He tossed back his long dark hair in a show of defiance. "I did, Alpha. She's human. How can you expect us to take direction from her, considering what the last one did? She wreaked havoc with our people, yet you expect us to defer to this woman?"

"This woman is our mate, and it would serve you well to remember that. Of course, if you don't want to remain a warrior under me then do as you please. Otherwise, I won't tolerate you or anyone speaking against her." Talh spoke softly, but the message was loud and clear.

Reyo paled, his lips tightening, but he didn't say another word. Instead, he sat back down.

"Any other objections?" Roar asked, looking around. Most of the people gathered avoided his eyes. Inwardly, he groaned. This would be harder than he'd thought. He smiled, turning to his beloved. "Would you like to say a few words to everyone? They're your people now too."

Her eyebrows furrowed. "Must I? I don't know what to say."

"Say whatever comes from your heart. They're not bad people. They just need to get to know you, then they'll see how wonderful you are," Roar whispered.

"Okay. If you think it'll do any good." Trina squared her shoulders and stepped forward. "Hi... uh... hello. My name is Trina and I'm very pleased to be here. I understand you may be a little apprehensive about my presence, but I'll do my best to be a good leader and I'm looking forward to getting to know you all." She gave the audience a shy smile.

Roar could see some of the looks she received from the men in the crowd. He recognized that emotion well. Lust. A faint surge of jealousy washed through him and he thought of Tegor, Rain, and Geho. No. Trina wasn't like that. She'd never betray them. He gave her a good look, proud of her regal bearing. He knew she was scared, but it hardly showed. Roar took her hand as a show of his support. "Any questions?"

When no one spoke he nodded. "In that case, you may now greet the newest member of our tribe. Let the procession begin."

* * *

Trina's cheeks hurt from smiling as she stood beside her mates, shaking hands and greeting each tribe member who came her way. She felt like she was in a receiving line at a wedding, although the people that greeted her acted as though it were a funeral. Her nervousness was replaced by dread. For some reason, they didn't like her. She couldn't figure out why.

They didn't know her so why the hostility? And who were Tegor, Rain, and Geho that dark-haired man had mentioned? Was it only because she was human that they were wary of her, or was there some deeper reason? She had to win them over, even if it killed her. She wanted to prove she was a worthy mate for Roar, Bayoh, and Talh.

All her life she'd had to fend for herself, but then these three came along and showed her that she, Trina Davis, was worthy to be loved. They made her feel special and taught her it was okay to trust and love. Failure to assimilate into their culture was not an option. She'd have to show them on her own that she was up to the task.

She was broken out of her private musing when a tall woman with silvery blonde hair and slanted green eyes stood in front of her. The woman had to be at least six feet tall. It seemed that all the Manani people were tall and lithe, making Trina feel like a shrimpy lump. This woman was no exception. She could probably have been a supermodel if it weren't for the tail swinging behind her.

Though the woman smiled down at her, Trina had the distinct impression that it wasn't sincere. "I'm Nika. Welcome to our humble land. I'm sure it's nowhere near as interesting as the outside world," she practically cooed.

Green eyes darted to Roar, Bayoh, and Talh, lingering a little too long, and Trina didn't like it one bit. She never thought of herself as a jealous person, but the look the blonde threw at her men didn't sit well with her. Maybe she was imagining things.

Trina made an effort to smile as she took the hand Nika offered. "Thank you for your welcome, Nika."

Nika turned to Roar, pulling her hand from Trina's grip, but not before her nails dug into Trina's tender palms. Trina gasped. What the fuck? Had Nika done that on purpose?

"She's such an adorable little thing. It would be my honor to show her how things are done around here. After all... who knows better than me how things should be run?"

Was this broad for real? Trina felt like smacking her but realized that would make a lousy impression on the Manani people. Instead, she answered in her most sickeningly sweet tone before Roar could respond. "While I appreciate your offer, I believe my *mates* will show me how things are done around here. If I need further assistance, I'll be sure to keep you in mind. Now, I really should greet the rest of my new tribe," Trina finished, making it quite obvious that the blonde was dismissed.

Nika's eyes narrowed, but the smile remained on her lips. "Very well, Trina, but if you need me don't forget to ask. Roar, Bayoh, and Talh would like that, considering how close we all are." She sauntered off, but not before her point hit home. Trina looked over at her men. What the hell? Had she just been challenged?

"Who is that woman to you?" she hissed.

Roar's lips tightened. "We'll discuss this matter in private."

Trina wanted to argue, but thought better of it. It wouldn't do to start a fight in front of their people, especially on her first day here. The next person in line was the dark-haired man who'd spoken against her in the hall. She stiffened, but to her surprise he was smiling at her. Was this yet another false display? He took her hand and raised it to his lips. For some reason, she got strange vibes from this man and it had nothing to do with his earlier outburst.

"Please allow me to apologize for what I said. It was a shock to see a human among us, but I must say you handled yourself beautifully." His total about-face surprised her. "The Alphas have chosen well. It's nice to have such beauty added to our

tribe, and you're most welcome here. I'm Reyo. If you need any assistance, any at all, please don't hesitate to ask."

She could hardly call him a liar to his face. He had apologized, so it would look petty on her part if she didn't let bygones be bygones. She didn't want to make enemies of anyone. She smiled at him. "I'll keep that in mind and thank you for your apology. That was kind of you."

Reyo smiled back at her. "Just remember, any help at all."

Roar grunted. "Reyo, I think it's time for you to move on."

Trina looked at him and wondered why he sounded so annoyed.

"Again, I apologize, Alpha. I only thought to rectify my earlier transgression." He bowed his head before moving on.

She breathed a sigh of relief to see the back of him. He puzzled her because most of the men were grouped in threes while Reyo was obviously alone. She'd ask her mates about it later. Trina stood in line for several more minutes, trying to remember the names of all those introduced to her. Some people, while not openly hostile, didn't seem to want her here, though others were friendly. She'd never been happier when it was all over.

"You're probably tired. We'll take you back to our hut so you may rest and also change into something more suitable," Bayoh said, his eyes raking over her white clad body. She wore the same dress she'd worn on the night they met.

"What's wrong with what I'm wearing now? I thought you liked it." She looked down at her dress and saw nothing out of place about it, considering the skimpy attire of the Manani women.

Bayoh smiled. "You look beautiful. But if you want to fit in, you'll have to wear what the other women do."

Her dress could be considered enticing -- it was short and strapless -- but it at least covered her from chest to mid thigh. The Manani women looked like they'd stepped out of someone's caveman fantasy with rawhide skirts that barely covered their crotches and strappy tops of the same material that barely covered their nipples.

She supposed the outfits were so skimpy because Lαιοcean was hot, but Trina didn't like the idea of bending over and having her ass hang out. "Umm, is it okay to wear my own clothes?"

Roar sighed patiently. "The only reason we allowed you to bring a suitcase full of your stuff was so you'd have something to remind you of the outer world. However, this is your home now and you'll have to wear what the other women wear if you want to fit in."

He had a point. She did want to fit in. So be it. She'd have to wear the hooker gear. Still, she couldn't help but throw in one last protest. "It barely covers their private parts. I mean, no one wears an outfit like that unless they're walking the street."

"But if every woman is wearing it then you won't have any undue attention directed toward you," Talh pointed out.

Trina shrugged. "Fine. I didn't mean to sound so peevish. I guess I'm more tired than I thought."

Roar took her hand and led her outside, with Bayoh and Talh following closely behind. Trina gasped when she saw lion-like creatures walking freely outside and remembered where she was. This would take some getting used to. "Where is your house?"

"It's only a short distance away. We can walk from here. Besides, it will give you a chance to see more of our village," Roar answered.

Silently she walked with her mates, taking in the sights around her. The houses, or the huts as they'd referred to them earlier, were round with golden roofs that kind of reminded her of upside down tops. It looked quaint and she liked it. They continued down a wide grassy road until they stopped in front of a hut twice the size of the others.

"This is our home," Roar said needlessly. It made sense to her that their home would be larger than the others. She shivered, thinking this would be where she'd spend the rest of her life. Trina walked ahead of them, eager to see the inside.

She didn't know what to expect, but it certainly wasn't anything this grand. It was like one big efficiency. In the far corner was a large bed covered in what appeared to be fur. The bed was so large ten people could probably sleep comfortably on it.

There was an area that looked like a kitchen, but she wasn't sure. The place had all the amenities of the world she'd left behind, but everything seemed to be crafted from some kind of precious metal and the walls and floors were covered with exotic looking furs. The hut was sparsely furnished, so she could only assume they generally sat on the floor. It was different, but she liked it. "It's nice," she commented as she walked around, taking in every aspect.

"Just nice? We could have something larger built for you," Bayoh offered.

"No, this is fine. It just needs a few feminine touches." A sudden wave of drowsiness washed over her. She was more tired than she'd originally thought, but she wasn't too tired for a little afternoon delight. "It would be nice if you guys would help me christen this bed."

Chapter Three

"It's been a month and she hasn't made any progress. Everything seemed to be going so well at first, and then she completely changed. I don't understand what's gone wrong." Bayoh paced back and forth, a look of frustration on his face.

Roar knew exactly how he felt. It seemed like Trina was making no effort at all to get to know their people. If anything, at times she seemed downright hostile. He was so sure she'd fit in. Never for a moment did he think she'd act this way. What happened to the sweet woman they'd met on Chimera?

They'd tried talking to her together, and then Bayoh and Talh had tried separately. They hadn't been able to break through the wall she'd built between them. Lately it seemed the only time he felt any connection with her was when they made love. It was only then that she'd let her guard down. That just wasn't enough, however. It tore them apart that this was happening.

"I hope we don't have another situation like the last three who brought a human among us." Talh sighed, a pensive look on his face. Dark red brows furrowed together in consternation.

Roar refused to accept it. "Damn. Do you two hear yourselves? Trina isn't like that. She loves us, and if we truly love her then we need to support her."

"Don't question my feelings for her because they're just as strong as yours." Bayoh's nostrils flared.

"I'm not questioning your feelings. I'm merely stating that we owe her our support. I'll talk to her this time. Perhaps we haven't spent as much time with her as we should have since we've been back. I know she assured us that she'd be okay left to her own devices -- actually she insisted on it so she could get to know the people better -- but there's been no evidence of that."

"You may be right. Coming back from a two week absence has made things more hectic than usual. Maybe she feels neglected and is too prideful to mention it," Talh mused.

"How can she feel neglected when we spend all of our nights with her? And furthermore, I don't like the way Reyo has been sniffing around. People are starting to talk. I think we should have killed him with the rest of his Triad, or at least banished him," Bayoh said to Talh.

"It was my decision to make. He threw himself on our mercy and you know as custom dictates we couldn't kill him if he pleaded for mercy. As for banishing, we could never prove he was the mastermind behind what happened. Besides, at the time we were at war with the Darwaedd. I needed as many warriors as possible," Talh defended.

Bayoh snorted. "I will never completely trust him."

"Maybe not, but don't you think the very fact that he lives is punishment? Because his Triad has been broken, he can't choose a mate. He seems content enough as one of my warriors."

Bayoh shook his head, his lips curling into a cynical twist. "I still don't trust him. He bears watching."

Roar nodded. "I agree, but Reyo isn't the issue. Trina is. She's different somehow and I don't know why. There's no one I need to attend to right now so I'll go have a talk with her. What about you two?"

"A band of us are gathering for this week's hunt."

"And my warriors are waiting for their training," Talh sighed. "Perhaps you'll be able to find out what we couldn't."

"I certainly hope so." Roar stayed behind while he watched Bayoh and Talh walk off. He undressed, placing his clothing aside. He needed to shift so he could think clearly. They'd been careful not to shift so much around Trina, especially in light of her odd behavior, but now the urge was too strong to ignore.

He dropped to his hands and knees, letting out a loud primal roar. His organs and muscles shifted. A mat of smooth fur popped from his skull. His face contorted. Roar stretched his body until the transformation was complete.

He paced the land, thinking about his next course of action. He'd confront Trina now. Maybe she needed to see him like this to grow more accustomed to this form. Roar headed back to his hut and found himself running, eager to see her again. Despite what had passed these couple weeks, she was still his mate and he loved her.

He made his way inside, his eyes seeking her out. Her scent wafted to his nostrils, directing him to the bed. With stealth natural to him, he walked toward her, the sound of her even breathing reaching his ears. She wasn't wearing a stitch of clothing as she slept. His cock jutted from its sheath. She looked so beautiful and vulnerable, unaware of his presence.

Trina lay on her back, an arm flung over her head and legs slightly parted. Catching a glance of her succulent pussy, he licked his chops, wanting to taste her. Roar purred, stalking closer. Jumping on the bed, he was careful not to let his claws tear into the covers.

He stopped at her feet and fell to his haunches, pushing her legs further apart with his head. He crawled closer to the delectable pussy until his nose was touching her. She smelled wonderful. Roar nuzzled her with his face. A soft moan escaped her lips. He raised his head to see if she'd wake up, but her breathing remained even. Unable to hold back any longer, he delved his tongue between the plump lips of her cunt.

The tart, tangy taste of her titillated his senses. He lapped hungrily at her pussy, savoring the flavor of her on his tongue. Roar felt as though he could do this forever if she'd let him. Trina wiggled her hips, her lips releasing another soft sigh, but still she didn't wake.

As much as he enjoyed this, he wanted her to be aware, wanted to look into her eyes and see her reaction to his ministrations. Reluctantly he pulled his head back, only

to run it along the base of her stomach. He crawled over her, letting his tongue drag up her body until his head reached her breasts.

Roar licked each nipple to hardness, his cock aching to enter her damp heat.

He called her telepathically. *Trina.*

"Mmm," she moaned, her eyes still firmly shut. She stretched with a smile on her lush lips as though she was in the middle of a particularly wonderful dream.

Trina, he tried again.

When that didn't work, he gently nipped the side of her breast in hopes that would do the trick. She woke with a gasp, her eyes flinging open. "What the --"

Roar lowered his head and licked her neck. *I thought you'd never wake up.*

"Roar, no. Not like this," she groaned, twisting her head away even as her hips rose from the bed.

Yes, like this. You know what we are. It didn't seem to bother you on Chimera.

"But... but that was different," she stammered, trying to scoot back, but the weight of his body pressing into her wouldn't allow her to move. A paw rested on either side of her head.

Roar looked into her eyes and saw emotions he didn't expect. Worry. Doubt. Fear. For some reason that angered him. Neither he nor the others in the Triad had ever given her reason to mistrust them. He'd realized when they met she had trust issues because of past relationships, but he thought they were past that. *Why is it different?*

"It just is. Please. I don't want you to take me like this."

Why? We've taken you like this before.

"I know but before... before I felt you... you cared."

Her words were like a dagger to his heart. *What makes you think I don't care now? How could you think that? I love you more than life itself, and I know Bayoh and Talh feel the same way. Whatever gave you the impression that we didn't care?*

She averted her head. "It doesn't matter."

I think it does. Is this the reason you've been acting so strange?

"I don't want to talk about it."

His nostrils flared. *You will tell me, Trina --*

"Don't you dare threaten me. I didn't know it would be like that and I wish --"

What?

"Nothing." She chewed on her bottom lip and he knew she was hiding something.

Tell me.

"If you really want to know, I wish I'd known what it would be like before I came here."

Unable to hold back his anger, he let out a loud roar. Trina yelped, now trying in earnest to pull herself from beneath him. *Regardless of what you wish, you made a commitment to us and we're not letting you go.*

He lowered his head, lapping at her breasts again briefly before moving down her body to her cunt. His tongue surged forward, entering her pussy.

"Roar!" she screamed with shock, pushing at his head, but he was too strong for her. He thrust his tongue into her, growling ferociously, daring her to deny she wanted him.

Don't ever deny me again -- or any of us. Even now you want this.

"No. I didn't want it to be this way," she cried.

Liar. Your pussy is so wet, so slick. I feel your muscles clenching around my tongue because you want me. Say it!

"No," she whimpered but even as the word spilled from her mouth, she arched herself against his mouth. He licked her harder, faster. "Oh God!" Her fingers dug into his mane.

Say it!

"I want you! Oh God, I want you," she yelled, bucking her hips against him. Moving over her, he thrust his cock into her, dipping his head to lick her lips and face. This wasn't the way he wanted things to be with her. To take her in his natural form should have been a special moment.

Her pussy was so tight, so wet. He couldn't get enough of her. His lust drove him deeper, harder, and faster into Trina's cunt. She convulsed beneath him, screaming her climax. "Roar! Roar!" Her fingers pulled at his mane, her head thrashing back and forth.

He gently bit her shoulder, careful not to break the skin. She continued to moan and pant beneath him. He threw his head back, letting out a roar that could probably be heard throughout the village. But he didn't care as he emptied his balls into her channel, the explosive peak rocking his body. He collapsed on top of her, his head resting on the soft pillows of her breasts.

Roar could hear the pounding of Trina's heart, her breathing ragged.

"Get off of me." Her voice sliced through the silence. He lifted his head to look at her. Alarm filled him when he saw tears streaming down her face. What had he just done? He knew she'd wanted him too, but he could have handled it better.

Trina --

"No. I don't want to hear anything you have to say right now. Just get off of me."

Roar released a mental sigh, complying with her wishes. He rolled onto his back. When his breathing was under control once more, he grunted, letting his body shift to his human form. Then he reached over to pull Trina into his arms. "Trina, we have to talk."

She shrugged away from him. "Haven't you done enough? There's nothing to talk about."

He sat up and rolled her to face him. He hated to see her cry, but he wouldn't let her tears deter him from his purpose. "You wanted this too. Don't deny it."

She poked her lips out mutinously.

"Trina, speak to me."

"My body may have wanted you, but my heart and mind didn't. I asked you not to take me like that."

"I freely admit I could have -- should have -- done things differently, but that doesn't change the fact that it was inevitable. I'm sorry it turned out this way."

"Sorry isn't going to change things." Her eyes narrowed and she sat up, covering her breasts by folding her arms over them. "What did you want anyway?"

He didn't like her shielding her body from him, but it was something they'd discuss later. There were more important issues at hand. "I don't care for your tone, Trina."

"And I don't care for being taken against my will."

"That's not true and you know it."

She lifted her chin defiantly. "If you want to split hairs, fine."

Roar sighed. She was strong willed. Though it was one of the things that had attracted him to her, now it was more than a little annoying. He raked his fingers through his hair. "I didn't come here to start an argument. I only wanted to know if something was bothering you."

"Besides being forced?"

His patience was slowly wearing thin. Why was she acting like this? It was almost as if Trina was a totally different woman from the one they'd met on the island. No, that couldn't be true. Every now and then he'd catch glimpses of the woman he and the Triad fell in love with, especially at night.

"Trina, I've apologized and I promise it won't happen again unless I'm sure all of you is engaged, not just your body." He knew she'd enjoyed it even if she didn't want to admit it, but he didn't have the inclination to start another argument with her.

"Well, that will certainly be a long time coming."

"Trina, could you stop for a minute and listen to yourself? This isn't like you."

"How would you know? You, Bayoh, and Talh haven't been around long enough for any of you to know what I'm like. If you've come to give me one of your talks then I've heard it before from the other two. I'm a grown woman and I won't be lectured."

"Then start acting like one." She gasped at his harsh words, but he ignored the indignation in her eyes. "I don't know what your problem is, but I think you had better re-evaluate your priorities. In the time you've been here, you've made no effort to get to

know our people. You're standoffish, and you walk around as if everyone is beneath you. You need to get over yourself and do it quickly."

"I have not acted like that. I've tried to make an effort!"

"Really? Well, it seems like your efforts aren't worth much. I'll leave you alone now since that's what you obviously want." Roar rolled off the bed and grabbed something to wear from the closet. He didn't bother to look back before tearing out of the hut.

* * *

Trina's head drooped. What had just happened? Granted, she didn't appreciate the way he assumed it would be okay for him to take her in his leonine form without consulting her first, but that didn't alter the fact that she'd wanted him.

Part of her reason for being apprehensive about Roar taking her in his natural form was because it had been so special on Chimera. She'd known with a certainty then they loved her and wouldn't hurt her, but she'd been here a month and they seemed distant. Everything she did seemed to be wrong, and Trina felt like an absolute failure. She was sure they were disappointed in her.

Because of this distance growing between them, she didn't know if she could bear them making love to her like that and tainting her special memories of Chimera. Trina had a feeling Roar had wanted to fuck her that way to send a message of some sort. She didn't understand where he was coming from by saying that she wasn't trying to fit in with his people. That's all she'd been trying to do since she got here.

Laiocene was its own contained little world. In many ways it was primitive, yet in other ways it was more technologically advanced than her world. They had access to all modern conveniences and then some, but lived simply. She liked the way the Manani people went about their day to day lives, keeping busy, everyone seeming like a close knit family. Too bad it was a family that didn't welcome her.

On her first full day here, her mates had offered to stay with her. Realizing they had urgent duties to attend to, she'd insisted that she'd be okay. She wanted to explore

the village on her own. Besides, she wanted them to be proud of her. She didn't want to appear clingy. So they'd left her to her own devices.

They did send a woman to help her out around the hut. Though Teya had come to assist Trina with all her needs, it soon became obvious that the woman didn't like her. Any help given was done reluctantly. Trina tried hard to be friendly, but to no avail. In front of Trina's mates, however, the Manani woman was a different person. Teya couldn't do enough for the Alpha Triad. Maybe Trina should have said something to them, but she didn't want them to think she couldn't handle herself.

Teya wasn't the only one who treated her that way.

Trina put up with Teya's barbs and sly innuendoes for three days. On the fourth day, she'd told the nasty woman exactly where she could go. From then on things seemed to go downhill. Every attempt she made to reach out to the villagers was met with rebuffs. Even the ones who'd been friendly in the beginning turned on her.

If Roar, Bayoh, or Talh were around, the people would smile in her face and pretend everything was okay. She honestly did make an effort. One woman made a comment within earshot of Trina saying, "Nika would have made a better mate for the Alphas. Who does this human think she is to believe she could lead us?" It was comments like those that were slowly breaking down her resilience.

As for Nika, the woman was trouble. Trina had no doubt the blonde was spreading rumors about her, but there was no concrete proof. To top it off, her mates were constantly lecturing her about things she was doing wrong or asking what was the matter with her.

She wasn't a whiner and didn't want them to know about what was going on with the Manani people. She thought she'd be able to handle things herself, but instead she was finding things more difficult as the days went by. She didn't know what true depression was until she'd come here.

Despite this, she was still determined to prove to her mates that she was a worthy leader. Things couldn't go on like this though. The only person who was

actually nice to her was Reyo. They'd formed a friendship since her arrival. Maybe she just needed a sympathetic ear to listen to her woes right now.

Yes, that's exactly what she needed.

Chapter Four

Trina pulled her skirt down over her thighs for the third time as she walked toward Reyo's hut. She hoped he'd be there and not out training with Talh. She'd learned that the warriors trained in shifts, although she wasn't sure what his schedule was. She passed several tribe members on the way.

Some acknowledged her with a nod of their heads while others averted their eyes as she walked by. She nodded at everyone like she'd been instructed to regardless of how they looked at her. She tapped on Reyo's door, shifting her weight from side to side impatiently. She knew people were watching and scrutinizing her every move.

Trina needed to get away from the watchful stares. She knocked one more time, but still there was no answer. Trina's shoulders dropped. So much for having someone to talk to. She was just about to turn around when the door opened. Reyo's eyes were bloodshot as though he'd been sleeping.

"I'm sorry I woke you. I'll come back later."

"Trina. This is a pleasant surprise. What can I do for you?"

"Well, I... I was just coming for a visit, but I see you were resting. Perhaps another time?" She turned to walk away but he reached out, grabbing her arm.

"No. Stay. I would love your company. Please come inside."

"Are you sure?"

"Of course. You're always welcome in my home."

She smiled up at him. How could she ever have thought she wouldn't like him? He was her only ally in this entire village. He was a handsome man with midnight shoulder length hair. His lithe toned body was without an ounce of fat, and he possessed a wintry pair of blue eyes that almost seemed to look inside her soul. Trina realized all Manani men had blue eyes of one shade or another, while the women

possessed green eyes. Slowly but surely she was learning things about the people, but not fast enough it seemed.

She stepped into Reyo's hut and looked around her. Though they'd talked on several occasions, this was the first time she'd actually been inside his hut. It wasn't as large or as grand as the one she shared with her mates, but it was still nice.

"Please have a seat. Can I offer you some refreshment? I have freshly squeezed mango juice," he offered.

Trina took a seat on one of the fur pelts in the middle of the room. "That sounds lovely, but I'm really not thirsty."

"Would you like something to eat?"

"No, thank you. Come sit next to me." She patted the empty space beside her.

Reyo revealed large white teeth as he settled down next to her. "So tell me what's on your mind, Trina. Something seems to be troubling you." His voice sounded so sympathetic she wanted to give in to the tears that had been threatening to spill the past couple of weeks. She released a deep breath, suddenly feeling miserable.

Maybe she shouldn't have come, but she had to unburden herself to someone or go crazy. "I hope you don't mind my coming over here."

"Of course not. I'm honored that you sought me out."

"Reyo, I know this may sound like an odd question, but can I trust you? I mean, I know we haven't known each other long, but you've been so nice to me when everyone else..."

"Has refused to give you a chance?" he asked gently.

"Exactly. I'm trying very hard to fit in and be the Alpha fem I'm supposed to be, but none of the women will even look in my direction. The men leer at me, but it's a different story when my mates are around. I don't understand what I'm doing wrong. You said they expected me to show my superiority, and while I think that's an odd way to lead people, I've tried my best. They're still not responding to me. What should I do?"

"It humbles me that you've followed my advice and I will continue to help you as long as you need it."

"I'd really appreciate that, but I've followed your advice to a T so far and it hasn't worked. What am I doing wrong?"

A fleeting expression of annoyance crossed his face, but it was gone so fast she couldn't be sure. "Well, you're going to have to trust me. I wouldn't steer you wrong."

"I know you may not intend to, but wouldn't it make more sense if I just got to know people? Try to talk to them? We may be from different worlds, but where I come from that kind of thing works," she reasoned.

"Yes, but you're no longer among humans. We have customs that need to be adhered to. If you don't follow those customs, you'll never win their respect. Now remember what I said. You will never go to them. They must always come to you. You are the Alpha fem. They're just testing you right now."

Trina thought this was a stupid custom but didn't want to be insulting. "It seems like they're doing more than just testing me. Some people act as if they hate me. I don't understand why because they don't even know me."

"Of course some of them are going to be reserved at first, but they'll come around."

"Yes, you said that a couple weeks ago."

"Give it a little more time. You'll see. Things will change around here." He placed his hand on her shoulder and locked eyes with her. "Trust me."

She had the sudden urge to shrug off his touch and didn't know why. Maybe the heat was getting to her. Lαιοcean was hot and muggy. Her poor hair didn't stand a chance in this humidity. She wore it in two large plaits pinned to her head. She pretended to fix her hair as an excuse to pull away from Reyo.

There was something else she needed to know. "Reyo, could you tell me something?"

"Anything."

"Were my mates involved with Nika before I came here? I heard it whispered behind my back that she should be the Alpha fem. Whenever I see her, she gives me a nasty look like she wants to kill me."

Reyo grimaced. "Well, there was talk that she'd mate with the Alpha Triad. We all assumed she'd rule by their sides. I suppose we took it for granted. She's built up quite a following for herself."

"But what I'm asking is... well, did she uh... you know?"

He threw his head back and laughed. "Are you asking me if she fucked them? Of course. Quite often. It's permissible for any unmated female to fuck anyone she wants. Nika has been with many Triads, but she certainly made no secret about who she preferred."

Trina's heart sank. She knew where this conversation was going, but needed to hear the truth anyway. "And did... did they prefer her?"

"Of course they did. She's the most beautiful woman in our tribe, that is until you came along."

Her cheeks grew warm. It had been a while since someone had said something kind to her. "Do you know why they didn't choose her? Why did they go to Chimera instead of deciding to mate with her?"

Reyo placed his finger under his chin as though in deep contemplation. "Hmm. Well, I don't really know to be honest. I mean no disrespect to you, but they were all very taken with her. They showered her with gifts and I do believe they may have made an offer for her."

"But if she was so fond of them and they of her then why didn't she choose them?"

"That's our Nika. She probably thought she could hold them off long enough to have a little more fun because once a female is mated, she can only mate with her Triad. She loved the attention. I think the Alpha Triad was trying to teach her a lesson when they went to Chimera. The look on her face when they introduced you as their mate was funny."

"Are you trying to say that they only went to Chimera to get revenge against Nika?"

He sighed. "Trina, I really like you. I think with a little more time, you'd make a wonderful leader."

She gripped his arms, tears stinging her eyes. "That's not what I asked. What do you think?"

"I think it must be true. What other conclusion can I draw?"

"But... they told me I was their true mate," she whispered, feeling as if her heart were breaking into several pieces.

"Did they? That's odd."

"Why?"

"Well, that was the reason Tegor, Rain, and Geho gave for bringing another human among us."

"That's another mystery that needs clearing up. Who the hell are they?"

"I'm sure you've probably seen them around. They're the ones who walk around with their heads down in shame."

"Why would they be ashamed?"

"Their mate dishonored them and our people. She made a mockery of our ways, was unfaithful, and caused dissention among us."

"Where is she now?"

"She was banished. The last I heard she was somewhere in the woods. She was pretty useless so it wouldn't surprise me if she's dead."

Trina gasped in horror. "She didn't leave Laiocan?"

"This is an island. She can't get off unless one of us were to aid her. Once someone has been banished, they no longer exist to us."

"That's horrible."

"Yes, but she brought it on herself." Reyo didn't sound a bit sorry about the woman's plight at all and that bothered Trina.

"Is that why people don't like me, because of what someone else has done?"

"She's the only other human who has been here so we don't have much else to go by. You have a challenge ahead of you."

"What was her name?" For some reason, that bit of information was important to her.

"Shelby."

Trina shuddered to think what would happen to her if she didn't fit in soon. The thought of being banished to a remote part of the island, left to fend for herself, was scary. She trembled.

Another thing that bothered her was Reyo's revelation about how close Nika had been with her mates. Deep down Trina knew they loved her. But with the widening divide between them lately, it was becoming harder to feel that love. Now she knew winning over the Manani people wasn't the only thing at stake. She had to fight for her men.

"You'll help me, won't you?"

Reyo placed his hand over hers and smiled. "Of course I will. What are friends for?"

* * *

Talh looked at him with censure in his eyes. "You shouldn't have done that, Roar."

"Don't you think I know that? I only meant to talk to her, but she was naked and her pussy smelled so good. I had to have her." Roar sighed, inwardly cursing his weakness.

A wry smile twisted Bayoh's lips. "She has that effect on all of us, but the question remains. Where the hell is she?"

Roar shrugged. "I'd like to know that myself."

It had surprised them all to find her missing when they came home. Where could she have gone, especially when she didn't have any friends they knew of? Bayoh pounded his fist in his hand. "I think we should go look for her."

It was on the tip of Roar's tongue to reply when someone knocked on their door.

"Trina?" Talh asked.

"Why would she knock? This is her home," Roar answered, marching to the door. He was surprised to see Nika on the other side, a concerned look in her green eyes. "Nika? What are you doing here?"

She gave a slight smile. "Is that any way to greet a friend? I thought I'd always be welcome in your home... if not as your mate then at least as a friend."

Roar wasn't in the mood to parry words with her, but she was a member of the tribe and it was his duty as part of the Alpha Triad to see to the needs of their people. "What can we do for you, Nika?"

She fluttered her eyelashes at him, a thing that had half the Triads in the village lusting after her. It left him cold, however. "May I come in?"

"Of course." He stood back, allowing her entrance.

From the looks on Bayoh and Talh's faces, they weren't that happy to see her either. "Nika." They nodded their heads, greeting her in unison.

She shot them a broad smile, her tail dragging across their floor in slow seductive movements. Roar grew annoyed.

The more time they wasted with Nika, the less time they had to look for Trina. "What is it that you've come for?" he snapped, his voice coming out sharper than he'd meant.

Nika's face fell, a pout forming on her lips as she twirled a strand of silvery blonde hair around her fingers. "I don't know why you'd talk to me like that, especially when I've come as a concerned friend."

Roar let out a deep breath and silently prayed she'd get to the point. "I apologize for snapping at you. What is it that brought you here?"

"Well, I see Trina isn't here and that's what I've come about."

Bayoh stepped forward and grabbed her shoulder. "What about Trina? Have you seen her?"

"The whole village has. I'm sorry to be the one to tell you this, but your mate was seen going into Reyo's hut. She's been there for a long time now. It's been whispered

among the people that they've been spending a lot of time together when the three of you are tending to your duties. I'm sorry you had to find out like this." Nika didn't sound the least bit sorry.

Bayoh's hand fell away from her shoulder. "Liar," he hissed.

Nika placed her hand against Bayoh's chest. "I know it must be hard to accept that she's making a fool of you, but she is a human. As it's been proven before, their moral standards aren't as strict as ours."

Bayoh pushed her hand away. "What are you trying to get at?"

Nika laughed, encompassing them all in her gaze. "I thought it obvious. You've chosen her for a mate, but if things don't work out, you're not allowed to choose another. No mate, no leadership positions. That is, unless another female does the choosing. I think you know by now that I would make a much better Alpha fem. I'm a wee bit mad at you for going to that silly little island and bringing Trina back, but I'll forgive you if you do the right thing."

Did this woman have a death wish or was she just incredibly stupid? "That will be enough, Nika. You've said plenty and I think you should leave." Roar pointed to the door. The knowing smirk fell from her face, only to be replaced by a scowl. She didn't look so pretty now.

"What is it about that woman that makes her so special? She's just a human. She's beneath you -- beneath our people -- yet she walks around the village as if she's too good for anyone. Several people have made overtures of friendship to her, but she only turns her nose up at them. Didn't you learn anything from the other Triad who dared to bring that human scum among us?" she sneered.

"You go too far, Nika. She is your Alpha and there will be consequences if we ever hear you speak so disrespectfully like that about her again!" Roar yelled.

Nika's eyes filled with tears, her lips quivering. "But I was supposed to be your mate. Now you've brought her here to Laiocan when everyone knows I should be the one by your side. It's one thing if she were making an effort, but it's obvious she holds

everyone in disdain. I wonder if she even lets you touch her. I bet she doesn't satisfy you like I can, like I have," she sobbed.

"Get out. There's much we need to discuss, in private," Talh said quietly enough, but the underlying menace in his voice spoke volumes.

Nika's eyes narrowed. "You mark my words. She won't last."

Bayoh grabbed the angry woman by the tail, the ultimate sign of disrespect in their culture, and dragged her to the door, pushing her out none too gently. "The bitch," he hissed when he closed the door. "What did I ever see in her?" he asked, self-disgust dripping from his voice.

"She was a willing body and beautiful, but she's poison," Roar sighed.

"Do you believe what she said about Trina?" Talh asked.

Roar shrugged. "I don't know, but I'm damn sure going to find out."

* * *

"Reyo, I don't know how to thank you." Trina smiled, standing up. He stood up with her.

"You don't have to thank me. Just seeing how you handle your leadership role is thanks enough."

Trina felt overwhelmed all of a sudden. She never considered herself an overly emotional person, but it was good to be able to talk to someone and not be looked down on. She threw her arms around his neck and burst into tears. He held her tightly against him, rocking her body back and forth.

She wished Roar, Bayoh, and Talh's arms were around her, but they were so distant lately. Nothing was going as she thought it would.

Suddenly the door of the hut slammed open.

"Get your hands off our woman now!" Roar stormed through the door breathing fire, Bayoh and Talh following closely behind. They all had murderous looks on their faces.

Trina jumped away from Reyo, feeling guilty although she'd done absolutely nothing wrong.

“Trina, get over here!” Bayoh thundered, not waiting for her to comply before walking over to her and pulling her to his side. “As for you, Reyo, we’ll allow you to choose the way you wish to die.”

“No!” Trina shouted.

Chapter Five

Trina could imagine what it must have looked like when they'd entered the hut, but how could hugging someone warrant death? She jerked herself out of Bayoh's tight grip. "This isn't what it looks like," she protested, knowing how clichéd it sounded, but it was the first thing out of her mouth.

"Stand aside, Trina. We'll deal with you later," Roar said through clenched teeth.

"No, listen to me, please. We didn't do anything wrong. I only came over here to talk."

"It looks like you were doing more than talking from where we stood," Bayoh said, his eyes shooting daggers in Reyo's direction. Trina turned to Reyo and wondered why he was silent. Why wasn't he defending himself or her?

There was an unreadable expression in his eyes. "Reyo, say something," she demanded.

Reyo shrugged. "What would you have me say? They'll believe what they want, although we both know the truth in the matter."

"I don't understand why you're just standing there and taking it. Maybe it's another one of your customs, but I for one will not be maligned." She faced her angry mates, placing her hands on her hips. "We were only talking. I came here because --"

"That's enough. I said we'll deal with you later," Roar yelled, his face turning bright red.

"I'm not a child to be dealt with. I --"

In one swift movement, Bayoh lifted her bodily and threw her over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. The shock sent the breath whooshing from her lungs. She was so surprised she couldn't speak. He marched out of the hut. When she wiggled to break free, he brought his palm down on her behind with one hard swat.

That stopped her. As Bayoh marched down the road through the village, Trina felt several pairs of eyes on her. Her face burned with shame. How could they humiliate her like this? They didn't even let her speak.

Bayoh didn't put her down until he dumped her unceremoniously onto their bed. He looked so angry and she didn't know where to begin, but she had to convince him of her innocence.

"Please listen to me, Bayoh. I've done nothing wrong. I went over to Reyo's because he's the only one who's been nice to me since I've been here. In case you haven't noticed, your people hate me and I've tried. I've really tried." She pleaded her case, fighting the tears that threatened to spill. His lips tightened and he folded his arms across his chest. "Please say something."

When he spoke, his voice chilled her to the core. "What would you like me to say? Your actions speak louder than any words you could possibly utter." He sounded so cold. Trina preferred his anger to this.

"I'm telling the truth, dammit! Why are you treating me like this? You humiliated me in front of the entire village. You promised you'd never hurt me! Why?"

A muscle twitched on the side of his face as if he were grinding his teeth together. "Trina, you've been here for a month now and despite your protests to the contrary, we've seen no evidence that you've made an effort to fit in. If you walk around with your head held any higher, you're likely to stumble over your feet."

She gasped at the unfairness of his statement. "But you said I'm the Alpha fem. I have to show everyone who's in charge or they'll never respect me, at least that's what..." She was about to tell him what Reyo had told her, but decided that mentioning his name wouldn't be a good idea.

"What were you about to say?"

"Never mind. The thing is, in any relationship there has to be trust and it's quite obvious you don't trust me."

"Should we trust you when we find you in the arms of another male? I'll tell you what; you tell me exactly what you and Reyo talked about and I just may be inclined to believe you."

This conversation was starting to wear on her nerves. "If you trusted me, you wouldn't have to ask. I already told you he's just a friendly person to talk to. Real trust doesn't mean I have to explain my every action to you."

"If you don't want to be fodder for the gossipmongers, you will. Trina, do you realize what you've done by visiting his hut without one of us?"

She rolled her eyes. "Obviously I don't."

"Any mated female who is proven to be unfaithful to her Triad can be banished. There were many witnesses who saw you go into Reyo's hut."

"But nothing happened!"

"I want to believe you, Trina." The message was clear.

"But you obviously don't."

He looked away from her. "We'll discuss it later. I'm going back to Reyo's to deal with him. Would it be too much to ask that you stay here until we return?"

She nodded in agreement, not trusting herself to speak. She was either going to burst into tears or curse him out. For a moment he seemed to relent. Walking over to sit on the bed next to her, Bayoh grasped her chin between his fingers, forcing her to meet his eyes.

"I don't want things to be like this between us. Whatever the problem is, I believe we can work things out. The feelings we have for you and you for us are still there. I know they are."

He leaned over, pressing his lips against hers. His anger and coldness had not penetrated her defenses, but his tenderness did. Tears fell down her cheeks. She felt like a perpetual water pot.

Bayoh pulled her into his arms. "Don't cry, Trina," he soothed, rubbing her hair. This only made her cry harder.

"Then why are you treating me like this? I don't think I can take anymore. I believed you three wouldn't hurt me, so why is my heart breaking?" And it was true. She'd thought Tim's betrayal was the worst thing that happened to her in a relationship, but she was wrong. Her hurt was threefold, because she'd believed their words, thought they'd always be there for her, and now she felt rejected.

Trina wondered how something that had started out so right could have turned out this way. It wasn't that she'd left anyone special back at home. She'd been taking care of herself since the age of seventeen, had no attachments, and had quit her job before traveling to Chimera, but still, she'd given up everything she was familiar with to come here.

"I hope you're not suggesting that you want to leave us because we won't let you go."

She looked up into his aqua eyes. Even though her heart ached right now, her love for Bayoh and the others still burned. "Didn't you say I could be banished for what I've done?"

"You could be, if we wish it. Some of our people may call for it, but it's not something we can't handle."

Trina didn't know what to say to that. In one breath Bayoh spoke of banishment, yet in another he talked of not letting her go. It was no wonder she was in a state of confusion. She turned away.

"Trina, please try to understand our point of view."

What exactly was there to say? What it all boiled down to was that she was failing miserably in her role as the Alpha fem and had to toe the line. She stretched out on the bed, shutting her eyes against the light and him. Lying still, she waited until she heard him leave to move again.

The more she thought about it, the more something didn't feel right. Why had Reyo kept quiet? He didn't seem like the type to allow someone to decide his fate, yet he'd let Roar, Bayoh, and Talh rip into her and him. If she did nothing else, Trina planned to get to the bottom of this.

* * *

Roar was only seconds away from tearing a chunk from Reyo's hide. The dark-haired warrior stared back at Talh and him with a knowing smirk on his face. "What's there to tell, Alphas? You saw with your own eyes what was going on."

Roar didn't want to believe him, but why had he been holding Trina? Why else would she be alone with him in his hut? Instinct told him that Trina wouldn't do this to them, but her behavior of the past month coupled with what they'd walked in on left him unsure.

"Reyo, do you understand that you could be put to death for what you've done? She's the Alpha fem. You're just a citizen of this village," Talh said quietly.

Roar recognized that voice and realized his companion was close to his breaking point. Reyo obviously didn't because he continued on arrogantly. "Doesn't my status as a warrior put me above being a mere citizen? It did before." He tossed his long dark hair over his shoulder with a smirk.

Talh shook his head. "Correction. You were a warrior. Now I don't want you serving beneath me. I need to be able to trust my men. Time and time again you've let me down, but this is the final straw."

The smirk fell from Reyo's lips to be replaced by a look of astonishment. "You can't be serious!"

Talh marched over to him, standing nose to nose with the defiant man. "I've never been more serious in my life. You'd like to think that being a warrior places you above our laws, but it doesn't. How soon you forget that you were spared from the same fate as the rest of your Triad. The three of you challenged us, tried to raise the people against us and gave me this scar, yet I defended your right to stay among us because you claimed the other two were responsible. Something we couldn't refute with them dead. It was our good grace that saved you from death." Talh paused, his eyes raking the trembling Reyo from head to toe before continuing.

"You must have also forgotten how you pleaded so eloquently for your life. Did you not pledge loyalty to us? Reaffirmed yourself in front of the entire village? Yet now you stand here in front of us with no contrition for what you've done."

"Am I to be condemned without a hearing?" Reyo asked.

"You've been given a chance to explain," Roar said, growing tired of this back and forth.

"No. You only assumed that I've done wrong, but I see I... I must tell you the truth."

"That would be nice." Roar's fists itched to slam into Reyo's face. He'd never liked him or the rest of Reyo's Triad when they were alive. It had been Talh's decision to spare the man's life, and it was one Roar was sure the redhead now regretted.

"Please, Alphas, may I speak freely?"

Roar nodded, knowing that if he spoke he'd end up saying something he shouldn't. He wondered where this contrition in Reyo suddenly came from. Reyo was about to speak when the door opened. Bayoh entered, a wary look on his face.

"How is Trina? Did she say anything?" Talh asked.

"We'll speak of it when we're alone. How do you two fare in here?"

Roar crossed his arms. "Reyo was about to tell us something."

Bayoh walked further into the hut. "Well, it seems like I've come at just the right time." He turned to Reyo, one dark brow raised. "So what were you going to say?"

Reyo bowed his head almost in a sign of defeat. "Forgive me, Alphas, for what I'm about to say, but I was only trying to protect her."

"Protect who?" Roar asked, the blood pounding in his ears.

"I feel like such a traitor for saying this." Reyo's eyes darted between the three of them but not quite meeting anyone's eyes. "Trina and I have formed a friendship. As I'm sure most of you have noticed, she hasn't really fit in with the rest of our tribe. I don't know why she singled me out, but she sought my advice. I only tried to be an ear for her to talk to and she asked me how to go about winning over the people. I explained to her that she'd need to make friends and show everyone she was receptive

to their ways. I don't think it sat well with her. I sensed a lot of anger in her. She told me they would have to accept her because she was the Alpha fem." Reyo paused to clear his throat before continuing.

"I tried to tell her she was the newcomer, not the other way around. I don't want to speak against her because I honestly believe she's not a bad person, but I think she finds us beneath her. When you came upon us, we were simply hugging because... forgive me, Alphas, but she was upset because I wouldn't fuck her. When she started to cry, I felt sorry for her. It was only a hug of comfort, I swear. Please don't be angry with her. I don't think she knows any better. She's confessed to me that she hasn't been receiving the attention she feels she deserves from the three of you." Reyo dropped to his knees, stretching his arms out in front of him in a reverent bow to show his submission to them.

Roar stood frozen, not knowing how to respond to this so-called truth. He wanted to deny that Trina would do these things, but it almost seemed to fit with the strange way she'd been acting. He turned to his companions who had the same stunned expressions on their faces.

"I think it would be best if we discussed this matter elsewhere," Talh said. He turned to Reyo. "As for you, we'll discuss your fate later. Roar, Bayoh, let's go," the redhead commanded, not waiting to see if they followed or not.

Roar turned to the other two Triad members when they were outside. "Did you believe him?"

Bayoh frowned, rubbing his chin. "Something doesn't ring true with his words, but there's something Trina said that makes me think he may be telling the truth after all."

"What did she say?" Talh asked.

"She made it a point to say that she was the Alpha fem and the people had to listen to her, or something to that effect. It sounded very arrogant on her part. I can't help but think there's some deeper issue here though. How can one person change so drastically?"

"I don't know, but I intend to find out," Roar vowed.

* * *

Nika walked into Reyo's hut unannounced. She knew he'd be here; she in fact had watched the Alpha Triad leave minutes earlier. Reyo lay naked on his fur-covered bed, his arm flung over his forehead, his eyes wide open. He didn't bother to look her way although she knew he was aware of her presence. She slowly undressed and climbed onto the bed. Sidling next to him, she grasped his cock in her hand and lowered her mouth over it. Reyo's shaft was long enough, she supposed, but it didn't have the thickness of any member of the Alpha Triad. It would do for now though.

Nika figured she wouldn't have to fuck him much longer before his usefulness ran out. Her head bobbed up and down over his cock. She closed her eyes, imagining it belonged to one of the men who should have been hers.

Reyo grabbed her head and thrust his hips up, driving his cock down her throat. She gagged, but forced herself to continue. He bucked against her mouth relentlessly, making her throat ache. Tears stung her eyes yet she still couldn't stop. She needed his complete allegiance.

He had no finesse whatsoever and she wished he would hurry up. He grunted, shooting his cum into her mouth. It tasted horrible, more so than usual, as if his diet consisted of nothing but rancid meat. She made herself swallow every drop before finally raising her head.

Nika plastered a smile on her face. "Mmm, I love doing that to you," she lied.

He smiled. "Give me some time, woman, and I'll use this rod to fuck that sweet pussy of yours."

"I can't wait." *For this to end.* "So," she said to change the subject, "is everything going according to plan?"

"Yes. I have poor Trina so confused she doesn't know which way to turn. I've given her bad advice like you said I should, and I've dropped hints about not bothering her mates unless she wanted to look incompetent. She hasn't. As a matter of fact, the Alphas now believe she's betrayed them. I told them she wanted me to fuck her."

Nika threw her head back and laughed. "Nice touch."

"Just as you said they would, our people hate her."

"They do, don't they? Of course I made sure to tell a few tales about her," she said with satisfaction. She wasn't about to let some human bitch stand in the way of what was hers.

"We'll drive that human off of our land just like we did the other one. You will, of course, honor your pledge to me, won't you? You'll remain unmated so we can continue our tryst. After all, I could lose much from our little deception. Besides, had Hehl and Megah survived, you'd be our mate anyway."

She placed a finger over his lips, not really to silence him, but to keep herself from needlessly lying. What kind of fool did he take her for? Once Trina was gone, she'd cast Reyo aside and then she'd be the Alpha fem as she was always meant to be.

Chapter Six

Trina felt an impending sense of doom, almost like a criminal waiting to be sentenced. But she'd done all that she was supposed to do, or at least what Reyo had said she should. Reyo. Surely he would clear things up. It was odd how she'd drawn close to him, especially when it was difficult for her to trust in the first place, but it was so easy when that person was the only friendly face among a bunch of hostile eyes.

She paced the floor, wondering what was happening. What was taking the men so long? She normally wasn't the type to wait around and let someone else decide her fate, but where else could she go? It was clear she'd no longer be allowed to associate with her only friend in the village. Now what?

Her head shot up when the door of her hut flew open. She turned to her mates expectantly. Trina thought they would have calmed down by now, but instead they seemed just as angry as they had before. The scary part wasn't their stormy faces, but the fact that none of them said a word.

"Did Reyo clear things up? Did he tell you what happened?" she asked, hating herself for sounding so weak.

They still didn't speak. "What's going on? Why won't you talk to me?"

It was Talh who finally stepped forward, a pinched look on his face. "Have a seat, Trina." The way he said it had alarm signals going off in her head.

"I think I'd rather stand. I don't know why you look so angry, but I would think after talking to Reyo things would be settled."

"Is this the first time you've visited his hut?"

"Yes. I've met with him several times by the lake, but today was the first day I actually went inside his home. I haven't tried to hide it. I don't understand what the big deal is."

“And as I’ve said earlier, it’s against our customs for a mated female to be alone in an unmated male’s home. Your commentary isn’t needed now. We’ll ask the questions.” Bayoh snapped the last part of his sentence, making her gasp.

She was too stunned to reply. Was this truly happening?

“Is it true that you’ve asked him for advice on the ways of our people?” Bayoh continued his questioning.

Were they so angry because her asking showed weakness? Reyo had told her it would be looked upon as that. He’d also told her he’d keep her secret safe. She supposed under the threat of death, she couldn’t exactly blame him.

“Yes, I did seek his advice.”

Bayoh’s lips tightened. “What did you think of the advice he gave?”

“I thought it was stupid, if we’re being honest here. I’m not trying to knock your people’s customs, but as Alpha fem, must I really act like that? I don’t understand how someone in a leadership position can act like that if they want people to look up to them.”

“It would behoove you not to mock our customs. Reyo did say you took issue with what he told you,” Talh said more to himself than to her. He looked disappointed. She knew with a certainty that she’d failed them.

“Did you also seek *comfort* with him?” Bayoh asked.

Trina pursed her lips. She knew exactly what he meant and she was mad as hell that they’d even think she could do that to them.

“Trina.” Roar said her name with a warning note.

“Roar,” she mocked.

“We’re trying to get your side of the story. You’re not making this any easier.”

“What do you want me to say? That I’ve been fucking Reyo? That the comfort I sought was of the sexual nature? Fine. I did. I betrayed you. Now, can you send me home?” She threw her arms up in the air in defeat.

She knew very well that she could protest her innocence until she was blue in the face, but the fact that they believed she could betray them hurt her more than any

wrong ever done to her. They looked at her as if trying to figure out whether she spoke the truth, but at this point, Trina couldn't have cared less. Screw them.

"If you're joking, it's in poor taste. You do realize the penalty for breaking trust with your Triad?" Roar asked.

"Breaking trust? *Me* breaking trust? I guess I was just following the Alpha Triad's example because you broke trust with me first. The three of you have been so busy with your duties that you forgot your duties to me. You leave me alone for most of the day. I only see you when we talk at meals or at night. You've left me to flounder on my own and you wonder why I feel the way I do? I've broken trust with you? If that's what you want to call it then go ahead. Whatever penalty I must face, it can't be worse than this hell I've already suffered."

She didn't want to cry anymore, but she couldn't help herself. She angrily wiped away a tear. Why hadn't she just left Chimera when she'd spotted these three? Then she wouldn't have experienced this piercing pain in her heart.

"I see," was all Roar could say.

"Do you? Do you really see? So what's going to happen to me now? Will you let me go?" she asked, feeling numb.

"Surely you must know that we could never do that. No, letting you go would be too difficult."

She snorted. "So I guess it's true then."

"What's true?" Bayoh asked, scratching his head.

"It's true you'll lose your Alpha status if I'm sent away."

Roar walked over to her, stopping short when she glared at him. "I suppose this was also something Reyo told you."

"I couldn't have heard it from someone else, could I?"

"It's true that once a Triad has chosen their mate, we can't choose again. That is, unless another unmated female chooses us."

Trina didn't know about that part. She saw the way some of the women looked at her mates when they walked by. Any number of them would probably be happy to

take her place. As much as she loved all three of them, Trina realized she could never truly fit in their world. Not as things stood now.

They deserved someone who wouldn't make a mess of things. Someone who knew their customs. Someone other than her. She'd given her heart and because of it, she'd left herself open to hurt. There was only one thing left to do. "Knowing that I've betrayed you, what will you do to me?" All the fight had left her. It was hard to fight when you kept getting knocked down.

"That's something we'll have to think about. In the meantime, we ask that you don't leave the hut. When we're not here guards will be posted outside to ensure you don't leave. We'll send someone to help you with the upkeep of the place and with meals," Roar said almost emotionlessly.

Her humiliation was now complete. They would hold her prisoner here. She walked over to the bed and plopped down, trying desperately to think. She stiffened when the bed dipped on either side of her. Oh, hell no. Surely they didn't expect to have sex with her after punishing her like some errant child.

Hands fell on her body, rubbing her shoulders and back, but she remained still, willing herself not to respond to their touch. She kept her head bowed, taking the route of passive resistance when the ties of her top were undone. They pushed her back on the bed and to her surprise flipped Trina on her stomach. Still she lay there unmoving even though it was becoming harder not to respond.

Hands were everywhere, her back, neck, legs, and ass. When one of the men pulled her legs apart and rubbed her suddenly moist slit, Trina bit her lip to stifle a moan. No. She couldn't let them do this to her, but already her traitorous body began to warm up.

A large palm cupped and squeezed her ass cheek, massaging the tender flesh until she couldn't help but cry out. "Please, don't do this," she whispered.

"We must. You have no idea the effect you have on us. Don't you think we hurt too -- want to find the answers you seek to deny us?" Roar groaned, leaning over to brush the side of her neck with his lips.

Bayoh and Talh ripped her skirt away before parting her pussy, exposing the inside to their gazes. Though she couldn't see their faces with her back to them, Trina could imagine the hunger within the depths of their eyes. Hadn't she seen that look of wonder mixed with lust every time they fucked her?

She buried her face in her pillow, her body shaking. "Oh, God," she moaned when two sets of fingers slammed into her entrance. She could feel the wetness seeping from her pussy, could almost hear it. Damn them for making her want them like this.

Damn them for treating her like a convenient bed warmer, and damn them for making her love them so much.

"Tell us," Roar ordered, running the tip of his tail down her spine. She knew what they wanted to hear, but she wouldn't give in so easily. Not this time. She had some pride left.

"No, I can't," she said defiantly. The titillating sensation of being finger fucked by both Bayoh and Talh at once was hotter than she wanted to admit. The soft fur at the tip of Roar's tail stroked her ass crack.

"Tell us, Trina. Tell us how much you want it," Roar prompted again.

"No," she groaned, knowing that she was swiftly losing this battle. The blond rubbed the back of her neck in slow circular motions, relaxing her muscles. He made it harder for her to resist. She turned her head to the side so he wouldn't be able to read the surrender in her eyes. "No," she repeated, although her body was screaming yes.

She managed to pull herself to her knees and buck against the fingers delving deep into her. They were driving her crazy and the added stimulation of Roar's tail running along her body was a delicious torture she couldn't withstand. A searing heat spread through her body and she threw her head back with a shout.

Roar chuckled. "You're being stubborn today, but that's okay. Your body says it all." He grabbed her head, turning it toward him until their lips met in a hungry, explorative kiss.

Her tongue shot out, joining his in a passionate duel of wills, like two warriors on a battlefield. The kiss was hot, angry, and absolutely mind shattering. Roar dug his

fingers into her hair, deepening the kiss, taking total control. It seemed as though he wanted there to be no doubt in her mind that he was in charge.

It was a message Talh and Bayoh sent to her as well. When they removed their fingers, Bayoh grabbed her hips and pushed his fat rigid cock inside of her damp channel.

He pounded into her without mercy, and she loved it. God help her whore's heart, but she loved it when they did this to her. She moved her hips back, meeting him thrust for thrust, rhythm for rhythm.

Roar released her mouth and knelt beside her, his cock jutting out in all its veiny glory. A drop of pre-cum rested on the tip and Trina didn't hesitate to open her mouth around his length. He grabbed either side of her head and gently slid his cock into her mouth.

Talh, not to be left out, ran his dick along the side of her body. He groaned as though the contact of his cock against her skin was enough to take him to completion, but she knew he waited impatiently to be inside of her as well.

In this position it was difficult to accommodate all three of them at once, but whenever they took her doggy style, the odd man out always seemed content to just touch her.

Bayoh withdrew and then stuffed her pussy with his cock over and over again until Trina didn't think her braced arms could support her any longer. He let out a loud grunt and pulled back, not spilling his seed into her, although she knew he wanted to. Often when they took turns like this, they wouldn't come until they all finished. Bayoh pulled out, moving to the side making way for Talh.

Her red-headed mate eased into her, taking his time with long deep thrusts. Trina felt like a much loved fuck doll, the way he plowed into her with a tenderness unique to him.

She tried to block out the feelings from within her heart. When this was all over, they'd go back to the way things were before and she'd be left to fend for herself. She pushed the thought from her mind, concentrating on the moment.

Roar pulled his cock out of her mouth and rubbed the tip against her cheek. "I'm going to shift, Trina, and I'm going to take you in my natural form," he informed her.

She could only moan as an indication that she'd heard him, so delicious were the sensations of Talh's cock. She didn't care how they took her at this point, as long as she got hard cock inside of her.

Trina groaned and wiggled her hips against Talh's thrusts, wanting him to give his all. "Yes!" she screamed. Damn, this felt good. She was fast approaching her peak, but he stopped just as she was about to obtain it.

"Don't stop! God, don't stop!" She wiggled her hips.

"Relax, Trina. You will have your release," Talh assured her.

Out of the corner of her eye, she witnessed Roar's body morphing into its natural form. She didn't think she'd ever get used to it, but it was fascinating. When Roar was completely transformed, she turned her head to follow his progress.

He nudged Talh aside with his head and placed large paws on her back. She collapsed under his immense weight, but fought to stay on her knees. His cock entered her wet sheath, stretching her vaginal walls to the limit.

"Oh," she sighed at the relief of excruciating fulfillment. "Roar," she moaned.

He purred in the back of his throat, thrusting with leisurely strokes. She opened her eyes to see Bayoh and Talh also transforming. The last time all three of them had done this was on Chimera. Soon, their tongues laved her body, snaking out to lick the sides of her breasts and any part of her body they could get to. This continued until she nearly reached her peak again only to have the thrusts stop.

She realized they did it on purpose. She should have been angry with their tactics, but when she felt tongues on her body and cock in her pussy, all angry thoughts flew out the window. They rotated positions, each one of them taking turns fucking and licking her.

They did this several times in fact, each time denying her an orgasm until she could no longer stand it. "Please let me come!" she begged, wishing she didn't have to be reduced to this.

You know what we want to hear, Roar's voice entered her mind.

She no longer had any shame. "I want you. I want you all so much. Please give me the release I'm dying for."

That's not all we want to hear, Talh's voice lightly scolded.

"I love you! I love you! I love you! Please," she begged.

When her orgasm finally came, it was unlike anything she'd ever felt. It wasn't a mere climax, it was an explosion. No other words could describe the experience of what happened to her. They each took turns emptying seed into her cunt, unleashing their own desires.

Trina convulsed uncontrollably, her body not quite able to handle the cataclysmic burst within. She collapsed weakly to the bed, exhausted from what she'd just experienced.

Instead of shifting back, they all rested their bodies around her in a protective ring. She was content to lay here like this with them. She did love them, but they couldn't go on with things as they were now. Her last thought before she drifted off to sleep was that she'd have to find her way off this island and leave them.

* * *

Roar didn't know what it was that woke him up, but he sensed something had changed. Bayoh and Talh lay on the bed, still resting in their natural forms, but there was no Trina. His ears pricked up as he allowed his eyes to adjust to the darkness. He quickly surveyed the hut and saw no sign of her.

He roared to wake up his companions. They lifted their heads sluggishly, obviously fighting the effects of sleep. *What is it?* Bayoh asked, shaking his mane out.

She's gone.

This bit of information made them alert. Bayoh and Talh stood up, looking around, noting what Roar had earlier. *How long do you think she's been gone?* Talh asked, jumping off the bed.

I can't be sure because I only just woke up myself.

We have to find her. We could gather a search party for her, Bayoh suggested.

Roar shook his head. *And draw more attention to Trina than necessary?*

I told you it was a bad idea to play games with her. Why didn't we just come out and tell her that we knew she hadn't done anything with Reyo? Bayoh snorted with displeasure.

Because we needed to hear her tell us what was going on. Admit it, you wanted her to open up to us as well.

Bayoh didn't immediately answer, but finally said, *Maybe so, but now that she thinks she'll be banished, she's gone. I swear if--*

Let's not fight, Talh interrupted. *We have to look for her.*

And if we don't find her? Bayoh asked.

It's a possibility I'm not willing to entertain. We will find her and never let her go even if we have to keep her tied to the bed. She belongs to us! Roar said with a determination that would not be denied.

Chapter Seven

Nika stood in front of the crowd in the gathering hall in triumph. The buzz of angry people talking filled the place. She raised her arms to silence them. "Please, everyone. I've asked the Alphas to join us and they should be here any moment now. They'll see things our way, I'm sure. Didn't I say from the beginning that the human bitch would be nothing but trouble? She looked down her nose at us as if we're dirt under her feet, as if we're the unworthy ones. She's made no effort to follow the customs of our people, and now she has worked her wiles on poor Reyo. He didn't stand a chance against her wicked ways. I say she should be banished," Nika preached with thunder in her heart.

Her plans were finally coming to fruition. Trina was public enemy number one in the eyes of the Manani people and victory would finally be hers. Of course, she'd have to figure out a way to ensure Reyo's silence. Last night when Bayoh had carried Trina bodily from Reyo's hut through the village, Nika couldn't have asked for better results.

"But what about our Alphas? They're fair and we don't wish them to step down," a man called out from the crowd.

Nika nodded, trying to look sympathetic about his concern. This was exactly what she wanted to hear. She knew that Roar, Bayoh, and Talh were a beloved Triad. Everyone in the village respected and revered them with the exception of Reyo, but that was neither here nor there.

"I don't want to see the Alphas step down either, especially because of that arrogant human. She's awful!" a woman shouted.

Nika nodded. "Yes, I understand how you feel, but perhaps there's a way to keep them in their position and get rid of the human."

"How?" someone asked.

Nika pretended to consider this before speaking. "They've already chosen a mate which means they can't choose another. But nowhere in our laws does it say that a female can't choose them. I know it's a technicality, but I think it just may work. I'm sure there are more suitable females here to take up the position as Alpha fem. Someone who knows how things are done around here," she suggested lightly.

"That would be a great idea," someone else shouted in glee.

"Well, I think it should be someone who's close to the Alphas, someone who knows them well." She cocked her head, wanting them to think she was thinking deeply over this matter.

"You should be Alpha fem, Nika," a woman suggested.

Nika gasped in mock surprise. "Me? Well, I don't know if I'd be able to handle the awesome responsibility." Her eyes darted through the crowd, seeking out Reyo's face. She had to be careful with how she handled this or he could easily ruin everything for her. His face looked pinched and Nika knew she'd have to soothe him later, but things were falling into place better than she thought they would.

Now where were the Alphas? She'd spoken to Talh earlier this morning. He'd been coming from the direction of the forest, the rest of the Triad nowhere to be seen. "What do you want, Nika?" he'd asked, looking wary.

She didn't like the way he talked to her or the way the other Alphas had spoken to her since they brought that human scum to Liocean. She tried to hide her displeasure. Once she was Alpha fem, she'd teach them a lesson.

"Where are the other Alphas?"

"Tending to business. I asked what you wanted."

"Can't I just have a talk with my Alpha without having some hidden agenda?"

"Nika, I have no time to tarry. Please state your business so that I may be on my way."

"There's nothing more important than your mate, I would think."

This got his attention. "What about her?"

"Well, people have decided to meet at sundown. It's about your mate. We can't ignore the insults she dealt to you even if the three of you are willing to do so."

Talh stiffened. "Whose idea was this meeting?"

She evaded his question by trying to change the subject. "Will you attend? Of course you'd have to bring your mate along with you to face the tribe."

"Whose idea was it?"

"Talh --"

"Whose idea?" he stormed, making her jump.

"It was a bunch of us. What does it matter anyway? She's dishonored and broken faith with your Triad. Reyo can attest to that. How do you expect any of our people to respect her after what she's done?"

Talh closed his eyes and Nika wished she knew what he was thinking. When he opened them again, whatever expression he'd tried to hide from her was gone. "We'll be at the meeting. But if I find out that you were the one who called it, there will be consequences." He walked off, leaving her alone. She'd just have to make sure Reyo took the fall for this as well.

Now she glanced impatiently at the door, waiting for them to arrive.

"Where are the Alphas?" a tribesman asked.

"Right here." Roar walked into the hall followed closely by Bayoh and Talh. They held their hands up to quiet the buzzing crowd. When they made it to the front, Roar turned to her. "Nika, you may take a seat with the rest of the people."

"But --"

"Now." Bayoh's command left no room for argument. She froze her face to prevent herself from glaring at them. How dare they treat her like this in front of everyone? Nika forced a smile to her lips. "Of course. But if I may be so bold to ask, where is your mate? Shouldn't she be here to face the allegations against her? I mean, besides being arrogant and unpleasant, I didn't think she was also a coward," she said loud enough for everyone to hear.

The crowd went into an uproar. Bayoh, Roar, and Talh looked at each other before facing their people. "Trina is missing. We'll need to round up a search party for her."

This was too good to be true. Trina was missing. Nika's heart soared. Nika felt like jumping for joy. She turned to the Alphas. "Yes, we'll search for her and bring her back to face everyone for what she's done."

"Nika, now is not the time," Roar thundered.

"This is as good a time as any, don't you think?" she challenged. "I volunteer my services." *And I'll make sure the bitch is never found.*

* * *

Roar wanted to wrap his fingers around Nika's throat and throttle her. He knew she'd been the one behind this meeting from the beginning. He also knew she wanted to be the Alpha fem, but he would gladly give up his position if it meant having to mate with her. One thing Nika didn't understand was that not all men found her irresistible, whether she wanted to believe it or not.

To wake up and find Trina missing was the worst thing that could have ever happened to them. Knowing she was out there, fending for herself, scared him, as he was sure it did the rest of his Triad. There were wild beasts that roamed the land, waiting to strike. Though they were at peace with the inhabitants of neighboring islands for now, one never knew when they'd be ambushed again.

With her missing, he knew regardless of what transpired before, they couldn't let her go. She meant the world to them. They had to find their mate. If it meant stepping down as the Alpha Triad to be with her, it was something he, Bayoh, and Talh were more than willing to do.

He only hoped they'd find her alive.

* * *

Trina's eyes fluttered open. She lay on top of furs. Something cool rested on her head. Where was she? The last thing she remembered was stealing out of their hut in

the middle of the night while the men slept. She didn't know where to go, but found herself walking until she made it to the forest.

Once there, she continued on, stumbling through it for what seemed like hours. Sharp branches tore at her skin. Exotic creatures jumped out at her. Flying bugs slammed into her face. It was an absolute nightmare but she had to find a way off this island.

When she spotted a creature that looked like a bear charging toward her, she ran, but as bad luck would have it, because she wasn't looking in front of her, Trina ran straight into a tree. It was the last thing she remembered.

A woman leaned over her. A human woman. Trina shook the hand off her forehead, sitting up. The room began to spin and her head ached. "Where am I?" she asked, clutching her head.

"Easy. You have a pretty nasty lump on your head." The woman tried to guide Trina back to a lying position, but she would have none of it.

She scooted away. "Where am I?" Trina asked again.

The woman smiled, a friendly gleam entering her hazel eyes. Trina studied the strange lady for the first time. The woman was stunning with long blonde hair and well defined features. She was a little on the thin side, but not Ally McBeal thin.

"My name is Shelby and you're in my home." The woman introduced herself with an accent Trina couldn't quite place. It sounded kind of British, but not really.

Trina looked at the crude little shack. It wasn't much bigger than a tool shed, but at least it was shelter. The name suddenly registered. "Shelby? As in the Shelby who was banished from the Manani tribe?"

"The very same." The blonde's lips twisted cynically. "You're human, or at least you don't have a tail."

"Yes. I'm human."

"I never thought they'd have another human among them after what happened to me," she sighed. "Rest up. You should rest after the trauma you've experienced."

"No, I don't think I can lie down anymore."

Shelby shrugged. "Suit yourself, although I think you should take it easy if you want to stand up."

Trina tried to mull over what Shelby's presence meant. Was this some kind of omen? "They say you're dead."

To her surprise, Shelby laughed. "They would think that, wouldn't they? Well, I've been camping since I was walking. My parents were free spirits and we traveled for the first half of my childhood. I didn't see the inside of a real school until I was thirteen. I'm a certified wilderness and survival guide. I could probably live off of the land better than most of the people in that tribe."

"How long have you been out here?"

"I'm not really sure. When one is here alone under these circumstances, time just seems to meld together. I think I've been out here for several months, but not quite a year if I've calculated correctly."

"Have you tried to get off the island?"

"Of course I have. If I could get off the godforsaken island I certainly wouldn't be here."

"How did you... I mean what happened?"

Shelby lifted one blonde brow, an amused smile on her lips. "Are you trying to ask me what led up to my being banished?"

"Yes. You're nothing like what you've been made out to be, although I've just met you so I could be wrong."

"Trust me. No one is as bad as they think I am. They've probably made me out to be the devil incarnate, right? Despite what you've heard, most of it was false. I was banished because I broke a rule that I shouldn't have, but technically the Manani people were just looking for a reason to get rid of me in the first place so that was as good an excuse as any."

"So you were unfaithful to your mates?"

"I was never unfaithful. Never!" Shelby yelled and then flushed. "I'm sorry. It's just that... so much time has gone by and it still hurts, you know?"

"So what rule did you break?"

"I went into an unmated Triad's hut, but it wasn't only to -- well, it doesn't matter. No one believed me the first time I told my story."

Trina needed to know, had to know. "I'd believe you," she said, touching Shelby's shoulder with a tentative hand of reassurance.

A smile crossed the blonde's face. "Thank you -- er... what's your name?"

"Trina."

"Thank you, Trina. You have no idea how good it is to talk to another person. I've been so lonely out here."

"You were going to tell me what happened."

"Was I?"

"Yes. Please continue."

"Okay, but I'd like to ask you a question first."

Trina paused. She supposed it was only fair. "Okay. What do you want to know?"

"What were you banished for?"

She shook her head. "I wasn't banished, at least not yet."

"Then why are you out here in the middle of these woods? Not even the hunters venture this far out."

"I ran away. They were going to banish me sooner or later, so I decided I'd rather it be sooner. I made the same mistake that you did apparently."

"The same mistake? Not likely. My mistake was coming to Laiocan and allowing those three rats to get away with what they did."

Trina furrowed her brow, not understanding Shelby's meaning. "Three rats? Tegor, Rain, and Geho?"

"No. Not them, although it burns me to think to this day that they didn't choose to believe me. No. I'm talking about Hehl, Megah, and Reyo. I knew they were up to no good, but to do what they did to me, oohh!"

"Reyo?"

"Ah. You know him, do you?"

"Well, he was my friend. Actually he was the only one who's been nice to me since I arrived on this island."

"Just Reyo? What about the other two?"

"As far as I know, they were killed. Reyo lives on his own."

Shelby gasped. "I *have* been gone for a while. Do you know what happened?"

"No one told me, but I believe Roar, Bayoh, and Talh might have done away with them from what I've gathered. No one really talks about it, or at least not to me."

"Son of a bitch. They must have gone ahead with their plot. You'd think that would have vindicated me, but from what you say I'm still just as hated as ever. They did a thorough job maligning me -- the bastards. If you count Reyo as one of your friends, watch your back. The man would stab his own mother in the back with a smile on his face. He obviously has an agenda if he wanted to befriend you."

"What do you mean?"

Shelby sighed, taking a seat next to her. "I suppose I should probably tell you my story. I received a letter in the mail stating that I'd won an all expenses paid vacation --"

"To Chimera? Yes. I got one of those too."

Shelby nodded. "At first I thought it was too good to be true, but when the letter came, my spirits were kind of low. My kid sister had just gotten married and I was feeling a little down that I'm the last in my family to get married. I have four brothers, two sisters, and I'm smack in the middle. I'm not one of those women who needs a man in my life to validate my existence, but do you have any idea how depressing it is on the holidays and attending family functions to be the only one without a spouse or children?"

"Not really. I've been on my own for a long time now. At least you have a family. I have no one."

Shelby blushed. "I'm sorry. I guess that sounds selfish."

Trina shrugged. "It's no big deal. I can understand what it's like being the odd man out."

Shelby smiled. "Thank you, Trina. Now where was I? Oh, yes. I booked my trip to Chimera and not only did I meet one hunk, but three, and they all wanted me. I was like a kid in a candy store. I couldn't believe it. I was more than happy to have a fling with them, but feelings got involved. By the time my vacation was to end, none of us could be parted. I agreed to come to Lαιοcean with them."

"Did you tell your family?"

"I wrote them before I left Chimera, but I haven't seen them since. My mates promised that I'd be allowed to visit them often, but --" Tears sprang to her hazel eyes and Trina threw her arms around Shelby.

"It's okay. Take your time." Trina was glad it wasn't her breaking down for a change.

"I do miss them and they probably think I'm dead or something."

"You said they were free spirits. Maybe they just think you're off enjoying yourself somewhere."

Shelby sniffed. "I hope so, but it's been so long. Anyway, let me finish my story." She paused as if to get a hold of herself before continuing. "Tegor, Rain, and Geho are next in the line of succession."

"The what?"

"In the Manani culture, you have Alphas, and in case something happens to them, they have sub-Alphas to take their place, and then the beta Alphas after them -- Reyo's Triad. My mates were the sub-Alphas."

"I'm not following you."

"You will. Just hear me out for a moment. Reyo's Triad has been a greedy ambitious lot from the beginning. My mates were their friends, but I could never quite warm up to them. One day I stumbled upon Reyo's Triad and they were talking about a plot to overthrow the Alphas. Reyo was definitely the ringleader. They discovered me eavesdropping. I ran to my mates to tell them what I'd heard, but they couldn't believe that of their friends. Besides, I was the newcomer, and for all their ambitions the betas were seen as upstanding. It was very frustrating."

"That really sucks."

"Tell me about it. Anyway, that's when the betas' smear campaign began. People who'd been friendly to me before turned against me. My mates grew distant. I guess I didn't handle things as well as I should have and lashed out at the wrong people, including my mates. When I got tired of the isolation and the accusations, I stormed into the betas' hut to confront them. That was a big mistake because I'd broken custom by doing that. All along they were looking for a way to overthrow the Alphas and discredit the sub-Alphas so they could take over. No one believed me when I tried to denounce them, and as a result they said I tried to seduce them. They spread all kinds of nasty lies."

"And people believed them?" Trina asked incredulously.

"Of course people did, especially when they recruited this bitch named Nika. Everyone thought the sun rose and set on her. I don't really know what her motive was, but she never liked me and had made things uneasy for me from the very beginning. I think she doesn't like humans in general. Either that or she hated me because I didn't kiss her ass like the rest of the villagers do. She's probably the Alpha fem now -- the bitch," Shelby snorted.

"No, she's not. I am."

Shelby's eyes widened in apparent disbelief. "The Alphas chose you for a mate? Forgive me, that didn't come out right. What I meant was, everyone was sure they'd choose Nika. I would have loved to have seen the look on that cow's face when you were introduced. I bet it was priceless. Now it's your turn. How did you come to be out here? I'm guessing you met them on Chimera and they brought you back here. Tell me what happened after that."

It was difficult for Trina to relay her story without wanting to cry, so she told the story slowly and emotionlessly. Shelby sat watching her with unblinking hazel eyes, not commenting until Trina finished. "That son of a bitch is up to his old tricks, it seems. I wonder what his motive is now that the rest of his Triad is dead. You've been duped, doll face." Shelby gave her a sympathetic look.

"I'm beginning to suspect that I was. But why?"

"I don't know, but now that you've had a chance to think clearly, surely common sense would tell you that he gave you bad advice."

"At the time I was so desperate for a little human kindness I didn't examine what he told me too deeply, but I still can't figure out what he'd possibly have to gain by doing what he did."

"I don't know either, but I know he hates the Alphas. Even though he can't rule without a Triad, he probably wanted to see them step down and did it by trying to get rid of you. I wouldn't be surprised if our girl Nika was involved. What I don't understand is why the hell you didn't tell your mates what you just told me."

The question cut through Trina like a knife. Why didn't she tell them? She didn't want them to think her incompetent. She'd wanted so badly to please them and do the right thing that she was scared of admitting what was going on. She didn't want to look like a failure in their eyes. She'd been scared to admit her insecurities to them. It all boiled down to trust. They'd asked her to trust them, but she never completely did. "Oh, God! I've been an idiot. I never told them because I was such a fool. I've been hurt so many times that my heart has never truly been open. I've done them a disservice." She dropped her head into her hands.

Shelby pulled Trina into her embrace. "It's okay. We're both fools. I didn't fight hard enough for my men either. I could have tried harder to make them believe me, but when the rumors started to fly and I didn't feel I had their support, I turned my back on them, Trina. From what I know of the Alphas, they're honorable men. I'm sure if you were to go back and plead your case, they'd listen. You can't let Reyo win."

"But they were going to keep me a prisoner in my own house. I couldn't endure that humiliation."

"I'm sure it was the frustration talking. Once they've calmed down they'll see the truth. I don't think they're unreasonable men."

"Maybe not, but --"

Shelby interrupted. "Do you love them?"

"Of course I do."

"Then you have to fight. Don't make the same mistake I did. I let those bastards do that to me. I should have fought harder than that or said to hell with them. Go back, Trina. Fight," Shelby egged her on.

Could she really let Reyo and Nika win? Hell no! She sprung to her feet, feeling a fire raging inside that she hadn't in a long time. "Get up, Shelby. We're leaving."

"I can't go with you. I've been banished. Going back could mean my death."

"I'm the Alpha fem and I won't let anyone touch you. Now get up. We're going to go fight for our men."

Chapter Eight

Roar turned away from another female offering them sympathy. He gritted his teeth, wishing this ordeal was over and they could be with Trina, wherever she was. They'd searched throughout the night, coming back to the village at sunrise to rest.

He looked over at Bayoh and Talh. Both men wore a dejected expression on their faces. Where could she be? A chill raced down his spine when he thought of all the things that could possibly happen to Trina alone. She'd spent a whole night out there.

Roar knew the participants weren't happy to search for Trina considering all that had transpired, but he appreciated their efforts nonetheless. "What do you think we should do now?"

Bayoh sighed, kicking the dust under his heel. "We'll just have to keep looking, of course. We said there would be another search when everyone has sufficiently rested."

"If one more person comes to offer their false sympathy, I think I'll scream," Roar said, looking up at the sky. It looked like it would rain soon. He hated that Trina was out there with no shelter. What if she'd done something drastic like try to swim away? That would be the height of folly because she wouldn't make it.

"I for one don't feel like standing around talking. I think we should go look some more. Besides, I couldn't possibly rest knowing she's out there," Talh added.

"Nor could I," Roar agreed. "Should we split up?"

"Yes, I think that would probably be the best course of action. I only wish..." Bayoh broke off, an upset expression on his face.

Roar didn't have to hear the rest of the sentence to know what his friend was thinking because he felt it too. "You don't have to say it. I feel the same way. We should

have stayed by her side and made things easier for her. Even when she tried to push us away, we should have fought harder. I curse myself for our role in this."

Talh nodded. "If we find her and we have to choose between remaining the Alphas or her, I choose Trina."

"As do I," Bayoh nodded in agreement.

Roar also agreed. "I think we all feel that way. Well, let's go."

"Alphas, where are you going? Surely you're not about to go out again in this weather. You should be seeking shelter now. A storm is on its way." Nika sauntered over to them, coming out of nowhere.

Roar groaned inwardly. She was an absolute nightmare, popping up whenever she wasn't wanted. "Nika, we don't need to explain ourselves to you."

She pouted, sidling next to him, her breasts intentionally rubbing his arm. He knew exactly what she was trying to do and it was by no means exciting him. The more he interacted with her, the more disgusted he became. By the look on Bayoh and Talh's faces, they were experiencing a similar emotion.

"You know, Alphas, you shouldn't talk to me like this, especially since I'm going to be your next mate."

Roar's eyes narrowed at her audacity. Nika had hinted several times about her desire to mate with them, but she'd never come right out and said it before. Had she no shame? He closed his eyes to block her face, hoping that when he opened them she'd be gone.

No. She was still there. Cursed woman. "Nika, I don't know how many times we have to tell you that we're not interested in mating with you, never have been and will never be."

She smiled coyly, running her finger down the middle of his chest. Roar felt the bile rise in his throat. He looked at his friends for assistance.

"Nika, don't you have other things to attend to?" Bayoh asked.

"What's more important than me offering comfort to my mates? You should be thanking me for being willing to save you from your folly," she said with an easy smile on her face.

What was wrong with this woman? Was she not right in the head? "Nika, did you not hear what I said earlier? We don't want you!" Roar said none too gently.

She laughed. "Of course you do. You're just trying to do the honorable thing by standing up for Trina, but you don't have to anymore. I know the truth."

"And what's the truth, Nika?" Talh asked incredulously.

"That your Trina is dead." She looked at their faces. Seeming satisfied with their reactions, she continued. "Oh, don't be shocked. Surely you didn't think that little bitch would last out in the forest for very long, did you? Now that she's gone, you're released from the rules. You can take me as your mate as it was always meant to be."

Roar grabbed Nika by the forearm. "You little liar!" He shook her with all his might, making her teeth rattle.

"Stop it, Alphas! Stop hurting me!" she screamed.

Bayoh grabbed Roar, pulling him off of the now hysterical woman. "The bitch isn't worth it."

Nika stepped back, a crazed look in her eyes. "I'm a bitch, am I? So this is the way it's going to be? Reyo's Triad should have killed you when they had a chance!"

"What the hell do you mean?" Bayoh thundered.

Nika's eyes narrowed. "Do you think I owe you anything now? You three will never be Alphas again when I'm through with you. I will see you banished!"

The blonde was indeed insane. Why had no one ever noticed this before? Her quest to get what she wanted had driven her absolutely mad. How could he be angry with someone who was touched? "Nika, please calm down. We can talk about this," Roar tried to reason with her.

"Talk about it? There's nothing to talk about. You've made your choice, and now you're going to pay for it. You won't be Alphas for much longer, and when the new Alphas take your place, I'll mate with them and we'll destroy you!" she hissed.

"So that's what it's been all about, hasn't it? You claimed you cared so much for us, but you never did. You just wanted the power," Bayoh whispered, shaking his head in amazement.

"I was meant to be Alpha fem, and you won't stop me."

"And how do you propose to get rid of us? Who'll believe you over us?" Talk asked.

"They'll believe me. You three have already let our people down by bringing that whore to Laiocan. They'll think you no longer care for them, especially when they see what you've done to me," she sneered.

Roar sighed. "We've done nothing to you, Nika, and you know it."

"But you have. You know it's against our laws for men to strike a woman. You'll be banished for what you've done, maybe even killed. I'll enjoy watching you all die!"

To Roar's astonishment, she grabbed a chunk of her hair and pulled it out of her scalp. She let out a blood curdling scream. "No, Alphas. Please don't hurt me!" She smacked herself so hard he knew she'd leave a mark. That's when he knew what she was trying to do.

"You bitch!" Roar grabbed one arm and Bayoh the other to stop her from hurting herself further, but he knew the damage was done. Already he could hear footsteps approaching, probably people investigating the scream.

"No, Alphas! Please don't hurt me! I only meant to help. Please don't hurt me!" she screamed, a maniacal gleam in her eyes. If he weren't seeing this with his own eyes, Roar would never have believed it.

"Alphas, what's going on here?"

Roar looked up to see a crowd gathering around them.

"They're beating me because I spoke up against the human. Please, someone help me. The Alphas have gone mad." Nika burst into tears, giving a performance like none other.

"She's lying. She did this to herself," Bayoh yelled.

Nika wasn't ready to let go of her charade. "Why would I do something like this to myself? Please, won't someone help me?"

"Let her go, Alphas. She's just a harmless woman." Moyre, a tall tow-headed warrior, stepped forward.

"She's lost control of her emotions and started to inflict injury on herself. We're only trying to restrain her," Talh said.

The crowd looked doubtful, and Roar realized exactly how it looked. If they truly believed that they'd done this to Nika, then he wished that he had hit her, but no. That wouldn't solve anything.

Roar looked over at Bayoh with a nod and they let her go. She immediately ran into the arms of the warrior who'd stood up to them.

The crowd stared at them accusingly. Roar didn't know what pure evil was until he looked into Nika's eyes. How were they going to get out of this when the evidence was overwhelming?

"We didn't strike her," Roar began.

"No, they didn't. I did!" someone called.

The stunned crowd parted to reveal Trina stepping forward with Shelby Morgenson, the first human brought to the village. The crowd gasped in astonishment. "They didn't strike her, I did. They were only trying to protect me," she declared to the crowd, her head held high.

Roar, Bayoh, and Talh rushed over to her, but she held her hand up. "Let me handle this," she said, and then turned to look at the crowd. "I've brought Shelby back, for the same reason I've come back -- to clear our good names. And if anyone says one word, they're going to get the same thing Nika got!"

* * *

Trina trembled on the inside. She couldn't believe what they'd stumbled upon. Coming up to her hut, she and Shelby had witnessed Nika's hysterics. The woman was a true nut. Trina had only seen people like that on television. She didn't want to interrupt the scene because she wanted to see what Nika's next move would be.

When the bitch started hurting herself, Trina was about to step forward, but Shelby held her back because the crowd was starting to gather. She couldn't be restrained, however, when the psychotic woman lied about the Alpha Triad hurting her.

"She's lying! The Alphas did this to me!" Nika screamed, pulling herself out of the warrior's arms.

Trina had had enough of the nut and walked over to her calmly. Without a word, she slammed her fist into Nika's jaw, sending the woman to the ground. She then turned to the crowd. "Do you need any further proof? This woman is very troubled. Why else would she accuse the Alphas of doing her harm when it was clearly I who'd done it?"

"You should be banished!" a woman called from the crowd.

"And you should shut the hell up!" Trina yelled.

Stunned gasps rippled through the crowd and Trina realized she'd made a mistake. She hadn't come back to start an argument, but she also didn't come here expecting to see crazy Nika trying to pull a con job on her mates. She took a deep breath and turned to the woman she'd just yelled at. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have yelled at you like that."

The woman looked surprised, but merely grunted in response.

"I'm not the bad person Nika and Reyo have made me out to be and neither is Shelby. She's a good person who loved her mates. She was never unfaithful to them just as I've never been unfaithful to my mates. I love them very much and would never do anything to betray their trust in me." She looked behind her and saw Roar, Bayoh, and Talh's faces. She wanted to run to them and beg forgiveness -- tell them how much she loved them -- but knew she had to handle the issue at hand first.

Reyo stepped forward. "Then why did you try to seduce me?"

"You lying sack of shit! You know that isn't true. You're not going to get away with ruining me like you did with Shelby." Trina turned to the crowd. "How is it

possible that any of you believe a word this man says after he and his Triad tried to overthrow the Alphas? Do you honestly think he's as innocent as he appears?"

Reyo smirked. "This human would say anything to save herself. And how dare she bring *that* woman back among us!" He pointed at Shelby.

Shelby glared at him. "This woman has a name, you bastard."

Trina shook her head at her new friend. "Let me handle this." Reyo's smug expression wouldn't last after what she had to say. She turned to him with a smile of her own. "You never did get over the fact that your little coup didn't work. Your Triad wasn't strong enough to overthrow the Alphas. Now in your own twisted search for revenge, you're trying to force them to step down because it's eating you up inside, isn't it?"

Reyo laughed. "You're being ridiculous."

Trina raised a brow. "Am I?" He was going to be a tough nut to crack but she knew she was getting to him by the way his jaw clenched. Thank God for those psychology classes she took in college.

"I think you should stop talking before you get yourself into more trouble, human," Reyo sneered.

"Reyo, how dare you speak to her like that," Roar's voice sliced through the air.

"Please let me take care of this." Trina shot him a pleading look. She needed to do this on her own. Her mates wore grim expressions on their faces, but remained where they were.

Reyo used this as an excuse to turn the crowd against them. "Do you see how she talks to the Alphas? They let her disrespect them and they beat a revered female. What kind of leaders are they?"

Trina's impatience with him snapped. "They are wonderful leaders who care about their people." She faced the crowd. "Can any of you honestly say anything bad about the Alphas? Have they done or said anything for anyone to believe they could do what they've been accused of? If someone can step forward and say so, then do it now."

Murmurs rippled through the crowd. "I didn't think so," she said triumphantly before letting Reyo have it. "As for you, Reyo, it's time for you to admit that you and your Triad would never have been the leaders because the Alphas are stronger, smarter, and much better liked by their people. When Shelby overheard your plot to overthrow the Alphas, you started spreading lies about her -- you and Nika."

"Liar! You dirty human bitch!" Nika sprang to her feet, and with claws out, charged toward Trina.

She was ready for the blonde, however, blocking her arm and using Nika's weight against her to perform a standard throw Trina had learned in self-defense class.

Nika went flying with a scream.

Trina wasn't finished with Reyo yet. "You two plotted against Shelby when she'd done nothing wrong. You didn't want anyone to find out that you were the mastermind behind the plot to take down the Alphas. People actually liked Shelby until you had her banished. Admit it!"

"I admit nothing." Reyo crossed his arms against his chest, with a defiant tilt of his chin.

"You admit nothing because you are nothing, and it's killing you, isn't it? You'll never be able to beat the Alphas and you know it. That's why you tried to get rid of me -- to hurt them. But you've failed. I'm not going anywhere, and now everyone knows you're weak. You're a pathetic excuse for a man. Hell, you're not even a man." Her last taunt got the desired results.

With one swift move, Reyo backhanded her, driving her to the ground. "Shut your mouth, bitch. I'd do it again too. I would have made a great Alpha. They don't deserve to be the Alphas. I do!" His face contorted into an ugly scowl from his rage.

Before Trina could speak, Roar, Bayoh, and Talh were on the hapless Reyo, pounding their fists into him. She stood up, looking at Shelby. "Now everyone knows the truth," she said with a slight smile.

Shelby's eyes widened. "Trina, look out!" she screamed.

Trina turned around just in time to see Nika charge at her with a chunk of firewood in her hands. This time Trina didn't have a chance to duck. Pain exploded in her head before she passed out.

Chapter Nine

Trina's eyes slowly fluttered open. Her head ached like a son of a bitch. This scene was becoming all too familiar.

"She's awake." Feeling the bed dip, she slowly looked over to see Roar by her side with an anxious expression on his face. "How are you feeling?" he asked, placing his hand on her forehead.

"My head is splitting. What... what happened?" she asked, running her tongue over dry lips.

"It's over. We had to get rid of Reyo."

"You banished him?"

Roar shook his head. "It was a fight to the death."

"Oh." Trina wanted Reyo to pay for what he'd done to her and Shelby, but she didn't know if she'd wanted him dead. "And Nika? What's going to happen to her?"

"She... she's not well mentally. She'll be cared for, but will be guarded at all times so she won't ever harm anyone again."

"Good. I'm glad. What about Shelby? What will happen to her?"

"That's between Shelby and her mates. I think they have a lot of issues to work out."

"Do you think they'll be okay?" Shelby deserved happiness, especially after what she'd gone through this past year.

Roar shrugged. "I can't really say. Angry words were exchanged and feelings were hurt. A lot of time has passed so it may not be an instant reconciliation, if there is one."

"Oh no, poor Shelby. She's actually a very nice woman. Damn Reyo and his Triad for doing what they did." When Trina jerked her head forward the motion increased the pain. She placed her hand to her forehead. "Ow."

"Here, I mixed a concoction that should help." Roar offered her a cup, placing it to her lips. It tasted foul, but she drank it without protest.

"What's going to happen with Shelby? Please tell me you didn't send her away. She didn't do anything wrong --"

Roar halted her with a finger to her lips. "It's okay, Trina. She won't be sent away. Everyone knows of Reyo and Nika's treachery. Things will be different around here now. People may be a little apprehensive at first, but that will pass quickly."

Trina bit her bottom lip before asking the question that was foremost on her mind. "And what will you do to me?"

Bayoh and Talh joined them on the bed, smiling at her. "We're going to shower you with love. You scared us to death when you ran away. Don't ever do that again," Bayoh scolded.

"You... you mean you're no longer angry with me?" Her head shot up in surprise, looking at the faces of her mates.

Roar answered, "I admit that it did upset us to find you missing, but only because we feared for you out there alone. You gave us quite a scare. Trina, why didn't you tell us about the advice Reyo was giving to you?"

She felt ashamed to admit her weakness to them, but then remembered her resolve about completely opening her heart to trust. "I was scared that if you knew about what I was doing, you'd think I was weak. I wanted to prove I was a worthy leader."

Bayoh touched her shoulder, forcing her to look at him. "While we think being a good leader is important, even if you weren't, it was something we could have worked on. Our love for you isn't so fickle that we'd turn on you for the first thing that goes wrong."

"But the three of you seemed so cold to me. I didn't know what to do. It seemed like the only time you wanted to be around me was when you wanted to have sex."

Talh reached over to brush his knuckles over her cheek and then let his hand fall. "We're sorry if we ever made you feel like you couldn't come to us. I guess we're at fault for not properly explaining how time consuming it is to be the Alphas around here. Yes, there is power in the position, but with power comes responsibility. If we had known the people were disrespecting you in any way, it would have been put to an end right away."

"But I didn't want to complain," she protested.

"And because you didn't, it made you unhappy," Roar pointed out.

Trina sighed. "You're right. I should have come to you with my problems, but Reyo was so convincing. He made me believe that you'd think less of me. It's all my fault because I should have trusted enough in our love to know you wouldn't think badly of me."

"And we should have been more accessible to you," Talh said.

"I was a little hurt that you'd believe Reyo's lies at first. You wanted to keep me a prisoner in the hut and I guess that made me angry," Trina explained.

Bayoh nodded. "Believe us, we were angry for having to do it, but it wasn't because we believed Reyo's lies. We were just hurt that you wouldn't tell us what was going on. We suspected that all wasn't right with Reyo when he tried to befriend you so soon after he decried you at the first meeting. It was a little suspicious."

"You threatened to have me banished," she accused, unable to forget that incident.

Roar pulled her into his arms and ran his hand down her back. "It was said out of hurt. It seems like there have been a lot of misunderstandings between us since we came back to Lαιοcean. You should have been more honest with us and told us what was going on, and we could have worked it out. And we shouldn't have let our jealousy get in the way. You mentioned trust, but it goes both ways. Strength doesn't mean not

being able to admit you have a problem. It means being strong enough to recognize when you have a problem." He paused to kiss her on the head.

"Trina, we love you, and nothing's going to change that. You are our world and mean more to us than anything." He kissed her tenderly again, this time on the lips.

Tears sprang to her eyes as she turned to Bayoh and Talh who each gave her sweet kisses. Her heart filled with love for them and she felt free for the first time. Not only did she love them, she trusted them.

Trina knew now that whatever happened from here on out, she could always turn to them whenever she had a problem. Her head felt a lot better. She smiled. "Since we're all in bed, let's put it to good use."

Roar grinned. "I think that sounds like the best idea all day, but are you sure you'll be okay?"

She nodded. "Of course. I'm tougher than I look."

"Don't we know it," Bayoh laughed.

The three men surrounded her, each of them running their hands over her body. Instant arousal assailed her senses. Her nipples tightened and pussy tingled. She wanted them now, all at once.

As though he'd read her mind, Talh pulled her into his arms and began to rain kisses on her face and neck, while untying her top. Hands roamed up and down her back. She tore at his pants, wanting to feel his nakedness against her.

Roar, who'd made short order of undressing himself, slid behind her, his cock pressing against her rear, demanding entrance. She gasped in anticipation, wanting him inside of her more than anything else.

Trina pulled Talh's pants down his thighs, revealing his thick turgid cock. It was beautiful and it was all hers. She wanted to taste it. Talh scooted backwards, so she could tug his pants down his legs. Once they were tossed aside, he lay on his back, aqua eyes filled with lust.

Trina bent over, pushing her hips in the air, Roar's hardness still pressing against her. Encircling Talh's cock in her hand, she engulfed the head with her mouth, laving it

with her tongue. His fingers dug through her hair. "Oh, Trina, that feels so good," Talh moaned, bucking his hips forward, pushing his member deeper inside her mouth.

Her head bobbed up and down his length, as she savored his unique masculine flavor. It gave her as much pleasure, tasting him like this, as it gave Talh to be pleased. Wetness formed at the juncture of her thighs. Trina was ready to be deliciously filled by Roar's cock. Instead of pulling her skirt down her hips, he ripped the material away from her body.

She moaned when Roar gently parted her labia with his sturdy fingers before sliding his hard rod deep within her channel. If her mouth weren't full, she'd have let him know how good it felt to be wonderfully stretched by his thick length.

Bayoh, not to be ignored, scooted forward to run his hands over her exposed skin. He then lowered his hand to cup a breast in his callused palm. The stimulation sent a shockwave of pleasure up and down her spine. He squeezed and molded the mound, making her shake. Bayoh tweaked her taut nipple, rolling it between his fingers and thumb. Trina didn't know how much more her body could take before she exploded.

She was so hot and excited, her knees could barely hold her steady. Roar's fingers dug into her hips while he thrust into her with slow, sure strokes. "Your pussy is so tight," he groaned.

Trina lifted her head off Talh's cock. "And you feel wonderful inside of me," she sighed with a feeling of complete contentment. Sometimes it was nice to be ravaged and fucked until they took her breath away, but times like now, when they handled her gently, she thought her heart would burst with love.

She whimpered when Roar slowly pulled out of her, but her emptiness was short lived. He slid his wet cock against the crack of her ass and pressed it against her anus. He leaned forward and rubbed his fingers against her sopping wet pussy before rubbing the moisture around her tight asshole.

"Don't tease me. Please stick it in," she begged him.

Roar chuckled. "It would be rather selfish of me if I didn't share some of that sweet pussy with Bayoh and Talh."

She smiled. He had a point, and there was no sensation like being deliciously filled by all three of them at once. Trina lifted her head to look at Talh, who lay back on the bed, his hand stroking his cock. She wanted him inside of her. Now. "How about sticking that beautiful dick of yours inside of me," she beckoned to the redhead.

A smile tilted Talh's lips. "With pleasure," he said, pulling her forward as he sat up. With Roar's help, Talh lifted her until her wet cunt rested over his cock.

When the redhead's long thick shaft slid into her dampness, Trina thought she'd lose her mind with pleasure. "Oh, my dear Lord, that feels good," she sighed.

"My sentiments exactly," Talh groaned.

When she was seated firmly on Talh's cock, Roar pushed them forward, positioning himself behind her. The velvet smooth tip of Roar's cock pierced her ass, sliding slowly forward. Trina relaxed her sphincter muscles, allowing him to go as deeply as he could possibly go. She cried out in pleasure with every inch he slid into her. "Oh, Roar."

"I love your tight pussy and ass. Your body was made just for us," Roar replied on a groan.

Talh's and Roar's cocks inside of her weren't enough. She wanted Bayoh as well, needed him. Trina turned her head to see Bayoh, thick cock jutting forward, looking at her with an intensely lustful look. "Come here," she said.

Without hesitation, he moved toward her on his knees until his dick was mere inches from her face. She opened her mouth and he slid his cock between her lips. Trina eagerly sucked his hard shaft. She could taste a hint of his pre-cum dripping from the tip. "Mmm," she moaned around him.

Bayoh buried his fingers in her hair, guiding her. "I love you, Trina," he whispered. Their eyes locked and her heart swelled with love for this beautiful man. She never thought it was possible to love someone so much, let alone three men.

Roar, Bayoh, and Talh moved together, to the collective rhythm of their beating hearts, thrusting in and out of her hungry holes. Beads of sweat popped out over her body. Hot. The fire within burned so hot she thought it would consume her. The flames of desire licked every single nerve ending in her body.

Stroke after exquisite stroke drove her to a mind-shattering peak. She pulled her head away from Bayoh's cock and screamed, "I'm coming!"

Roar and Talh continued to grind into her pussy and ass, while Trina shook uncontrollably. Bayoh rubbed his cock against her skin, groaning with pleasure. Each man moved against her and within her until they too reached their peaks.

Their seed shot into and onto her body. When they finished, Trina collapsed on top of Talh's solid body. He wrapped corded arms around her, and turned her until they lay on their sides. Roar settled himself behind her, while Bayoh rested his weight on her legs.

Nothing ever felt so right. "I love you, Roar, Bayoh, and Talh," she sighed with contentment. For the first time since leaving Chimera, Trina felt like she was home.

The End

Eve Vaughn

Eve Vaughn has enjoyed creating characters and making up stories from an early age. As a child she was always getting into mischief, so when she lost her television privileges (which was often), writing was her outlet.

Her stories have gotten quite a bit spicier since then!

Eve likes to read, bake, make crafts, travel, and spend time with her family. She lives in the Philadelphia area with her husband and pet turtle. She loves to hear from her fans, so feel free to contact her at EveVaughn10@aol.com or join her yahoo group at www.evevaughnsbooks-subscribe@yahoogroups.com