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Traditions
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A Chronicle from the Prometheus Promise

Traditions

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Chapter one

All the way to Bri'aque's quarters Brietta fumed. "Make *my* life friggin miserable," she muttered, "He obviously does not know who he's messing with." She sniffed as they stopped in front of a door. The guard turned then, making sure she was behind him, before rapping on the door twice. Brietta heard a muffled command for them to enter.

"This is where I take my leave." The guard opened the door and waited for her to enter. Brietta rolled her eyes and stomped into the room. The door clicked behind her and for reasons she couldn't discern her heart sped up at the thought that she was now alone with Bri'aque. There would be no one here to run interference, she was at his mercy.

Bri'aque had ordered she live with him until she could observe the rules of the House. In other words, he wanted her to report every little thing she did, or intended to do. How was she to do that? Half the time she did things on the spur of the moment. The man was simply unfair.

"Are you going to just stand there or are you going to get dressed?" His deep voice wrapped around her agitated nerve and sent it into sensual overdrive. That was the most annoying thing about him. He had to just speak to her, look at her and... "Dressed for what?" Brietta snapped, distracting herself from the desire that bloomed every time she was around him.

"The preparation."

"Again, not from this planet therefore I can't read minds. Can't you just tell me and get this excruciatingly painful conversation over with?" Brietta looked around for the first time and shock settled in. The room was sparsely furnished, with a very male accent to every piece. It was neat of course, functional, but that wasn't the shocking thing. It was the thing in the corner, or to be more accurate, the rather furry tree. The *orange* furry tree, with glittering gaudy objects hanging from it. "What's that?" She pointed to the hideous piece of art.

"I thought you would know. Torin had them placed all over the House." Bri'aque took the few steps towards her and stood next to her. She could feel the heat from his body. A body that was still slightly damp from an unseen shower. His gleaming black hair still held small beads of water. He turned to her then, just as she was staring at him. Those onyx eyes seemed to know the fever he caused between her legs.

"I've never seen anything so hideous in my life." Brietta answered him sweetly, taking a few steps away from him so she could breathe. "Oh, well maybe except once..." She let the innuendo hang in the air. Bri'aque snorted at her jab and whipped the cloth that was around his waist off, causing her eyes to bug out in surprise and appreciation.

"Well, if that's the case there is no need for this." He threw the cloth to the floor and began to parade around nude. Brietta could barely keep her tongue in her mouth as she eyed his rather large, smooth, half erect penis. "I've nothing to hide, since you have already seen my hideousness." Without missing a beat he continued, "You mean to tell me you know nothing of this tradition that Karia refers to as Christmas?"

Brietta stared at the tree in horror, grateful for the distraction. This was supposed to be a Christmas tree? Suddenly the laughter that bubbled up wouldn't be contained. Tears streamed from her eyes as she pointed to the offensive icon and tried to explain one of the many things that was wrong with the tree. The laughter wouldn't cease and she began to hiccup in merriment. In the background she could hear Bri'aque's demand

to know what was so funny, but she couldn't stop laughing. That was, until ice-cold water was thrown over her head, causing her to go into shock, realization, then blinding red anger. Slowly she turned towards Bri'aque who was holding an oddly shaped container in his hand with a smug grin on his face. As water trailed down her face and clothing she lost all sight of her reasoning.

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"I said let me go!" Brietta screamed as she tried the tethers again. Both her arms and ankles were bound to Bri'aques' bed. Her hair was still plastered to her head and her wet clothing was causing an unpleasant sensation over her whole body. Had she not been so angry she probably would be sitting there with her teeth chattering. "Will you please untie me?"

Bri'aque ignored her as he tended to his eye. He was lucky. He didn't appear to bruise easily. Perhaps hitting him in the eye wasn't the best response, but he *had* asked for it. She flicked her gaze at his still naked body and remembered the reason she had focused on the tree in the first place. Her body began to heat up, and she wondered if she could make him angry enough to leave her alone so she could break free of her bonds. The thought of being at his mercy right now was equally scary and intoxicating.

"I'm sorry I hit you." She lamented at last when it seemed he wouldn't answer her. He tied his black hair back and pinned her with his gaze. He was up to something.

"No, you are not sorry Brietta. But you will be." The promise of his words sank in and Brietta felt her heart speed up. "You assaulted The First In Command to the First Family of the First Order of Scyrrilis."

"Yada, yada, yada." Brietta interrupted anxious to get on with her punishment. It would be easier to focus on whatever unpleasantness he had in store for her, than his gorgeous aroused body parading around in front of her.

"Your disrespect will not be tolerated." His voice took on a note of displeasure. "You should have a care who you sharpen your tongue on Brietta."

"Again, yada yada." Brietta was surprised at the boldness in her own voice. He irritated her as much as he excited her. She watched as he stood at the foot of the 'sleep pod' as he called it, and peered at her. His lips were pursed together as if deep in thought. Brietta began to squirm under his gaze. She conceded that there might be the slightest chance that she pushed him a little too far.

"Perhaps I have been trying to tame you in the wrong manner." He said almost to himself. Brietta opened her mouth then thought the better of it. So far nothing good had come out of her mouth. Maybe if she appeared to be contrite he would leave her alone and give her body some peace. He then disappeared into another area of his quarters. Where she could hear he was looking for something. Her interest was piqued.

He came back then, both hands behind his back, a barely concealed grin on his face. Her heart sped up and her mouth went dry. "The problem that we have here is your failure to recognize my authority. I will not have you embarrass The First Son or myself with your insolence. My warnings have gone on ears that appear to be broken."

"The correct phrase is, falling on deaf ears." Brietta retorted before she thought better of it. His grin only increased and Brietta knew she had not helped her situation one iota when he responded. "Well let us hope your screams and pleas of mercy don't fall on deaf ears."

Chapter two

He could smell her arousal; see her excitement as her breasts heaved with her uneven breathing. There was never any doubt in Bri'aque's mind that the human found him sexually attractive. However that was not enough, he needed her obedience, her respect. He brought the small toy from behind his back and brandished it for her inspection as he approached the sleeping pod.

"What is that?" her voice held just the smallest quiver. He ignored her question as he set it on the side of the pod. Bri'aque made little work of her clothing. She squirmed as he removed her clothing but said nothing. He knew that she wanted to give him no quarter. He could tell she wanted to show him no fear; but he didn't want her fear, he wanted her respect. He would show her no quarter either.

Bri'aque straddled her hips as he looked down at her. He unconsciously licked his lips as he stared at her full breasts and pink erect nipples. His eyes traveled slowly to her flat stomach where a small metal adornment pierced her belly button. He surmised it must be an Earth practice. He liked it very much. He fingered the piercing, loving the feel of the harsh metal against her soft skin.

"I got it without my father knowing." She whispered, her voice husky. It was the first thing she had said to him that wasn't sarcastic. He nodded his head in approval as he positioned himself further down her body. He loved the feel of his cock sliding over her supple skin. For just a second, it fell between the junction at her thighs and she gasped.

"I've never been with a man." She turned her head to the side then, the strong confident woman swallowed by the inexperienced one.

"I will take nothing that is not given to me." Bri'aque replied. "This is about your obedience." He bent over then and tongued her navel, his tongue played with the metal ring. Her hips surged up and her breathing quickened. Bri'aque sat up slowly and watched as her skin puckered into small bumps as if she were cold.

Leisurely he reached back and stroked the long lean legs all the while watching her eyes. "Don't take your eyes away from my gaze." She nervously bit her lip and for a second he was lost in the movement of her luscious lips. He bent down again, slower this time, lower. Gingerly he placed his tongue against the bud of her womanhood. He circled it slowly and he watched as she fought the impulse to close her eyes to savor the sensations. "Tell me of the Christmas Tradition." He whispered against the hardened nub.

"It—it is in celebration of a religious f—figure on earth." Her words stuttered delightfully as he licked her between her folds, savoring the sweet cream she produced for him. "It's about love, forgiveness, and giving" the last of her words trailed as his tongued speared inside of her. "So much giving." She moaned as he dipped his tongue inside of her, lapping at the cream that flowed from her.

"And the tree?" he asked between licks as one hand traveled up to a breast and began to tweak the nipple. Her back bowed as he grabbed the small toy. Her breathing was coming out in puffs of air. "Tell me about the tree, Brietta." He didn't wait for her answer as he switched the toy on, and the small unit of energy hummed between his fingers. He laid the toy against her nipple and waited. Her eyes widened as the vibrations ripped through her body. He clamped his mouth over her clitoris and released the mating waves that had threatened to consume him. His whole body vibrated, every part of him. He used one hand to gingerly probe her and found her walls convulsing violently in an orgasm.

He removed the toy from her nipple, and waited as she tried to catch her breath. "Answer me." He demanded as he climbed from her body and walked to the head of the pod. He pushed a button that lengthened her bonds. She appeared too scattered brained at the moment to notice the slack in her tethers. She muttered something about tradition, gifts being placed under it, and the color of the tree being green and not orange. He now understood the source for her laughter. "Turn over."

He watched as she saw the lengthened bonds for the first time. "If you choose not to cooperate I will retract them and make them tighter than before." Slowly she sat up and his breath caught for just a second as her breasts swayed from the movement. His body vibrated now on a low hum. On all fours her bottom pointed up round and firm, and Bri'aque wasted no time getting back onto the pod. He splayed his hands over the firm flesh and smacked it.

"Fuck!" she screamed, but Bri'aque saw no real anger behind the word. His teeth sank into her bottom as he nipped her playfully. Her bottom wiggled as he nipped her on various places on her ass. He smacked her again on the bottom and she cried out. Bri'aque could smell a fresh wave of arousal.

He picked up the small toy and positioned himself so that his cock was between her folds. Slowly he began to pump his hips so that his humming cock slid between her folds. She bathed him in her hot juices and he threw his head back in ecstasy. "Oh yes." She moaned as she pushed against him, a time or two the head of his cock almost slid inside of her, but he wasn't ready to penetrate her unless she wanted him to.

His fingers finished undoing the braid that had already started to come undone. Her long partially wet hair hung in waves and he wrapped the blonde strands in one fist, trapping her in the position. She remained still as he tugged on her hair, and placed the toy between her legs, swathing it with her cream. Gently he began to insert it in the puckered spot between her cheeks. She didn't move as it hummed and he pushed it gently inside of her.

"How does that feel?" he asked as his cock began to slide between her folds again.

"Please..." she started but her voice seemed to have failed her.

"Tell me." He demanded letting go of her hair and reaching around to stimulate her bud.

Her body shook from the overload of sensation. Bri'aque felt the swell of male satisfaction as her voice started low then turned into a high keen of pleading for him to stop for as she declared, she could take no more.

"Tell me." He demanded again this time he stopped rubbing against her, he could sense she was at the cusp of another orgasm.

"Like heaven." She said at last.

"You want satisfaction?"

"Yes." She said heavily.

"Perhaps another time." Bri'aque responded as he removed the toy from her ass. He did the hardest thing he ever had to do in his life. He climbed off the pod, with his cock aching to be buried inside of her. "We have made progress here. Keep in mind Brietta, I can keep you in a perpetual state of arousal and never give you satisfaction."

She glowered at him from the bed as he walked to the small area that kept his private stash of liquor. What he needed right now was a large dose of Chandrin. He would not only be torturing her, he would be torturing himself as well. Even now his body hummed in the traditional Mating Waves. He poured himself a healthy serving and drank, impatiently waited for the effects of the liquor.

"No worries," she said sweetly. "I can give myself satisfaction."

He turned to see the saucy smile on her face and it gave him great pleasure to wipe it off. "I've fashioned a device for you that prevents you from pleasuring yourself." "You expect me to wear a damn chastity belt!" she roared.

Bri'aque frowned and guessed that perhaps it was the earth term for the Purity Strap. "Sure." He said at last irritated that his cock still demanded satisfaction. He surmised that as long as she was sitting there naked and gloriously beautiful his cock wouldn't be going down anytime soon. "I need you dressed and ready to go in half a tick. Torin is most intent on giving Karia this *Christmas Day* celebration and we need to prepare."

"You can't just make up a day for Christmas." Her tone was dry as she pulled the bed clothing around her. "It does fall on a certain day you know."

"Yes, Torin has researched and compared your calendar with ours, it would seem that your Day of Christmas would fall on the morrow."

"Today is Christmas Eve?" A smile lit up her face and for that moment Bri'aque wished he could keep it there for all time. Then a frown marred her features as a signal the She-beast was back. "That's a hell of a gift to give a woman, a fucking chastity belt!"

Bri'aque slammed his glass on the small counter. "You want to be treated as a woman? Then it would seem not only do I have to teach you obedience, I have to deaden that colorful blade that is your tongue. Better still, would it suffice better to put something in your mouth that would prevent talking altogether?"

Chapter three

Brietta snarled at him as she pulled the bed cloth tighter around her. The last thing she needed was this gorgeous asshole making her ache for release even worse. She bit her lip as was her nervous habit, and chose to ignore his last statement. "I need to change." He tipped back his head emptying the glass before he looked at her. His dark stare unnerved her. Every time those black eyes focused on her, she lost her ability to reason. "Well?" she practically spat out at him. He stared at her a second longer before retreating out of the room.

Brietta was glad he couldn't see the way she stared at his naked body as he walked out of the room. He was perfection. Male beauty at its finest. He was also the biggest asshole she'd ever had the misfortune of running into. She resented the way he ordered her around, fully expecting her to just fall in line like some damsel in distress.

To be fair, on one—ok, maybe two occasions she *had* been a damsel in distress. Brietta let herself get lost in thought for just a moment. While she had no recollection of him rescuing her from the cave, she certainly remembered the way he came to her rescue on Adara. Without hesitation he had shot Caleb Tushkov because he had held a knife to her throat. It was true that a short time later he wanted to kill every man in that camp, and then haul her off like a sack of potatoes. But what he'd done had been chivalrous. Even now lust went through her body like lightning when she thought of him. Why did he have to have such an effect on her?

The object of her thoughts came into the room, carrying a small bundle of fabric. He set it on the foot of the bed. He paused, and then continued to the head of the bed and in a second, her tethers were released. "Dress quickly. There is a ship waiting for us." He left the room leaving her alone to wonder if she was to suffer his company alone.

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Perhaps she should have been more excited about the ride in the ship. It was a wonder of technology and structure. However all Brietta could think about was Christmas Eve. It had been a long time since she had celebrated the holiday. Even at the facility, Christmas was celebrated. All work stopped until Christmas was over. Her own father made the best eggnog. It made sense that he, being a scientist, would know how to make the perfect concoction.

He gave her surprisingly sentimental gifts. Music boxes, exquisite hand made dolls and trinkets from all over the world. Her father had not been the most affectionate man, but she knew he loved her. It was the only time of year her father indulged her as a child.

"Are you afraid?" Bri'aque's voice cut through her thoughts. She was surprised to find his hand caressing her face. "Why the tears?" Brietta could see the teardrop he had captured on his finger and she looked away in shame. How could she allow her thoughts to get to her this way? Christmas was making her homesick for a world that didn't exist anymore.

"No, just thinking silly thoughts." Brietta sniffed and turned away. The thought of Bri'aque seeing her this vulnerable was unnerving.

"I've never known silly thoughts to cause this sort of pain." He remarked, rubbing the moisture between his fingers.

“Where are we?” Brietta deliberately changed the subject. She couldn’t deal with having this sort of conversation with Bri’aque.

Bri’aque looked at her for a few heartbeats before he answered her. “Very well, I will let this go for now. We are in the north quadrant of Scyrrilis. It’s fairly wild, and many unknown species of plant and animal reside here. If it is a green tree we need, surely we could find one here.”

“Why is it wild? Your people are so advanced, traveling the solar system at will, yet you leave part of your own world unexplored.”

“We have found in the past that many plant and animals are indigenous to the area. Many were killed trying to explore it. They are species we cannot get back. We Scyrrillians do not think it is such a bad thing to leave nature alone.”

“Won’t our presence here cause damage then?”

“No, since then our technology has advanced. I can obtain the sample we need without setting foot upon the land. I will of course observe all precautions.”

“You would go through all this trouble for Karia?” Brietta stared at him incredulously. He hardly knew Karia at all.

“No, I do it for my Brother of Heart. This would make his Mate happy. His happiness is a concern of mine.” The sincerity of his words touched Brietta. Against her will she found herself harvesting respect for him. So there was more to him than just his pretty face, gorgeous body, and smart mouth. “Here is a good place to start.” Brietta watched with interest as he maneuvered the ship so that it hovered at least a mile off the surface. “Look at this screen here while I survey. Tell me if you see what we need for this Christmas Day celebration.”

“Tree.”

“Tree.” He smiled, and Brietta found she wanted to see it more and more.

“Thank you for doing this.”

“There is nothing I wouldn’t do for the people I care for.” His eyes bore into hers, then he turned away. “Look at the screen.”

Brietta watched the small screen as Bri’aque slowly maneuvered the craft. Something rustled in a clump of trees and Brietta wanted to see one of the creature wonders that Scyrrilis had to offer. Since she’d awoken from her coma she had been cooped up and really hadn’t had a chance to get to know the planet.

A clump of green trees caught her eye. Of course they didn’t look anything remotely like a pine tree, but it was green and they were on a different planet, hell, solar system. The odds of finding a tree like the ones on earth were pretty far fetched. There was more rustling and this time, it seemed a number of creatures were scurrying about.

“What are they?” Brietta asked as she saw the concern on Bri’aque’s face.

“We need to leave.” He answered as worry lines deepened in his usually boyishly handsome face.

Before Brietta could ask why, she saw the glow of purple eyes on the screen. Gaurans. Many pairs of purple eyes all seemed to be focused on the ship. As she looked closely at the monitor she realized one of the creatures had something large and long seated on his shoulder. A large blast emitted from it and Bri’aque cursed as he frantically pushed buttons and levers. But it was too late. They were hit. Bri’aque grabbed her and they both hit the floor as the craft hurled toward the ground.

Chapter four

The ship must have bounced at least four times on the terrain before it skidded and crashed into, what Bri'aque could only guess, was one of many trees. Smoke filled the control room of the ship, and he knew they had little time to exit the craft before it probably blew. Brietta! Bri'aque took a breath before he released his grip on Brietta. Relief coursed through him as he took note of that fact that she was still breathing.

"Brietta, are you all right?" he asked gently as he took a quick examination of her body. Besides a few bruises and a small open wound on her head that trickled blood, she seemed none the worse for wear.

"Now that you're allowing me to breath, yes." Came her slightly sarcastic but shaken retort. "What happened?" Bri'aque noted that she wasn't exactly squirming to get out of his arms.

"I believe those annoying Gaurans got ahold of some weaponry. It would seem they are getting more intelligent, which is making them more of a nuisance. Are you ok to walk? We have to get out of here."

Bri'aque helped her to her feet, already forming a plan. They were in a tenuous position. Before the ship crashed he had counted no less than twenty Gaurans. There were weapons on the ship, but the count remained the same. There were two of them against, a small army of cannibals—with weapons.

After helping Brietta to her feet, he punched in the coordinates and sent out a signal in the hope it would reach someone before the ship lost communications. Without losing a beat he went to the weapons rooms and began arming himself with as many weapons as possible. Satisfied with his small arsenal he turned to leave, only to see a sour expression on Brietta's face.

"You have to be the most chauvinistic male I've ever had the misfortune to meet." She squinted at him in derision. "Did it ever occur to you, to pass me some of those weapons?"

Bri'aque looked at her incredulously before he burst out laughing. Women only served the needs of men. They looked after the houses and gave the males infants. What she was suggesting was ludicrous.

"I need no help carrying these weapons."

"Give.. Me.. A.. Weapon."

He realized that she was serious. "I don't have time for this Brietta. I would suggest you gather what you can as far as supplies. This ship could explode at any moment."

Why he expected her to comply he didn't know. She brushed past him, and began strapping weapons to her body. He was lost as she lifted her skirt, exposing smooth, toned flesh. She was a quick learner, for she strapped the foreign weapons on her body as if she had handled them all her life. The sight of her armed, gave him strange sexual urges that shocked him. He found her immensely sexy, as she stood there ready for battle. When she ripped the hem of her long skirt and tied it around her head to stop the bleeding, it took everything in him not to knock her to the ground and sink into her.

"My father saw to all my educational needs, even weapons. You can explain to me how they work once we exit this sardine can. Let's go Rambo." She purposely bumped him in a challenge. As they exited the ship he couldn't help but wonder why she called him 'Rambo'.

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Every one of his senses was on alert. With the scent of blood on Brietta, they would be easy to track. He just hoped they could hold out long enough for help to arrive. They'd traveled less than a quarter tick before the ship blew. Brietta proved to be a quick learner as he gave her a quick tutorial on each weapon. He had to admit she was impressive in her learning ability. It never occurred to him that a woman could be useful in battle.

They had made their way toward a cave. Unsure of whether or not it was occupied by the Gaurans, they had been sitting in front of it for some time now. They needed shelter, a place they could defend themselves and sleep for the night if need be. Luckily there was no sign of their enemies. That was but a small comfort. This may very well be home to the Gaurans yet empty because they were out looking for them.

"I should go in first."

"That's ridiculous."

"I'm smaller. You are large and will garner a lot of attention."

"You also are wounded."

"Exactly. If they are in there, they'll smell me coming and attack. I have my big strong man here as back up."

"Back up?" Bri'aque frowned at the phrase, he was afraid he'd never get used to her Earth references.

"You'll look out for me." She smiled at him, and though Bri'aque knew she was purposely trying to charm him to get her way, he still couldn't help but fall for it. After a quick plan, Bri'aque watched with his heart in his throat as Brietta made her way to the cave.

As predicted, the unseen Gaurans attacked. Bri'aque wasted no time dispatching the cannibals. He didn't even have to kill them all. Brietta proved to be quick, and a good shot as well. She waved him on and together they entered the cave.

"Well they all aren't living here." Bri'aque observed noting the small nest of bones rested in the back of the cave. "I can only guess that since they're evolving, their pack animal instincts are waning. Perhaps a family of Gaurans is living here."

"At least they were." Brietta rubbed her arms as she shivered from the coolness of the cave.

"I'll gather some wood so we can start a fire."

"Won't that alert them to where we are?"

"Yes, but they are afraid of fire, or at least they were. Let us hope that instinct did not become dormant in their evolution. They know we are here, seeing as they shot us out the sky. We can keep warm and possibly keep them at bay."

"Don't go far, I'll watch your back."

"That means you're back up right?" Bri'aque asked with a grin. When she smiled back at him his heart flipped. "I'll just be a moment."

With the fire started they'd nothing to do but sit and wait. Bri'aque noticed Brietta sat close, which was fine, even if she was just using him to keep warm. "This is really nice of you and Torin to bring Christmas to Scyrrilis for Karia."

"Torin loves her very much."

"Yes, I know."

"Tell me more of this Christmas, Brietta. Does it have as much meaning for you as Karia?"

Brietta grew quiet and Bri'aque had assumed she had decided not to answer. When her voice came out, warm and nostalgic it held him spellbound. "My father was a

very busy man. He and Karia's father were two of the leading scientists on my planet. I hardly ever got to see him. But on Christmas...He always spent Christmas with me."

"What about your mother?"

"She died when I was young so it was just Dad and I. He always bought me the most girlish toys he could find." She laughed to herself. "Dad never could accept I wasn't like other girls. One Christmas he gave me a necklace with a gold unicorn that had a diamond eye."

"Ah, I understand on your planet gold and diamonds are very precious."

"Yes. I loved it. Wore it everyday. When it was time to leave Earth, I gave it back to my Dad. I wanted him to always think of me."

"I'm sure he did Brietta. I can't imagine anyone forgetting about you."

Brietta laughed again. "Yes, Christmas does mean a lot to me. But Karia now has someone special to share it with."

"She is still your Sister at Heart, you are special to her as well."

"It's not the same." She stood then and Bri'aque watched her pace about the small cave. "When we get out of here, we're going to need a ton of things." Her head snapped up then, as she looked at him with a devilish smile. "We're going to need someone to play Santa Claus."

"Santa Claus?" Bri'aque began to suspect that whomever this person was, it didn't bode well for him.

"Oh yes," a small giggle escaped, "I think you'd be awesome."

"I do not play pretend very well."

"Sure you do." Brietta teased. "Right now you're pretending to be a very decent man who saved my life." Her voice took on a more serious note. "You saved me back there in the ship."

"It's my job to save people." Bri'aque swallowed as the thought of Brietta dying in the crash swiftly surfaced. "Nothing will happen to you while you're with me Brietta."

"I know that." Brietta whispered. "And thank you."

Bri'aque turned toward the fire unable to stand the seductive lure of the woman. Right now when he should be thinking about their safety he was thinking of mating with her. His body was already hard for her. He had to get some air. Bri'aque stood then and almost bumped into Brietta who had silently come over. She held a small plant in her hand.

"I found this earlier. This looks just like the mistletoe plant on my planet. It's tradition at Christmas time that should you find yourself under one, you kiss the person who stands with you." She held the plant up but couldn't reach over his head. He took the plant from her slim fingers and held it over her head.

"Allow me." He murmured.

Chapter five

It was the most erotic kiss she'd ever had. It was also the most insane, considering cannibals were hunting them. But his firm lips against hers, only made her moan for more. His tongue swept inside her mouth and greedily she kissed him back. She loved kissing this man. His large hands grabbed her bottom bringing her closer to him. The feel of his heated skin penetrated hers, warming her from the inside out.

She pushed her hips against him, rubbing against the bulge in his pants. Even now soft waves pulsed through his body. Men from earth could benefit from a gene like this she thought to herself, as her body flared in response. Bri'aque broke the kiss, but immediately his teeth sank into her shoulder, and her lower region clenched in response. He alternated between kisses and bites, driving Brietta to score her nails down his arms and back in response. Apparently this did to him, what his bites did to her, as it seemed the bulge in his pants got bigger, and so did the pulsing waves, throughout his body. Brietta wanted him. She wanted to feel him between her legs until nothing else mattered. She knew she'd never be the dainty or proper lady her father tried to rear her to be. She was Brietta, a girl who said what she wanted and did what she wanted. Right now she wanted Bri'aque. If there was ever a man to have her virginity, it had to be him. Brietta broke the kiss and stepped back. In seconds she was completely naked save the weapons she had strapped to her thighs and her arm.

"I've never had a man before. But you Bri'aque, I want." Her heart hammered in her chest as she waited for his reaction. It seemed he was warring with something in his head. "I'm not asking you for anything, other than to give us both what we want." Brietta turned then and took a deep breath. She was risking one hell of a rejection, but no guts no glory. She walked to the nearest cave wall and planted her hands against the wall and spread her legs. She stuck her bottom out just a bit hoping to entice him. There was complete quiet, only the fire crackled and snapped.

Just when she thought she was about to face humiliation she felt his warm hands on either side of her hips. He took the time to caress her bottom. His hands went everywhere and she closed her eyes as his hands explored her body. He left lava trails where he kissed her along her spine, while his hands caressed her stomach, and tweaked her breasts. "Are you sure love?" he whispered in her ear. "To ask me to stop once I start would be nothing short of killing me."

"I want you to fuck me." Brietta stated, hearing the smoky sensuality in her own voice. The words shocked even her, but that was how she felt. She heard his sharp intake of breath and then rustling. Seconds later, she could feel his hard cock nestled and rubbing between her ass cheeks. His hand reached around and manipulated the already hardened and sensitive bud. She closed her eyes, as her hips gyrated in response to his touch. His body was hard against hers, every part of him.

"What you do to me." He moaned in her ear, as he pulled his cock back far enough to now slide between her moist folds. His heated vibrating cock rubbed against her, and she caught her breath at the sensations. She could feel his cock get slicker as he rubbed along her folds. "I want to be inside of you." "Then do it." She ordered him pushing back against him.

One hand went to her hair, grabbing a handful. The other stayed at her hip keeping her in place. He began to position his cock at her unbreached entrance and swathed it's head around, until it was completely coated. Brietta squirmed wanting to feel

the pulsing root inside of her. Just then he pulled her hair and bit into her shoulder, Brietta felt a flash of painful pleasure. He surged inside her at the same time. With so many sensations she barely registered the pain.

“Are you all right?”

“Yes. How did you know?”

“Torin told me human women who’ve never mated, have to be breached and it could be painful. I was trying to distract you.”

“You did well then.” Brietta smiled at his clever thoughtfulness. “Now fuck me.”

He laughed as he surged inside her again. The pleasure was more than Brietta could have ever imagined. Her nails scratched at the walls as she braced herself while he pumped slowly into her. The vibrations his cock emitted became a stronger pulsing wave. As he glided in and out, her eyes closed with enjoyment.

“You feel wonderful love,” he murmured in her ear. “So hot, inviting and perfect.” He began to slam into her and Brietta braced herself even more against the cave wall. She threw her head back on a sob of ecstasy and immediately his head came down and placed kisses alongside her neck. She could feel him swell even bigger and her legs nearly buckled as an orgasm ripped through her.

He held her up but kept sinking into her time and time again until her body stopped quivering. Bri’aque then brought them both to the ground where he pulled out and flipped her over. “I want to see your beautiful face, as I bring you pleasure.” He entered her again in one long stroke. Brietta reached up and grabbed his narrow hips, urging him to go faster, harder. The ground dug into her back and she didn’t care, she wanted all of him. He was saying something but she could barely make out his words as another orgasm began to creep upon her and his cock seemed to swell once again.

“Do you accept me?” From the sound of urgency from his voice he obviously had asked her this before. Of course she accepted him, she was making love to him wasn’t she?

“Yes, Bri’aque” she said breathlessly as the orgasm got closer.

“And I take you...” The rest of his words were lost as the orgasm became a cyclone and swept her body up in a torrent of sensations.

Faster and faster he pumped into her making her orgasm stretch out. Then his body stiffened. His seed erupted inside her with such force; she could feel the warmth of it inside her, as it covered her walls. A thin sheet of sweat covered their bodies as they tried to recover their breath.

“Well, it looks as if we came earlier than they expected.”

Brietta and Bri’aque scrambled and sat up in alarm. They looked toward the entrance to the cave. There, stood Torin, accompanied by a few guards with amused expressions. Brietta wanted to die from embarrassment.

Chapter six

“So you still haven’t told me if it’s true or not.” Karia asked again. Brietta really wished she would just drop the subject. Given all the stares everyone in the house was giving her, they all knew what she and Bri’aque had done.

“Yes it’s true.” Brietta snapped at last as she turned from the mirror to stare at her nosy friend. “We had sex, what is the big deal?”

“You were a virgin. You must care for him if you slept with him Brietta.”

“Again, I told you, it was just the whole dangerous situation that made it sexy. Besides we both know I wasn’t going to be a virgin forever.”

“Did he...” Karia began then stopped.

“Did he what? Just say it Karia.” Brietta fussed over her gown one more time, though it was perfectly in place. Ever since they’d returned from that god forsaken place, Karia had been fussing over her. Bri’aque had given her permission to spend the night with Karia while he and Torin discussed the situations with the Gaurans. In truth Brietta didn’t know if it was because he wanted to be away from her after what they’d just done, or he really needed her to keep Karia busy.

“Did he vibrate?”

“Yes.” Brietta believed she had told her that before. Karia was acting strange like she knew something.

“He didn’t say any special words did he?”

“No, no words. At least not that I can remember.” Brietta huffed. She could barely remember her own name when Bri’aque was making love to her let alone any words uttered. “Can we just drop this?”

“For now.” Karia conceded. “Where is Torin anyway?” she half muttered to herself.

“Bri’aque said they had some meeting to attend.” Brietta covered, glad that Karia had changed the subject. “He seemed quite upset that the Gaurans had found their way to Scyrrilis with no one detecting them. He’s worried about the damage they may have caused to that area.”

“I know it’s because of me.” Karia’s voice dropped.

“Don’t.” Brietta gave her friend a hug. “You had no control over what your father did. You should be happy. We survived and you’re expecting a child from the man you love.”

“And what about you Brietta, are you happy?” Karia’s eyed her shrewdly.

“I am content. I am alive, and healthy and I get to spend time with my best friend in the world.”

“What about Bri’aque?”

Brietta groaned. Why couldn’t Karia just leave this alone? A knock at the door saved her. After Karia, gave permission, Torin and Bri’aque walked in. Anything smart she had been preparing to say to Bri’aque lodged in her throat. He looked absolutely, stunningly, gorgeous. His hair was in one long braid down his back. With close fitting pants and black knee high boots he looked like a well dressed, well decorated warrior. His jacket was perfectly fitted to his physique with various pieces of decoration that Brietta was willing to bet he had earned in the line of duty. A weapon was strapped to one thigh and Brietta was curious as to its firepower.

“You’re staring.” Karia whispered in her ear, before she walked over to her

husband and gave him a kiss on the lips. Brietta tried to avert her eyes, but somehow his dark ones held her in a trance. He practically glided over to her, his eyes never leaving her face.

“We have traditions of our own.” His deep voice resonated as his eyes raked her from head to foot. “We honor the wishes of our women, for they are the most precious element in a man’s life.” Brietta swallowed the lump in her throat at his words. “You look absolutely breathtaking”

“You clean up well yourself.”

“May I?” he held out his hand and hesitantly Brietta took it. Her mind was reeling. What was he doing? Now that he was being this nice to her, this sweet, it left her defenseless. What was he up to? As they followed the First Couple of Scyrrilis, Brietta couldn’t help but wonder about her feelings for Bri’aque. Her stomach was doing funny twists and turns every time he looked down at her. Her heart was beating erratically and truth be told, she kept thinking of her bold behavior in the cave. Karia was right, she did care for him.

As soon as they stepped into the decorated hall, everyone inside became perfectly still. Brietta watched Karia’s face as her gaze traveled around the hall. “I-I.” She stuttered as she turned to Torin. Brietta teared up at the love she saw in her eyes, for her husband. “You did this for me?”

“I would do anything for you.” Torin responded. “Do you like it?”

Torin definitely had gone out of his way to give Karia Christmas. The huge hall held white, red and green trees. Each tree was covered with a substance that looked exactly like snow. As Brietta looked closer at the trees, a humorous suspicion began to form. “What exactly are those trees decorated with?” she whispered to Bri’aque.

“Exactly what you told me, horns and mints. We have to release them soon, I don’t think they like being in the trees.” Bri’aque’s eyebrows drew together in thought. “Why?”

“I said *or-na-ments*. Not horns and mints. You know, small decorations that you attach to the tree with little hooks.” Brietta crooked her finger in imitation of a hook. “Oh my, Bri’aque what is a mint on this planet?”

“They live in the wild waters here. They are harmless creatures, which are often given to children as first pets. They can be out of the water several hours before death. Don’t worry, we’ll put them back before any harm is done.”

“Oh no, you put goldfish on the trees?”

“No, mints...”

“Yeah, they’re probably like our goldfish.” She didn’t even want to know how they got the fish to stay up there. Brietta tried to keep from laughing, knowing how hard they were trying to make it Christmas. Instead she chose to look at the other decorations.

Up towards the ceiling, life-sized snowflakes hung midair and twinkled like crystals. Brietta had no idea how they did it, but it was beautiful. As her eyes perused the room her attention was captured by the sound of Karia’s laughter. She turned to see her friend doubled over in laughter and Torin demanding to know what was so funny.

Then she saw him. A rather short and portly man seated in a large seat, dressed in war armor. Armor, by the smell of it, that had been freshly painted red and white and not in a good way. He looked like a giant peppermint. At his feet, several small gray beasts lay, some were snorting, their muzzle-like noses to the ground. Each sported large ears, which reminded Brietta of elephant ears. Two of the creatures were more intent on procreating than eating the bits of food that was scattered to keep them in place. They were the oddest ‘reindeer’ she had ever seen.

In seconds Brietta was laughing harder than Karia. Tears came to her eyes as she realized several of the Christmas decorations and symbols had been misinterpreted.

Instead of green holly being draped elegantly along walls and pillars, a sickly looking yellow vine was in its place. Torin took Karia by the arm and pulled her aside, as did Bri'aque to Brietta. When she caught her breath and explained, Bri'aque's smile was slow in coming, but eventually he saw the humor as well.

"I do appreciate what you have done. But you have to admit, that's funny." As music started up Bri'aque took her by the arm and led her to a space reserved for dancing. Dread immediately settled in, she'd never learned to dance. There had never been an occasion for it at the laboratory base. "Bri'aque," she began to protest but he had already led her to the dance floor.

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"Relax, this is an easy dance to learn. It's a custom dance that's performed at all celebrations." Bri'aque looked down at the woman that he was now sure was his Attachment. As much as he wanted to fight the notion, this fiery, hardheaded, but strong woman was fated to be his.

All during the night, as he and Torin discussed the flourishing Gauran nuisance, he kept thinking of her. Thinking of how it felt to caress her skin. The smell of her alone caused his body to instantly harden. Sweet gods of Scyrrilis! Being inside of her gave him all the wicked pleasure a man could ask for. She had given herself to him first, that was a precious gift. Even as a virgin she had been a siren, tempting and sexy. She moved so light and unsure in his arms, but just her body being near his caused his body to react. He gritted his teeth to keep the mating waves at bay.

"I told you, I don't dance well." She said in exasperation, as she stopped. "Can't we just sit down or something?"

"If that is what you wish." Bri'aque took her by the hand, and began to lead her to the seats reserved for the royal family. As they were making their way, they were stopped by Torin's booming voice.

"Attention Scyrrilians. I have an announcement to make." Torin paused as the music and the chatter stopped. "As you know my wife Karia is from the Space Desert. She lived on a planet called Earth. On Earth there was a tradition of celebrating what is called Christmas." Karia tapped Torin on the shoulder lightly and Brietta wondered what was going on. It was then that Torin stepped back and Karia began to speak.

"My husband has had a hard time grasping the meaning of Christmas." She laughed lightly. "It was one of my favorite holidays. To put it simply Christmas is about showing all those you love in your life, how much you cherish and appreciate them. It's about taking the time to be kind to stranger and friend alike. Animosity and quarrels are set aside for peace. Gifts are exchanged as a symbol of giving. Of course we have decorations that go along with this tradition." Karia glanced around and Brietta saw her press her lips together to keep from laughing all over again. "I want to thank everyone who was involved in making this feel like home for me."

Bri'aque looked at Brietta as everyone clapped and yelled to the First Daughter In the Law how much they loved her. Love. It was the most unpredictable and powerful force in the universe. It can't be controlled, forced or denied. And Bri'aque could no longer deny the feelings he had towards the human. The energy in the room was contagious. He needed to take control of what he and Brietta were both denying. The time for games was over. What she needed to learn was that he was a man of persistence. He was used to being obeyed and getting what he wanted. He took a surprised Brietta by the arm and began to lead her out of the hall. It was time she learned her place!

Chapter Seven

“What the hell are you doing?” Brietta sputtered as Bri’aque, out of nowhere, began to drag her from the hall. One moment he had been nice and sweet to her, the next moment the cave man started dragging his knuckles on the ground.

“Showing you.” He said through gritted teeth.

“Showing me what?” She barely got it out as she realized that he appeared to be leading her back to their forced shared quarters. He didn’t answer her and didn’t slow down until the door was closed behind them. He trained his dark eyes on her and took a breath as if he were preparing for something. “What’s wrong? I did nothing back there that would warrant house arrest.” Brietta folded her arms across her chest ready for a fight. But Bri’aque went past her into the bedroom. Curious Brietta followed.

He went to the far wall in the bedroom and pushed various panels. Her mouth fell open when one of the panels slid open. A secret vault. Nice. He pulled a small box out of it and walked towards her. Her heart began to speed up, as nervousness set in. What was he up to? He handed her the box and waited for her to open it.

Brietta snapped the box open and gasped. It was a necklace with a small gold leaf, in the middle of it lay one single jewel that looked like a diamond. “Oh.” Was all she could get out as she pulled out the beautiful piece of jewelry.

“It seems when Torin’s father had gone to Adara, gold and diamonds were some of the gifts bestowed upon him by the humans who wished to remain there. The leaf is from the plant you had in the cave. I had the artisan work on this all night. Brietta, I want you to wear it and always think of me.”

Brietta looked at Bri’aque in shock, her throat became blocked as a large ball of emotion made its home there. “When a Scyrrilian male finds his True Attachment, his body reacts in what is called the Mating Waves.”

Brietta’s mouth hung open in shock. She knew he vibrated whenever things got heavy between the two of them but it never occurred to her...how long had he known this? How long had he believed she was his destined mate? More than that why didn’t he tell her?

“Why didn’t you tell me.” Her voice came out in a whisper.

“I was in denial. But not anymore. When our craft landed all I could think was that I had to save you Brietta. I know we fight a lot but that can be taken care of in time.” He took the necklace out of her hand and stood behind her as he clasped it around her neck. “Merry Christmas Brietta. Did I say that right?”

Brietta turned around and looked into his eyes. He hid nothing from her. Not his vulnerability, or growing love for her. “You said everything perfect.” She breathed and leaned in to kiss him.

The taste of him always sent her senses reeling. She inhaled the male scent that was uniquely Bri’aque. Her body immediately grew feverish and it seemed she couldn’t get close enough to him. The sound of fabric ripping vaguely registered as she deepened the kiss. Cool air washed over her, and she could feel her dress pool around her ankles. Bri’aque broke the kiss. “I can’t get the image of you in the cave, with nothing but weapons strapped to that scrumptious form, out of my mind.”

“Then how about this image.” Brietta licked her lips slowly as she stepped out of the dress with her three inch heeled Scyrrilian black boots. She turned then and sauntered over to the bed, hoping she looked as sexy and he made her feel. When she turned he was already there, sans clothing. “I hope that’s the only thing you do fast.” She

remarked as he pushed her down on the bed.

Bri'aque said nothing as he stared down at her. Brietta tried to remember every romance novel she'd ever read as she tried her hand at seducing him. She brought her hands slowly to her breasts and caressed them teasing the peeks. To her delight she liked the feel of what she was doing to herself with him watching. His cock was long and hard as it jutted forth from his body. Brietta scooted up the bed until her head rested on the pillows.

She spread her legs and propped her feet so that the heels dug into the bed. She closed her eyes, not yet confident enough to do what she was about to do and look him in the eye. She licked her fingers, then slowly brought them to the junction of her thighs, keeping the other hand at her breast. The warm moisture from her fingers felt good and she pushed against her own hands and gyrated her hips. As her own sexual excitement grew she opened her eyes, knowing he was watching her every move.

Bri'aque crawled onto the bed and lay beside her but never touched her. She closed her eyes again and began to work her clit in a figure eight motion, engaging her hips for better friction. She felt the beginnings of an orgasm building and began to squeeze and caress her breast, working the tip into a hardened nub. Sweat began to coat her skin as her orgasm built. Without warning a hot mouth clamped on to her other breast and she cried out from the sensation.

Bri'aque nipped at the breast and soothed it with his tongue. His large hands began to ply the fleshy mound as his mouth assaulted it, sending her ribbons of pleasure that went straight to her core. In seconds her body jerked uncontrollably as the orgasm ripped through her. Before the waves subsided Bri'aque was between her legs and inside of her, pumping slowly, making her orgasm last longer. The vibrations intensified the orgasm. Her nails dug into his taut smooth skin as she tried to regain her senses.

Then Bri'aque began to sink into her faster, and deeper. The slickness from her core making it easy for him to invade her tight sheath. Verbally she egged him on, daring him to fuck her into oblivion. "Be careful what you ask for." He taunted in return as he slammed into her harder and harder, making the head of the bed smash against the wall. They were both oblivious to the ruckus, engulfed in passion.

Bri'aque pulled out of her. "Get on all fours for me, here." He pointed to the edge of the bed as he got off and stood. Brietta got up on all fours and positioned herself so that her ass was right in front of him, the tips of the boots over the lip of the bed. Bri'aque grabbed her by her waist, and without preamble pushed his cock into her to the hilt. For a second he paused then did it again. One hand traveled to her shoulder for a better angle while the other hand smacked her ass. Brietta's eyes fluttered in response, loving the rough yet sensuous way he treated her.

Again and again he spanked her, then smoothed the flesh with his warm hand. His hand traveled alongside her thighs until she could feel his fingers between her wet folds. He began to rhythmically stroke her, and Brietta's back arched wanting him to go as deep as possible. "You like that don't you?" his voice sounded gritty, barely controlled. "Gods, I could fuck you all night. So wet and tight for me. "

"All for you." Brietta moaned as he pounded into her. She could feel the tightness of his balls as they slapped against her ass. "Don't come in me." Brietta gasped. "I want to taste you Bri'aque. Please let me taste you." It seemed he swelled even bigger at her words, and Brietta began to wonder if she could actually get his cock into her mouth. She'd never had one in her mouth before, but Bri'aque made her want to try everything. Goosebumps adorned her skin as the vibrations from his cock made her muscles turn to jelly. She knew without a doubt he could fuck her forever and she would never want him to stop.

"Get ready Brietta." He warned. A second later he pulled out of her and Brietta

spun around. His cock was pulsing. Brietta put her lips around the velvet hard head and sucked him into her mouth. Immediately the taste assailed her, and she loved the outcome of the mixture.

He pulled his cock slowly out of her mouth and Brietta sucked him back in. He drew in a sharp breath as she undulated her tongue along the shaft. "Oh, Brietta." He moaned as he pushed into her mouth. The tip of the head was at the entrance to her throat and Brietta pushed up along his cock until the head was in her throat. She pulled back and opened her mouth just a bit to get a breath.

She did it again and this time, he held her head in place as he pushed himself further down her throat and low guttural moan came from his chest as he fucked her mouth. "You want to know how I taste?" Brietta tasted the salty spray of his seed as he was pushing back into her mouth. The hot thick liquid coated the back of her throat. She kept him in her mouth as the last of his load subsided. Then she pulled back and freed his cock, swallowing the last of his essence.

He stood in front of her sweating, the last of the Mating Waves beginning to subside. She said nothing as he bent down until he was eye level to her. "Stay with me Brietta."

"I have to remember? You ordered me to."

"No, this is your choice. I want you to stay with me, get to know me. Let me show you I can be the Attachment you deserve."

"I want to stay with you Bri'aque." Brietta smiled as tears of happiness formed.

"Good. Then there's something I should tell you." Brietta's heart sped up at his words. Is this when he drops the bomb that he's married? Or that he has to move away to some distant planet.

"You staying here will make things easier." He paused then, making Brietta even more nervous. "In the cave I lost control. I attached us."

Brietta blinked twice, sort of, but not wanting to believe what she just heard. "What do you mean attached us? You sound as if we got married or something." When he didn't answer, Brietta squinted at him. "Did you somehow marry us Bri'aque?"

"It was not my intention." Then he began to explain the mating Attachment ritual. When he finished Brietta sat in shock. So that's what Karia had meant when she asked if he'd said any words. Now that she had time to replay it, she remembered he had...of sweet Earth, she had obviously agreed to it in her passion!

She pushed him, making him land hard on his backside. "Oh, things are about to get real interesting mister!" she screamed. "How dare you marry me while I'm under—under sexual duress!" she scrambled to get away as he wrapped his hand around her booted ankle.

"Not so fast, *wife*." He mocked her laughing, then pulled her down so that she spilled onto him. In scant time he had her pinned under him. "You agreed to the Attachment *and are* staying here with me. Are you not a woman of your word? It never occurred to me that I would have an Attachment who was not good on her word." He was challenging her and she knew it.

"Fine, I'll stay, but I guarantee you won't enjoy it."

"I beg to differ." He whispered as he lowered his mouth to her. "In fact you'll enjoy it too, That I guarantee." Then he kissed her. Brietta lost herself in the kiss for a moment before she broke it.

"Is that the only secret? Is there anything else you should be telling me?"

Brietta watched at Bri'aque appeared to be honestly thinking about the question before he shook his head. "No, I do not think there is anything else I should tell you." Then he kissed her again, rendering her senseless.

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Three hours later, the couple made their way back to the Christmas Celebration. Karia found her way to Brietta's side.

"You look different."

"Bri'aque Attached himself to me." Brietta responded trying to sound casual. Karia squealed loudly causing a few people nearby to turn in curiosity.

"You're Attached? Just now?" Karia pulled her to a quiet corner.

"Apparently last night." Brietta snorted.

"Oh wow." Karia whispered. "How do you feel about it?"

Brietta hesitated then smiled. "I care for him deeply Karia, but he annoys the hell out of me. If he thinks I'm going to play trophy wife he has another thing coming. He better know who he's dealing with."

"He knows exactly who he's dealing with." Bri'aque's voice startled Brietta. Torin stood behind Karia.

"We wish you both, uh, good luck." Karia snickered.

"Congratulations Bri'aque, you two were made for each other." Torin added with a chuckle.

"And here I thought once he told her about the Dausas implant he gave her, she would castrate him." Karia and Torin laughed.

"Dausas implant? Isn't that the disgusting insect that Torin had implanted in you to help you understand Scyrrilian language?"

"Yes." Karia swallowed on a giggle. "Did you not think about how you understand them?"

"Yeah, but Bri'aque never..." Brietta turned to Bri'aque at that point. "I asked you if there was anything else."

"And I answered." Bri'aque defended.

Just then Bri'aque's Second In Command came forth and whispered in Torin's, then Bri'aque's ear. Both men scowled but soon recovered. "What's wrong?" Brietta asked putting her arm around Bri'aque's waist.

"Nothing we need to worry about right now. This Christmas celebration is set aside for peace, and giving." He looked at Karia who shook her head in approval. Torin stopped a servant and retrieved three glasses of Chandrin and one glass of water from the tray and handed each a drink.

"In celebration of life," he lightly caressed Karia's pregnant belly. "New beginnings," he nodded towards Bri'aque and Brietta. "And peace. Many Christmas!"

"Merry Christmas." Karia lovingly corrected.

"Merry Christmas!" they all repeated and clanked their glasses together.

Bri'aque turned to Brietta then, "I promise you, we will make this work. As we stand here, my love for you grows."

"I know. I, I love you as well." Brietta finally admitted. "But about that Dausas implant—" before she could finish, Bri'aque took the remaining portion of the plant from his pocket and held it over her head, and kissed his wife, rendering her quiet under the 'mistletoe'.

The End

Author's Biography

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