



# THE SEXSHIFTERS

BOOK 2

D. J. MANLY

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## CHAPTER ONE

Cameron and Shane walked undetected among the inhabitants of Gender X. Shane held Cameron's arm tightly and they waited on the movable sidewalks to be taken to the speed train. Both their heads were covered by hooded jackets, the fashionable kind everyone was wearing now days, but it wasn't necessary. No one could tell what they were from looking at them. They looked liked everyone else.

They had come back home again to look for the others, the ones who had been spared the vaccinations at birth, kept secretly as sex slaves by the elite male dominators of the planet. There was a time when very few knew about the existence of the others. Now, to the surprise of Cameron and Shane, that had all changed. The commoners on the street spoke of them, spoke of the ones the so-called 'aliens' hadn't got to.

In truth, there had never been any aliens of course. Gender X was totally populated by a race of sex shifters once, but a group of them decided

they wanted control, so they developed a vaccine to stop people from shifting, and blamed it on a group of aliens who never existed. Severe brainwashing taught the damaged children how to observe severe gender scripts, and preached the evils of same-sex love, which carried a death sentence, and ensured that everyone kept their place. But those in control couldn't resist allowing a few of their kind to escape the so- called 'cure,' so they could be used by them exclusively for their own sexual entertainment.

"That club down in Mid-Village has them," a man who lived in the neighbourhood where Shane and Cameron were housed, told them earlier that day. "Master Rufus rents them by the hour and..."

"Who's Master Rufus?" Cameron had asked, trying to hide her horror.

"You don't know Master Rufus? He has a permit from the Government to keep those things for entertainment purposes. You can rent them by the hour, and they're legal. A man can have sex with them in any form he wants, and still not be breaking the law."

"Where does this eh...Master Rufus get the shifters from?" Shane persisted.

"The government has their own hunter," the man replied, "a ruthless son of a bitch called Caden Wolff. He rounds them up, like freaks in the circus, and brings them to Rufus. Gets paid by

the head. Guess the aliens didn't get 'em all back in the old days."

The 'old days' would have been not more than one hundred years ago, in the day of Shane's and Cameron's grandparents. They were part of a small group of scientists who had revolted against the plan to vaccinate their race against shifting. Their children had grown up in seclusion, far away from Gender X, as had their grandchildren. All the while, they had been hunted, and now three generations later, they were still fugitives. Little had changed, except now the government could no longer hide the fact that some shifters had survived.

Gender X was a sad place to them as they looked at the people around them. They were completely oblivious to who they once were. To them, shifters were nothing more than freaks in a circus, at least that's what that man had called them.

After that conversation, Shane had looked at Cameron and said, "I think I want to leave now."

"But we haven't found the sex slaves yet, and we have an idea where they are now," Cameron said.

Shane sighed. "This is a dark and dangerous place. Even if we find shifters in that club, how are we going to get them out of there? They are all implanted with detection devices on top of that.

They'd find us in a heartbeat. And this hunter...this...Caden Wolff..."

"Don't worry," Cameron had replied, "we'll be careful, and while we're here, we could..."

"We can't do it here, right on Gender X!" Shane was horrified. "We could get reported, caught...and..."

Cameron gave him a slow smile. "If we could educate people, let them know how they've been duped, how those shifters who wanted to dominate the planet made up a lie about the aliens, then they'd revolt and..."

"Get a grip, honey," Shane sneered. "You're talking about starting a revolution? We'd be executed. And there is no guarantee that anyone would believe us."

"We can change things one person at a time, Shane."

\* \* \* \*

As Cameron climbed onto the flying train which would take them into a far seedier part of Mid-village, the commercialised center of Gender X; she looked around at all the sad faces. Didn't they owe these people something? Shouldn't they try and give back what was stolen from them?

It was ironic really. As much as the elite tried to deny their own natures, they still secretly yearned

to indulge in it. Some babies, those found to be especially beautiful, were spared the vaccine, secretly hidden away, and kept as sex slaves. Cameron and Shane had been searching for these slaves. They knew that maybe they'd never find the ones who had hidden away in private households, generations of them, but now there were shifters right out in plain view, in this Club.

While they were looking for the slaves, Cameron knew that Shane feared she would not be able to resist saving another poor brainwashed soul from a life of sexual depravity. This time, Shane had made her promise that she wouldn't go on one of her "missions" as he called it.

"It's too close to home, Cameron," he'd said. "It was one thing with Tavish on that island. The chances of being detected were low, but here, on Gender X, we could get reported in a heartbeat if we make a wrong move. We have to be extra careful."

He was right of course, and so far, Cameron had kept her mind on finding the others...so far.

\* \* \* \*

It was dusk when Shane and Cameron stepped off the train in Mid-village, following the tip from the conversation they'd gotten from that man earlier on.

"He said that it was a private club," Cameron reminded, as she walked along the grimy streets, lifting the hood over her blond hair. "Do you think the shifters belong to private owners who are farming them out to this club...you know, when they are not using them for their own pleasure, they're making money off of them?"

"Perhaps," Shane pointed out. "They might be runaways or prostitutes pretending to be sex shifters, you know...inoculated ones."

"I've thought of that." Cameron nodded, scurrying along the once movable sidewalk which had now broken down. "...would be tough to carry off though."

Shane nodded, looking around him. They were surrounded by rundown buildings, derelicts and losers, those who had completely lost hope or maybe realised that they'd been lied to all these years. It would be difficult to accept that it wasn't aliens who had come to strip them of their true natures; it was their own kind who had done it to them. They had been robbed, neutered like a bunch of animals.

"There's no joy here," Shane said, tripping on Cameron's heels.

Cameron kept moving.

"So, do we know where we're going?" He demanded, stepping over an intoxicated soul on the sidewalk.



"Yes," she said. "I remember the directions. It has to be right around this corner."

"And how do we get into this place once we find it? Maybe you have to have a membership."

"We'll worry about that when the time comes," Cameron said.

\* \* \* \*

Hart sat in the small cell, his face in his hands. He was trying not to move, listening for any small sound. At any moment he expected Master Rufus to come in with his henchmen and have him carried off somewhere. He wondered where they put defective shifters. Was there a special graveyard for them, or just a big dump?

Hart stood up finally, and paced the cell. He was trying to remember the moment when he could no longer shift. He knew it had begun shortly after Caden had brought him here. *Caden*. God, even thinking about him, he could hardly breathe. Caden Wolff. His very name struck fear in the hearts of shifters, but ever since that night when he had touched him...Hart had remained in his male form. It didn't matter what Rufus did to him. He could beat him to the bone, but as hard as Hart tried, he couldn't shift to his female form.

"You're useless," Rufus had screamed at him last night, throwing the whip he had in his hand

on the floor. "No man will be able to use you. You're not worth breaking the law for. You're just not that beautiful. Shift or I'll put you out of your misery."

Death. He didn't mind that so much. His life had been misery. The only thing he could think of now was that maybe he'd never get to see Caden again before the end. He swallowed, thinking about what Robin had told him today as she tried to disinfect some of the lacerations Rufus had put on his back with the whip. "I know why you can't shift," she told him.

"Why?" Hart said frantically. "Help me, Robin. What's wrong with me?"

"It's because you're in love."

Hart blinked. "What?" He had pushed her gentle hands away from his back and sat up.

"Caden Wolff," she whispered. "You love him. I've seen the way you look at him. What happened between you the other night?"

Hart blushed. "Well...he..."

"He made love to you. We all knew it was going to happen sooner or later. He looks at you the same way."

Hart met her eyes. "Does he? Do you really think so?"

"Wolff's true desire lies with men, but he hides it like all the men who come here, because it's against the law. You can't shift because you love

him, and you know it is your male form he desires. Until Wolff confesses his feelings for you, you will remain in the form he lusts for."

"That's ridiculous." He had stood up. "First, Caden had no feelings for me. As far as that goes, sometimes I doubt that he has any feelings at all, and secondly...well I forgot what comes second."

Robin had smiled sadly at him. She came close and smoothed back his fair hair. "Beautiful angel, Hart. I'm sorry. On top of all this sorrow we must bear, you have gone and involved your heart too, and for that unfeeling son of a bitch, Caden Wolff. He may be one of the most gorgeous men I have even seen, but I swear he is without a doubt, also one of the coldest...cold as ice."

Hart said nothing.

"Night after night," she said, shaking her head, walking away. "We must endure this night after night."

"Is it so bad?" Hart came and sat beside her, taking her hand. "They were cruel to you where you were before."

"Yes, but at least it was only one beast I had to pleasure."

They had held onto one another for a long time after that, until he had been taken away from the dungeon where all of them were imprisoned, and brought to this isolated cell.

Now he could hear the noise from the club. It

was starting to fill up. Soon Rufus would parade the shifters across the stage, taking bids. He sighed, almost anxious to hear Rufus' voice describing each of them in turn, for at least then he'd know that he had a little more time. *Caden, please, come see me one more time before the end.*

\* \* \* \*

"You can't go in," Shane told Cameron.

"Why not?"

"It says men only." He pointed at the sign.

"So, I can easily take care of that."

"No. You can't," Shane lowered his voice, "not here. It's too dangerous. We said we wouldn't on Gender X. There's a gastronomy shop across the street. Go have one of those berry things you like."

"Don't try and placate me with berry pastries, Shane." Cameron's eyes blazed. "I'm coming in there..." She paused suddenly as Shane's eyes moved to the left, indicating that someone was close by.

A man stopped in front of them. He looked at Shane. "Little woman giving you trouble?"

Cameron rolled his eyes.

"Send her home," he said. "Get home, woman. This is no place for you. Let your husband have some fun. Try something sexy, and maybe he won't need to go out so often."

"Thanks," Shane said, inwardly wincing, aware of what must be going through Cameron's head. "See you in there."

The man nodded, and walked on to the door.

Cameron opened her mouth, but Shane stepped forward and pressed his mouth against hers in a passionate kiss.

"What did you do that for?" she asked, trying to hide a grin.

"To shut you up before you say what I know you want to. Now, go on to the shop. Let me try and get in there. I don't see any sign saying 'Private.'"

"Shane, it would be so easy for me to..."

"We agreed we wouldn't do any...you know...on Gender X. There are spies everywhere."

"Okay." She sighed in frustration. "Go on, but you'll tell me everything."

"I promise," Shane said, giving Cameron a little shove.

She gave him a backwards glance, then walked in the direction of the shop.

\* \* \* \*

Cameron entered the little shop and ordered coffee. She resisted the berry pastry out of pure stubbornness. It wasn't Shane's fault she couldn't

go in there with him, but she was still pissed off. She knew they had agreed that whatever form they took when they came to Gender X would remain constant until they left. They couldn't risk shifting. Still, it would have been so easy to change forms and go in there with Shane. They had also decided to appear as a male/female couple while they were here. Given the extreme homophobia, they couldn't risk being remotely affectionate in public as two men, or two women; and it would be so easy to forget and slip up. It felt strange not to shift, like it must seem for the vaccinated ones to have to remain consistently in one shell.

She sat in the window, looking over at the exclusive all male club which might be filled with shifters. She sighed deeply... frustrated, anxious. She would have felt better if Shane hadn't gone in there alone. She knew he'd be careful, but still. She drained her coffee cup, and waited, wondering if there were actually authentic shifters inside those walls.

\* \* \* \*

The Club was a noisy den of iniquity. It was filled with smoke and loud mutated men waiting anxiously to get a look at the 'merchandise.' Shane felt heavy hearted as he moved up to the bar,

which was centered in front of a stage with a dirty canvas floor. Above him were flashing screens with a variety of pornographic images featuring shifters with their mutated clients. To the left of the stage was a caged-in wicket with a bespectacled man placing counted unit cards into neat piles. Was that the one they called Rufus? He wondered. He didn't look like much. But then again, he was a sex broker, selling the flesh of unwilling shifters, so what did he expect?

He ordered a drink, feeling a little uneasy about being without Cameron, on his own in this crowd. There was no reason to be paranoid he thought, as he ordered a glass of Machismo, a popular Gender X drink. After all, it wasn't as if anyone here could possibly know. He had no chip implanted in his skin, but still the hairs on the back of his neck were standing up.

As he sipped his drink, he turned around and scanned the room. There were small groups of men talking quietly together, and there were the louder, more enthusiastic types who yelled out vulgarities at the obscene images on the screens all around them. Then suddenly a certain hush fell over the room. Shane narrowed his eyes curiously as he watched the small gathering of men melt away and make room. He heard someone say, "It's him, it's Wolff."

When the man appeared, Shane took a sharp

intake of breath. He walked with determination in the direction of the bar and Shane quickly turned his back. *The Hunter*.

Suddenly he felt someone's arm brush his. A deep voice said to the bartender, "Gin."

Shane risked another look at him now. Tall, broad shouldered, wearing a long black leather coat which flapped open around him and high black boots. His hair was as black as his coat, and hung like a shiny shroud over his shoulders. He wore a large hat which dipped down below one eye. It looked somewhat battered, the brim worn almost silver through the material.

"Is there a reason you're studying me, stranger?"

Shane's eyes widened a bit. Startled, he realised the man was speaking to him. Shane was forced to meet his eyes, eyes which were large, and also black as coal. He somehow found the strength to speak. "I...ah...don't we know one another?"

"I don't believe so," he replied. The right side of the hunter's mouth lifted in what could be interpreted as a smile. Shane felt his heart, which was thudding fearfully in his chest at the moment, suddenly do flip flops. Gorgeous. Caden Wolff was drop dead gorgeous, and something about his male aloofness was extremely sexually alluring.

"Ah, I thought we had," Shane said. "You look familiar."



"Where would we have met, Mr. ah...?"

He was superbly handsome. And if the body under that long coat was as hard and muscular as Shane was imagining it to be, Caden Wolff was to die for. Too bad he was a rotten piece of shifter hunter shit.

"Call me Shane. Ah, I think it was a long time ago. I might have given you some information about an escaped shifter."

"That's possible," he said, eyeing him over his raised glass with those eyes. "I talk to a lot of people in my line. Are you government?"

"Not anymore. I'm just visiting actually."

"Ahh," he drawled, "and how do you like this shit hole?"

Shane raised an eyebrow. "It's interesting. I was told this was the place to come if you're looking for fun."

"Depends on what kind of fun," Caden Wolff replied, meeting his eyes. He drained his glass.

"Well...is it true you can rent a shape shifter here...one that changes sex?"

"Yep." He looked around the room, then back at him.

"I'm a sceptic I'm afraid." Shane laughed lightly. "There are a lot of impostors."

"These are the genuine article." He motioned to the bartender.

"Are you certain, because...?" Shane let the

question hang in the air as he allowed himself the luxury of running his eyes over him. Oh God, yes, Caden Wolff was almost too intoxicating to look at. What a pity.

Wolff took the glass of liquor the bartender shoved across at him. He slugged it back then placed it down on the bar. "Take it from me," he said, throwing him a look. "I know."

With that, he strolled away from the bar, passed the little wicket where the men stood counting and disappeared.

\* \* \* \*

Shane craned his neck to see where he'd gotten to, when suddenly a voice boomed through the room.

"Are we ready, boys? Are we ready to see the beautiful shifting flesh...the ones who can fulfill your every depravity, your every sinful desire...all is permitted...all is legal...place your bids at the wicket for each numbered shifter. One full hour alone in a luxury room, and if you don't win the beauty of your choice, you can try again in an hour's time. Now, first up, our beautiful Robin!"

Shane turned his head around to the stage as the men in the room crowded round. A rotund, middle aged man walked out on stage, leading a beautiful blond woman by a chain which was

attached to a collar around her neck. She was completely naked. He pushed her forward, yanking hard on the chain. Her head wrenched backwards, and her body jutted out, giving the leering spectators a clear view of her naked breasts.

“A beautiful woman, but wait...” he called out, “do I see,” he yanked the chain again, and the woman began to change right there, “a studly man?”

The crowd cheered, and shouted obscenities. Shane sucked in some breath. Was this the real thing? Could it actually be...a real shifter? If it was a trick, it was a clever one.

“How much do you bid on this...the lovely Robin...who can satisfy your every desire? Hop over to the window, and place those bids now.”

Shane watched as the line formed. He turned back around and the man had taken the one he called Robin off the stage.

In the course of the next hour, the vile little fat man called Rufus brought out several other shifters, all, from what Shane could see, authentic. During that time, Caden Wolff returned to the bar. He stood away from Shane now, leaning against the wall in the corner, his hat down over his eyes. He looked bored, disinterested in what was happening around him.

Shane stood frozen to the spot. He was in shock

really, watching the men come and go, seeing the shifters treated like pieces of meat...like animals. It made him sadder than he could ever say. He didn't know how he was going to tell Cameron all this.

After a little while, his eyes went to that little wicket. He wanted to know what lay beyond, where Caden Wolff had disappeared to earlier. Is that where they kept them, in some room beyond that wicket? He could wander over there, and if anything was said, he'd say he was looking for the bathroom. He cast another look at Caden Wolff. Immediately, Wolff raised his glass to him. Shane found that unnerving. If he was afraid of anything at the moment, it was of that man in the corner.

As the crowd began to move again toward the wicket to bid on yet another poor shifter, Shane began to shuffle along with them, blending into the mob, easing his way in the direction he wanted to go. When he arrived near the booth, he casually moved out of the crowd and glanced at the entrance, which was directly behind it. There was no door, just a long, dimly lit hallway, but that hallway led somewhere, and it was compelling.

Cameron would have warned him not to go, told him it was too risky, but she wasn't here now...so... If he got stopped, he could come up with a million excuses. He pushed on, rounding

another corner, which took him into complete darkness. *Shit*. He would have turned around if he hadn't heard what he thought sounded like someone crying.

"Hello?" Shane said softly. "Is there...where are you?" He felt along the wall with his hand, almost stumbling. There was absolute silence. "I'm looking for a bathroom," he said. "Do you know where...?"

"Who are you?" a voice whispered suddenly in the darkness. It was soft, but definitely male.

"Shane. I'm Shane. Who are you? Where are you?" His hand encountered a bulky piece of metal suddenly. He felt it. It was a chain, and a padlock.

"I'm here," the voice said, and suddenly Shane found himself looking through a small barred window. The moonlight streamed through another window in back of the young man, who was now peering out at him with light iridescent eyes. Shane could make out his fair hair.

"What are you doing in there?" Shane whispered, glancing around him. "Are you a shifter? Do they keep you all like this?"

"No, not all of us. I'm slated for elimination...I...I think."

"Elimination? You mean, they're going to kill you? What for?"

"I can't shift anymore."

"I don't understand. Were you vaccinated?"

He shook his head. "It's a long story. Who are you?"

"I'm Shane," he said. "I've been looking for shifters."

"Why?"

"I can't tell you now. Someone could be listening. Let me try and get you out of here." Shane looked around him. "I have to find something to break the lock then..."

"You can't. Caden is out there. I heard him talking to someone a while ago. He won't let you take me." He lowered his head.

Shane wasn't listening. "To hell with Caden Wolff. I'm going to get you out of here. Just wait, I'll be back."

Shane raced down the dark hallway, and turned the corner. He made his way through the club, and out the front door. There had to be something he could use to break the lock. He practically crawled into the first garbage dumpster he saw, rummaging like a hobo in the night. He finally found what might have been a piece of broken pipe. He slipped it into his jacket and walked back into the club again. All eyes were focussed on the stage as Master Rufus paraded another shifter around.

This time, Shane didn't wait for the crowd to move, he hurried back down the hallway and to

the cell. "I'm back," he said softly.

"If Caden catches you, or any of Rufus's thugs...why are you...?"

"Shush," Shane said, slipping the pipe through the lock and twisting.

The lock broke on one twist, and Shane hastily took it off and opened the door. "Come on," he said, surprised when the young man inside the cell hesitated. "Come on," Shane urged, motioning with his hand. "Let's get out of here."

"I...what do you want with me?"

"I want to help you, set you free. What's your name?" Shane held out his hand.

"Hart."

"Hart, I'm like you...I'm a shifter." He knew it was dangerous to say that aloud, but he had no choice.

Hart gasped, meeting his eyes.

"What's another way out of here? Do you know?"

"That way, come on," Hart said, running out in front of him.

Shane followed on his heels through the darkened hallway, then down some stairs. They raced down yet another hallway, and at the end of it, stopped in front of a huge door. Hart pushed on it. "It's locked," he groaned.

"It's just stuck," Shane said, beginning to push on it. "Help me. We'll get it opened."

"No," a deep voice behind them said suddenly.  
"Hart's right. It's locked."

Shane and Hart turned around to see the tall man with the big, black hat standing in front of them, his legs slightly apart.

"Caden," Hart breathed.

"Where you going, Hart?" he asked, his deep voice steady and calm.

"I...well...Rufus is going to..."

Shane sucked in some breath. "Look, Mr. Wolff. I can pay you, I..."

"What do you want with him?"

"I want to give him his freedom," Shane said.

"You want your own private shifter?" Wolff replied, his deep voice smooth, matter a fact. "I'm afraid I can't let you do that. Come on, Hart," he held out his hand, "let me take you back upstairs."

"Rufus is going to kill me, Caden," Hart cowered away from him. "I don't want to die."

"Nonsense," Wolff said. He reached out and grabbed Hart's arm, pulling him forward. As he did, Hart's shirt fell half off his shoulders, revealing the marks on his back. For a moment, Caden Wolff froze. A change came over his face. "What happened to your back?"

"Rufus was angry," Hart whimpered. "I can't shift anymore, Caden, and..."

"You see," Shane growled. "You, and this Rufus! You're animals! Slave traders. Let me take



him. They'll kill him anyway. He won't make money for anyone anymore. He can't shift. Come on, Wolff, show some compassion."

Shane noted the way Hart was looking at Wolff now. There was no fear in his eyes. "I'll go with Caden," Hart said, looking at Shane. "It's okay. Thanks for trying to..."

Caden Wolff narrowed his eyes suddenly. He studied Shane for a second. "Push the button under the bar," he instructed gruffly. "The door will open."

"I'm not leaving without him," Shane replied, looking at Hart.

Caden shoved Hart at him suddenly. "In that case, I guess you better take him with you then," he said dispassionately.

"Caden!" Hart cried, as Shane pressed the button under the bar, and grabbed the young shifter by the arm.

Caden Wolff turned and walked off down the hallway without so much as a backward glance.

\* \* \* \*

Hart wanted to run when they got outside but Shane grabbed his arm and slowed him down. "Don't," Shane cautioned him with his eyes, looking around him as they came out of the alley. He released his arm, then, arranged his tattered

shirt up over his shoulder. "Don't get too close to me, and don't do anything to make yourself look anxious. Stop looking over your shoulder," Shane told him as they walked at a measured pace toward the shop where Cameron was waiting.

When they got within a few feet of the shop, Shane told him to wait outside. Quickly he walked inside, and said in a loud voice, "Woman, I'm ready to leave."

Cameron stood up, frowning at him, and followed him out the door. "Shane," she said once she got out the door, "what happened?"

"Not here," Shane said, glancing at Hart. "Let's go home."

Cameron looked from Shane to Hart, nodding.

\* \* \* \*

They said little on the way home. Each of them lost in their own thoughts. As soon as Cameron unlocked the door of their small hovel, ushering first Hart, then Cameron through the door, Cameron, who was practically bursting with questions, began her bombardment.

"Wait," Shane said, "before we can do anything, Hart, where is your chip?"

Hart glanced at Shane. "In my neck."

"We have to take it out."

Cameron put a hand to her mouth. "But Shane,

we don't know anything about those things. Maybe they can't be removed."

"I know some shifters who tried to dig them out themselves and..." Hart stopped, his eyes looked fearful. "Some are wired to the heart."

"Meaning?" Cameron insisted.

"If they are disconnected, you die."

"Sit down on the sofa," Shane said, tipping Hart's head back and probing his neck with his fingers. "When you say some...you mean, not all?"

"Yes," he replied. "It was up to the master. Some were more compassionate I suppose, didn't wish death to the shifter if they managed to get rid of the tracking device."

"Ah, there it is," Shane said, looking at Cameron, who had come over to inspect. "See it?"

Cameron nodded.

"Hart," Shane said, still gently probing, "meet Cameron."

"Hi," he said.

"Hello." She smiled at him.

"You're both shifters? But how?" Hart met Cameron's eyes.

"Our grandparents were scientists, part of the original group of shifters who wanted to take control of Gender X. When they discovered what the others were up to, they defected to another planet. Shane and I are the third generation. Many

of the original shifters who defected were hunted down and killed, including my grandparents, but my parents survived. Without tracking devices, no one knew who we were."

"What are you doing back here?"

"Trying to help," Shane said, sighing as he backed away from Hart. He looked at Cameron. "It's risky, but it's even riskier not to remove it. As soon as Rufus knows that Hart is gone, he will report it, and that device in his neck will lead them straight to us."

Cameron sunk down in the chair.

Shane looked at Hart.

Hart nodded. "Do it."

\* \* \* \*

The devise was the size of a small pebble. When Shane made the incision and located it with his finger, he was relieved to see that it had been planted far closer to the surface than he'd originally thought.

Hart made not a sound through it all, but he kept his eyes closed.

"Is it attached to anything?" Cameron asked anxiously, standing by with disinfectant and a bandage.

"Doesn't seem to be," Shane said, capturing it with a pair a tweezers and lifting it out. "Quick,

give me that glass of water." Submerging the tracker in water would instantly kill the signal.

Both Cameron and Shane sighed with relief as they watched the bloody device sink to the bottom of the glass.

Cameron instantly started to cleanse Hart's wound. "You can open your eyes now," she told him gently. "Are you alright?"

"I feel a little woozy, but I'm okay."

Shane threw himself into a chair and closed his eyes.

After Hart's wound had been bandaged and Shane got everyone a drink, they sat together in the living room. "Okay," Cameron said. "I want to know everything." She looked at Shane. "How many were there?"

"Too many to count. Hart can tell you more."

Cameron looked at Hart. "Are they authentic shifters?"

Hart nodded. "Yes." He made a face as he took a sip from his glass. "What is this?"

"Whiskey. Haven't you ever had....?"

"No," he said, shaking his head.

"Well then, take it easy. It's strong. Okay, how many?" Cameron insisted.

"It changes. Last time I counted, there were seventeen."

"My God," Cameron said. "All rounded up by that hunter?"

Hart nodded. "Yes, Caden brings in most of them but I think there are a few that were sold by their masters, but most are runaways."

"You call him Caden," Shane said.

"That's his name," Hart replied, making a face as he took another swallow of the whiskey.

"Tell me about him."

Cameron gave Shane a curious look.

There was silence.

"Hart?" Shane insisted. "He let you go. Why?"

"Well, probably because like you said, I'm not really worth anything anymore and..."

"Why aren't you worth anything?" Cameron asked.

"I can't shift."

She laughed. "Don't be ridiculous. You haven't been neutered."

"I can't shift." He shook his head. "Rufus was going to kill me."

"I've never heard of a shifter that can't shift," Cameron replied.

"I found Hart in a prison cell," Shane said. "He told me that."

"And this hunter caught you?" Cameron was horrified.

"Yes, but he let us go," Shane said, meeting Hart's eyes.

"Why?" Cameron insisted.

Shane held Hart's eyes. "That's what I'd like to

know. Hart?"

Hart put the drink down. "I love him," he said suddenly.

Cameron just about fell through the floor. "You what?"

"I love him," Hart said again, without hesitation.

"He's a ...a...piece of ..."

"No, he's not," Hart protested.

"He hunts shifters. He..." Cameron accused.

"Yes, I know."

"And still you love him?"

"It's not his fault," Hart said.

Shane sat listening quietly.

"Everyone is responsible for their actions," Cameron cried. "How can you...?"

"Cameron," Shane said sharply, "let him finish."

Cameron stood up. "I can't believe you." She glared at him, and then stalked off into the other room.

"Don't worry about Cameron," Shane said. "She'll come around. It's a lot for her to digest right now, a lot for both of us, but she wasn't there. She didn't see the way you looked at him, or the way his face changed when he saw those marks on your back. I want you to tell me, Hart, tell me about the first time you met Caden Wolff."

\* \* \* \*

Hart managed to get the rest of that foul liquid down. It relaxed him, eased the pain in his neck, but unfortunately it didn't do much for the aching in his heart. As he began to talk, everything around him slipped away and he was transported back in time.

He had been Randolph Bane's only sexual surrogate. He had been raised in the Manor in separate quarters, where he was fed and cared for by a kindly old woman named Damath. Although Randolph's family knew about him, no one was ever permitted to see him, except for Randolph himself. Later, he discovered it was easier for the family to deny he existed if he was invisible. He lived mostly in the night, allowed out to roam the grounds when the Banes were fast asleep in their beds. In the daytime, he would watch children playing outside on the grass from his high towered window, longing to join them.

Shifting was something which felt very natural to him, and he shifted back and forth at will, sometimes doing it for the entertainment of the old woman who seemed to delight in it. But it was a long time before he realised that he was the only one who could shift. For many years, he just assumed that everyone could do it, even the children outside.



On his seventeenth birthday, Damath gave him a book. It was filled with erotic imagery. She seemed almost embarrassed when she told him to study it. He remembered not being sure of what to make of it all. It made him laugh, all the bizarre positions naked women and men got into.

Then a few nights later, Randolph came to him. Hart would never forget what he said. He looked at him in a very strange way, and said, "Hart, I've waited many years for this. You will now begin to serve your destiny. The very reason you exist is so that you can satisfy my every sexual desire."

For almost four years, Hart lived only to please his master. Randolph would visit him most every night and tell him exactly what he wanted. Sometimes he wanted male flesh, and other times, female. Hart became so in tune with Randolph's sexual needs, he could change to whichever sex he desired even before the old man vocalized it.

During that time, Damath continued to bring his food. Sometimes Randolph brought him music and books on painting and art. He lived in his own little universe, apart from the world as a whole, and he was content, because he knew nothing else.

Then suddenly, Randolph Bane died, and the old woman came to him in the night, frantic. "You have to get out of here, Hart. Run away," she told him. "Mr. Bane is dead and the family is talking

about doing away with you."

"Doing away?" He blinked. "What do you mean by, do away?"

"Kill you," she whispered, her eyes wide with horror. "Take what you can. I'll help you get away. Hurry. You must go now."

So he ran, although he had no idea where he would run to. He had never been out from behind the walls of the manor. He was scared and alone, everything a new adventure, a frightening undertaking. He sought refuge, a place where he could hide again; hide from a world he didn't know how to cope with.

He ended up going into retreat, huddled in an abandoned building in the toughest part of Mid-village, eating out of garbage cans. "I didn't dare speak to anyone," he told Shane. "I was so scared of everyone, everything. That's where I was when he found me. One night, he came."

"Go on," Shane said, his eyes filled with compassion.

It was cold and he was huddled under some old blankets he'd found in the dump a few days before. When he heard the noise, he thought it was rats. The place was filled with them, and they terrified him. He sat up straight, and peered around him in the obscurity. The light from the full moon streaked across the dusty floor suddenly, and then he saw a pair of black boots.

Hart raised his eyes slowly, and caught a glimpse of that face. From the moment he saw it, he was in love, even though he wasn't sure what love was.

"Get on your feet, Shifter," the voice said, holding out his hand. "Don't make any trouble, and I won't hurt you."

"Who are you?" Hart asked him.

"My name is Caden Wolff. I'm a hunter. Come on, I'm going to take you where you'll be safe."

Hart reached up and took his hand. The man pulled him easily to his feet in one smooth effort. "What do you hunt?" Hart asked, literally falling into those serious black eyes.

"You. I hunt you."

Hart froze. "You mean to...eat?"

"No. I'm not going to eat you." Caden Wolff laughed softly.

His laughter sounded like music, so rich, so deep. He'd never met a man of that age before, so virile, so masculine. Randolph had been in his sixties before he'd laid a hand on him. Suddenly, Hart was aroused. "That's a relief," he said, putting a hand to his chest.

Caden Wolff seemed to relax for a minute. His mouth lifted at the corners in a semblance of a smile.

"Where are you taking me?" Hart asked him. "I'll go anywhere with you."

He lifted an eyebrow. "Really? Is that so?"

"Yes, it's so, but only if you'll kiss me." Hart's eyes focussed on Caden Wolff's mouth. He had been so naïve back then. He had known nothing about the world, and nothing about men like Caden Wolff.

Caden Wolff actually took a step backwards. "Don't be ridiculous," he grunted. "I have no intention of kissing you."

"Why not? You might like it. Randolph liked it."

"Randolph Bane?"

"Yes, my master, but he's dead. Now his family wants to get rid of me. That's why I had to leave." He searched Caden's face. "You're beautiful," he told him.

Caden Wolff's eyes widened a little. He cleared his throat and pulled the brim of his hat down a bit over his eyes. "Don't be ridiculous," he muttered again.

"You find me ridiculous? It's the second time you told me that... 'don't be ridiculous.'" He laughed. "I find you beautiful. There's nothing ridiculous about that. In fact," he ran his eyes over him, "I'd love to see you naked."

Caden's mouth opened a little, then, he closed it. "Okay," he said gruffly, "that's enough of that." He took his arm and pulled him across the floor with him. "Let's go."

When they got outside, there was a small

vehicle parked at the curb. Caden pulled him forward and threw the door open on the passenger side. The seat was equipped with straps and manacles. "Get in," he gave him a push.

Hart looked up at him with a mix of fear and curiosity. When Caden strapped him in, he felt his body shifting. He did that when he was uncertain, but he didn't complete the transformation. As Caden Wolff drove on through the night, Hart felt the shift coming again, and then finally, it was complete.

Caden looked surprised for a moment when he saw the young woman sitting there next to him, then he returned his attention to the driving. "Why did you shift just now?" he asked, his eyes on the road.

"I don't know," Hart said with a shrug. "I do that when I'm nervous."

"There's nothing to be nervous about," Caden Wolff told him. "I'm sure you didn't enjoy living in that rat infested hole, did you?"

"Not especially. And you didn't need to strap me in here because I don't intend to go anywhere. I'm sure I'm going to enjoy having you as a master because you're so young and..."

"Whoa," he shook his head, casting a glance at him as he pulled the vehicle up to the curb. "I'm not going to be your master."

Hart glanced over at Shane now, who sat there

spellbound by the story. "I didn't understand what was going on then," he told him. "I didn't understand anything. You see, having a master was all I knew. I had been Randolph Bane's sex slave from the moment he thought I was old enough to be, and now I thought I was to be Caden Wolff's. And from the first moment I saw him, I wanted to be anything he needed."

Shane reached over and touched his shoulder. "What happened then?"

Hart took a breath and closed his eyes. He remembered Caden opening the door, his hands touching him as he undid the restraints. Before he had him completely out of those straps, he had shifted again back to male form. He just felt more comfortable as a male when Caden was that close to him, although at the time, he didn't know why that was.

Caden put his hand on his arm. "Come on," he urged, steering him around to the back of a building. He pressed some code in the door and it opened. Down a hallway and up a flight of stairs they went. Hart felt as if his feet weren't even touching the ground they were going so fast. His heart was beating hard in his chest. *Where was he taking him? To his bedroom?*

When they entered a large dining room, Hart's eyes lit on the feast spread out on a huge wooden table. His eyes widened and his stomach began to

growl. He couldn't remember the last time he'd eaten, at least not anything which looked and smelt that good.

Caden Wolff tightened his hold on him suddenly. A little fat man sat gnawing on a chicken leg at the head of the long table. He barely looked up when Caden spoke; his deep voice booming across the room. "I found him."

"Good," he said. "I'll call the guards. Is it real?"

"Yes. It's real."

Hart blinked up at him, trying to see his face under that hat. "Caden?"

"Shut up," he snapped, his eyes on the fat man. "Just wait a minute, Rufus. I know the family is paying you a handsome sum to hold onto this one. They don't want it to get out that old man Bane had a taste for shifters. How much, Rufus? You're not going to fuck me over on this one."

The man called Rufus smacked his lips and stood up. He ran a napkin over his lips, and waddled down to where Caden was standing, his hand securely on Hart.

"Caden," Hart said, "Who is he? Am I to have two masters?"

The man called Rufus eyed him, and chuckled. "Looks like he's taken a shine to you, Wolff."

"Never mind that," he growled. "I want my usual finder's fee and twenty percent of the sum you're getting from the family."

"I have to feed him, and..."

"You'll make a mint off of him," Caden said, running his eyes over Hart, then, returning them to Rufus. "How much? And if you lie to me, I'll know."

Rufus took a clumsy step backward. He held up his hand. "No need to get antsy, Mr. Wolff. I'm willing to negotiate. The family has offered me the tidy sum of six thousand units."

Wolff pulled Hart closer. "I'm leaving, and he's coming with me. I'll go to the family directly, and you won't make a cent."

"Now, now, don't be hasty." Rufus laughed nervously. "Did I say six thousand? Oh my, I meant six hundred thousand of course."

Hart looked from one to another. He didn't understand anything that was going on. He eyed the food. "Caden," he said, gazing up at him, "can I eat?"

"Feed him," Caden said to Rufus. "He's about to fall over."

"He'll get fed downstairs with the others," Rufus said, running his eye over him critically. "First, before any money exchanges hands, I want to see him naked, and I want to see him shift." Rufus folded his arms across his chest.

Caden released Hart's arm. "Take off your clothes," he said, meeting his eyes.

Hart looked at Rufus, then at Caden. "I'll take



off my clothes for you, because you are my new master; but not for both of you. I've never been naked in front of two men at the same time before."

Rufus chuckled. "Seems it's shy. You'll soon get over that," he growled. Then his voice got loud and ugly. "Take 'em off, Shifter, or I'll have the guards come and rip them off you."

"It's alright," Caden said softly, meeting his eyes. "Take them off. I want you to. Do it for me."

"Yes, take them off for your master," Rufus sneered.

Hart kept his eyes on Caden as he removed his shirt, then reached down and slid the pants he wore over his slim hips.

Rufus began walking around him, inspecting him with his eyes.

Caden Wolff turned away, which to Hart meant he didn't like him naked. Rufus began to poke and prod him here or there, but Hart hardly felt it. He was deeply hurt. If his master wasn't pleased with his naked body, what in the world was he supposed to do? "You...Caden..." he began, his throat working, "you don't like me?"

"I'll wait out in the other room," Wolff said suddenly, without answering his question.

"Where is he...?" Hart began. "He doesn't like me."

"Listen, you freak," Rufus said. "You don't

need to worry about whether Wolff likes you or not, you won't be seeing much of him. You only got to worry about pleasing the clients, you hear me? 'Cause if you don't, you won't get fed, or worse. You got it? Wolff is not your master, I'm your master and any other man I say is your master."

His face was right up against his. Hart could smell his foul breath, inhale the crazed look in his eyes.

"Now shift, become a sweet little girlie-girl so none of my clients have to feel bad about fucking that ass of yours, and none of 'em have to worry about getting arrested. SHIFT!"

It took some time for Hart to be able to shift. He was far too nervous, and he was fixated on Caden Wolff's shadow, which was visible from the other room. He concentrated on tracing the brim of his big hat, and the broad expanse of his shoulders, and the edges of his coat which was moving slightly around his booted calves.

Finally he felt the shift coming. He transformed almost instantly, shivering.

Rufus ran his eyes over her, and smiled. "Very nice." He reached out and squeezed Hart's full breasts, startling him. "Nice tits," Rufus told him. "Don't shift back. Later, I'm going fuck you as a girl. I don't do boys."

Caden Wolff came walking back into the room

at that moment. He reached down and scooped up Hart's shirt. He threw it at him. "Put it on."

Suddenly two huge men walked into the room as Hart started to put on the shirt. They stood beside Rufus, directly in front of Caden Wolff, arms folded across their barrelled chests.

"My money," Caden said, his coal black eyes narrowed, and staring at the fat man. "My usual fee, plus twenty percent of what the family is giving you."

"Now, Caden, dear friend," Rufus said, "you know I don't have that kind of money right now. The family hasn't paid me yet and..."

Caden Wolff reached over and wrapped his fingers around Hart's forearm. Almost immediately Hart felt himself begin to shift. He couldn't seem to control it.

"Stop that," Rufus told Hart, once he began aware of the shift. "I told you to..."

"Never mind that," Caden snapped. "Pay me or he goes with me."

"Now, you know I can't let you do that, Caden." The fat man shook his head. He nodded at the two men standing beside him.

Caden Wolff moved so fast, Hart could hardly follow the movement. In less than a few seconds, he grabbed the first man's arm. He fell to his knees, a sickening crack resounding through the air. The second man received a firm kick to his

genitals, which doubled him over, groaning loudly. With one guy on the floor and the other doubled over, Rufus took a few steps back.

Caden once again had a hold of his arm. He bent down and picked up the pants. "I'm leaving and I'm taking the shifter with me. You have my number. You have twenty four hours before I deliver it to the front door of Bane Manor."

With his pants dangling in one hand, Hart was running to keep up with Caden Wolff, who was rushing him down the hallway, and back outside to the vehicle. "Where are we going now?" Hart asked him as Caden Wolff pushed him into the car and strapped him in.

He didn't reply. He just shut the door and came around to the other side. When he got behind the control panel, Hart asked him the question again.

"Never mind," he hissed between his teeth. "Don't talk, okay?"

"Okay," Hart said, studying the control panel with interest. He'd never ridden in this kind of contraption before. He rather liked it. As the vehicle zoomed through the winding streets, he sat back and smiled. He was glad Caden had taken him away from that man. He didn't like Rufus at all. "I much prefer you as a master," Hart said. "I don't need two masters."

"I'm not your master," Caden growled. "Stop staying that nonsense."

"But I..."

"Shut up. I told you not to talk. Look, I'm really not in the mood. That fat little bastard is trying to double cross me."

He was talking to himself really. Hart didn't really understand any of it. He just knew he was upset. As Caden stopped the car, Hart said, "I can fix that. I can make you feel better. Randolph used to say that I was good for what ailed him, relieving tension."

Caden looked at him as if he were insane. "Look, I don't want to know what Randolph used to say, okay. Fuck. You're about to drive me nuts." He got out of the vehicle. Hastily, he undid the straps and pulled him out of the car. "Hurry up, before anyone sees you. I could get my balls loped off for having a shifter in my lodgings."

Caden shoved Hart out in front of him, and through the side door of this narrow building. He gave him a little push forward and Hart started up the stairs. "I wouldn't want to see your balls loped off," Hart suddenly said. He was being totally sincere. Caden Wolff was so beautiful. It would have been a shame to castrate him.

Caden Wolff stopped in mid climb. Hart turned to look at him, then, smiled when he saw him laugh. "You kill me," Caden said. "Are you for real?"

"I'm very real," Hart said, searching his face.

He reached out for his hand. "Here, touch me." He squeezed Caden's hand in his, and then pressed it to his chest, right over his heart.

Caden pulled his hand back as if he'd been burnt, the laugh dying in his throat. "Knock it off," he demanded. He turned him around and gave him a little shove. "Keep going."

Once they were inside Caden Wolff's small lodging, Caden took off his big black hat and shrugged out of his coat. Hart looked around the room. It was a living area of sorts, containing nothing but a battered but comfortable looking love seat, and a matching chair, sitting in front of a full length window. To the left was a rumbled bed, and what looked like a small bathroom. On the wall beside the window was a food dispensary.

"Help yourself," Caden said, when he saw where Hart was looking. "And put on your pants, will ya?"

Caden pulled his cotton shirt down selfconsciously over his hips, then began to put on his pants. As he walked across the floor to the food dispensary, he watched Caden, who was not sprawled on the love seat, his long thick black hair hanging down over the top of it. His coat and boots were in a heap in the corner, and he wore only a thin pair of black pants which fit his form like a glove, and a high collared black sweater which looked a little threadbare. "How come you

don't like me naked?" Hart asked him suddenly, his eyes ravishing the dehydrated food choices which were ready to be dispensed from the machine.

Caden picked up his head and threw a backwards glance at him, then he crossed his arms and settled back down again. "What are you talking about?"

Hart began to greedily swallow the dehydrated meat without putting it in the readier, which was beside the dispensary.

Caden stood up suddenly. He walked over and took the meat out of Hart's hand. He opened the readier and shoved it in. Hart glanced up at him. He stood almost a head taller than he did, his body hard and sleek, the muscles taut like a tightly wound coil. Caden pressed a few buttons, then took the meat out again. "There," he said, "that's better. Haven't you ever done this before?"

"No," Hart said. "Damath did everything for me."

Wolff walked back to the love seat. "Who's Damath?"

"The woman who cared for me at the manor."

"Oh," he said, closing his eyes.

Hart came and sat down next to him.

Caden picked up his head. There wasn't a lot of room, and Hart was pressed tightly to his flank as he ate his food. Caden sat up suddenly. "Why

don't you sit in the chair?"

"I like it here," he said. "It's nice being close to you. You're so tense. I want to..."

Caden jumped up off the sofa. "Never mind that. No more of that talk."

"Are you afraid?" Hart looked up at him. "I won't hurt you."

Caden opened his mouth, then, closed it. "Listen, you," he pointed his finger at him. "I'm the one you have to worry about. I could hurt you. You're my prisoner, don't you understand that? I'll get money for you when that fat bastard comes to his senses."

"You won't hurt me," Hart said, taking another bite of his meat.

"I will if you don't stop your nonsense. Now, I don't need anything from you, I don't do shifters, at least not as a rule."

"There are others?"

"Of course, dozens of them. How do you think I make my living?"

"And they serve too?"

"What?"

"Serve...sexual needs, like I did for Randolph?"

"Yeah, now they do. Before they were killed, if they were renegades, didn't belong to somebody." Caden went over and looked out the window, his hands on his slim hips.

Hart traced the line of his back, the way those



black pants hugged the outline of his hard, rounded ass. He wanted to taste it. He wanted to taste him. He licked his lips. "I don't understand everything you say to me, but I want you."

Caden swirled around on his heel. "What?"

"I want you. I want to please you. I want to loosen those coils in your muscles and..."

"Fuck," Caden muttered. "Enough." He marched over to him, and grabbed him by the shirt collar. He looked deep into his eyes. "Listen, you, this is the last time I'll say it, your life is in my hands right now. I will sell you to Rufus for the right price, or give you back to the Banes, who want you dead...want you kept their dirty little secret. You're not even considered human, don't you understand? I'm a hunter...I'm not your lover!"

He released him with such force that Hart almost fell off the sofa. There were tears in his eyes. "I...okay. You don't want me. You don't like me naked." The tears fell. "I can't please you. Why don't you kill me now? I have no use to anyone."

Caden Wolff stood with his back to him for a few minutes, then suddenly he turned around. He looked at him. "Look, you're okay. Actually for a shifter you're...well...you're very attractive but...I don't use the merchandise personally okay? It's just this rule I have."

"Merchandise?"

"The shifter," he corrected. "I don't fuck the shifters, at least not while I'm making a sale."

"You're going to take me back to him, aren't you?"

He nodded. "Now, let's not talk okay? Why don't you lie down and get some sleep?"

But Hart couldn't sleep. The words Caden Wolff had said kept running through his head. What was he? He wasn't like Caden Wolff...and yet there were others like him, others that Caden Wolff captured and sold like pieces of meat. He wasn't going to have one master like Randolph, or like the beautiful Caden Wolff, he was destined to have many.

A few hours later, he felt Caden Wolff's hand on his shoulder. "Wake up, Hart," he said. "We have to go."

\* \* \* \*

Cameron was standing in the living room now. Hart just noticed her, his mind far away. There were tears streaming down her face. "It's okay," Hart said. "Don't cry, Cameron."

She turned her face to the wall, and Shane stood up and went to comfort her.

"I'll stop talking now," Hart said.

"No." Cameron sniffed, turning away from Shane and coming to sit beside him on the sofa.

"Go on. I have to know. What happened then?"

\* \* \* \*

Caden took Hart back to Rufus. Rufus paid him what he was owed. Hart stood there, his eyes never leaving Caden as the payment changed hands. For a moment, it seemed that Caden was going to leave without so much as a backward glance, but when he got to the door, he paused and looked back at him. "Goodbye, Hart," he said. "See you around sometime."

Before Hart could utter so much as a word, Rufus had his hands on him. "Shift. I don't want to fuck a boy. I don't do boys. Become a little girlie for me, Shifter, and I'll show you a real man."

He was brutally raped by Rufus, then shoved down into a dark dungeon where Hart quickly discovered, for the first time in his existence, there were others just like him. It didn't take him long to realise the difference between himself and the others who couldn't shift. They were free. He wasn't. He was expected to service any man who paid the right price, and suffer an indignity. He was nothing more than a thing. His feelings didn't exist. He felt himself harden against the world, against others.

It was weeks before he saw Caden Wolff again, and when he did, it brought tears to his eyes. Hart

was up there on stage, a leather collar strapped around his throat, being led around by Rufus, who he had come to despise.

\* \* \* \*

"I was so exhausted," he told Shane and Cameron now. "I had been made to shift back and forth all night, been through at least seven customers, and my morale was at an all time low. Then, my eyes caught sight of that big black hat of his in the crowd. He was standing there, leaning against the wall, a drink in his hand, watching me. For the first time, I felt my sense of worthlessness so profoundly, I truly wanted to die. He was everything to me, and I knew at that moment that he'd never be mine...that I'd never be worthy of him, a non-shifter, a free man. I tried to break away from Rufus. I wanted to get off that stage, away from Caden's eyes. Rufus pulled so hard on my collar he just about strangled me. I was in my male form, and he demanded that I shift. I couldn't. As hard as I tried, I couldn't. I kept my eyes on Caden Wolff, and when Rufus yanked on my collar, I swore that I saw Caden propel himself off that wall, then, he stood still again, that hat casting a shadow over his handsome face.

\* \* \* \*

Hart suddenly forgot all about Cameron and Shane as he continued to speak. He was back there suddenly. It felt like yesterday. He remembered that Rufus has been pissed at him. He'd made some sort of an apology to the crowd, and dragged Hart off stage. He beat him with the chain that was attached to his collar, then was forced to release him, because he needed to drag one of the others out there to appease the irate crowd.

Hart had scrambled back to his little room, the one he serviced the men in, and lay down on the bed. He sobbed, not from the physical pain of the chains, but from the ache in his heart that had become so acute upon seeing Caden again. This longing, this need he knew would never be filled.

Then he heard a voice say his name. He picked up his head and gasped. There he was, Caden Wolff, standing there, his hat in his hands, just looking at him. The door was closed. Hart sat up, rubbing his nose on the back of his hand, sure he looked a fright with his face all streaked with tears.

He was totally naked, with nothing on, except for that leather, studded collar wrapped around his neck, connected to a chain. He leaned forward and covered his genitals with his hands. His cock stiffened, just looking at him. "What are you doing

here?"

"The same as every other man," he said, throwing his hat on the floor. He took off his coat. "I paid." He met his eyes.

Hart swallowed.

"Don't cover yourself," Caden said softly, too softly.

Hart let his hands fall away from himself. He laid back on the bed, lifting his arms over his head, his eyes on Caden, his heart hammering in his ribs. He could hardly breathe as those coal black eyes moved over him. "What do you want? I'll be anything you..."

"Shush," Caden said, moving closer. He pulled his sweater over his head, shaking out his long black hair.

Hart caught his breath in his throat. His chest was practically hairless, with smooth rounded pectorals and taut brown nipples. His biceps rippled as he reached down to remove his boots, then slid the black pants down over his hips revealing an erection which was thick and already glistening with his own fluids.

Hart thought he was dreaming for a minute. Caden Wolff was suddenly standing there naked in front of him, and he had a faint, almost timid smile on his face. He reached out a hand to him, placing one of his knees on the side of the bed and lifting Hart's head off the pillow. He spent an

agonising second or two searching his face, then, he pressed his mouth to his. Hart's mouth opened to his probing tongue, allowing the kiss to deepen. He moaned against him, lifting his own hand and wrapping it in all that long, silky black hair. Caden's hand pulled his head back, and to the left, then slipped down to support his back as he pulled him closer into his arms. As he laid there now, half supported by Caden, he felt Caden's other hand slide over his chest, and down to his stomach, caressing him gently there before his fingertips brushed over his erect cock.

Caden's passion appeared to intensify as his fingers played over Hart's cock now. He pulled him closer and murmured something against his mouth. Hart's arms slid around his torso, delighting in the feel of his naked skin. A hand wrapped around his erection now, squeezing gently, lips leaving his lips and moving to his throat.

Hart grabbed some of Caden's long hair in his fist and pulled, letting his head go back as Caden's tongue gently lapped at one of his nipples. His hand began to fondle his sex more roughly, with more determination.

Suddenly, he was being pushed back on the bed. Caden knelt between his legs, his hands moving over his hair, his face, then down his chest again, when he lowered his lips and kissed him.

"Hart," he breathed, looking at him with those intense black eyes, "I swear you've bewitched me. When I see you out there on that stage, naked, I just want to..." he moaned and lowered his head again, this time running his tongue along the length of Hart's cock.

Hart shuddered, his entire body being hit by spasms of pleasure. He placed his hands in Caden's long hair as his mouth and tongue continued to concern itself with his cock, his balls, and then pushing his legs upwards and out, his tongue hit the sensitive core of his anus.

"Caden," he breathed. "Oh ... God... Caden... .ahhh..." No one had ever done that to him before. He'd done it on the command of many men, but never had it been done to him. He screamed out his orgasm as he felt Caden's tongue enter him, at the same time that his hand stroked his cock.

Caden brought his head back up and sat there watching him as Hart's hips bucked forward, and he shot a realm of cum in the air. Then suddenly, he realised that he had thought only of his own pleasure and forgotten all about Caden's.

"Oh..." he sat up, embarrassed, guilty. "I'm sorry, I..."

Caden smiled at him. "What are you sorry about?"

"I...I'm not supposed to...I mean I'm here for you not the..."



Caden reached out and touched his cheek. "I wanted to give you that. You are doing exactly as I want you to do."

Hart blushed. "Okay."

Caden sat looking at him for a moment, then glanced down at his erection. "You think you could do something about that?" He glanced back up and smiled at him, a real smile that transformed his face into an ethereal mask.

"Oh yes," he whispered. "Do you know how long I've wanted to touch you like this?"

Caden let Hart take him down on the bed. He laid there on his back, looking up at Hart leaning over him. He met his eyes. "No, but show me, Hart."

Hart pressed his mouth to his, and kissed him hotly, passionately, letting his hand move down to his erection. When he caressed it with his fingers, Caden moaned low in his throat. It was hot and slick, and Hart licked his lips, anticipating what he would taste like. He moved his lips slowly down his chest to one nipple, nibbling it gently, all the while letting his hand play with his cock. He tackled the other nipple, biting, licking, feeling it come alive under his tutelage. He placed his hands on his muscular thighs and moved his mouth down further, depositing feathery kisses across the waves of his stomach, then circling the base of his cock with his tongue.

He didn't have to shift. Caden didn't want him to shift. Caden wanted him like this, in his male form, and Hart knew that before the night was over, Caden would possess him completely, like this, man to man.

As Hart tasted the salty musky tang of his cock, he felt so fragile inside, as if this man could possibly destroy him if he suddenly rejected his touch. He licked the underside of his cock, handled his balls, and then took the head of his cock into his mouth.

Caden dug his head back into the pillow, the cords of his neck standing out as Hart took his cock deeper and deeper into his throat.

It was heaven to be filled with his cock, to feel it pulsing inside his mouth, to know that every sound of pleasure coming out of Caden Wolff was because of what he was doing.

The succulent taste of the hunter trickled into his mouth, and he heard Caden's protest. Hart knew what he wanted, and God, he wanted it too, more than anything.

When Hart pulled back from his cock, and lay down on his stomach, Caden immediately pressed his hard naked body up against his. He slid both arms around his waist and pulled him up to his knees. "Baby," he grunted, as his passion suddenly turned from gentle coaxing to a frenzied aggression, a need so strong that it propelled them

both off the bed and onto the floor.

The first thing Hart felt were fingers prodding him, delving up inside of his ass, hitting every possible nerve. He suddenly was more than acutely aware that Caden Wolff was no novice when it came to fucking. He felt a certain stab of jealousy at the realisation that he'd done this before and probably with a variety of other men. However, the feeling was only a fleeting one as it was quickly replaced by the stabbing entry of Caden's cock. The initial discomfort disappeared almost immediately as Caden held him steady with one hand and pumped in and out of him frantically, eventually slowing to a pace so sensuously slow, it forced a scream from Hart's lungs. His breathing was coming at a shallow pace now as Caden sped up again, one hand snaking around to tease Hart's aching cock.

Their bodies slid against each other, sweat lubricating their skin and dripping from Caden's long hair. Hart matched Caden's rhythm stroke for stroke as he began to move in and out of him at a rapturous pace, first with long smooth movements that forced a groan from both their lips, then hard and fast, until finally he felt Caden let out a shout and explode inside of him, yanking at his cock at the same time, which seconds later produced an identical response.

Hart fell on his stomach, his head to the side,

trying to catch his breath, and Caden collapsed on top of him, moving his lips against Hart's shoulder.

The tears were flowing silently now and Hart was unable to speak. Cameron and Shane moved quietly out of the room, leaving him alone for a few minutes, giving him some room to express his grief.

"What do you think happened after?" Shane asked Cameron, one tear spilling out of his eye. Cameron wiped it away with a soft smile.

"I don't know. I just know that Hart is desperately in love with him, and he's had such an unhappy life."

Cameron nodded. He'd get no argument from her. She sighed. "We have to take the others out of here, off this planet."

Shane walked over to the bed and sat down. "Yes, but how? We need a plan, and frankly, darling, if I don't get off this godforsaken hellhole of a planet soon, I'm going to lose it. I can't shift. I'm stuck in one half of myself. I feel stifled and frustrated."

"Me too. We need help...help from Caden Wolff."

Shane raised his eyes up, and looked at Cameron. He gasped. "Caden Wolff? Cameron, no."

"Shane, it's perfect," Cameron said, rushing over to his side. She sat down beside him. "He's obviously in love with Hart, he's just stifled by his own..."

"We don't know that. Just because he came to Hart and fucked him doesn't mean that he..."

"Hart loves him so, if we could get to Wolff, reconnect him with his origins, then maybe..."

"My love, always the matchmaker," Shane sighed.

Cameron stood up. "I want to know what happened after. I want Hart to tell us what..."

Shane stood up. He reached out and grabbed Cameron by the arm. He drew her close. "I love you. I can't wait to fuck you like we...we can...you know." He kissed her hair. "Maybe he's not ready to..."

She jerked away from him. "He'll have to be ready. We can't stay here forever. We need to get the rest of those poor shifters, and get off this planet."

He let her go, watching as she marched back into the other room. He knew her heart. He knew that when she had something in her head, there was nothing stopping her.

He walked out after her, watching as she gently cradled Hart in her arms, wiping at his tears. "Honey," she said. "I know it's painful. It's obvious how much you love him. Tell us what

happened after he came to you that night and made love to you."

"I couldn't shift anymore," he whispered, meeting her eyes. "Robin, one of the others told me it's because I love him, and it is me, in my male form he really desires."

Cameron looked at Shane curiously. "I've never heard of that, have you?"

Shane shook his head. "What happened that night, after you were together? Tell us everything that you can remember."

\* \* \* \*

Hart had no problem telling Shane and Cameron what happened. "He was lying on top of me, kissing my shoulder, and I was so happy. I'd never been in love, I didn't even know it existed, but I knew I felt it with him. He lay there with me for awhile, then, all of a sudden he moved away. I felt it like I was dying, him moving away like that."

"What did he say, honey?" Cameron asked softly, squeezing his hand.

"Nothing," Hart shook his head. "I watched him as he put on his clothes. He said nothing."

"He just left the room?" Shane persisted.

Hart nodded.

"And after?" Cameron probed. "Did you see

him after that again?"

"Yes, I saw him, but always from a distance. Some nights he'd be in the crowd, and he'd be watching me when Rufus would parade me across the stage, but he never...I mean..."

"Do you believe he loves you?" Shane asked.

"It felt like it that night, when he held me, when he touched me, but it doesn't matter." Hart stood up, pacing a little. "We can never be together. He's a hunter, and I'm only his prey, plus I was Rufus', not Caden's. I had a secret fantasy that he would come and steal me away, but he never did, and now, I think I imagined it all. I was just a fuck and..."

"I don't believe that," Shane said, surprising Cameron. "He let us go tonight. He could have had me arrested, dragged you back to Rufus, but he saw those marks on your back. He's a product of Gender X, Hart. Sexual love between males is a criminal act, except with Shifters. He hides his true sexuality, but you can't shift because you emphatically know what turns him on. Now it makes sense to me."

Hart shook his head. "None of that matters anymore. I wish he'd never touched me."

"No you don't," Cameron said. "And he will touch you again."

"Cameron!" Shane snapped, cautioning her with his eyes.

Cameron came over to Hart and placed her hands on his shoulders. "We are going to get the other Shifters away from that animal, and Caden Wolff is going to help us."

Shane was saying something in the background but Cameron wasn't paying any attention.

"Caden won't help us. He's a hunter," Hart cried.

"You don't know this, Hart," Cameron told him, "but at one time we were all shifters, all the inhabitants of Gender X."

"Even Caden?"

"Caden was vaccinated against shifting at birth, as were the majority of people on the planet. Shifting lies dormant in his genes. He was indoctrinated to believe that men are more valuable than women, and that same sex love is a sin worthy of death."

"I don't understand."

"No, love," she said, touching his face, "you wouldn't. But know this, inside, Caden, probably has many raging desires he's had to stifle in order to survive in this insane system. He is completely unaware of his own genetic makeup. He doesn't know that each time he hunts a shifter, he is hunting himself. We're going to teach him."

"How? He won't listen."

Shane echoed Hart now. "He's right, Cam. He won't listen, so how in the hell are you going



to...?"

"Listen," Cameron said. "We need Caden Wolff, and he needs us. We just have to lure him to us, give him what he wants."

Shane laughed harshly. "Okay, let's say we lure him here. What exactly are we supposed to do with him when he gets here? He's a six foot hunk of..."

"Use me as bait," Hart intercepted.

Cameron smiled.

Shane looked doubtful. "It's risky."

"I'm worth money, he'll come. And then I'll pretend I'm alone, you can hide and if you promise not to hurt him, maybe we can tie him up."

"Perfect," Cameron said. "But here, on Gender X?"

"Do you think he'll travel to another planet for a bounty?" Shane rubbed his chin.

"No," Cameron nodded, "maybe not, but he might travel to another planet for love."

Shane looked at Cameron and smiled. "Always the romantic. One problem with that though, we can't be sure he's in love. I think we should take him here on Gender X, and have the hovercraft ready to take off."

"Let's sleep on it," Cameron smiled coyly at him. "I'm beat."

\* \* \* \*

After Hart settled down on the sofa to sleep, Cameron cuddled up beside Shane. They had been hesitant to make love on Gender X, afraid they might shift unconsciously as they picked up on the other's immediate desires. "Are you so sure Caden Wolff loves Hart, enough to travel to another planet to come and get him?"

"Yes," Cameron said, placing her arm around Shane's waist and reaching down between his legs to casually play with his cock.

Shane moaned, pressing his buttocks up against her mound.

"Ah, you want to be fucked, don't you, baby? I'm afraid now in this shape, I can't accommodate you. The recounting of Hart's romp with the hunter turned you on, did it?"

"Oh yeah," Shane breathed as Cameron kept stroking his cock.

"Tell me about him, the hunter. Will I be impressed with him?"

"Oh yeah. He turned me on."

"Oh yeah?" Cameron chuckled. "Too bad about your rule, honey, I could have pretended to be the hunter and you my prey. Would you like that?"

"Do it," he whispered. *God, Cameron was such a good fuck.* "Only you need to shift. Please, Cameron," he urged. "I'll suck your cock later."

"We're breaking the rule," she said hesitantly.  
"Ooh but the way you suck cock, it's tempting."

"Fuck the rule. We're leaving anyway."

Cameron giggled. "What's he look like, this mysterious, very male hunter?"

"Tall, over six feet, all solid muscle, long black hair, black eyes, obviously knows how to use his cock from what Hart says. Caden. Caden Wolff." Shane smiled as he felt the change come over the body behind him. Suddenly there was a smooth, hard cock jutting up against his bare ass. The feel of the hands were different, more demanding, more evasive. Cameron always let himself go when in male form, became very aggressive. Soft lips came down on his neck as the arm gripped him firmly around the waist. "Hello, slut," Cameron whispered in his ear, his breath hot and determined, the voice deep, purring like a lion in his ear.

Shane smiled.

"I've been looking for you everywhere, Shifter. Hunting you."

"Yeah?" Shane said breathlessly, his cock throbbing in Cameron's hand. "And what do you want with me, hunter?"

"To fuck that sweet ass of yours. I plan to fuck you good tonight, shifter."

"Um," Shane murmured, as Cameron yanked him up onto his knees and knelt behind him. He

took a handful of Shane's hair and yanked his head backwards. "Don't hurt me, hunter," Shane teased.

"Oh I'll hurt you," Cameron whispered. "I'll hurt you so good, you'll be begging for more. You're in my control now, shifter," Cameron growled behind him. "Say my name. Say it. Say 'fuck me, beautiful Caden Wolff.'"

"Fuck me, beautiful Caden Wolff," Shane groaned as Cameron's hands moved over his ass.

"Say 'fuck me, Caden, because soon we'll be fucking you, and we'll be changing your mind about a lot of things, baby.' We'll have that gorgeous hunter on his knees."

Shane laughed huskily. "Change my mind, baby, yeah, God, change it," he breathed, then, he moaned deeply as Cameron rammed his hard sex up inside of him, and began to pump like crazy. The image of Caden Wolff on his knees played in his mind. He was going to enjoy that. He was going to enjoy that a lot.

\* \* \* \*

When Shane got up the next morning, he was alone. He stretched luxuriously, a smile on his face. God, that had been good last night, real good. Cameron had fucked him half the night, and they'd ended it with Shane giving him a blowjob,

then Cameron had shifted back to female form and they had fallen asleep in each others arms. He couldn't wait to get off this planet so they could shift at will, in bed and out.

Shane threw on a robe and wandered out into the living room. Hart was sound asleep on the sofa. He was glad. Poor kid must have been exhausted.

Shane found Cameron sitting on the little outside terrace. She was dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, a glass in her hand. When Shane came closer he realised that she was staring at the tracking device he'd dug out of Hart. "What are doing?" he hissed. "Someone could see you with that thing."

Cameron was in her female form, her long blond hair tousled, her blue eyes looking a little bleary. "Relax," she said, "no one would be able to figure it out. It's too small, besides, the liquid is all clouded with blood."

"Yeah," Shane wrinkled up his nose, wrapping the robe tighter around him and shivering some, "you should get rid of that. At least change the liquid."

"I've been thinking," she said.

"Should I be afraid?" Shane grinned.

"Ha, ha. I've been thinking about how we're going to lure Caden."

"We have to be smart about it."

She nodded. "We really do need to use Hart as

bait. I've been trying to think of a way around it, but there is none. If he's in love with Hart, as I believe, he'll come after him."

Shane nodded, running a hand through his fair hair. "Let's hope it wasn't just a desperate fuck, because if it was, we're fucked. I need coffee. Do we have any?"

"In the kitchen. I've been through a gallon already." She sighed. "Where's Hart? Still sleeping?"

"Let him sleep."

"I've been thinking about what you said last night, Shane. You're right. I think we should take him here, then go home to Melage Flat."

Shane pursed his lips, considering her suggestion. They had called Melage Flat home for the last few years, a tiny planet where anyone was welcome, alien and shifter alike. It had been founded by shifters a generation before, but aside from a cousin of his who had apparently died a few years before they'd discovered the place, they were the only shifters in residence. "It is close by," Shane acknowledged, "but the counsel might not welcome us bringing Caden Wolff there."

"Why not?" Cameron glanced at him. "We're going to re-educate him. I could see them objecting more if we lured him there and he was conscious, but he'll be out when we take him."

"Yes, but still, Cameron, we are going to have

to take him against his will. The laws of Melage Flat state that ..."

"Yeah, yeah, I know what the book says...no one of prejudice mind and..."

"Yes, and you're thinking about launching a...well...organising a rescue mission from there as well."

"So, no one needs to know about it. And the shifters will be welcome there once we get them out of that hellhole. On top of that, Melage Flat is sanctioned as a neutral planet, immune from attack or involvement in interplanetary warfare. It has no racial affinity which means that it..."

"It can't be attacked. Gender X won't send anyone after us. I know," Shane interjected, "but I'm just wondering if we should inform the counsel of..."

"On a need to know basis," Cameron said, waving her hand, then looked up with a smile to see Hart emerge, sleepy eyed.

Shane gave Hart a tender look, and came over to hug him. He looked like a sweet, young angel, and it was hard for Shane to have to think about what he'd endured. Yes, they had to get to the others, and they needed Wolff's help. He knew all that. It's just that he dreaded it all so.

"How did you sleep?" Cameron asked him, motioning to Hart to come and sit beside her.

"I slept okay but I dreamt all night."

"Dreamt of what?" Shane asked, lifting an eyebrow.

"Caden. I dreamt of Caden. He seemed so alone, and I wanted to touch him but he was being held behind this glass case. He put his hands on the glass, and I put mine there too, but then he withdrew. He wouldn't look at me and..."

He was visibly upset. Cameron took his hand. "He won't be behind that glass much longer, baby. We'll see to that." She looked up at Shane, and slowly, he nodded.

\* \* \* \*

Hart felt a little more than guilty as he waited in the same abandoned building where Caden had first found him. He was also scared. There were so many things which could go wrong. He could end up back with Rufus, that scared him most of all, not to mention that Caden could get hurt. Cameron and Shane had tried to reassure him that the stuff they would inject Caden with wouldn't hurt him, would only knock him out for a few hours until they could get him back to this other planet that Hart could never remember the name of, and do whatever they had to do to...well, he wasn't sure of that part either.

An hour before, Cameron had gone to Caden Wolff's lodgings and left a note for him. It said



simply. "If you want the runaway shifter, the one called Hart, you'll find him where you found him before. Come alone, and we'll expect five percent of your fee." They were going to use the tracking device, but when they removed it from the water, they discovered that it was no longer working.

Hart had helped Cameron and Shane compose the letter. "I'm thinking where I'd go if I was alone again. I'd go back to the same place. And write in there something about wanting some money. Caden will understand that. I think he'll be less suspicious."

So, they had added that they would expect a five percent finder's fee. Cameron had been about to add, "come alone," but Hart shook his head and told her to take that off. "That's not necessary. Anyone who knows Caden Wolff, knows that he works alone."

So now, here he was again huddled under those blankets, listening for every sound, while Cameron and Shane stood quietly by, listening for every sound as well.

After a few hours, they all began to suspect that Caden Wolff wasn't coming. "Maybe he's suspicious," Shane whispered.

"Suspicious of what?" Cameron insisted.

"I don't know. Maybe he just didn't get the note yet."

"Or, not at all. What if someone intercepted it?"

"Shush," Hart said suddenly. "Someone is here." He heard the footsteps on the stairs. He'd recognize those steps anywhere. He'd trained himself to listen for them when he was back at Rufus's. Sometimes he would hear him walk past the door, and somehow that brought him comfort. His heart would race, and he would anticipate that maybe he would open the door, and he would see his face, but he never did. Somehow just having him close by, would make him smile.

"Caden," he called out in the darkness, "is that you?"

He was there, standing in front of him, and Hart felt himself blush all over, the memories of the last time they met flooding over him.

"Yes," he said, "it's me. What are you doing here?"

"I...I ran away from that man. He wanted to use me for...he's not my master. I missed you, Caden." He stood up.

Caden Wolff sighed. He stepped forward, and placed a hand on his shoulder. He looked down into his eyes. "Who brought you here?" Then suddenly Wolff stiffened. He turned, sensing someone behind him. Cameron jabbed the needle into his neck, and pressed her thumb down on the dispenser.

Wolff stumbled backwards. Hart reached out to steady him, while Cameron and Shane took him

down to the floor. He reached out once blindly, grunted, and his body went limp.

Hart went down on his knees beside him. He touched his face. "Is he alright? He's not dead?"

"No," Shane said, "he's not dead, but we'll be dead if we don't get to fuck out of here. Okay, let's go."

\* \* \* \*

The hovercraft was parked inconspicuously in the parking lot down the street from the abandoned building in mid-village. The three of them carried Caden Wolff down the back stairs, which was no small feat, and heaved him onto an electronic lift, the kind the sanitation guys used to lift the garbage bins which they propelled into space. Hart dropped the old ratty blankets over him and they pushed the thing manually over to the hovercraft. No one was around, and Shane pressed his foot on the lift and literally dumped his body though the loading area of the small craft.

Hart was hovering around the door, fretting until Cameron grabbed his arm and yanked him into the craft. Shane closed the door, and Cameron got behind the control panel. "Let's get out of here," she breathed. "That shit will wear off eventually and I don't want to be in the way when

it does."

"I'll go back and tie him up now," Shane said, pressing Hart's shoulder down in the seat. "Buckle up and stop worrying. Your lover will be fine."

"Tie him tight. Make sure," Cameron said, "he can't get loose."

"I will," Shane called as he made his way to the cargo area of the craft.

"Relax," Cameron told Hart as the craft left the landing space. "Everything is going as planned."

"Just what do you do exactly...to...well...re-educate him? Is it painful?" Hart asked, glancing out the window. He'd never been off the ground before.

"Painful? Good heavens, no," Cameron laughed, increasing the speed. "Although they resist at first, it's part of the fun. Once we reconnect them with their true natures, they enjoy it."

"You've done this a lot?"

"Quite a few times."

Hart turned his head as he heard some banging around.

"Stop worrying. Shane isn't hurting him."

Hart nodded. "How do you do it exactly?"

"How do you think, Hart, darling?"

"You mean...ah...but..."

"You'll just have to get over this possessive stuff...at least temporarily. You will be able to

participate but not at the beginning."

"I won't be able to watch because..."

"Hart, it's your choice, and after we're through, he's all yours."

Hart smiled at that, then, he chewed his thumb nail. "If he wants me."

"All signs point to that. He let you go, and he did come to you that night. I don't know if he loves you, but he was certainly heading that way. You'll have plenty of time to convince him later."

Shane was back now. He came and sat down next to Hart. Hart glanced at the window. Darkness. "Do we know where we are?"

"Don't worry, Cameron is a great navigator. She knows exactly where she's going."

"Why thank you, Shane." She smiled. "Is our boy still out?"

"Yes, for now, but there's no time to waste. He's a little bigger than I thought..." he grinned, "and in more ways than one, and I'm not sure how long that stuff will last on him. He may come out of it quicker than we planned."

"Then I'll make haste," she said.

Shane looked over at Hart and noticed that he was shaking. "Are you alright?"

"I've never been in ah...up here before."

"Don't worry," Shane squeezed his hand, "there's nothing to worry about."

Some time later, Cameron announced, "We are

now officially out of Gender X territory."

"Thank God," Shane said, sitting back in his seat and uttering a sigh.

"That's good, right?" Hart enquired.

"That's good, yes," Shane smiled.

"Next stop," Cameron sang, "Melage Flat," and the space dipped to the right and accelerated again.

\* \* \* \*

Melage Flat was a large planet geographically, but it was sparsely populated. With a little less than two hundred inhabitants, it wasn't exactly a swinging place. The counsel was made up of two aliens from different planets and a humanoid called Jack, who had a little soft spot in his heart for shifters, were very choosy about who they allowed to live there.

"Welcome home, Cameron, my sex shifting god of goddesses," Jack smiled at her through the camera as she requested permission to land. "Where's your other half?"

"Right here," Shane piped in, winking at Jack, a handsome man in his thirties, who was more than aware of his charms.

"You don't have any illegal passengers or goods on your craft, do you? The weight is coming in a bit heavy?"

"We have a shifter with us that we rescued from Gender X," Cameron announced.

"Oh...heavens, what were you doing on that rot hole?"

"There are shifters there, Jack, sex slaves and we tried to rescue them," Cameron said.

Shane passed her a look.

There was a silence.

"We'll explain once we get in, Jack."

"You might have to do that, my friend," Jack replied. "Permission to land. Come on in."

When his image disappeared from the control panel, Cameron turned to Shane. "What do we tell him about Wolff? He's going to search the hold."

"Well, we're just going to have to use our charms."

"Will he be a problem?" Hart interjected, casting a nervous glance back at the cargo area as Cameron began to bring the craft down on the runway. They taxied for almost three miles before entering the special passageway which took them to the urban centre of Melage Flat.

"We're lucky. It's Jack and he's a sucker for shifters. I can talk him into anything."

They landed with a thud, and Shane laughed at Cameron, who prided herself on smooth landings. He could tell that her mind was not on her aviation skills. "Shut up," she said, pointing to him.

It was night. Only the brightly lit neon signs of the commercial establishments were lit. Jack came running out from the landing garage, huddled in a Pumet skin, which was derived from a lizard type of animal, native to the planet. Seasonally, they shed their skin, and people who worked in the industry went around collecting them. They manufactured and exported these coats, which were the warmest, most waterproof in the universe.

"Damn, I forgot how much colder it gets here at night," Shane said. "My coat is in the back somewhere."

"We'll get it soon," Cameron said, looking at Hart. "Now, just be cool, Hon, and let us do the talking."

Hart nodded.

Shane was the first one out. He and Jack exchanged a hug and a kiss. Cameron jumped out next, dragging Hart after her. "Hey, Jack, sweetie," she said, kissing him heartily, "this is Hart."

"Another shifter eh?" Jack winked. "Always welcome here. A real cutie too."

"Ah...thanks," Hart said shyly.

"So," Jack mused walking around the craft, "what you got in the back, a dead body? The equipment registered another breather in here." He went to open the hold.



Shane placed a hand on his. "You know, we've missed you," he said.

"Oh yeah?" Jack grinned. "And me, you guys."

"Hope we can get together soon for a little fun," Cameron sidled up beside Jack.

"Sure. Now what are you guys hiding in there?" He hooked a thumb in the direction of the door.

"If we tell you we have it under control, will you let it go?" Cameron asked, looking tense.

"Now, Cam, darling, you know I can't let anything pass without inspecting it first. Is it bigger than a bread box?" he teased.

"Yep," Shane hissed some air through his teeth, "and if we don't get it where it has got to go real fast, it's going to mean trouble." He met Jack's eyes. "Trust us. Please, Jackie?"

"You know what you do to me when you call me Jackie, Shane." He took a breath. "Okay, but I want an explanation in twenty four hours or I got to report it."

Shane moved up close and whispered something in his ear.

Jack looked flustered. "Okay, okay, get out of here with that."

"I'll just go get the land mover," Cameron said and ran into the garage.

Shane shivered. Hart's teeth were chattering as well.

"Get yourselves in the vehicle before you freeze to death," Jack said, standing back as Cameron backed the mover up to the hold in the back of the craft. She had opened both of the vertical doors wide.

Shane motioned to Hart. "I'm going to need you. Come on." He jumped back into the craft. He made his way into the back again, Hart scrambling after him. "Throw the bags in the back, then we'll get him in there," he told Hart.

Hart picked up the bags and threw them into the back of the mover. He knew Jack heard a noise because of the thud the object made when it was transferred.

Jack craned his neck to see, but with the huge door blocking his view, he couldn't see anything.

Shane quickly shut the doors of the mover and then banged on the door, indicating to Cameron that she should move ahead.

A few seconds later, Hart and Shane were in the vehicle, waving to Jack, a painted smile on their faces.

"Okay?" Cameron asked, driving away, her eyes on Jack through the rearview.

Shane wiped the sweat off his forehead. "Yes. He's still out."

"Hart, are you okay?" Cameron asked as they turned off the main drag and made their way to a tiny house in what was called Corner Ville.

"Yes," he said. "I think so. He's not moving. Is he...?"

"He's fine," Shane said.

\* \* \* \*

Cameron drove up as close to the door of their charming little house as she could. Without delay, they rushed out of the vehicle, swung open the back doors and carried Caden Wolff inside. Thankfully the house was only one floor, and Cameron steered the other two into a small bedroom in the back.

They dumped Caden's body on the bed, and he made a sound, a low moaning which startled them all. It caused them to stand still, and almost stop breathing. It was Shane who came out of the terrified trance first. "Untie his hands and secure them to the bed post. We'll do the same with his feet."

"Hart, you should leave the room now," Cameron said. "We're going to strip him."

"But..." Hart began.

"Go," Shane demanded. "Go get the bags."

Hart left the room.

"Is Hart going to give us grief over this?" Cameron asked, fiddling with the ropes. "Shit, you really tied him up."

Shane nodded, loosening the rope and then

lifting him with a grunt and pulling of the coat. They'd lost his hat somewhere along the way. He threw the coat aside. "How would you feel?"

"I know, but I think it's because he really doesn't understand what we're doing here."

"You're right," Shane said, pulling Caden's sweater over his head as Cameron finally untied the other wrist.

"Jesus," Cameron said, suddenly getting a glimpse of Caden's bare chest.

"What did I tell you! Isn't it nice to have such pleasant work?"

She laughed, taking the handcuffs out of the drawer of the bureau.

Naked from the waist up, Shane and Cameron lifted both of Caden's arms and cuffed him to the bedposts.

He moaned again.

"He's coming to," Cameron said, looking at Shane with alarm.

"Hurry up. Get the ankle cuffs," Shane said. "I'll get these pants off of him."

"Sure, sure, have all the fun," Cameron said.

When Cameron moved her hand down one of Caden's muscular calves, then cuffed his ankle to the side of the bed, it hit her. What a gorgeous man he was. No wonder Hart had fallen for him. She threw the other pair of cuffs at Shane, who quickly secured Caden's other ankle to the bed.

They stood back now, admiring their handiwork.

Caden's head moved from side to side, his body lifting a little off the bed.

"Provocative," Shane licked his lips.

Cameron smiled at him. "Stop your drooling." She took his hand. "Come on, let's talk to Hart."

Shane nodded and they left the room, closing the door gently behind them.

"But why do you have to do it...that way?" Hart asked, looking down at his hands.

Cameron smiled. "There isn't any other way to reconnect him with what he really is."

"Will he...ah...shift after?" Hart asked.

Shane shook his head. "No. I'm afraid that part of him is dead. The vaccine took care of that when he was born, but his feelings, his sexual needs, his attitudes, these we can change by sexual reconnection."

"We'll let you have him when we're sure the reconnection has been established," Cameron told him, touching his hand. "But we can't guarantee his feelings for you, honey. We're assuming he had those feelings, and you said you felt it when he made love to you, but this reconnection won't necessarily mean he will love you."

Hart nodded. "I understand that. How long will this take?"

Shane looked at Cameron, then at Hart. "With this one... with a will that strong? Maybe a few days. Maybe it's better if you're not around for the first little while."

Cameron nodded. "We can send him to stay with Delica."

"Who?"

"She's a good friend, an alien, very sweet. I'll ask her," Cameron said.

\* \* \* \*

Delica was more than glad to have Hart for company for a few days. They took to each other quite easily, as soon as Hart got used to the fact that Delica had several pairs of arms. Cameron thanked her, saying she had to get back to the house. She had left Shane alone there with Caden Wolff, and although she knew there was no way he could break away from those cuffs, she didn't like the idea. "I'll be back in a few days, Hart," she told him, hurrying down the path and back to her vehicle.

\* \* \* \*

Hart watched her go apprehensively. Delica touched him with one set of her fluid arms, and brought him into her living quarters. As he drew closer to her, he noticed that her skin took on a sage colour. It was quite beautiful and he couldn't

stop staring at it.

"Tell me your pain, Hart," she said, caressing him with long fingers which were certainly more than ten on each hand. It was remarkably soothing.

"I'm in love with the wrong man."

She laughed, a tinkling sound. "If only I had a credit for every time I heard that. Tell me about him?"

"He's from Gender X."

"Oh, right there, I am beginning to understand. A neutered shifter." She shook her head, tendrils of florescent fuchsia sparkling around her concave shoulders. "They're the worst I'm afraid. Is he terribly beautiful?"

"Yes. Terribly. That's a good word actually."

"Does he love you?"

"I...I don't know." Hart shook his head. "We're so...different."

"Are you?"

Hart met her perfectly round emerald eyes. "Yes. I'm a shifter."

"He was too, once, in his ancestry."

"Yes, and it was okay for him to take me...to... you know," he blushed a little, "because I'm a shifter...or I was. Now I can't shift to a woman, so if he does that with me, he's breaking the law."

"But he's no longer on Gender X, dear. We have no such laws here. We laugh at such archaic

nonsense. Why can't you shift?"

"I don't know. I think it is because I know he wants me like this. But I can never have him, I mean, I can't..." He stopped.

"You are so sweet, and for a shifter," she said, "so unusually shy about sexual matters. You mean you can't fuck him."

"Ah...no, I can't. Even with a shifter, it would be wrong for him. He must always regard me as female."

She shook her head. "Such nonsense. I want you to stop worrying about that, Hart. None of that will matter after Cameron and Shane complete the reconnection process. He's in good hands. They will help him to understand his roots. If you don't understand who you really are, then you're lost. He's lost right now."

"But the way they do this is..." Hart blushed.

She smiled gently at him. "There really isn't any other way, darling. We are all sexual beings. It is at our core. They must make him feel it. He won't listen to words. He is far too indoctrinated for that. Anyway," she patted his hand with one of her many hands, "try not to think about it for now."

\* \* \* \*

Cameron came through the door, out of breath. Shane looked up at her. "Where's the fire?"



"Is he awake?"

"Yes," Shane said, "and how."

"Did you go in?"

"No."

She smiled. "Chicken."

"That's me. He doesn't yell. He roars."

"Well, it's bound to get worse before it gets better. Are you ready?"

"No, but let's do it," Shane said, laughing nervously.

She walked over and kissed his mouth gently. "Just let me change."

Shane watched as Cameron shifted almost instantly into a gorgeous man.

"Shock therapy right away?"

"Why not?" He shrugged. "It's what he really wants; it's what he denies himself. We can't let him know we're shifters right away, it will give him license, and he won't learn anything. We must make him believe he is in violation of Gender X codes."

"That makes sense," Shane said.

They both cocked their heads suddenly as they heard the voice of Caden Wolff yell out from the other room. "I don't know who in the fuck you are, but you better be writing your eulogy, because when I get loose from here, you are dead! Did you hear me? DEAD!"

Cameron sighed. "You sure those cuffs are...?"

Shane laughed, and then he pulled him towards the back room.

\* \* \* \*

"Where in the fuck am I?" were the first words out of Caden's mouth when Shane and Cameron entered the room. "Who are you? And why am I trussed up here, buck naked?"

"That's a lot of questions." Shane smiled softly at him, running his eyes over his body. "But God, you're a beautiful man. I imagined what you'd look like under that coat, and I'm not disappointed. What a shame you've been neutered."

"Neutered?" He croaked. "What in hell are you talking about? Did Rufus send you? Where is Hart? What did you do with him?"

Cameron glanced down at him now. "Ah, suddenly you care about what happens to Hart, and yet you came after him to bring him back to that hellhole he was in."

"Where is Hart?" Caden repeated in a measured tone.

"He's safe," Cameron said.

"What do you want with me? If Rufus thinks he's going to get his money back, he can forget it because..."

"Rufus has nothing to do with this," Cameron

told him.

"Then what do you want with me?" He repeated. Even lying there like that, he was intimidating.

"Oh, we want a lot," Shane said softly, running one finger over Caden Wolff's taut chest. "We'll take it slowly. I want to know your every desire, and before this night is out, I will." Shane sat down on the side of the bed, causing Caden to shift his body away, only to be brought closer to Cameron, who sat down on the other side suddenly.

"I don't have any desires that you can..." He stopped as Cameron took his sex in his hand. "Hey," he hissed, "don't touch that."

Cameron held it in his palm, running his fingers over it. "It's stiffening a little. You like that, Caden?"

"I don't do men," he said between clenched teeth.

"Really?" Shane said, his voice silky smooth as he flicked Caden's right nipple with his index finger. "What about shifters? Do you do shifters?"

"Shifters are..." He took a breath as Cameron cupped his balls in his hand.

"Shifters are what?" Cameron asked him, rolling his balls around in his hand.

"Legal, they're...not really...ah...men," he grunted.

"Not really men?" Cameron echoed, then, laughed.

"What's the matter, Caden?" Shane lowered his mouth to the nipple he'd been playing with, and nibbled it.

Cameron ran a hand over his thigh. "I believe his cock is a lot bigger than we'd imagined. You're getting very hard, Caden. Isn't that illegal?"

"Who are you people?" Caden grunted, lifting his hips up off the bed some as Shane continued to suck and bite his nipple, while pinching the other one between his thumb and forefinger.

"We're men," Cameron said, leaning down to run his tongue around the head of Caden's cock, "real men, and tonight we're going to break every law, every code on Gender X...the things we're going to do with your body, baby...well..." Cameron lifted up his head and smiled. "We're going to set you free, Caden."

"Do you realise you'll both be executed for this?" He growled, thrashing some.

Cameron wrapped his fist around his cock again. Shane lifted his mouth from his nipple, which was now a stiff peak. He stood up and began to take off his clothes. "We're far away from your planet right now, Hunter. We're outside the jurisdiction of Gender X authority, I'm afraid."

Cameron rose now as well, and began to take off his clothes.

Caden struggled against the iron cuffs. "Then you better kill me after you're done because once I get loose from..."

Cameron laughed. "Struggle all you want. That won't do you any good. You might as well lay back and enjoy it, lover."

"First," Shane said, walking around the bed and pulling Cameron close to him, "we're going to give you a show, warm you up a little."

"Ooh, I like the sound of that," Cameron murmured, looking at Caden. "He sucks cock like a pro, and I fuck like..."

"Like heaven," Shane said, kissing Cameron's neck.

"You guys are insane," Caden called out. "Do what you want, but I won't watch."

"Close your eyes then, honey," Cameron said, as he positioned himself in a place where he knew Caden Wolff had a clear view. Shane sunk to his knees and Cameron took him by the hair and pulled his face back, then he slowly fed him his cock inch by succulent inch.

\* \* \* \*

Caden's body was on fire. One of those guys had been sucking the other's cock for at least ten minutes, and was thoroughly enjoying it. Even if he had closed his eyes, he wouldn't have been able

to mistake the sounds coming from his lips, the more than obvious sounds of smacking and tasting, and the sounds of deep, erotic moaning. Caden had seen illegal activity before, watched underground movies of non-shifting men together, but he'd never seen anything quite like this.

As first, he'd turned his head away, determined that he wouldn't be seduced by their little performance, but as the frenzied noises grew more intense, he felt compelled to look, and once he did, he couldn't look away. The beauty of the two men in front of his eyes was mesmerising, the way they touched each other, hands moving over the other's taut muscles, orgasmic expressions which at once looked brutal and fragile on their faces... the slick cock moving in and out of the other man's mouth... the hypnotic head bobbing as the one on his knees eagerly moved his lips over every single drop of dew that cock pumped out.

The one standing stretched his head back now. He clutched the face of the other between his hands, and let out a strangled sound which vibrated with the throbbing of his pulsing cock. Caden felt that cry in the core of his gut. He unconsciously ran a tongue over his lips.

The one on his knees reared back now, one fist clamped around the base of the other's cock as he milked out the last drop, lapping his tongue

slowly over the tip, as the other man bent over, struggled away, silently begging for mercy.

Caden swore as his cock pulsed with its own juices. He could feel the cum leaking out, dripping down onto his belly in thick, sticky gobs. He didn't realise that his chest was heaving uncontrollably until one of the men leaned over and smoothed his damp hair back from his head. "Easy, baby, easy," he said softly. "You're so hard. You need so much."

Caden moaned involuntarily, feeling the man's hand settle on his cock, fondling it gently at first, then with more intention. He lowered his head, meeting Caden's eyes. "You know," he said, as he continued to stroke his cock, "when I first saw you in that club, I knew one day I'd have you. So mysterious, so dangerous, so goddamned male."

Recognition stirred in Caden. He'd seen him before. He was about to say as much when the man's lips came down hard on his. The kiss was hot, aggressive, meant to dominate. The hand under his head jerked it upwards, wrapping itself in his long black hair. When the man's mouth left his, Caden was breathless. The other one, called Cameron, crawled onto the bed, a leg looped over and straddled his neck. An erect cock brushed along his lips; the other man's hand still wrapped in his hair held his head stagnant. Caden tried to fight. "I don't," he grunted, "I...can't..." He felt a

hand move down his thigh, fondling his cock. "Jesus," he groaned.

"You're going to take my cock in your mouth," Cameron told him, smoothing back his hair, again trailing his cock across his lips, "inch by inch. I'm going to feed you my cock, and I'm going to fuck that gorgeous face of yours. And while I do that, Shane is going to amuse himself between those well muscled thighs of yours."

Shane pulled back on his hair, forcing his jaw open and Cameron lowered the head of his cock into his mouth.

Inch after inch it edged its way deeper, filling the entrance to the back of his throat. Caden's senses were invaded with the pungent, musky smell of this man's dick. At first he wanted to gag. It was overwhelming, not to mention illegal and humiliating, but as the man straddling him looked down in his eyes, he was spellbound by his beauty, by the almost gently brutality of the rape of his mouth.

The taste began to enrapture him and he started to move his tongue around the circumference, soaking up the salty intoxication as a tongue moved over his own swollen sex. Caden let his head fall back further, taking the cock deeper, feeling the tangy drops of cum hit the back of his throat.

The man above him moaned slightly, and



Caden moved his tongue up and down, until the cock itself began to fuck his mouth, slowly, in and out, then faster, until it was moving with such speed that all he could do was stay still and accept its frenzied invasion and retreat.

Then his own cock was enveloped inside a velvet mouth, the tongue and lips doing incredible things to it, moving in and out of the slit, in and around the head, up and down the shaft, then a volcano of cum spilled into his mouth, and he choked some as a hand cradled his head and brought him forward, removing the flaccid organ.

He was gasping, breathless as the man moved away, and he looked down to see a head moving up and down between his legs. The other man who had been on top of him leaned over now and licked his nipples, reaching down at the same time and twining his hand in the other man's hair.

Caden was totally buried in the sensation. Every nerve in his body was alive, every lick, every touch flooded through him like an avalanche. Then suddenly, it stopped. The man between his legs lifted his head, and gave him a provocative smile. "Had enough?"

He licked his lips. "No," he breathed. "No."

Cameron stood up. "I think maybe you need to be more specific."

"Suck my cock," he said, meeting Shane's eyes. "Suck it, or let me fuck you. Get me out of these

things and..."

Shane smiled. He traced one finger over Caden's balls provoking a curse, then moved the digit up between the crack of his ass. Caden gasped.

"Ever had your ass played with, Caden? Ever been fucked?"

"No, not that." He shook his head.

"Taboo for a man like you, eh?" Cameron laughed softly.

"It's emasculating," he said, "it's for girls and shifters, not men."

Shane casually slapped his cock back and forth now, which caused Caden to stifle a groan, close his eyes. "Please," he whispered, "stop torturing me."

He felt the finger probe him between the ass cheeks, barely touching his anus. It felt like an electrical shock wave throughout his body. No one had ever gone there before. He clenched his teeth. If he was defiled like this, how could he go on? He would be ruined as a man. He might as well join the shifters at Rufus' circus.

The finger touched him there again. Caden shuddered. "Please," he begged, his cock on fire.

"Please what?" Shane whispered, leaning down to kiss his cock head. "You're so hard, and leaking cum. It wouldn't take much to release you."

"How about a cock ring?" Cameron suggested.

"To increase the pressure a little. It would look luscious on you, Caden." Cameron held up a short leather strap.

Caden drew in some breath as he felt the leather strap fold around the base of his cock, taking in his balls at the same time.

Shane and Cameron admired their handiwork while Caden's body twitched in a dance of agonized pleasure.

"You should see yourself, Caden," Shane said, licking his lips slowly. "You are so beautiful. Makes me want to fuck you so hard, but I can't do that yet. You're not ready. We have to make you ready."

"If you do that," Caden moaned, "I'll never be able to go home, to show my face...if people knew, I could be..."

Cameron stroked his cheek. "Don't worry, baby, everything is about to change for you. Just go with it."

As Shane stood up and unhooked one ankle cuff, Caden began to struggle but it was in vain. Quickly, his leg was raised and the cuff connected to some contraption hanging from the ceiling. Cameron repeated the motion on the other side. With his legs stretched wide and suspended halfway in the air, Caden was balanced mostly on his back, and he realised that his ass was half in the air and totally accessible.

The strap they had fastened to his cock and balls was creating a throbbing need throughout his groin. He wasn't sure how much more of this he could take.

He was trying to figure it all out, focus on something else besides his aching cock and the fact that his ass was in the air. Had Hart done this to him...some kind of revenge maybe? Where was Hart? Were they really on another planet, away from Gender X? Suddenly he realised that he was alone. Both young men had left him. He struggled again, but he knew he was wasting his time. He was going to be forced to endure whatever it was they had in mind for him, and if he was unfit for manhood when they'd finished, he'd have to decide what in hell he was going to do about that.

\* \* \* \*

Shane lay on the sofa, his eyes closed. Cameron came and sat beside him, running a hand over his thigh. "How do you think it's going?"

"Rough."

"He's responding."

"Physically, yes, mentally, no."

"We're not even halfway through."

"He truly believes that some acts will strip him of his masculinity. The indoctrination has been strong, Cam. Sucking your cock was hard for him,

and I'm not sure how he's going to take getting fucked. It's almost like the more he responds emotionally, the more shame he feels."

"But we'll tell him the truth."

"There's no guarantee he'll believe it."

Cameron thought for a moment. "Hart."

"What about Hart?"

"If he does love Hart, deep down, then Hart will do what we can't."

Shane nodded. "Okay, let's finish the job, tell him what he needs to know, then, get Hart to add the final ingredient." He jumped off the sofa.

Cameron took his hand. "Maybe we should tell him the truth first."

"Later," Shane grinned.

"You are a devil." Cameron giggled and together they walked back into the bedroom.

"Hello baby," Shane said. He ran his hand over Caden's ass. "Nice," he said, giving it a little pat which earned him an obscenity from Caden. "I'm going to take that strap off soon. Don't want it on too long."

\* \* \* \*

Caden watched him with those dark eyes.

"How about a little tension for those gorgeous nipples of yours?" Cameron suggested, showing him a pair of nipple clamps.

Caden lifted an eyebrow, about to protest when Cameron reached over and pinched one of his nipples together, and applied the clamp.

"Ooh," Caden voiced.

"Feels painfully good, doesn't it?" Cameron laughed, as Shane began to grease up a thick, pliant imitation cock head.

Caden kept his eyes on it, as Cameron put on the other clamp, causing him to shudder. Cameron laughed, running a hand over his clamped nipples, and then down his belly. He ran his fingers over Caden's thrust up balls and cock, and then moved his hand around to his ass cheeks. "You have a nice virgin ass. It's round, and hard, and I'm guessing...oh so tight."

Caden thrashed again.

Cameron laughed.

Caden felt Shane slide a hand in between his cheeks and teasingly prod his opening with the instrument.

Caden whimpered slightly. He swallowed. Take it like a man, he told himself, lifting his chin defiantly.

"So sensitive, so needy," Shane whispered. He knelt between his open legs and opened his cheeks again. He slid his tongue over the puckered entrance and Caden began to buck, swinging back and forth in his elevated position.

Shane held his legs steady. "I'm going to work

on loosening up that tight hole of yours, gorgeous, the one you've been so jealously guarding over the years."

At the same time, Cameron began to kiss his mouth and play with those clamps, pulling on them, increasing the tension, sliding his hand down every once in a while to play with his bulging genitals, smothered in their leather binds.

Caden felt extremely fragile, as if he were heading down a one way track with a colliding mass which would shatter him into a million pieces, destroy everything he was ever certain of, and leave him utterly devastated.

The greased head of that object Shane held in his hands began to invade him, open him in a way he'd never been opened before. Someone spoke soothing words to him, loosened his cock and his balls from the strap. The clamps left his nipples, heightening his awareness of that object inching its way deeper and deeper into the core of him. He heard the strap hit the floor, and it resounded around the room like thunder. His breathing deepened, grew louder as he felt a tongue glide over his sore nipples. He said something unintelligent, and then his head flew back with the impact of an orgasm so strong his entire body shuddered with it.

Tears stung his eyes, tears he didn't know he owned. A hand began to stroke his cock, and he

felt it stiffen again. The object began to move slowly out of in, then in again in a fluid motion, then out, in, then faster, hitting every nerve.

When Shane knelt in front of him, flinging the object to the side, Caden knew what he intended to replace it with. Caden met his eyes. He let his tongue slide over his dry lips, his chest heaved, and Shane said, "It's alright baby. It's time. Close your eyes and picture me to be anyone you want me to be. You can let go. You've been in control too long. It's okay."

Caden grunted as he felt the head of Shane's cock nudging his anus. He was considerably bigger than the object which had just come out of him. He took a breath.

"Say no," Shane said, his eyes locking with his. "Say no and I'll stop."

Cameron caressed his shoulder. Caden looked up at him. He swallowed, then looked at Shane. "Go," he voiced hoarsely.

"Don't think," Cameron said as Shane's cock went deeper into him. "Just feel, and you'll know it isn't wrong, Caden. Feel."

He was feeling alright. He felt every inch of Shane's cock moving deeper made him. His entire body trembled when Shane started fucking him in earnest, pulling out before he came, to stand aside, and allow Cameron to take his place.

Caden was hardly aware of the fact that Shane



had now let Cameron take a turn at his ass. He was lost. His eyes were closed, carried away to some beautiful place where he didn't have to think, where he didn't have any responsibilities, where no impressions were necessary.

An earth shattering orgasm gripped him and he literally wailed it out, his lungs exploding in a sound he couldn't contain. He hyperventilated himself into an utter satiated calm.

Caden didn't know there were tears staining his cheeks until he felt a gentle hand wiping them away. Cameron was on one side of him, Shane on the other, and suddenly he didn't care about anything except touching them. When he turned his face away from Shane and looked at Cameron, he gasped. "Holy..." he began, breathless, "you're a...a shifter." Before his eyes was a beautiful woman with long blond hair. He began to laugh out of utter release. "It's alright. I'm...I didn't...well...I did in away but at least you're..."

\* \* \* \*

Shane took Caden's chin in his hands and turned his face to him. "You still got a long way to go, Wolff. You're missing the point here."

"I...what?"

"You're a shifter too. You've been neutered, vaccinated at birth not to shift," Shane said,

releasing his chin.

He laughed. "That's a good one."

"You do realise that everyone on Gender X once shifted?" Cameron pointed out.

"Yes, a few generations back before the aliens came and treated the..."

"Don't say sickness," Shane snapped. "You, I'm afraid, are the damaged one, not us. There were no aliens, Caden. We did it to ourselves. Some people suddenly wanted power, so they found a vaccine which would neuter shifters, force them into male or female form, and socialise us into rigid scripts, and make us homophobic."

Caden narrowed his eyes. "That's ridiculous. The aliens recognized some abnormality and...it was in the atmosphere. They said that..."

"You've been lied to, darling." Cameron touched his hair. "And you know it, deep down, as do those desperate souls lost in the inner city. You felt it when we touched you, when we fucked you. It's the only way we have to connect our brethren from Gender X with their true..."

"Stop," he said softly.

Cameron stood up. She motioned to Shane. "Let him rest now. I'll go and pick up Hart."

Shane nodded, indicating that they should lower Caden's legs. Cameron agreed and in a few minutes, Caden's legs were once again spread wide and hooked to the bed posts, rather than

being suspended in mid-air. Caden barely noticed. He was being pulled into a gentle and dreamed filled sleep.

\* \* \* \*

Hart said his goodbyes to Delica and followed Cameron to the vehicle. Cameron waved to the female, and pushed the automatic controls to steer them home.

Hart held his breath. He kept his eyes on Cameron, who was dressed casually in a pale pink mini-skirt and a floral blouse which dipped open to show a healthy amount of cleavage. He was dying to ask her for details but he didn't dare.

When the vehicle stopped in front of the little house, Cameron turned to him. "We're not sure how it went."

"What do you mean?"

"He fought us at first of course, and his body responded, but I'm not sure he is convinced of what he truly is. He seems very resistant to the..." She paused. "We're thinking maybe you can do the rest."

"Me?" His eyes opened. "He's probably very angry with me right now."

She giggled. "That could be, but he's still tied up so there's little he can do about it. His bark is much worse than his bite."

Hart grinned. "I suppose. What should I do?"

"Follow your instincts." She got out of the vehicle and walked into the house. Shane was lying on the sofa, half asleep, dressed in jeans and an oversized t-shirt. Cameron motioned to him. "Come on. Let's go for a ride, handsome."

Shane got up off the sofa and stretched. He glanced at Hart, then reached out and touched his shoulder. "Your turn," he said, and followed Cameron outside.

\* \* \* \*

Hart stood tentatively in front of the bedroom door. It wasn't fear which held him back. He had never been afraid of Caden, even when he wasn't tied down. Never once had he ever imagined that Caden would hurt him, at least not physically. But he could hurt him in far worse ways; destroy him even, with his words, with his rejection. He didn't know why or how he had fallen in love with Caden Wolff, he just knew he had, and that love couldn't be denied from the first moment Caden had touched him.

Hart sucked in some breath, and pushed the door open. He took one step, then two, landing him in the room just inside the door.

\* \* \* \*

Cameron walked along the edge of the small

settlement, her hand in Shane's. Shane looked deep in thought as he looked out at the purple horizon. "You ever get tired?"

"Sure," she said. "Everyone gets..."

"No, that's not what I mean," Shane replied, releasing her hand and sinking down to the ground. He sat, stretching his long legs out in the graham, which was a coarse grass-like substance which grew wild on the planet. "I mean, do you ever get tired of trying to convince people of the truth?"

She sighed. "Sometimes," she said, sitting down beside him. "Usually, we're successful."

"But what does it...I mean, in the end, does it matter?"

"It does for the people we reach. And they reach others, re-educate others."

"But don't you feel burdened with it all?"

She reached out for his hand. "Yes, but when it works, I have such a sense of happiness...accomplishment. And we do it together and sometimes...most of the time, it's fun. Didn't you enjoy yourself with Caden Wolff today?" She lifted an eyebrow, and began to undo the buttons of her blouse.

Shane watched as her full breasts came into view. She tweaked her soft brown nipples. Instantly they hardened, becoming diamond nubs of need. "I want some beautiful breasts to play

with," she whispered, placing her tongue in Shane's ear.

Shane closed his eyes and began to shift, allowing his female form to immerge as he reached out and rolled his thumb over one of her nipples.

She moaned, straddling Shane now, pulling the t-shirt over her head, exposing her smaller, yet beautiful tits with their already hard stiff peaks. Cameron grabbed both of Shane's palm-sized breasts in her hands and kneaded them, moving her fingers over the hard nipples at the same time. Shane let her head go back, a tongue smoothing over her lips. Cameron moved her large breasts forward, one hand on Shane's neck now she pressed her head towards one nipple. "Suck it," she urged. "Lick it. Make it ache."

Shane immediately flicked her tongue over Cameron's right nipple, moaning as Cameron captured both of her nipples in between two fingers and tugged. "God, I wish I had clamps," Cameron moaned, as Shane sucked more of her tit into her mouth. "I'd love to bind your breasts right now, torment your nipples until you screamed."

Shane transferred her mouth to Cameron's left breast, uttering another deep moan as he felt her redouble her efforts to torment her nipples.

"They are so hard," Cameron moaned, licking

one then the other. "I love their shape, so firm."

"I love yours," Shane said, pinching both of her nipples hard. "They're so big, and they move and bounce and God...you turn me on. I want to fuck you," Shane breathed, desperate to undo the fastenings on her jeans as Cameron got up and slid her mini-skirt down over her hips. Shane got up on her knees and began to suck and lick her engorged clit.

"Oh shit, stop," Cameron moaned. "Look at me. I'm wet. I'm ready." She dropped to her knees, then fell back on her ass in the graham, spreading her thighs. She looked in Shane's eyes. "Grow a cock already, darling, and take me for a ride."

\* \* \* \*

Hart inched closer to the bed. He could hardly breathe. Caden lay there spread eagle, completely naked. Lust took hold of him so tight that he almost bolted and ran. He felt his balls tighten in his pants. He literally felt himself begin to salivate. *Caden*. He had no right to touch him. He was a lowly shifter...a defunct one at that, and Caden was...well he was...everything. His hand trembled suddenly as he reached out and lightly brushed his fingertips against the flushed hollow of his cheek.

Caden moaned slightly in his sleep, and Hart

jumped back a little. He held his breath as Caden's eyes fluttered open and he looked at him in the semi-darkness of the room. "Hart," he managed, his voice struggling to come out of its sleepiness.

"Cadan, I'm sorry," he whispered.

"What?"

"I'm sorry," he said, raising his voice an octave. God, he loved him so much. He bit his bottom lip. If there was even the slightest hope that Caden could ever love him that way, then he wanted to know. He had to know, especially now that there was a real chance they could be together.

Caden was quiet. He lay there watching him, those black eyes calm.

Hart tried not to let his eyes stray to his naked body. He kept his eyes fixed on his face.

"Let me go, Hart," he said suddenly, his eyes beseeching him. "Untie me."

"I can't," he swallowed, shaking his head. He felt a dampness in his groin. Oh God. "We need you."

"We? So, you are a part of this nonsense."

"It's not nonsense, Caden. It's the truth." He had to get the courage to touch him. He had to know. He took a step closer. He closed his eyes and reached out to touch his sex.

Caden audibly sucked in a breath. "Don't," he said.

"Why not? It is because you don't like me or



because you like me too much?" He could hardly believe that he'd said that. When Caden didn't answer, he let his fingers curve around his sex, then tighten.

Caden moved his head to the side, and dug it into the pillow.

Hart stifled a moan and lowered his mouth to that luscious sex. He let his tongue explore it for a moment, then splayed his fingers up over his chest as he took his cock into his mouth. Hart sunk down on the side of the bed, one hand around the base of Caden's cock which was now lengthening in his mouth, and one hand playing casually with his left nipple.

Caden's hips jerked forward, and Hart widened his jaw, swallowing more of him. "Yes," Caden hissed ferociously, "yes."

Hart pinched his nipple without mercy now and concentrated on pleasuring that cock. He was close to bringing him off but suddenly he wanted to fuck him. He wanted to possess him. His own cock was clear to bursting out of his pants.

He pulled his mouth away from his cock, licking his lips. He stood up and took off his pants, ignoring Caden's pleas to finish what he started. "I want to fuck you," he said, meeting Caden's startled eyes. "I'm going to fuck you."

He crawled up on the bed, and knelt between Caden's open legs. He grabbed his muscular

calves and pulled them down some which allowed him enough leverage to force his knees up, giving him access to his ass.

Hart literally licked his lips as he parted his ass cheeks.

"Hart," Caden said, causing him to look up, meet those beautiful eyes, "I..."

"You what, my gorgeous hunter? You're scared to want me? Know this, I love you, with everything in me, I'm yours, and right now all I want is to make you mine, truly, totally mine."

\* \* \* \*

Shane pulled his cock out of her, and Cameron lifted her hands over her head. Shane reached up and slapped her breasts back and forth, moving his palm across her nipples a few times. Cameron moaned, thrusting out her large breasts, her nipples hard. They had no idea they were being watched until they heard a voice say, "I want to play too."

Cameron and Shane both looked up to see Jack standing there. He held a bag in his hand. "I brought toys."

Shane rolled off of Cameron and smiled up at him. "We didn't invite you."

"Yes, but you owe me." He gave Shane a determined look.

"He's right," Cameron said. She was still horny and although Shane was better at fucking, Jack's cock was nice and thick and he was rubbing it quite consciously now. He also loved to play with her breasts. "We do owe him. What toys do you have there, baby?"

Shane smiled at Cameron. "Cameron loves two men on one girl action."

"Me too," Jack groaned, undoing his pants. "I'm up for a little S and M. How about you, Shane? Should we bind her and make her our slut?"

"Then we get your ass," Shane looked at Jack. "Will you be our slut, Jackie boy?"

Cameron smiled like a cat. "Ooh, yes, and I get to watch. Two hot men fucking...um...just the dessert I require after being dominated." She stretched out again, sticking out her tits so that Jack could have a great view, spreading her legs wide. "What 'cha want, Jack?" she teased.

He licked his lips, naked now; he was literally foaming at the mouth. "What 'cha say, Shane, we stretch her out over that large bolder, tie her down, bind her tits...play with them and then fuck the shit out of her?"

Shane stood up and smiled. "Fuck her both ways," he glanced over at Cameron. "Would you like that?"

Cameron put on her little girl look as Jack

reached down and picked her up in his arms. "Please don't, don't rape me." She caused her bottom lip to tremble, then pressed her face into Jack's chest and smiled...a little diversion. She was looking forward to it...tremendously. God, she hoped Jack had nipple clamps in that bag.

\* \* \* \*

Caden had never seen Hart this way. When it came right down to it, he had never seen Hart anything but submissive. He felt silky smooth fingers flirt down over his thighs, felt his erect cock nudging his ass, and he saw arousal in his eyes, arousal that was seriously turning him on. One hand came to stroke his slick and wanton cock now. Hart's other hand was guiding his erection into Caden's opening. "I won't hurt you," Hart told him softly. Caden noticed that Hart was shaking so hard he could hardly get the words out. "The feeling of being inside of you," he choked, his throat working, his eyes boring into his, "I won't be able to hold back once I'm inside of you."

Caden held his breath. "You're so beautiful," he told him. "Don't. Don't hold back." He closed his eyes as he felt the tip of his cock push back the first set of muscles. He grunted, feeling himself being opened, his head pushing back into the

pillow.

Their voices mingled together now in some kind of disoriented harmony as Caden felt Hart push up inside of him. His cautious diligence was being lost and he shouted something and began to ride him.

Caden wanted to touch him but he wasn't able to. He could only watch as Hart pushed in and out of his body, one hand moving over the flesh of his leg, the other hand rather brutally brandishing his cock.

The pleasure shot through him, and he could think of nothing except how happy he was that Hart was in ecstasy, that Hart was safe...that Hart was inside of him. He pumped out his joy as Hart gave a shout and filled him with his own particular bliss.

He felt Hart's body cover his, his hands moving everywhere, exploring every inch of him, and he moaned deeply. He closed his eyes, and said his name, then, he felt him reach up and undo the cuffs.

\* \* \* \*

Cameron was stretched out naked on her back across the rock, her wrists securely tied together over her head. Jack had wrapped a red silky tie around one breast, then looped it around the other

which made her tits stick out prominently. He had played unceasingly with each nipple, nipping at them and suckling, before applying the tightest clamps Cameron had ever experienced. *Um*. Shane had been very busy between her thighs. He was a champion at oral sex. It didn't matter what form she was in. They were both driving her out of her mind at the moment. Jack was talking dirty to her, still squeezing her breasts, pulling on those clamps, making her moan. She had had multiple orgasms, and if someone didn't fuck her soon, she was prepared to murder both of them.

"I'm ready to fuck you," Jack said, looking down into Cameron's eyes. "Shane, what do you say? A team effort?"

"Umm, the thought of that." Cameron squirmed on the rock.

Jack took her arm and pulled her up. Shane got off his knees, and gave her a lecherous grin. "Back or front?" Jack asked Shane, still squeezing Cameron's breasts.

"Back," Shane said, as he turned her around so that her ass was facing him. "Let me start, get the rhythm and then you follow."

"Suits me," Jack growled, positioning his cock at Cameron's dripping cunt. "She's more than ready." He laughed, dipping two fingers up inside of her as Shane grabbed her hips and began to enter her from behind.

Cameron swooned. Her hands were still over her head, connected together, and the silk ties were still binding her abused tits. The nipple clamps clanged together, and she felt wanton and very aroused. Shane had his cock in her now and began to thrust. Jack had captured her left nipple clamp in his teeth as he listened for Shane to shout, "Go." When he did, Jack grabbed her swaying hips and rammed his erection up inside of her. They got a real movement going, and Cameron was in seventh heaven. "Oh God," she cried out, "yes, yes....God..." and she came with several shuddering orgasms before the boys were even halfway though.

Jack was sweating all over her and his head fell on his chest as he shouted his release. Shane moaned something against her ear and came quietly, reaching his hands around to the front of her to cover her tits with his palms, yanking on those clamps.

Cameron licked her lips and leaned back against the rock. Shane leaned down and kissed her forehead, then untied her wrists so that she could lower her hands. She unwrapped her breasts, removed the clamps, and sighed with contentment.

Jack had lowered himself to the ground to rest.

Cameron closed her eyes, and shifted. She glanced at Jack. "I want to fuck you too, you

mind? I thought I wanted to watch, but I think I've changed my mind." Shane gave him a grateful look; Cameron knew that he was tired.

Jack met Cameron's eyes. "A special treat. Two gorgeous studs. Who in the hell would mind! Where do you want me?"

"Why don't you lean over that bolder there?" Cameron suggested, standing up.

Shane was masturbating, trying to stiffen his cock. Cameron smiled at him. "Need some help, baby?"

He nodded.

Cameron knelt down and took his cock in his hand. He began to suck it. Jack went to sit down on the rock, watching. A few minutes later, Shane was more than up for the task.

Jack turned around and lowered himself over the rock, ass in the air.

Shane walked over and ran his hands over his ass. He slapped it a few times "We might need your help with something," he said, opening his cheeks.

Cameron ran his finger over the opening.

Jack grunted.

"Yeah," Cameron said, inserting the tip of his index finger while Shane slid the head of his cock up the length of Jack's crack.

"Ah...beautiful," he moaned. "What? What do you need?"



"A space craft, fairly large," Cameron said, pushing his finger deeper inside of Jack's anus.

"Space craft?" He croaked. "Oh God, God," he moaned.

"I want to fuck you, Jack," Shane said.

Cameron withdrew his fingers and Shane placed the head of his cock at Jack's anus. He didn't enter him.

"He wants to fuck you," Cameron sighed, "but we need this space craft, and it's hard to fuck when you're worried about..."

"For ah... how long?" Jack asked, breathless.

Shane pushed a little deeper, past the first ring of muscles.

"I don't know," Cameron said, running his hand over Shane's fair hair, capturing his mouth in a deep kiss.

Shane moaned, and pushed deeper into Jack.

Jack let out a cry. "How long and to take...oh Fuck...ah...yes, baby...baby...deeper..."

"Not long," Shane grunted, beginning to thrust, letting his head go back.

Cameron kissed him again, long, deep, heart stopping kisses. He ran his hand down Shane's chest, played with one of his nipples.

Shane moaned again, moving faster, rocking his hips, burrowing deeper into Jack's ass.

Cameron's hand parted Shane's ass. He rammed two fingers up inside of him and began

to finger fuck him.

Shane slammed harder into Jack.

Cameron continued to kiss Shane, his mouth, his throat and his nipples, fingers moving frantically up inside of him.

Jack was shooting all over the rock. "Yes, yes, yes!"

Shane pulled back. Cameron dropped to his knees and took his cock in his mouth. Within seconds, Shane shot in his mouth.

"So," Cameron said, getting up from his knees, after it appeared that both Shane and Jack had recovered, "do we get our craft, Jack?"

Jack brought his heaving chest to under control, and wiped the sweat off his forehead. "Fuck me again like that, and you can have anything you want." He smiled.

Shane smiled. "Can we rest for a few hours first?"

Jack grinned and stood up. "Sure. I'll expect you tomorrow night."

Shane held out his hand. "It's a deal."

Jack shook it, then blew him a kiss, and winked.

\* \* \* \*

Hart felt Caden's arms wrap around him and he settled down into them. God, he felt good. He couldn't believe that he was holding him like this.

Caden kissed the top of his head, moved his hands over his forearms, and Hart pressed his lips to his chest.

"I'm tired," he murmured sleepily. "I want to pee but I don't have the energy," he murmured, turning on his side."

"I'm tired too, but I'm too damn happy to sleep," Hart said, kissing his jaw lightly.

Caden muttered something, squeezed his arm, then yawned. Hart watched him as he fell off to sleep, his chest expanding and lowering peacefully. There was so much they needed to talk about, but it would have to wait.

\* \* \* \*

Hart laid there for the longest time just watching him in his sleep. He slept like a baby. When he heard a slight noise, he looked up to see Cameron standing in the door. He was in male form, and smiling at him.

"Is he sleeping?" Cameron asked softly.

"Yes. I took off all the cuffs. I hope that's okay."

"He didn't try to take off?"

Hart shook his head. "Wait, I'll come out. I don't want to wake him up."

Cameron nodded, and left the room.

Shane was sitting beside Cameron on the sofa when Hart padded out into the living area in his

bare feet. He had slipped on a stray terry robe he found hanging on the bathroom door. He sat down, and then with a slight shiver, he shifted into female form.

Shane was eating something which looked gooey and decadent, and Cameron reached over and tore off a piece and popped that into his mouth. They both looked up suddenly, noticing the shift. Together, they said in amazement, "you can shift."

Hart nodded. "It just happened. I'm okay now. Don't ask why. I don't really understand it. I just knew suddenly that I could. What is it you're eating?"

"Ambrosia," Shane muttered, "want a piece?"

Hart shook his head. "I've had ambrosia. That couldn't compare." He smiled, placing a hand over his chest.

Cameron laughed.

"So," Shane grinned. "What happened?"

"We...well...he didn't fight me. I...took him. I took his body and I..." He paused. "I'm still alive."

Cameron laughed, clapping his hands. "Good."

"He didn't say he loved me."

"Give him time," Shane said, taking another bite of his chewy delight.

"He did say that I was beautiful though," Hart beamed.

"You are beautiful," Shane chanted.

"Did you talk to him about...?"

"We didn't talk," Hart flushed, "much. Did he believe you about you know...him being a shifter himself originally and...?"

"I don't think so," Shane said, shaking his head. "But I think he is in touch with his own feelings now. He won't deny what he wants in bed anymore. As for buying the other stuff, only time will tell."

"He doesn't know that you want his help to rescue the others?" Hart looked worried.

"No. But he'll help us," Cameron said. He looked at Shane. "Should we tie him up again?"

Shane shook his head. "No. He's not going anywhere anyway. And we can't force him to help us. He can refuse and..."

"Help you to do what?" A voice suddenly asked. And there stood Caden Wolff, wearing his black leather pants, shirtless, his long black hair in disarray.

"I didn't recognise you without your hat," Shane said, with a wicked gleam in his eye.

Caden lifted an eyebrow, then, he glanced at Hart. "You're back?"

"I seem to be," he shrugged, shifting again into male form. He didn't seem to be able to stay in female form when Caden's beautiful dark eyes looked at him, but at least he knew now he could

shift again.

Hart's heart was aching. Caden was so beautiful, but now he looked pretty much like the Caden Wolff he'd always remembered, strong, defiant, and intimidating.

\* \* \* \*

Shane ran his eyes over him. God, was this man to never cease having this kind of effect on him? He was sexually exhausted, but still his cock was beginning to pulse in his jeans. "We need your help, Caden," Shane said, meeting those coal black eyes. "We need you to help us rescue those shifters from Rufus's club."

There was complete silence, all eyes on Caden Wolff. He moved his neck stiffly, muscles flexing across his chest, in his arms. Everyone held their breath. Then he said, "Is that the reason you brought me here?"

"One of them," Cameron said. "The other one was Hart."

Caden looked at Hart for a moment, then away. "You expect me to take all those shifters out of there? Most of them, I brought there myself...was paid for it."

Shane spoke now. "That's precisely why you should be the one to take them out of there." He met his dark eyes. They were unreadable and that

put Shane ill at ease. Had they made a mistake? Had Hart released him prematurely?

Caden lifted his hand and rubbed the back of his neck. He narrowed his eyes. "You expect me to do this alone?"

"No," Cameron said. "We'll help you, and we may be able to get others."

"There are seven-teen...six-teen now with Hart gone," Caden said.

Shane stood up. "We can get a big space craft."

"We might be able to get some mercenaries," Cameron piped in.

Shane met her eyes. "Tavish?"

"Why not?" he grinned. "Surely he's recruited a few by now. He said to contact him anytime."

"Gender X militia won't sit by and just let us take them," Caden said. "The government makes a lot of revenue off the shifters."

Shane nodded. "We understand if you don't want to ..."

"That's why," he said, walking deeper into the room, "we need a plan."

Cameron's face broke into a smile.

Shane hardly dared breathe. "Agreed," he said.

Hart sat in the corner quietly. He seemed surprised when Caden said, "there are other shifters in private houses, about twenty two, last time I counted."

Cameron clutched Caden's arm. "Do you know

each location?"

He nodded. "I was appointed to keep track of them, check to make sure that each one was where the owners reported them to be, and to capture any runaways. If we go in to get the ones at the club, couldn't we take them all?"

Shane blew out some air. "Sounds good, but it's not doable?"

Caden sat down in a chair next to Cameron. "Look, we're no match for the militia on Gender X. If they catch us, we're dead, so we might as well go for broke, the way I see it."

Hart stood up suddenly, and tore out of the room.

Caden narrowed his eyes. "Did I say something wrong?"

Cameron reached over, took his hand. "He is crazy in love with you. You didn't even acknowledge him when you came in the room."

"I think that thing about us being dead if we're caught might have gotten to him," Shane said.

"He's not very strong. He's been so sheltered and then..." Cameron swallowed.

"I..." Caden began, running a hand through his long silky strands of hair, "I'm a little insecure myself right now. I'm overwhelmed. I..."

"Tell us how you're feeling," Shane said, reaching over and touching his cheek.

"I don't know what to make of this story you



told me, and I feel it in my gut to be true, but my mind can't accept it. I'm having a hard time dealing with the fact that..." he paused, then continued, "that everything you did to me in that room...well, I've been taught that it's wrong, and yet," he licked his lips, "I want more, and more." He met Shane's eyes hotly.

Shane leaned over and placed his hand behind Caden's head. He kissed him deeply. He didn't see Cameron's expression until he released him. His mouth tightened, and he stood up abruptly, announcing that 'they all should get some sleep.' "We can continue this discussion in the morning. And, Caden, no matter how you're feeling, you should be talking to Hart, not us."

Caden nodded. He stood up and excused himself. "Goodnight," he said.

"Goodnight," Shane replied, watching him leave. When he had left the room, he turned to Cameron. "That was harsh."

"What was harsh?" he shrugged.

"What's wrong with you? Don't you have any compassion? Caden's world has been turned upside down and..."

"Well, why don't you go and turn it right side up for him then?" Cameron sneered, and left the room.

\* \* \* \*

Hart was snivelling a little when Caden came back into the room. He lay on his side on the far side of the bed, knees raised. "Hey," Caden said softly, sitting down on the other end of the bed.

"I can go. I won't sleep here if you would prefer that I..."

Caden got into bed. He placed a hand on Hart's shoulder. "No. It's okay. Stay with me," he invited. He moved closer to him, putting his arm around him. "I'm sorry."

"For what? Oh God, Caden, you don't need to be sorry for anything. I'm..."

Caden rolled Hart onto his back. He looked down into his eyes. "Now, one thing, if you're going to be with me, you got to stop apologising for everything. I'm no angel. Sometimes I'm wrong." Caden traced his cheek with his finger. "You are so beautiful. I can't believe that you're in love with me, after all the sins I've committed in my life. What did I do to deserve your love?"

Hart bit his bottom lip. The tears slid down his face. He wrapped his arms around his neck and pulled him close. He kissed his ear. "Caden, I have so much living to do, so much to learn. I know I've missed so much. Teach me, baby. Teach me." Hart's mouth moved to his. Caden kissed him deeply, his hands moving down his flanks, then his mouth making its way over his chest, then to

his sex. When he took Hart's erection into his mouth, he moaned with pleasure. He tasted heaven, and he wanted more.

\* \* \* \*

"You do realise that Caden's in love with Hart," Cameron said, yanking the blankets off Shane and rolling in them.

Shane laughed. "Maybe so, but freezing me to death won't help that situation."

"You're impossible. Kissing him like that. What in hell possessed you to..."

"You're jealous," Shane accused, laughing again.

"Oh, this is one big fucking joke to you, isn't it?" Cameron growled, slamming his fist on the bed, and sitting up.

Shane sprang, falling on top of him, tackling him on the bed. "Yes," Shane muttered, trying to kiss his mouth, "it's one big joke, because I love you. You have my heart, forever and ever, and so what if my cock gets hard for Caden Wolff, if you were honest with yourself, you would have grabbed him and kissed him."

Cameron's struggling died down, and he moaned a little when Shane's mouth captured his. "Now, I'm going to remind you, baby," Shane said, ripping away the blankets, and hoisting

Cameron's legs over his shoulders, "just who you belong to, and just where my cock belongs. Any questions?"

Both of them were heaving with unspent passion. When Shane pulled his legs up straight in the air and began to fuck him, Cameron cried out his name, and Shane slammed him deeper, crying out his in return.

\* \* \* \*

Down the hallway, Hart came in Caden's mouth, his hands tearing at his hair, and Caden rested his cheek on Hart's sticky sex. They both looked at each other and chuckled softly when they heard the two men in the other room. "Looks like we're not the only ones not sleeping," Caden remarked.

Hart stroked his hair. "I love you, and you don't have to say it back, baby."

Caden met his eyes. He kissed his sex, then, began to lick the length of it. "Oh but I do have to say it," he replied, "because it's true. I love you back, Hart. It's the reason I came after you. I didn't want to take you back to Rufus."

"Would you have?" Hart asked him.

Caden lifted his eyes to his. "I don't know. I really don't know. I don't think so. I have to be honest. I closed my eyes deliberately to what Rufus was doing to the Shifters at the Club. I

didn't want to know. When I saw those marks on your back, I..."

Hart made a soothing sound in his throat. "Don't think about that."

"I have to. I have to own up to what I've done. Shane and Cameron are giving me a chance to make amends. I have to do this."

"Okay," Hart said, choked with emotion. "Just sleep now. We'll talk about it later."

\* \* \* \*

Cameron stayed cuddled in bed with Shane until well past ten. When he got up, he went to shower, and smiled when he felt Shane slip in behind him. Cameron threw his arms back over his head and wrapped them around Shane's neck, pulling him forward, and then shifted to his female form. Shane held her for awhile, kissing her shoulder, then reached his hands up to cup her breasts. He played with them for a few minutes, tweaking her nipples, then moving a hand between her legs to bring her to orgasm with his fingers. "Fuck me," she urged, spreading her legs and leaning forward against the wall. He plunged into her moist cavern from behind, pumping slowly, sensuously, moving his cock inside of her. "If you want to fuck Caden, that's okay," Cameron breathed. "I want to watch if it happens. Promise? Promise you won't

fuck him without me there?"

"I won't," Shane groaned. "I won't fuck him without your seal of approval, okay?"

Cameron screamed out her acquiesce, and shuddered in orgasm, turning in Shane's arm to kiss his sweet mouth. "I love you."

"I love you," Shane said softly, kissing her mouth.

\* \* \* \*

Hart was sitting on Caden's knee when Cameron and Shane emerged from the shower. "Ah, that's cute," Cameron said with a grin.

This seemed to embarrass Caden some because he tipped Hart off his knee.

"It's okay," Cameron grinned. "It's sweet."

Caden twisted his mouth into a semblance of a smile. "Sweet," he repeated, lifting an eyebrow.

Hart laughed. "Caden is still so damn male, and it's okay, I like it, I like it a lot." He met Caden's eyes, who grinned at him.

"Me too," Shane piped him, winking at Caden.

"You're not going to tie me to the bed again, are you?" He was teasing, flirting even.

"Not yet," Shane replied, but his eyes were filled with promise.

Cameron cleared her throat. "We've discovered that Shane is obsessed with you, Caden."

Hart looked alarmed.

"Don't worry," Cameron interjected. "It's only a temporary fixation with Caden's very masculine exterior. He's not after his heart."

"No," Shane said, "I'm after something far more ah...fundamental than that." He howled with laughter when he saw Hart reach over and grab Caden's hand.

"I think he's talking about my cock," Caden said humorously.

"I don't think I like that much," Hart muttered.

"Me neither," Cameron said, "but boys will be boys," she shrugged. "I need to call Tavish," she said.

"If I recall, you had quite a hard on for him," Shane pointed out.

"Still do." Cameron licked her lips and left the room.

"The mercenary?" Caden lifted an eyebrow.

"Yes. From Gender X. Maybe you know each other? Tavish Lerue, tall, dark hair, blue eyes, body to die for."

"Sounds familiar," Caden said, glancing down at an automatic writing board he held in his hands.

"What are you writing?"

"I'm copying the map of the club, trying to remember all the exits."

Shane nodded. "Good idea." He came to sit

beside him. "Fill me in."

\* \* \* \*

Tavish Lerue came up on the picture phone clear as day. He looked luscious as usual. "Cameron!" he cried out. "How are you doing, baby?"

"Fine, fine. How are you?"

"Good."

"Where's Cassandra?"

"On assignment on WellwornX."

"Poor baby. On your own?"

"More or less," he grinned.

That smile still knocked her on her ass. "Are you busy?"

"I'm in between missions. What can I do for you? You guys in trouble again? How's Shane?"

"Fine. Shane is great. And no, we're not in trouble. We could use a hand though."

"Doing what?"

"Rescuing some shifters."

"Rescuing them from where?"

"Gender X."

His face changed. "Cameron, I..."

"I know, it's dangerous, but we found a slew being kept as sex slaves at a club. It's legal now, out in the open, to use them as prostitutes."

He sighed.

"We have Caden Wolff. Know him?"



"Caden Wolff?"

"You do know him."

"Only by reputation. Government assigned hunter."

"He's just taken his retirement."

"If I remember rightly, Caden Wolff is rather young for retirement. Some ah...encouragement from you and Shane maybe?"

She laughed. "He's going to help us bring the shifters back to Melage Flat."

Tavish rubbed his chin.

"I know it's dangerous, but if you have any friends who might want to..."

"You know I love a challenge." His face broke into a smile. "I'll be there, along with anyone who doesn't care if they get their butts shot off."

"Just smile at 'em, honey, and they'll go anywhere with you."

Tavish grinned. "See you, Sweetie."

"Oh yeah, I'll see you, all of you, once you get here."

Tavish issued Cameron a wicked wink, and then disappeared from the screen.

\* \* \* \*

Caden and Shane had their heads bent together when Cameron came back into the room. "Progress report," she said, "or have you been up

to other stuff?"

Shane looked up at her with a grin. "Down, girl. Actually, Caden has some great ideas about how we can get into the club and take out the shifters."

"Good," Cameron said, walking over and absently stroking Caden's silky, dark hair. "Where's Hart?"

"Took a walk," Caden said, glancing up at her with a smile.

"I got Tavish." Cameron met Shane's eyes.

Shane jumped to his feet. "Really? Shit. That's great." He picked her up in his arms and spun her around. "How?"

She slapped him away. "I just asked him. And he's bringing others, although I don't know how many."

"Perfect."

"Tavish Lerue?" Caden asked, looking from one to another.

"Yes, the mercenary from Sequal6 we told you about, a former Gender X boy."

"Drop dead gorgeous," Cameron emphasized.

"Is he still with Cassandra?" Shane asked.

"Yes, but she's on a mission."

"Poor, lonely boy." Shane grinned.

Cameron smiled back. "I doubt he's using his hand."

"He's got some rep," Caden announced.

"In more ways than one." Shane laughed.

"A Merc on Sequal Six," Caden remarked.

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"I think I saw him once."

"Well, if he saw you, he remembers." Cameron grinned. "You're a little hard to forget."

Caden glanced up at her, and grinned, and Cameron leaned down and gently touched her lips to his.

Shane gave Cameron a mocking look. Cameron laughed. "Well, he is very ah...hard to resist, pardon the pun."

Shane cleared his throat, hiding a smile. "When can we expect Tavish?"

"Soon, I think."

"Should we advise the counsel?"

"Well, let's talk with Jack first."

"Good timing. We're going to Jack's tonight, remember?"

Caden bent his dark head back to his work, tracing the different escape routes in the Club with his finger.

"Oh yeah," Cameron laughed. "Don't worry. We'll get Jack to let Tavish through."

\* \* \* \*

Jack watched the two luscious women as they stripped off their clothes and he knew that he

didn't stand a chance in hell. Whatever Cameron and Shane wanted from him, they'd get. He'd already started working on securing them a bigger space craft. The other counsel members were watching him suspiciously, wondering what he was up to this time. It wasn't the first time he'd gone out on a limb for these shifters. But as he watched Cameron shake her luscious breasts in his face, and felt Shane press him back on the bed, and straddle him, pressing her wet vagina over his lips, he knew that any trouble he could get into was well worth it.

\* \* \* \*

Hart walked along the road back towards Shane and Cameron's little house. He was deep in thought. He loved Caden so much, but he knew that it wasn't going to be easy. He was a shifter, and he didn't really have a right to be jealous if Shane wanted Caden. But he was. He didn't want Shane to make love with Caden. He wanted him all to himself. If only he had the courage to tell Caden that, but he had been taught all his life to put others' needs before his own. How did he learn to do it differently?

When he walked in the room, Caden was standing at the window, looking outside. He was wearing those tight black leather pants, his long

hair tied back from his face. He wasn't wearing any shirt. To say he looked beautiful was an understatement, to say that he wanted to possess him, take him down on the floor and fuck him, make him promise to never let anyone else touch him as long as they lived...well at that moment, he had all he could do not to do just that.

Caden turned around now, giving him one of those smiles. He never smiled much back on Gender X, or when he did, it was more of a smirk. Maybe he didn't have anything to smile about. Lately, he'd been smiling with his entire mouth, and it transformed his face. "Hi," he said. "I've missed you. Where have you been?"

"I..." Hart began. He met his eyes, clenching his fists at his side.

"You what?" Caden raised an eyebrow.

"Goddamn it," he burst out, marching up to Caden and punching in the arm.

Caden blinked. He laughed slightly. "What was that for?"

Hart hit him again, this time in the stomach, and then shoved him.

Caden stumbled back a little, then regained his balance. "Okay," he said. "I'm not reading you. You're upset with me. What did I do?"

"You're just you," Hart grumbled, turning his back. "I...you're too much for me."

"Hart?" A hand came down on his shoulder.

"Speak some language I can understand, please."

Hart turned around, searching his face. "Do you know that from the moment I saw you, you were everything I ever wanted?"

Caden smiled faintly. "I think you told me that already."

"I don't want anyone else touching you except me." His voice tried to sound hard suddenly, but he knew it came off weak and trembling. "No one. Not Shane or Cameron or...just me. Is that understood?" He lifted his finger for emphasis and pointed it at him.

Caden was trying not to laugh. "Hart, I..."

Hart growled with frustration. "You think I'm kidding but...damn you..." He walled up his fists and punched him again with both hands at the same time.

Caden grabbed his wrists and held him steady. He sobered. "Alright," he said.

Hart relaxed and Caden released him. Hart nodded. "Alright."

"For now. We'll talk about it later. Now," Caden grinned, cocking his dark head to the side, "after all that abuse, do I get a kiss?"

Hart was melting. He allowed Caden to draw him into his arms. He wrapped his arms around his naked waist, ran his hands up his back and tried to calm his racing heart as Caden bent his mouth to his.

\* \* \* \*

Cameron was half in and half out of her clothes when her teleportable rang. Tavish's handsome face appeared.

"We're on our way," he announced.

Cameron played with her hair, trying to make it look presentable. "Fine. Where are you, handsome?"

"Ah, the radar says about an hour away from Malage Flat. "Got some bad news. I could only get one man."

Cameron sighed. "Well, better one than none."

"Are we going to be allowed access?"

Jack managed to stand up. He glanced at Cameron, who in turn looked at him. "The best course might be for me to ready the craft I'm going to loan you...note the word loan," he emphasized.

Cameron gave him a sweet smile. "Why of course, darling," she interjected, waiting for him to finish his sentence.

"Have him wait outside the radar, chart one sixteenth thousand southwest. You can take the craft and meet him there. You're going to need more than one craft to bring back the shifters."

Shane had his hand on Cameron's shoulder. She grinned down at Tavish. "Hey, babe."

"Shane, my love. How are you?" Tavish asked.

"Fine, sweetie. Can't wait to see you."

"What have you ladies...ah...gents...ah, ladies been up to?" he asked comically.

They both laughed.

"Looks like you've just rolled out of bed." Tavish chuckled.

"Jealous?" Cameron cooed.

"Of course," Tavish replied.

"Jack says to navigate to the one sixteenth southwest corner and wait for us there," Cameron told him.

"Copy that, on my way," Tavish replied, and flashed off.

"Well," Shane said, "let's get back, grab Caden and Hart and get on the road. Jack, coming with us?" Shane asked.

"Who's going to prepare the counsel for your return?" he asked, struggling into his clothes.

"He's right," Cameron said, "we can't risk being turned back, not if we have Gender X troops on our tail."

"Are you sure you're going to be able to handle the super sonar zoom craft. It's nothing like you're used to?" Jack looked concerned.

"We're pretty sure Caden can handle it," Shane smiled.

Jack nodded.

"Okay," Shane added. "Thanks for all your



help, Jack."

"My pleasure," he grinned. "Really."

They all laughed.

Shane shifted back to male form, and he and Cameron left Jack, who immediately sat down and began to prepare a proposal for the committee.

\* \* \* \*

Shane and Cameron entered their dwelling, and immediately started to throw things together. Several times they called out to Caden and Hart, only to be met with silence. "Shit," Cameron said. "We have to move. Where are they?"

Shane shrugged. "Damned if I know. You finish up putting our stuff together and I'll go looking for them."

Cameron reached over and gave Shane a kiss. He smiled at her. "I love you, you know."

"Yes, I know," she grinned, then sobered. "It's not going to be easy. Tavish only got one guy to come along, and there is no way we're going to be able to get the shifters out who are in private homes."

"I know. Anyway. Go on. Find the boys. I need to change. I'm shifting to male. Everything is so much easier when you're a man on Gender X."

"Good idea," Shane said.

"Hurry up now, baby. We need our pilot."

\* \* \* \*

Caden's lips trailed up the length of Hart's calf and then past his knee. He spent a few minutes lazily licking the tender flesh of his inner thigh. When his tongue darted out to lick the head of his cock, Hart arched his back, pressing his sex against Caden's cheek. "What do you want?" Caden breathed. "Tell me. Tell me what you want?"

It was hard for him to demand anything sexually. No one had ever cared about his pleasure before. He tried to do as Caden told him, not think about whether Caden was enjoying himself, to think only of what he was feeling. "If you don't let me please you, I'll feel inadequate," Caden told him. "You don't want me to feel inadequate, do you?"

"God, you could never be inadequate," Hart told him. Then Caden led him outside and laid him down in that odd mix of grass and hay, under the azure sky. He watched as Caden removed first his own clothes, then Hart's.

Caden's tongue lapping at his cock now was driving him half crazy. He looked down at all that silky hair falling around his groin, and wondered how he had earned the right to be so happy.

Then he heard a voice calling somewhere.

"Caden? Hart? Where are you? We have to go."

Caden raised his head, looking around. Hart sat up on his elbows.

Shane appeared, looking rather frazzled. "Mercy, there you guys are." He stopped, smiled faintly. "And busy too."

Caden licked his lips. That simple motion almost caused Hart to blow his load right there. He tried to ignore the need.

"What's happening?" Caden jumped up, reaching for his pants. He was like a cat, a sleek, agile panther, his muscles tensed.

"Tavish is waiting for us outside the threshold. We'll meet his craft there. We thought it better than having them come inside. Less questions."

"Fine." Caden extended his hand and pulled Hart to his feet. "Let me grab my things and we'll be off." Caden followed Shane around front.

"Caden," Shane said, "we're going to have to get the shifters at the club and get out. Tavish only brought one man. It would be too risky to..."

Caden nodded. "Okay."

Hart was on his heels. "You're not going without me."

Caden looked at Shane, then back at Hart. "I was trying to come up with a plan where we wouldn't need you but..."

Hart put out a hand and touched his lips, which immediately silenced him. "I've been sheltered all

my life. It's time I saw the real world. Besides, I'm not letting you out of my sight." He smiled. "I need you."

Caden smiled. "Okay," he said softly. "It will be easier with you along. I might have a plan. But you do exactly as I tell you to do, and stay close." He squeezed his hand.

"Staying close to you is not a problem." Hart smirked.

\* \* \* \*

When Caden Wolff walked into the space craft Hangar, Jack didn't just do a double take, he did a triple. When Caden stepped into the craft and began to examine the controls, Jack glanced at Cameron and said, "Holy asteroid, where you been hiding him? That the breather you had in the back coming in?"

"Yep. Tasty, isn't he?" Cameron replied, helping Shane load the supplies in the hold.

Jack glanced up at an oblivious Caden through the front window who was busy preparing the craft for takeoff. "Tasty isn't the word. He belong to the blond baby face?"

"Yep," Shane said with a grunt, slamming the back door closed, and locking it.

"They're damn sweet together."

"Yep," Cameron said, reaching up and giving

Jack a quick kiss. "Imagine, Jack, having a whole planet full of shifters."

He smiled. "You do know how to get to me."

He laughed. "How is the proposal coming?"

"Don't worry. When you come back, you'll be allowed access. Just leave the counsel to me."

"The shifters will be eternally grateful," Cameron said, climbing into the craft.

"That's what I'm counting on," Jack said, raising a hand as Caden began to back the craft out of the hangar.

\* \* \* \*

"How come there's no one around?" Caden asked, as he lifted the craft up and off the runway.

"The hangar is out of the way," Shane said, strapping himself in and pulling Cameron down beside him. "At this time of day everyone is in the factory making coats."

"Oh, okay. I've set the course for the rendezvous with the Merc craft. We're going to have co-ordinate our landing on Gender X, fly below radar and land on the North side of the planet. It's the area of Gender X which receives the less surveillance."

"Doesn't that mean an extra six thousand star miles?" Shane enquired curiously, leaning forward.

"Yeah, that's exactly what it means," Caden said. "There's the merc ship now, I see it on the scanner," he pointed at the small dot moving across his screen. "He's just outside the boundary."

The screen flashed and Tavish appeared. "Well, if it isn't Caden Wolff," he accused. "How are you doing?"

"Not bad. Tavish Lerue. Your reputation precedes you."

"In bed, or out?"

"Both," Caden replied.

Tavish chuckled. "I didn't remember you being such a rakish son of a bitch."

"I'll take that as a compliment," Caden said. "From what I heard, you're quite the ladies' man."

"Still am, although I've extended myself some. I like to think of myself as quite a lover in general, when my lady Cassandra allows me off my leash, that it."

Caden smiled.

"I don't know what the two shifters in your company did to you, but they introduced me to pleasures that were previously unknown."

"I copy that," he said.

Tavish nodded, then sobered. "So, we may have a landing problem when it comes to Gender X. Suggestions?" Lerue probed.

"North side, under the radar."

"Shit, that's a far distance further."

"Yep. I'm open to suggestions."

"Surveillance is too heavy straight in. We'll be shot down before we get within four hundred miles. We go the long way."

"Okay," Caden nodded.

"And when we get in there?" Tavish raised an eyebrow.

"Hart," Caden looked at him, "see that button there near the interstellar transmitter?"

"Yeah?"

"Push it. It's set."

"Okay."

"I'm sending you the map of the club," Caden told Tavish. "We can coordinate landing when we're closer. You have transport inside your craft?"

"Yeah, you?"

"I can carry about ten."

"Twenty. She's a big bugger."

Caden laughed softly. "Okay. And someone could always sit on someone's knee."

"That might be interesting, Wolff. Care to sit on my knee?"

Shane shook his head. "We're created a monster," he said to Cameron.

"We'll see," Caden said.

"No, we won't," Hart retorted, pushing the button.

Caden chuckled and reached over to tickle him, then he returned his attention to Tavish. "Sending you the map of the club, and directions to get there. I've marked location of the shifters, and the guards. We should wait until dawn to make our move. The club is closed then. I have a plan. We'll discuss it at landing."

"Ten-four," Tavish said. "I'll contact you if I have questions."

"You only have one Merc with you?"

"Unfortunately. It was tough on such short notice. You?"

Caden sighed. "Well, we got four."

"Shit," Tavish threw back his head and howled with laughter.

"Yeah, shit is right," Caden muttered. "Let's hope we don't end up taking on the entire Gender X military."

"Um, we'd be rather fucked, wouldn't we?" Tavish grinned.

"Yeah, rather fucked," Caden replied.

"Don't worry, handsome. Life sucks and then you die."

"Right. I'll keep that in mind," Caden replied dryly.

"Bye," Tavish said, with a wink.

"He's a flirt," Hart complained.

"Good looking flirt," Caden murmured.

Hart shot him a dirty look.



Caden laughed.

There was silence for a few seconds then Cameron asked Caden, "Where did you learn to fly these mega crafts?"

Hart seemed to be sulking.

"My father was military. I did mandatory military duty for two years," he replied. "They trained me to captain the ships."

"Why'd you leave the military?" Shane asked him.

He shrugged. "I'm not so good at taking orders."

"Or towing the line," Hart piped in.

"Or towing the line," Caden repeated, grinning at him.

Hart folded his arms across his chest and sunk down in seat. He sighed. "I see I have my work cut out for me, wild boy."

Caden threw his head back and howled with laughter.

\* \* \* \*

The next time Caden took his eyes off the controls, everyone had fallen asleep. They were submerged in total darkness now; the only clarity illuminating from the controls and the overhead light in the cabin ceiling. The stars were subdued and clouded over. Total silence. It was awe inspiring really. He

took a breath, the calm before the storm. He looked over at Hart. He was worried now. This was more a suicide mission than anything else. Rescuing those shifters would be no easy feat. The shifters were all equipped with tracking devices that were easily detected by the military. Even if they made it past Rufus' thugs, they'd probably never get off the planet alive. But he couldn't regret any of it. If this had never happened, he would have made it through the rest of his life only half asleep. He had done bad things, helped people like Rufus imprison and abuse others like Hart, and Shane and Cameron. It was time to make amends.

He looked at Hart now. He truly loved him. Although, if they did make it out of this alive, he wasn't sure he could be absolutely faithful. All these years of burying his true sexual feelings deep inside...denying himself that much pleasure, God, he'd missed so much. Suddenly he knew who he was and he wanted to experience everything. He wasn't sure he was ready to devote himself entirely to one person. That worried him. He knew if he told Hart what he was feeling; it would truly break his heart. He didn't want to lose him. He loved him. And he knew in his heart that in the end, he wanted to be with him, only him, but maybe not quite yet.

As if on cue, Tavish appeared on the screen...

gorgeous blue eyes, black hair, that rough masculine mercenary persona. Caden was tempted, solely tempted and if they had been alone in a room somewhere, and... Caden licked his lips. "Hello, Tavish."

Tavish smiled at him. "Caden. How's it hanging?"

Caden cleared his throat. He was flirting with him. "Oh, ah, can't complain. How are yours hanging?"

"Right now, just about busting out of my pants. Can't seem to get you out of my head."

Caden cleared his throat. "Oh."

"I remember seeing you on Gender X about three years ago, before Cameron and Shane got to me. You put me through hell."

"How so?"

"At that time, man sex was a taboo to me. I'd been raised in the same way you had, educated on planet stupid," he said with a grin.

Caden grinned back.

"I was unaware of the pleasures. When I saw you walk into the government buildings, you were just about the sexiest thing I'd ever seen. You were wearing a big, black hat, and leather pants. Still got those?"

"Yeah."

"Ooh," Tavish grunted.

Caden laughed slightly.

"Someone told me you were a hunter. I felt you right straight through my cock to my balls."

"Oh yeah," Caden replied, reaching down and adjusting his cock in his pants.

"I couldn't get your image out of my mind. It tormented the hell out of me, and made me question myself. I wished Shane and Cameron had gotten to me then, I would have had my way with you."

"I would have shot you," Caden told him.

"Would have been worth it for one kiss from that sweet mouth of yours."

Oh yeah, he was hard, hard as rock. "Maybe we could get together later, if we make it through this..." He hesitated.

"Just what I was thinking. See you soon," he said, and was gone.

\* \* \* \*

It was tense flying under the radar. At any moment, Caden thought that he was going to be bombarded with militia from his home planet. Tavish stayed off the transmitter. They had exchanged the information they needed to, twenty minutes ago, then agreed that dead air was the best.

Cameron and Shane were checking weapons, and Hart looked a little overwhelmed. Caden

reached over and squeezed his hand. "Don't worry," he said, "I won't let anything happen to you, baby."

Hart undid his belt and stood up. He walked over to Cameron and said, "Show me how to use one of those things."

Caden cast a glance at Hart, then returned his concentration to the controls. One false move off the course he'd set, and they were screwed. When he saw the northern edge of Gender X come into sight, he sucked in some air. The sky turned dark. "I'm going to navigate in without lights."

Shane came and sat beside him.

"Tavish is right behind me, or he's supposed to be," Caden murmured, going on instinct more than anything else. When the ship landed with a thud, he put his dark head down on the control panel and closed his eyes.

"Good job," Shane said. Cameron echoed that. Hart touched his shoulder. "You okay?"

He nodded, and brought his head up.

When the door rattled and sprang open, Shane raised his gun.

"Don't shoot me, baby," Tavish said, stepping up into the cockpit.

Shane lowered his gun and shook his head.

Tavish came over and gave Shane and Cameron a big hug. "God, it's good to see you guys."

"You too," Cameron said.

"That was some navigating there, Wolff." Tavish looked at him.

Caden Wolff swirled around in his seat, and nodded. "Thanks." He ran his eyes over the full length of Tavish Lerue. Oh yeah, hot, a big, hot hunk.

"Well," Tavish said, nodding at Hart, "I think we should get this show on the road. What do you say, gentlemen...ah and sometimes ladies?"

Cameron reached over and touched Tavish's jaw. "God, that shadow does things to me. You're still gorgeous. I hope Cassandra appreciates you."

"Every chance she gets." He winked, then, he looked at Caden. "Can I see you in my craft a moment? Something we need to go over, right? The plan? We got a good hour before dawn."

"Yes," Caden said, standing up. He cleared his throat. "Won't be long," he said to Hart, who had turned his back. He knew he was pissed off, but what could he do? Right now, he would have followed Tavish Lerue anywhere.

Tavish's ship had landed right beside his. Caden almost ran right into it in the darkness. "I don't even know where the door is," Caden laughed slightly.

"To hell with the door," Tavish growled, pushing Caden up against the ship and reaching for his pants. "I'm so horny, and I want you bad."

A hand was on Caden's chest as he was being

held prone against the smooth metal of the ship. He didn't struggle as he felt Tavish take his cock out of his pants. He didn't want to struggle.

\* \* \* \*

"I'm going to kill him," Hart spat.

"Tavish or Caden?" Shane asked him, raising an eyebrow.

"Both of them, and it's not funny."

Cameron came and put an arm around him. "Honey, he loves you. He really does. He's just exploring. He needs that freedom. If you don't give it to him, you'll lose him."

Tears stung Hart's eyes. "How do I endure it?"

"You make sure that you give him even more in bed, even better, and that he'll always want to come back to you," Shane said, meeting Cameron's eyes. "One night, he'll never leave your bed again. You're where his heart is. Tavish is just a fuck."

Tears streamed down Hart's face. "It doesn't make me feel any better."

Cameron tightened his hold on him. He looked at Shane.

Shane sighed. "Hart, this is not the time. We have to get the rest of those shifters out of there."

Hart wiped his eyes, nodding. "I know."

Cameron released Hart and walked over and

wrapped his arms around Shane. "You be careful out there."

"You too," he said.

\* \* \* \*

Tavish was on his knees. Caden buried his hands in his hair and let his head loll back against the ship. He closed his eyes. He moaned as Tavish took his cock into his mouth and began to suck it. "God, god," Caden croaked. "You're setting me on fire."

Tavish's response was to redouble his efforts. His hand snaked up to caress the waves of Caden's stomach, then he released his cock and pressed his hard body against his. He took his mouth hotly, then with one strong hand, turned him around and slammed him against the ship. He grabbed his wrists, and lifted them over Caden's head, holding them there.

Caden felt Tavish's face in his hair, a hard cock nudging against his ass. His breathing was hard and laboured. He wasn't sure whose was more intense, his or Tavish's.

"Leave your hands there above your head and spread your legs," Tavish grunted, moving his long hair aside, kissing his neck.

Caden moved one leg about two inches out to the left.



Tavish's hand moved down over his back to his bare ass. "You're beautiful, fucking beautiful," he moaned into his hair. "Always wanted to fuck a hunter."

Caden left his hands on the ship over his head. He was feeling sexy. He was feeling hot and dirty and he wanted it. He wanted Tavish to fuck him. He grunted as one hand came around to torment his aching cock and the other separated his ass cheek and began to tease his anus. Ever since Cameron and Shane had forced him to discover it, it had become alive with sensation.

Tavish slid down to his knees again. He slapped his cock, and then began to rim him, licking his opening, inserting the tip of his tongue inside of him, replacing his tongue with one finger, then two.

"Oh fuck," Caden shouted, slamming his forehead against the ship. "Yeah, oh...arggg....Tavish...damn it, damn it."

"You like that?" Tavish moved his tongue back and forth rapidly over his quivering orifice. "Well then wait until you get this," he grunted.

Caden felt his hips being gripped in strong hands and yanked outwards. The head of Tavish's cock hit his opening and he gasped. "Like that, baby, like that you beautiful, gorgeous, sexy son of a bitch?"

Tavish began moving in and out of him and

Caden closed his eyes, letting his head fall forward. He squinted past the discomfort and then let the pleasure grip him, descending throughout his groin and down his legs, and as Tavish got his groove on, established his pace, the sensations even rose into his teeth.

A hand squeezed his sex, massaged his balls, then began to jerk his cock with serious intention as Tavish stuttered out his release with a string of curses and endearments. Caden felt his lips on his ass, then moving upwards. He turned him around and pushed Caden's hair back from his face. "Kiss me," he said. "I could be in love."

Caden laughed softly, his chest still heaving. "I doubt that. And doesn't the kissing come before the fucking?"

Tavish considered that, tucking himself back inside his pants. "Ah, yeah, but I couldn't wait. That's a couple of years of genuine lust."

Caden laughed again, and Tavish met his eyes. "No shit, kiss me, will yeah? Take my breath away, baby."

"Well, how can I say no?" Caden replied, reaching out and taking Tavish's face between his hands, and pressing his mouth to his.

The kiss lasted far too long, and Caden actually had to pry himself away. It wasn't easy. Tavish was one hot kisser, and he was oh, so sexy. "We ah..." Caden licked his lips, "better look at that

map I drew, and discuss the plan.”

“What map?” Tavish smiled, then laughed and took a step backwards. “Pull your pants up, honey, or I guarantee you, my mind won’t be on any map. Right now, I’d really like to have that cock up your ass. Um, what’s it like to be fucked by you, Caden?”

Caden pulled Tavish’s body close again. “Jesus, I wish I had time to show you, but we got other things we need to do.” He released him. “You’re going to get killed if you don’t get your mind off my cock,” Caden joked, pulling his pants up and fastening them.

“Yes but,” Tavish replied, running his eyes over him, “what a way to go.”

Caden smiled, lifting an eyebrow. “Take me to the map.”

\* \* \* \*

A half hour later, they had taken the land vehicles out of the ships, and were on their way. Hart watched carefully as Caden consulted with Tavish in the cool morning air one last time. The sun was just coming up, and Caden donned sunglasses before he got behind the controls.

Everyone seemed tense.

Hart decided not to give Caden the third degree about Tavish now, although he sorely wanted to.

Actually, he felt like kicking his ass.

"Although Tavish only has one man, they are both heavily armed," Caden said to no one in particular, "they've got a bloody arsenal in that vehicle with them."

That was met with silence. Shane quietly checked his weapon. Cameron adjusted his belt which was replete with shiny microwave bullets.

"Hart, are you sure you're alright with this new plan? Should we go over it again?" Caden asked him.

"Tavish probably wants to kill me off," Hart muttered.

"Don't be fucking ridiculous," Caden snapped. "Don't piss me off."

"This is not the time for this," Shane interjected, clearly irritated. "Hart, the plan that Tavish and Caden worked out is a good one, but if you don't want to go through with it, you don't have to."

"No, I want to," Hart said, embarrassed. "It's the best way. Don't pay any attention to me. I'm sorry." Hart risked a glance at Caden, then, looked away. Caden was really pissed at him. He could feel it. Hart knew he should be thinking of all those shifters being used as sex slaves by that bastard Rufus, instead of being jealous of Tavish Lerue.

"Let's go over it again then," Hart heaved a sigh, "just to be sure."

Caden cast a glance at him. Hart couldn't read his expression because of those damn dark glasses. "Okay," Caden said, carefully steering around the curve. "I take you into the club. I tell Rufus I found you, you can shift again, and I want my money. I ask a big price, more than I know Rufus would actually pay. I get him nervous, make some threats. He calls his goons. Tavish leads the rest through the entrance that's easiest to breach, the one I told him to use. Meanwhile, I take care of Rufus and his brutes, while Tavish and company get the shifters out."

"I can do more than that," Hart said.

"No. That's it, that's what you do," Caden told him sternly, "act like you're my prisoner, then when all hell breaks loose, find the others and wait for me back at the ship."

"I don't like that plan. I mean, you could get killed and..." Hart stopped. "I want a weapon."

"You can't have a weapon if you're supposed to be my prisoner," Caden sighed.

"But Caden, you're the one taking all the risks here. I..."

"Listen," Caden told him, "I'm the one who put most of those shifters there, so I guess I should be the one to take the most risks."

Hart began to say something else, but Caden was no longer listening to him. His eyes were on the road.

Shane reached forward and patted Hart's shoulder. "Don't worry," he told him, "everything will be alright."

\* \* \* \*

When Caden pulled to a stop around back of Rufus' Club, Hart felt a wave of nausea grip him. He swallowed it as Tavish pulled his vehicle up beside Caden and nodded at him through the window. Shane and Cameron hopped out of the back, weapons drawn, and ran around to the side door. Tavish got out of his vehicle, one man in commando style dress followed on his heels. They were both heavily weighed down with weaponry.

Caden didn't waste another second. He swung the vehicle around the building and pulled up in front. He got out, opened the passenger door, and pulled on Hart's arm. "Now," he said to him, "we got to make this good."

Hart nodded silently. He was shaking like a leaf as Caden practically dragged him to the front door. He banged his fist on it, and pulled off his sunglasses. "Rufus, open up. I have your merchandise."

Hart closed his eyes for a moment, licking his dry lips. This was happening. This was really happening. All the bad memories were flooding back to him, and when the door flew open, and

Caden tried to pull him inside, he resisted for a minute. "Don't give me grief," Caden told him gruffly.

Hart wasn't sure if his tone was genuine, or for show. He suspected it was a little of both.

The man who opened the door was definitely one of Rufus's bullies. His name was Santof, and he had raped him once. Hart's eyes filled with hate when he looked at him. "What do you want?" he demanded.

"Where's Rufus?" Caden asked, dragging Hart down the corridor; Santof on their heels.

"Eating. I should announce you. It's his downtime." Santof smiled at Hart, the smile of a sleazy eel. "I've missed you, precious," he said, reaching down to touch Hart's cheek.

Caden jerked Hart away from him. "No one touches the merchandise until I get paid."

"Touchy, touchy. Rufus isn't going to want that anyway. He's damaged."

"Not anymore. He's shifted fine."

"Wait here," Santof said, when they reached the door at the end of the corridor. He placed his hand up. "I'll let him know you're here."

"Well, tell him not to keep me waiting too long. I could just sell this one to the highest bidder."

"That would be a shame," he cooed.

Caden pressed Hart against the wall. "Don't move," he said, as Santof knocked once, then,

disappeared through the big wooden door, closing it quietly behind him.

Caden didn't look at Hart while they waited. He stayed in character. Hart looked around. There were cameras all over the place. Someone could be watching them, so it was a good idea that Caden kept up the act.

As they waited, the doubts and the fears redoubled in Hart, turning his stomach into knots. What if he ended up back here in Rufus's den of iniquity? What if Caden decided he wanted Tavish Lerue more than him? What if he couldn't cope in the outside world, or worse, what if something happened to Caden and...?

The door opened suddenly. "He'll see you now," Santof barked.

Caden brushed by the big guy, and pulled Hart inside with him.

Rufus was feasting again, surrounded by a virtual orgy of food. "Hey, baby," the fat man said to Caden, "join me?"

"No, thanks," Caden said. "I have the runaway."

"Splendid. I'll dispose of him shortly. Just give him to Santof."

"No need. He can shift again," Caden said.

Rufus stood up now, throwing his napkin on his plate. "Well that is good news." He came closer. "I will require proof."



Hart shivered.

"All in good time," Caden replied.

"What I can't understand is how you managed to let him get away in the first place," Rufus eyed Hart.

Caden tightened his hold on Hart's neck. "I don't think you can hold me responsible for that. Where were your men, when it escaped?"

"You don't expect me to pay again for this...do you?" Rufus lifted his hands, and then slapped them down to his sides. "I already paid you once."

Santof stood cautiously by the door, arms folded across his chest.

Hart could see a stream of sweat rolling down Caden's forehead. It was the only indication he was feeling the pressure. "It's not my fault he ran. It's your security. How many times did I tell you that you needed to tighten it? I'm not in the business of spending my time chasing down your runaways for free because you have shoddy security! Now pay up."

Rufus nodded at Santof who took his weapon out of his coat pocket, and opened up the door. Another big guy stepped into the room, his weapon drawn. Rufus moved behind them.

Hart tensed. He glanced at Caden, who immediately whipped out his weapon, a microwave powered ray gun.

"Technically," Rufus stammered; peering at Caden's gun over Santof's shoulder, "it is your job to capture runaways, even defunct ones slated for elimination. You are still responsible to the government of Gender X, aren't you?"

Caden reached out and wrapped his strong forearm around Hart's throat, dragging him in front of him. "I'm responsible for no one except myself, and my pocket."

The two guards were pointing their guns directly at them.

Caden didn't flinch.

Rufus smiled. "I think you might be outnumbered, Caden. Look around."

"I think we should talk about this, because right now," he said, placing the butt of his gun at Hart's temple, "one false move and I shoot him."

Hart sucked in some breath. He knew rationally that Caden wouldn't shoot him, but the feeling of that cold metal touching his skin was unnerving, and those guns aimed at Caden's head didn't help.

"Now, now," Rufus laughed uneasily, "no need to be hasty. Lower your guns, boys," he told them, stepping out from behind them. "Caden, you have what I want. We may be able to make a deal. Besides, if you shoot a shifter without authorization, you'd be in deep shit, Mr. Wolff."

Caden smiled a rapacious smile. "You know me, Rufus. I revel in deep shit."

"How much?" Rufus demanded.

"Too fucking much!" Caden roared.

Hart went flying into the far wall as Caden struck out with his foot. A knife extension on the edge of his boot hit one thug in the stomach, another in the groin. A gun went off somewhere, then another shot.

Hart struggled to his feet. He caught sight of Rufus crawling under the table. He reached up for something that seemed to be attached to the underside of the table. Hart flew onto his knees and grabbed onto Rufus before he could dislodge what looked like a gun.

There was an exchange of gunfire going off somewhere in the club. It sounded like it was coming from below them. Hart was distracted for a second and Rufus got the upper hand. He began to punch him in the face, his other hand reaching for the gun again which was still clinging to the table.

Hart fought him off, reaching himself for the gun. He could hear Caden struggling nearby and suddenly just as he got his hand on the gun, the table began to shake above his head. They were fighting on top of the table.

Hart scrambled backwards on his butt, using his feet to propel him. He pointed the gun at Rufus's head and cocked it. He didn't hesitate. One single shot and Rufus lay dead, blood

pouring out of his eye socket. Hart tried not to wretch.

The table stopped vibrating and the sounds of the struggle sounded muffled. Hart emerged from under the table slowly, looking around. One of the goons lay motionless a few feet away, a pool of blood slowly creeping around him. The room was empty. Hart jumped to his feet as he heard the noise from the hallway. More gunfire echoed below. There was some shouting. He swallowed his fear and pushed forward.

He saw Santof and Caden in hand to hand combat on the stairs. They smashed into the banister hard. Hart pointed the gun but he couldn't get a clear shot. He didn't want to miss and hit Caden by accident. Caden and Santof smashed against the banister a second time. Hart let out a shout as he heard the wood crack. The impact of their combined weight was enough to propel the two men over the side.

Hart could hardly breathe as he went racing down the staircase. Santof lay motionless, his neck placed in an unnatural pose. Caden was nowhere in sight. Suddenly as Hart rounded the corner and reached the bottom, he heard a moan. "Caden, where are you?" Hart called out.

"Ah...fuck," he groaned, "fuck. I'm here, behind the bar."

Hart raced over to see Caden make an attempt

to get up off the floor. "Are you alright?" He took his arm and helped him to his feet.

He brushed the debris off his coat. "I'm not sure," he said.

Suddenly, Hart heard a beeping.

Caden rose with difficulty, and took the communication device out of his coat pocket. "Tavish," he said. "What's happening?"

"We got some dead and wounded. We're getting the live ones out now, and I suggest you do the same, babe. Gender X militia are here. All exits are blocked except for the one you told us about, the underground one. Apparently they don't know about it yet. We're heading there now. Forget the North side, Gender X troops are..."

"Tavish?" Caden said. He shook his head. "He's underground. Lost him. Come on, we got to go." Caden limped over to the dead man. He picked up his weapon. "Where did you get the gun?"

"Under the table. I killed Rufus, I think."

"Good job," Caden said, pulling him close and kissing his temple. "Come on. Follow me."

\* \* \* \*

Hart was amazed at where Caden was leading him. There were hidden passages and corridors everywhere. The sounds of the military were all

around them. Hart could hear the pounding of their boots overhead but he wasn't afraid. He trusted Caden, yet he feared he was hurt more than he was letting on.

By the time they reached the entrance to the underground tunnel, Caden was soaked to the skin. There was blood on his cheek and in his hair. His limp was more pronounced, and a few times he had to stop. He doubled over and moaned, then straightened up and pushed on.

The tunnel was pitch black. Hart couldn't see anything. "Hang onto the wall," Caden urged, "and grab onto my coat."

Soldiers were still running overhead.

Hart held on to Caden's coat for dear life. His heart went to his throat when Caden suddenly hissed, "Jesus Christ, hurry up. They've found the entrance."

Hart increased his pace, then, came to a stand still, crashing into Caden as they hit the end of the tunnel.

"Okay," Caden said, "there are five steps leading upward. Climb."

Hart followed, blindly taking each rung directly after Caden.

"Wait," Caden said, struggling with something.

Suddenly a burst of light came through and Caden moaned as he crawled onto the pavement, reaching behind him to pull Hart up with him.

That effort seemed to be a lot for Caden. He literally forced himself to his feet now with a quick intake of breath.

Outside, Hart noticed that Caden's hair was matted with blood. "Caden," he gasped. "You're..."

"No time for that now," he pushed his hand away as Hart tried to look at his head. "We got to get to the vehicle. Come on. If they see us, we're done for. There are too many. I can't fight them off by myself."

They ran, Caden stopping every few seconds to grab his side. Finally, they reached the vehicle, and they both scrambled inside, breathing hard. Caden started the engine, and a bullet whizzed through the window, just barely missing Hart's head.

"Get down," Caden shouted, pushing Hart's head down with his hand.

Overhead a military ship hovered. A loud speaker barked, "Come out with your hands up. Your execution will be swift. If you surrender, your deaths will be painless."

Caden Wolff floored the gas, screeching out of the parking area. "Oh no you bastards, you won't take me alive!"

Hart clutched the gun in his hand, his head bowed. "Caden, this is..."

"Don't," he said, his eyes on the road. "It's not

over yet."

Several military vehicles suddenly appeared behind them, the spaceship followed overhead. "Fuck!" Caden shouted, pounding the control panel. "Get Tavish on my phone, in my pocket," he told Hart. "Don't give up until you reach him. He's on frequency eight. Don't talk longer than twenty five seconds. They need thirty seconds to trace the location."

Hart nodded and fished the phone out of Caden's pocket. "What do I say?" he breathed, turning to look at the vehicles on their tail. The blood was dripping down the side of Caden's face now in big, red globs.

"Meet rendezvous place with other vehicle in twenty minutes. If not there, leave immediately."

Hart nodded. He pressed the frequency several times, then finally Tavish came on.

"Meet rendezvous place with other vehicle, twenty minutes and leave if not there." He immediately hung up. "Think he got it?"

Caden nodded, looking weak now. "Hart, if I pass out, you meet Tavish...I'll drive by there now. You run...hide until he gets there and..." His eyes glazed over a little.

"Caden, don't. Please, God, I won't make it without you." Tears stung his eyes. He poked him.

"I'm okay," he grunted, shaking his head a little. "We got to lose these guys. So, make sure



you're belted in," Caden said, wiping the blood out of his eye, and slamming the peddle to the max.

\* \* \* \*

Shane saw the tension on Tavish's face as he came barrelling through to the front of the ship. "I got to fly. I heard from Hart. They're in trouble."

"Oh shit, no," Shane reached out and touched Tavish's arm. "What can we do?"

"Stay with the shifters, you and Cameron, and if I don't come back in an hour, take off. Can you pilot this thing?"

"I'm not sure," Shane looked at the controls.

"The manual is there," he pointed.

"I'm sorry about your man," Shane said as Tavish strapped on his gun.

He nodded. "Me too. It's always the risk. He knew what he was getting into. You got the bastard who did him. Thanks."

Shane nodded.

"I'm sorry we lost that many shifters."

"We got seven. That's better than none," Shane said.

Cameron appeared suddenly. "We need more bandages. One of them was hurt badly."

"In the supply closet," Tavish pointed, leaving by the side door.

"Where's he going?" Cameron asked, looking around for the supply closet.

"Caden and Hart are in trouble."

Cameron paled.

"I got to study the manual," Shane said. "I may have to fly this thing."

\* \* \* \*

Caden knew the town, and that's the only reason they were able to lose the tails long enough to dump the car at the side of the road, and hide behind a building where the rendezvous place was in clear sight.

Hart was breathless as he stood rigid against the wall, watching Caden carefully. He swayed a few times, and Hart was certain he was on the verge of passing out. "Caden, please stay with me," Hart begged. "Don't pass out. Tavish is coming."

Caden squeezed his hand. "Don't worry, baby, I won't leave you," he managed. Hart knew now that he was in bad shape.

When what looked like a street person wandered by, Caden grunted, and suddenly shot out in front of Hart like a lighting bolt, and pulled the guy in against the wall.

The man was frightened, and Caden placed a hand over his mouth so that he wouldn't cry out.

He reached into the pocket of his coat and handed him the keys to the vehicle. "I have a gift for you," he said. He placed the keys in his hand. "Walk back two blocks. You'll see a vehicle in the alley. All I ask is that you drive it around town," he breathed, removing his hand from the guy's mouth.

"Wowza," the guy said, rotten teeth appearing in a grin. "I'll drive it, man. Hey, you look like shit, man. Where's all that blood...?"

"Never mind," Caden replied. "Go, hurry up before someone else takes it."

The guy hopped up and down, and disappeared.

Hart went to say something but just then Caden placed his head back against the wall. It fell to the side. He closed his eyes, and slid to the ground.

\* \* \* \*

Overhead the military shift patrolled, calling out its ominous message. "Surrender and we shall kill you slowly."

Hart swallowed. He knelt beside Caden. He was cold, the blood congealing on his face. "Please, baby, don't die on me, don't you fucking die on me." Hart shivered. He looked around. Suddenly, in a distance he saw the vehicle coming. It was driving at maximum speed, heading

straight for them. *Tavish*. He was never so glad to see anyone in his life.

The car came to a dead stop. Hart pulled on Caden, but he was far too heavy. He stood up and motioned to Tavish.

Tavish hopped out, gun at his side, eyes scanning the surroundings. He raced over to the wall and looked down at Caden. "Fuck. Is he dead?"

"No, but he's hurt bad."

Suddenly a rain of bullets sounded somewhere. "They're close," Tavish said, picking Caden up over his shoulder and telling Hart to stay close. "Come on, we got to make a run for it."

Hart ran behind Tavish, alert for any sound, brandishing the gun.

Tavish laid Caden in the back seat and got behind the controls, Hart got in beside him.

The spacecraft was right overhead.

"They've found us," Hart cried out.

"No, they're circling," Tavish said, speeding out onto the road. "They don't know this vehicle. Where's the other one?"

"Caden gave it to some street person, and told him to drive it."

"Good move," Tavish said, his blue eyes keenly concentrating on the road. After a few minutes, he actually smiled. "We're not being followed. That's a good thing. But we have to get back to that ship."

As soon as they discover the other car is a decoy, they will concentrate on the shifter signals. It will lead them right to the craft."

"Isn't there anyway to douse the signals?" Hart asked, glancing back at Caden who lay still in the back seat.

"Not time to remove them all. Removing one or two wouldn't do us any good. If there was more time...then..."

"Are Shane and Cameron alright?"

"Yes, but I lost a man."

"Sorry."

Tavish nodded.

"Did you get all the shifters out?"

"Lost nine, got seven."

"What about Billie? Did you find one called Billie?"

"Sorry, man, I didn't have time to ask their names," Tavish told him.

Hart turned around and looked at Caden again. "If he dies, I..."

"He's still alive," Tavish said. "He's lost a lot of blood. What happened?"

"He went over a railing, fell. The other guy broke his neck, looked like."

"Ouch."

The speed increased and then the field where the space craft were waiting came into view.

Tavish brought the vehicle to a stand still and

hopped out of the car. Hart helped him and they carried Caden onto the craft where Shane and Cameron were waiting.

Cameron let out a yelp when she saw Caden. Shane came immediately to where Tavish laid him down on one of the beds.

"Have you figured out this thing?" Tavish asked Shane. "We've lost our pilot."

Shane nodded. "I think so."

"Okay, we got to go now," Tavish said. "I'm guessing that those Gender X boys will be in the air and after our asses quicker than we can say your execution will be swift. Follow me, Shane, and I'll see you to the safe zone, and then head out home. I got a call earlier that I'm needed to lead another mission."

Shane reached out and shook his hand. "Thanks, man."

"Anytime. Nothing compared to what you've given me." He lifted a hand at Cameron, who was busy trying to find out where the majority of bleeding was coming from on Caden's head.

\* \* \* \*

Shane slid in front of the controls and fired up the craft. He was tense as a coil, but they had come this far. They had to do this.

He could hardly believe how smooth the

takeoff was. He kept his eyes on the radar screen, following on Tavish's tail. "All clear so far," Tavish flashed on the screen. "Good takeoff, Shane."

Shane smiled. "Yeah, well...I'm following the lead of the best pilot I know."

He laughed. "Out. Let's make tracks. No sign of those bastards yet, but don't count those chickens...."

"How's Caden?" Shane shouted from the front.

"Alive," Cameron shouted back.

"Going to make it?"

Hart answered. "Yes, Goddamn it. He is."

"The passengers okay?"

"All resting in the back," Cameron replied, then Shane heard her ask Hart to go check on them.

When Shane looked up to see Cameron's face, something hurt when he took a breath. "Cameron?"

He bit his lip. "It's not good. He's weak. He's lost a lot of blood. I don't know if..."

Shane reached out and squeezed his hand. "Hold on, baby, we'll be home soon. As soon as I can, I will alert Jack to have medical personnel standing by. He's strong. He'll make it. Stay with him."

\* \* \* \*

Cameron sighed and went to sit beside Caden. He'd tried to clean the wound the best he could

and bandaged his head.

Hart appeared suddenly. "Billie is alright."

"Your friend." Cameron tried to smile.

Hart nodded, looking down at Caden's still face. He stroked his cheek for a minute, then, met Cameron's eyes. "If he doesn't make it, I..."

"Don't say that." Cameron shook his head. "Be strong."

Hart nodded. "I am. I'm..." he paused as something shook the craft. "What is it?"

Cameron stood up and went running into the front. "Shane?"

Shane looked up at him. "Military. They've found the shifters' signals. They're right on our tails."

"Was that artillery? Are we hit?"

Shane nodded, his hands shaking. "I don't know how bad. We're still up here."

"Shane," Tavish appeared suddenly. "Are you alright?"

"I'm hit, but I don't know how bad."

"There's smoke coming out of engine six. Turn it off."

"How?"

"Under the panel. There is a lever, lower it to five."

"Okay, I..." Shane began.

"Shit," Tavish called out.

Shane saw his image flash on and off for a



second.

"They're attacking my shield. Bastards. Okay, here's one for you, you fuckers," he called out.

Shane watched as one light disappeared off his screen.

"Got 'em!" Tavish whooped. "Okay, Shane, I want you to drive as if you don't know how."

"What?"

"Put her on manual and steer directly in my path. At the same time, when I tell you, press turbo."

"Okay," Shane replied, scarcely able to breathe.

"I recommend everyone gets strapped in," Tavish added, then, disappeared.

"You heard him," Shane said. "Strap yourselves in."

Cameron nodded and quickly left the controls.

\* \* \* \*

Hart reached out and took Caden's limp hand when the lights in the craft went out. The ship was ricocheting all over the place and being bombarded with artillery fire. He could hear Shane and Tavish exchanging shouts in the front but he couldn't actually make out any coherent words. He could tell that Cameron wanted to be with Shane. His eyes were fixed on the passage which would have led him to the control panel.

Hart closed his eyes. Was this the end? If it was, he'd keep holding on to Caden's hand until his last breath.

When the lights zipped back on with a whine, and the ship began to slow, Hart opened his eyes. They heard some whoops and hollers from the front, and Cameron tore off his belt and went racing to Shane. Hart followed.

"We did it," Shane said, his face aglow. "We made it. The bastards are turning around. We're out of their skies."

Cameron hugged onto Shane for a long time. Hart went back to tell the others. He grabbed Billie and kissed her. "How's Caden?" she asked.

Hart sighed. "I don't know. He's still out, but he's alive."

\* \* \* \*

Jack gave them permission to enter and land. Tavish waved them goodbye at the entrance, and whizzed away, telling them he'd be in touch soon.

Medical personnel were standing by with several vehicles. They took care of Caden right away, and escorted all of the shifters as well, saying they would give them a complete physical, and take care of the injured one.

Jack waited patiently with Shane, Cameron and Hart at the medical clinic. Shane thanked him

several times, and Cameron hugged him.

Hart paced, waiting.

The doctor was a huge alien of about seven foot two. He later found out that he was Delica brother. He had several pairs of arms and an intelligent forehead. When he walked out into the hallway, he smiled. "He's going to make it," he said. "He's a tough young fellow."

Hart closed his eyes in relief. The others stood up. "Can I see him?"

"A little later. Why don't you go home, and I'll let you know when he's able to receive visitors?"

On the way home in Jack's vehicle, Cameron asked him how it went with the counsel.

"They're open. They want to orientate the shifters. They have temporary housing set up for them until we can arrange for them to be independent."

"Jack, you're the best," Shane said.

Jack grinned. He let them off in front of the little hovel, and waved his goodbye.

Exhausted, they all slept for a few hours.

\* \* \* \*

When Shane and Cameron awoke, Hart was gone. Cameron smiled at Shane. "He's gone to the clinic to see Caden."

"Off course, and if it were you, I'd do the same thing," Shane said.

"You were pretty brave back there," Cameron

told him, moving her hand over his chest.

"You too."

"My hero," she said, kissing his neck

"You're my hero, and all I need."

"What about Caden?"

Shane smiled. "What about Tavish?"

She giggled. "Tempting, but I'd rather have you." She straddled him. "Especially now that you're such a hero."

Shane laughed out loud, his head going back as Cameron pressed her lips to his.

\* \* \* \*

Hart waited another three hours before the doctor finally relented and let him see Caden. His dark eyes were open, and alert. He put his hand out to Hart when he saw him walk through the door. "Hart. Mercy. I thought you were dead."

"Me?" Hart grinned, taking his hand. "You're the one who went flying over a balcony."

Caden nodded with a smile. "Did we do good?"

"We did great. I'll tell you everything later," he said. He perched on the edge of the bed beside him. "How are you feeling?"

"Not bad," he said. "Sore, but I'll be okay. Are you going to stay here, on this planet?"

Hart met his eyes. "I don't know yet. I suppose

it would make sense, wouldn't it?"

"Yeah."

"What about you?" Hart waited, then, he shook his head and got up off the bed. "What am I saying?" He turned around. "I can't live without you, so tell me you're going back to Gender X and I'll follow you."

"I'm not going back to Gender X," Caden said.

Hart smiled. "Will you stay here with me?"

"Yes, but Hart," he said, motioning to him. Hart came closer. "I want to be with you, but I'm not sure if I'm ready for..."

"I know," Hart said, kissing his cheek gently. "I thought about it before I came here to see you. I think we should take it slow. I won't push you. Whenever you're ready."

"Thank you," Caden said. "I just don't want to feel guilty all the time and..."

"I understand. I don't like it, but I understand. I have a lot to learn too. I want to be strong and independent, and I have a long way to go."

"You'll make it," he said. "I'll help you."

Their eyes met.

"Now, do you think I could get a kiss?" Caden asked with a smile.

Hart felt himself melt again. He was hopelessly addicted to Caden Wolff, and no matter how they both changed and grew over the years, that addiction was only destined to get worse.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I write not only for my own pleasure, but for the pleasure of my readers. I can't remember a time in my life when I haven't written and told stories. When I'm not writing, I'm dreaming about writing, doing something wild and adventurous, or trying to make the world a better and more open minded place to live in. I adore beautiful men, and I know I'm not alone in this! Eroticism between consenting adults, in all its many forms is the icing on the cake of life!

### **PUBLISHED BOOKS:**

Eternal Souls Book 1 Vampire Lust

Eternal Souls 2: Beloved Foe

Brennus' Witch

Christmas with Wistan

Dreaming of Brandon Archer

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