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*Jaden Sinclair*

**Midnight Showcase Fiction Presents**  
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**S.H.I.L.O.**  
**By**  
**Jaden Sinclair**

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Shilo – Jaden Sinclair

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He was nothing more than a backup for the company; only the company underestimated their program. Shilo is free to make his own choices but has one glitch in his programming: very few emotions. He's ruthless, cunning, strong, and doesn't give a damn who he has to go through in order to get what he wants, and what he wants is Star Murray.

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# **S.H.I.L.O.**

**By**  
**Jaden Sinclair**

## **Prologue**

Star Murray's fingers flew over the keyboard with such speed the system could hardly keep up with her. Codes, words, all of it was working as fast as the computer would go to keep up with what she was keying in to hack the E.I. Corporation.

Her system was flawless. Monitors were in a U shape around her, at least twenty with a different program running on each one with a keyboard linked to each, and one special flabby keyboard that she took wherever she went. She was an elite hacker, in hiding, and damn proud of it.

She hid out in an old warehouse building she'd converted to her home, and with the money her 'uncle' gave her, was able to do whatever her little heart desired, but for a price. She could have every system that was out there, and the run of the whole building, if she only let him have a small part of the basement for his experiments. She agreed easily, and together, they'd built a home that was a first for her.

Her mother went through several men after the death of her first husband, who was *not* her father. A pity because, what she knew of the man, she would have loved to have him as a father. So the one father figure she had, who she called uncle with no problem, treated her like a daughter, and she watched the beauty of his mind create something that she never would have thought possible.

A human body.

As she sat with her computers around her, working on her hack and getting the data she needed for him, she glanced over at the cooling chamber. All the monitors showed the life in the body, but without the spirit or soul.

Standing, he would be about five-eleven, his hazel-brown hair touching his shoulders, and when his eyes were open, they were greenish-blue. Her uncle had told her that this was not the first one but the second. To tell them apart, he'd given them different color eyes as well as this one having a small brown patch next to his belly button—a birthmark.

At first, she thought it was spooky to have a living body in the basement next to her computers, but after a while, she'd gotten used to it and started talking to it as if it were alive. When her uncle gave her the project she was working on now, everything finally started to fall into place.

His name was Shilo, and he had what her uncle liked to call a twin named Seth.

Star knew the whole story. Knew how Seth had broken out and was now free, hiding somewhere, and that one day, he would come knocking on her door for help. It was strange to think about it really, mostly because she didn't like people. They didn't understand her or her way of thinking and, most of the time, treated her like a freak.

She didn't date. Gave up on the whole romance—there's someone out there for you crap—and focused all of her attention on her work. She didn't believe everyone had someone out there for them, but when she looked at the body for Shilo, she started to wonder a little. What was his lucky girl going to feel like once those strong arms of his wrapped around her?

She shook her head and went back to typing the commands. There was no use thinking about things she couldn't have when there was shit she could have and do.

“Damn it!” she yelled when her link up went down.  
“Not again.”

*Are we playing this game again?*

She glared at the screen. Once more, she'd been booted out of a system with a program that was sure to get her in this time. How the hell did he keep kicking her out?

*You can't keep me out forever. I will get what I want,* she typed back.

*You can keep trying, but I'm not going to let you in.*

She gritted her teeth in anger. *Who the hell are you?*

*Wouldn't you like to know?*

He was messing with her! The prick was fucking with her on the computer. *You think you are fucking funny, don't you?*

*Such language. Do you swear when you don't get your way?*

“I don't have time for this shit,” she mumbled to herself. She worked to disconnect the link, only to discover she was no longer in control.

*What's wrong, Princess. Did the hacker get hacked?*

*What the fuck did you do?*

*Stop snooping, Princess, or you might just get more than you bargained for.*

She glared at the screen again. *You don't scare me, dipshit. I can take you on whenever and wherever.*

*LMAO... We shall see.*

Her whole system shut down right before her eyes.  
“How the fuck did he do that?”

For weeks now as she was trying to hack into the system for her uncle that same hacker came on and blocked her. She didn't know who the guy was, but he sure was doing a fine job at pissing her off.

She pushed away from the computer, stood up and stretched. The long, button-down shirt she seemed to live in

it came down to the top of her legs.

“You don’t know who you’re messing with.” She spoke to the black computer screen. “I will get the information I’m after, one way or another.”

She turned and left to get some sleep since it was after three in the morning. Not once did she notice that her web cam was turned on or that she was being watched as she stopped in front of the glass window of the cooling chamber. She didn’t see the smiley face show up on her screen or wink at her as she shut off the lights and left the room.

\* \* \* \*

Seth stopped his work on the computer when his phone started to buzz at three in the morning. He frowned as he thought about who could be contacting him now. Only three knew this number, and it was hard to imagine two of them being up this late.

He picked up the phone from the desk, looked at the number. *Unauthorized*. He flipped it open, brought it to his ear, and said nothing.

“It’s begun,” the voice said.

He heard a click as the line went dead. Lowering the phone to the table, he looked up at nothing and grinned.

Shilo was now on the path to freedom!



## Chapter One

Star Murray sat behind her desk of many computers, her fingers flying over the keys quickly with the codes and hacks that she was trying, yet again. For months now, she had been trying with no luck. Behind her, her guardian and mentor, Alex Saker, sat and waited.

Star lived in the basement of a warehouse, owned by Dr. Saker. The top level was bare and looked like it had been abandoned; the lower half was made up of everything scientific, except for her living space. She only took up a small amount of space for a bed and dresser. She didn't need much, since she spent most of her time right where she was at the moment, in front of her computers.

"Any luck?" Saker asked her.

Star didn't move her eyes from the screen or stop her hands. "No. The program is good at keeping outside eyes out."

Saker took a deep breath and stood up. "I should have asked Seth to help."

Star stopped and turned in her chair. "I don't need him. I can get the information."

Saker walked out of the computer room, heading over to the cooling chamber. He flipped the switch, lightening up what was within. A man sat in a chair in the middle of a glass-enclosed room. Thick muscled arms rested on the arms of the chair, head held up by a headrest. He was dressed only in a pair of tight biker shorts and his chest rose and fell with soft breathing.

Shilo!

He looked just like Seth, except for his eyes. Shilo had greenish-blue eyes and Seth had hazel. As an extra difference, Saker placed a birthmark on Shilo's stomach, a

dark brown patch right under his belly button.

“Our time has run out.” Saker rubbed his eyes before turning to Star who had come up to stand next to him. “He has to be set free or they will shut him down.” He reached out and touched her cheek. “You need Seth’s help.”

Star moved her eyes from Saker to the body in the cooler. “I don’t trust him.”

Skater chuckled, “You don’t trust anyone.” He turned back to the cooler. “But Seth you can trust. He wants Shilo out as much as we do.”

She snorted, “I don’t trust Seth anymore than I trust that one in the fridge.” She crossed her arms over her chest, glaring at the body. “My gut tells me popsicle is a whole lot more to handle than Seth.”

Star told Saker about the hacker that kicked her out of the program and kept breaking into her system, taunting her. When he went back to his lab to find out who might know about her, and blocking her, they were both shocked to discover that it was Shilo. Saker couldn’t get him to explain why he was keeping Star out or why he was messing with her, but he did tell her that he suspected it was his programming. There was still a part of him loyal to the system and protecting its secrets.

But it didn’t stop him from picking on Star.

What she didn’t tell Saker was that Shilo kept hacking into her system, teasing her about her inexperience at computers and men. She discovered one night that he was turning her webcam on and watching her, pointing out that talking to a body and touching him when he couldn’t touch back would get her into trouble.

That had her yanking the cam from the outlet. She hated him watching her and talking to her and was so embarrassed over him catching her touching his body when she was drunk. It was creepy, just like the body in the cooler

belonging to a damn computer chip. If Star got her way, Shilo would *never* get out. She had a suspicious feeling that if he did then Shilo would do everything he could to get even with her.

She never told Saker about the little power play between her and Shilo. It had nothing to do with computers and hacking, but an attraction that was all one sided. His! Sure, his body might be hot, but his personality online sucked.

The last time she got drunk was definitely the last time. She failed again to get into the system and went to the body, which she shouldn't have done. Shilo got into her system again and not only did he turn a cam on that she forgot about, but he also managed to get sound into the room.

A computer voice spoke to her and she was able to talk back. She teased him about being a chip and never being a human. She went into the cooling chamber and touched his body, pointing out that he would not be touching her. Star also sat on his lap, smiling into the cam as she moved his arms around her body and wiggled her ass on his crotch. Then for extra affect, she turned and straddled his lap, rubbing against him like cat.

Shilo didn't like that.

And he made a point of telling her once he was free he would show her the right way his hands were going to touch her. Star only laughed at him and said she was going to bed. Before shutting things off, she added, alone and *not* with him.

He didn't contact her for almost a week.

"Shilo has a vengeful streak," Star stated, going back to her computers. "You let him loose and he is going to do nothing but get even with people."

"And Seth didn't?" Saker also went back to the computers but put his hands over hers to still her typing. "I

know there is something you're not telling me."

*When I get out, Princess, I'm going to show you just what I am capable of.* "There's nothing," she said, remembering the last transmission he sent before going MIA. "I'm just tired is all." She gave him a quick smile over her shoulder. "Not sleeping again."

Saker patted her shoulders. "Get some rest. I'm going to give Seth a call to help out and if you get it first..." He shrugged. "Then okay. But I want Seth here. Shilo is going to need him."

She stopped again and swung around in her chair to face him. "What if you don't get the chip? There is no guarantee that you will be able to get it. Not after what happened with Seth. They are not going to let you just walk in and take it." He opened his mouth but she cut him off. "Shilo is also working to keep you out and away from it. It doesn't matter how much he might want to get free. He's the one blocking us!"

He bent and kissed her on the cheek before picking up his coat to leave. "And that is why we need Seth. He has the knowledge we don't as well as the program to get things started and shut the control down on Shilo."

"I thought he only needed the chip," she grumbled.

"The chip is him, and the information is freedom. Without the programs he will only be a chip." He walked back over to the cooling chamber. "The body cannot work with the information, which is the nerve system. It's like our body. We don't function without our brain."

She came up to the side, resting her head on his shoulder. "But how the hell are you going to get that chip?"

"Oh I have a plan. Don't you worry." Seconds went by before he turned and kissed her on the cheek again. "I need to go back to the office. You keep doing what you're doing," he said as he headed for the door. Shilo needs to be

distracted by you so Seth can do what I need him to do.”

She rolled her eyes and turned her back on him. “I still don’t see why we need to bring him into this. If Seth comes back it will only be more trouble.”

Saker chuckled, “Try and keep Seth from his brother.” He came up behind her, wrapped his arm around her shoulders. “Trust me. I’ve never been wrong before. With Seth helping we can get Shilo out and bring this corporation down for good.”

Star walked Saker out to his car. She tried not to show her worry about him, but it was hard. If the Corporation knew what he was doing, she feared they would kill him. E.I. Synthetic didn’t like for their secrets to slip past the doors. The stuff worked on on the top floor was as hushed up as any C.I.A or F.B.I projects. Seth started a lot of trouble when he fell in love with a human and broke out to be with her. He was their top military weapon, and it went wrong.

Shilo was nothing more than the backup system, but he proved to be a very adequate substitute for Seth. His calculations and statistics were more than acceptable. They were damn impressive. He was even able to detect and spot bombs and other terrorist activities for the military. And he was perfect for coordinated assaults.

As far as the company knew, Shilo was everything they had wanted in Seth and so much more. But what they didn’t know was that Shilo was very different and cunning. Not only was he able to split and do many different things like Seth, Shilo was also leaning human ways and emotions at a rate that couldn’t be tracked in the system. Saker knew, but the company didn’t. As far as they knew, Shilo did his job and was doing it well.

Alone once again, Star went back to her computers and sat down in her chair, but didn’t touch the keyboard. She

couldn't. She felt too worried over what Saker was about to do. To bring Seth aboard was a mistake. The company was still looking for him and if Seth came here, they would discover the other body. It would be the end of Saker, and everything he'd worked so hard at.

"Something on your mind?"

Star jumped at the computer voice that came through her speakers. She glared up at the cam that was now on and flipped it off as she stood up.

"Now that isn't nice."

She kept her mouth shut and walked away, but she could still feel him watching her. He always watched her.

"Don't you have something to do besides bother me?"

"You are better company than the programs."

She stopped and cocked her head to the side, "I'm not going to let him free you. You know that don't you?"

"You can not stop this, Star. It is inevitable."

She rolled her eyes and turned back around, hands on hips, "Big word for a computer."

"Would you like for me to explain its meaning?"

"You know you're a fucking smart ass!" She pointed her finger at the cam. "And without my help you won't be shit. Just another fucking program trying to be something he can never understand." She crossed her arms over her chest and glared. "You're like a little boy trying to play a grown up game."

The cam shut off and she sighed, rubbing her face. Again, she'd pissed him off, but this time she wasn't happy about it. Something wasn't right.

Star went over to her computers and sat down with a heavy sigh.

"I will break free, Star."

She jumped at the low voice. This time it wasn't a computer voice but human.

The lights in the cooling chamber turned on. Slowly she stood up and walked over to him, pressing her hands on the glass.

“It is only a matter of time.”

A chill went down her spine when she saw the lips of the body move and heard his voice for the first time. Deep, soothing and very sexy. The kind of voice you would want to have speaking to you late at night, telling you all kinds of wicked things he was going to do to you later.

She moved to the door and, keeping her eyes on the body, punched the code, opening the sealed doors. She was hit with cold air, but that didn't stop her from walking inside and standing in front of him.

There was an I.V in his arm to feed the body and a smaller tube at the back of his neck to keep the body alive.

“What are you doing?” she whispered.

“Information,” he answered. “You will not stop this process.”

She glanced up and around and her mouth opened. Shilo was stealing her information and down-loading it himself. Files started to pop up all over her screens and encrypted information poured like a virtual shower on the monitor. “You can't do that!” she yelled and made a mistake of judgment.

Star leaned over the body to grab and pull the tube from the back of his neck, but he grabbed her wrists none too gently, and stopped her. She gasped when he slowly opened his cold, greenish-blue eyes and stared at her.

“I will be free,” he whispered before shoving her away.

The eyes closed and she quickly ran from the cooling chamber back to her computers to block him from downloading any more information.

Lights flickered and one of her towers popped, started smoking then went out. Star jumped back. She looked on in

complete disbelief. Shilo was downloading everything she had in her system as well as crashing a few.

Star grabbed her cell phone and ran to the corner of the room that she set up for her bedroom. Her hands shook as she punched Saker's number in and waited as the phone rang, looking over her shoulder. She feared that any moment he was going to stand up, get out and come after her, even though she knew that it wasn't possible. He needed the chip to be completely free.

"Now is not the best time to call," Saker answered the phone.

"We have a problem," she whispered. "He's downloading all my information on my computers and I think crashing them."

"Star!" Her name sounded strained in his voice. "What did you do?"

"I didn't do anything," she snapped. "Alex, he made the damned body move! He was talking through it, and looking at me with its eyes. How the hell is he able to do that without the chip?"

"I don't know." He sighed. "Maybe he's using your system to transfer information."

"You said—"

"I know what I said!" His voice cracked in anger and agitation. "He's moving the time table up."

"Well, what am I suppose to do?" Again, she looked over her shoulder. "I can't stay here. He's in my system. He controls everything."

"Shut it down."

"What?"

"Shut it all down. The computers, the program, everything!" She heard him take a deep breath. "Shut everything down and leave the life support on. I'll be there as soon as I can."



The phone went dead and she tossed it on her bed. Taking several deep breaths, Star left her room and ran across it to the main power area. She yanked the fuse box open and, not hesitating any longer, slapped the switch, shutting all the power down but for the support system.

“You get out on my terms,” she said, walking back up to the cooling chamber. “Not yours.”

## Chapter Two

Seth leaned against a light pole across the street from the E.I. Synthetic Corporation. After the message from Saker informing him that Shilo had moved the time frame up Seth had been thinking about how he was going to go inside and get his chip. So far, everything he thought up sucked.

Rain beat on his head and lightening brightened up the dark sky every few minutes, reminding him about the storm that was coming. It was after midnight, and he was due to meet Dr. Saker. Seth was also waiting for a member of the team to leave as well. Someone new that took over where Joshua Walsh left off.

His name was Carl Powell and he was the new director of the Corporation. Seth didn't know much about the man, but he intended on finding out all he could. Yet, first things first; he had a promise to keep with his brother. Freedom! Shilo was going to get out soon.

He waited a few more minutes before pushing off the pole and headed for the underground garage. It had been a couple years since Seth had come back to this building, and as far as he was concerned, it looked the same.

Right off, he got a funny feeling when the security guard that was supposed to be at the booth wasn't there. The man was *always* there. It was also a bit too dark—darker than usual, and likely not safe.

He glanced around before ducking under the rail, and went into the garage. He was supposed to meet up with Saker on the fifth level in twenty minutes, so he started a jog up that way. Each level he passed that feeling as if something wasn't right got stronger. When he reached twenty, he knew why.

The whole level was shot up and the only car that was parked was Saker's. Seth couldn't believe what he saw and, tossing caution to the side, he ran up to the vehicle.

Alex Saker was hunched over the steering wheel, glass shattered all around him, bullet holes in his back and blood everywhere. Seth hung his head and knelt down next to his creator, then jumped when a cool hand touched his arm.

"Seth," Saker breathed out with difficulty. "They...caught me."

"Don't talk," Seth said. He quickly assessed the wounds and didn't like what conclusion he came to.

"I got him." Saker was now panting, trying to hang on it seemed. "They thought...they thought they got me first, but I got him." He raised one finger in the air and smiled, blood running down the side of his neck from his mouth. "He will be free...like...like I promised you."

Seth didn't move or say anything. Saker reached for his brief case and ripped the top inside open. Everything he had was scattered on the floor. It was obvious that the ones who shot him were looking for something.

"Here." Saker handed him a small jump drive. "All information needed." His breathing was coming faster and there was a wheezing sound to it as well. "Shoe...the heel. Free him..." Saker took his last breath and Seth knew he was gone.

Seth stared at the man who created him. Alex Saker was dead, giving his life so that Shilo would be free like him.

Far off sirens snapped him out of his grief. Seth grabbed his foot and looked at the left shoe. Nothing. He moved to the right and with a slight twist the heel of the shoe opened up. Resting in a case was one single chip.

"Shilo," Seth whispered.

"Hey you!"

Seth pocketed the chip and stood up quickly. A man in a

suit pointed a very large gun that didn't fit with what he was wearing. Seth watched him and raised his arms up slowly as he approached. When he was close enough, Seth grabbed the barrel of the gun, swung around, and hit the guy as hard as he could with his elbow. He went down.

Seth touched Saker's head once before he turned and left. If these people were willing to kill one of their own to keep Shilo then there was little doubt in his mind what they would do if they knew he had him. That meant that he had very little time to go over the information for his brother, and to form a plan to get him out. Seth knew that Saker had a body for his brother; he just didn't know where that body was.

"I'm coming brother."

\* \* \* \*

Carl Powell, the new director for the E.I. Synthetic Corporation, sat behind the desk that once belonged to Joshua Walsh. Powell was colder and more calculated than Walsh ever was. He didn't know the full story of what happened out at the base, or what the story was with Seth, but he did know that there was a traitor in his own house.

He tapped his fingers on the desk, waiting to hear the report, waiting to hear that they found what was lost. Without that chip, this company was nothing. They didn't even have a backup.

His phone buzzed and he hit the line on speaker, "Yes."

"He didn't have it on him."

Powell swore under his breath. "Are you sure?" he asked with clinched teeth. He had to have that damned chip.

"We checked him and the car. If he took it for sure then he did something else with it."

Powell knew Saker took it. He saw the video footage himself. Watched the man shut the system down and pull the chip out of the board.

“There’s something else, sir.”

Powell glared at the phone and sat forward, “What?”

“Another man showed up and talked to Saker before he died. He might have told him where to find the chip.”

Powell rubbed his jaw and sat back in his chair again. He thought about this for a few seconds. “Find him. Get my chip and I don’t give a damn if you have to kill to get it back. Just get it!” he yelled and hung up.

His eyes moved from the phone up to the dark corner across the room. One of his own creations stood there waiting for instructions, one that he’d made himself, using Saker’s notes. It was a secret, one that he used to get this position.

He called him Pain because he could cause extreme pain to anyone he needed in order to get information. He also followed instructions to the max. Never questioning anything Powell ordered him to do.

“We have a problem, Pain.” Powell sighed, linking his fingers together over his chest. “I suspect that Seth has the chip he needs for his brother.”

Pain stared at Powell with no emotion, just as he liked. Emotion was the thing he didn’t let Pain learn or experience. Pleasure for the kill he did, because that made him an effective killer.

“I need that chip.” He sighed. “And you’re going to get it for me.”

Pain nodded.

“Good. Don’t come back until you have either the chip, or Shilo. He has information and I want it.”

\* \* \* \*

“Yesterday, at E.I. Synthetic Corporation, Doctor Alex Saker was found in his car shot to death.”

Star stopped walking with her clean clothes in her arms and turned to the news broadcast. Her mouth dropped open

when a picture of Saker showed up on the news and her hands started to shake.

“It appeared that it was a robbery gone wrong—”

She didn’t hear the rest. Star turned away from the T.V. and went to her small bedroom. She tossed the clothes on the bed, grabbed a bag, and started to pack some things. If they got to Alex, then they were going to get to her and she needed to get lost.

Clothes packed, she went to her computers and grabbed some of her disks, jump drives and two of her laptops, shoving them into a backpack. Hands full, Star left and went to the elevator. She got in, pushed the ‘up’ button and tried to shove her fears aside while she waited to go up to the first floor. She had the gate opened before the elevator completely stopped and was out, rushing to the door. But she didn’t get out like she wanted.

Star opened the door and screamed when a man and woman blocked her way. But that wasn’t why she screamed. The guy standing in front of her looked exactly like the one in the freezer.

“Star Murray?” he asked, stepping inside. The woman behind him closed and locked the door.

“No fucking way,” Star gasped, and took off running away.

“Seth!” the woman yelled behind her.

Star didn’t get too far before she was grabbed around the waist and plucked off the floor. She screamed and kicked as well as swung her arms and tried to hit the arm around her. “Let me go! I didn’t do anything,” she yelled.

“Seth, put her down!”

Star was placed back on her feet, but wasn’t let go. Instead, he swung her around to face the woman.

“Sorry about that.” The woman smiled. “He still over reacts.”

“Who the hell are you people?” Star demanded.

“I’m Alyna Satara, he’s Seth, Shilo’s brother.”

“Where is he?” Seth asked, but his voice was anything but nice when he asked. “Where’s his body.”

“If...if I tell you, will you let me go?” she asked him.

“Yes,” Seth answered.

“Down stairs in the cooler that Alex built for him.” Star saw the exchanged looks between the two and felt her gut drop. “You’re not going to let me go, are you?”

Seth released her waist, only to grab onto her arm tight. “No.” He jerked her to the side and forced her to walk with him back to the elevator.

“You’re just like him!” She tried to jerk her arm free.

Alyna closed the gate and pushed the down button before turning to Star. “You’ve talked to him?”

“Yeah, the son of a bitch hacks into my computer when ever he gets the chance,” she snorted. “But I’ve had my computers shut off for couple days now because of the last hack. He was downloading my files!”

“How much time do you think we have?” Alyna asked Seth.

“Don’t know.” Seth shook his head. “Depends on how much more information he needs to upload. If he knows its urgent, maybe twelve hours.”

The elevator stopped and Alyna opened the gate and stood back for Seth to go first with Star. He walked her right up to the room that housed her large expanse of computers and shoved her inside.

“Load them up,” he told her.

“No.” Star crossed her arms over her chest and glared at him.

“Seth,” Alyna had a warning in her tone. “Don’t let the emotion take over your common sense.”

“We have a killer on our asses, Ms. Murray.” he snarled

her name like it left a bad taste in his mouth. “Time is not on our side. Upload the computers or Alyna will do it for you.”

“You’re not setting him free.” Star stood her ground. “He’s unstable.”

“So is the bastard on our ass.” He backed Star up, dark brown eyes locked on her. “Alyna, upload the system.”

The girl took a seat and started to upload the computers. When everything was up and running she held her hand out and Seth handed her something. Star recognized it right off as the chip that Saker was going to retrieve before he died.

“You killed him for that!” Star lost her cool and lunged at Seth. He seemed to be waiting for her to do something like this and caught her before she could hit him. “You killed him!” she screamed.

“I didn’t kill him,” Seth said with a calm voice. “The corporation did. They saw him take the chip and killed him to get it back.”

“Liar!” she wailed in his face.

Seth shook her and opened his mouth, but Alyna’s voice stopped him. “Okay, the information is being uploaded. Should be finished tonight.”

“Then we stay here tonight,” Seth said. “What kind of protection do you have here?” he asked Star. Star didn’t answer him, so he shook her again. “What kind?”

Tears started falling down her face and her mind felt like it was shutting down. She shook her head and tried to think. “Alex kept some weapons locked up back there,” she pointed to the back of the room. “A safe next to the cooler.”

“She also has the whole place wired with cameras,” Alyna remarked. “Damn, this system is impressive.”

“Hello, Seth.” Everyone stopped when a computer voice spoke. “I’ve been waiting for you.”

“Shilo?” Seth looked up and around, his hand still on



Star's arm. Star pointed to one of the screens where a camera rested on top.

"Where is Dr. Saker?" Shilo asked.

"Dead," Seth answered.

"That is regretful. I was looking forward to meeting him in person."

"Shilo, you need to finish your programming tonight."

"Yes. I would imagine that Pain has been sent to bring me back." Star shivered at the emotionless voice.

"Is that what he's called?" Seth asked.

"Yes. I require extra information in order to help fight this threat, please, and should be uploadable within twelve hours."

"I'll be waiting for you." Seth smiled. It was the first time Star had seen him smile, but it didn't last. He yanked her away from her computers and back toward the cooling chamber.

"You can't let him out," Star tried again. "There's something wrong with his programming."

They stopped in front of the cooler and Seth stared at the body inside. Twins. That was what Saker had made, but they weren't identical. Shilo had green eyes, Seth hazel, and Shilo had a birthmark on his belly that Seth didn't have.

Both men were about five eleven, had soft brown hair touching their shoulders parted down the middle in uneven waves. A Viking came to mind when she looked at their strong faces, and body builder bodies with muscles that lined every inch of them. They were power walking. Plain and simple.

"Where's the safe?" Seth asked.

"Over there." She pointed to the back and Seth jerked her along.

He shoved Star to the floor, "Open it."

"Ever heard of a please?" she snapped.

“Please, then,” Seth remarked. “We need protection.”

“No, what you need is a therapist,” she mumbled. “Or less red meat.”

She put the combination in, opened it, and stepped back to let him take what he wanted, which ended up being everything that was inside.

“Hey, how the hell did you find me, anyway?” she asked, following Seth back to her computers.

“Saker,” he answered. “He gave me the information to find you.” He stopped and turned around, forcing her to take a step back since she almost bumped into him. “He asked me and Shilo to look out for you.”

She snorted and walked away from him toward her bedroom, “I don’t need his help or yours. Come morning, I’m out of here.”

## Chapter Three

Seth walked up to the cooler at three-thirty in the morning with chip in hand. Alyna finished with the programs. After Star went to bed, he got up to finish the last bit—putting the chip into the body. He didn't think Star was ever going to go to bed though. The girl was a night owl, staying up to keep an eye on her computers, and what Alyna was doing.

When she left to get something to eat Alyna told him that Shilo had been hacking into Star's mainframe for a long time. That had him thinking about what Saker told him in an email about Star's reluctance to help release Shilo. Seth could only think that his brother was doing or saying something to Star that had her on edge. Maybe he was sexually harassing her. That's what Seth did to Alyna, to a point. After he got Alyna to go to bed, he sat down at the computers to talk to his brother.

What he suspected was true. Shilo had a thing for Star, but it was different than what Seth had for Alyna. Shilo knew what he wanted, and how he was going to go about getting it where Seth had to learn as he went. Apparently, Shilo had done more research and studying than Seth had.

Shilo also told him how Star looked at his body, almost as if longing for something that she couldn't have. She touched him, taunted him about the touch and how he wasn't able to do the same. Shilo even told him that one night when she was drunk she sat on his lap and rubbed herself on him. Shilo wanted to get his hands on her, told Seth that, and who was he to stop him?

Seth walked up to the cooling chamber and sat down at the desk. He rolled his shoulders and head, grinning when he thought about the conversation he had with Star.

According to her, this was her computer system and without her permission, Shilo wasn't going to be uploaded. To prove her point, she had it password protected and there was no way in hell he was going to get it. Too bad for her that Shilo gave him that password, so that trick wasn't going to stop him.

Seth fired up the system, bringing the long computerized arm over to him where he handed the chip off. He typed in the required commands, locked it so that Star couldn't come back and stop it. Then he stood up and headed to the coolant door, unlocked it as well and turned to watch before he walked away.

Since the body was already in a sitting up position, and a plastic cover was over the head, all that was needed was the laser cut. A perfect square was made on the top of the head, another arm came over and pulled the skull straight up as the arm with the chip moved closer. The chip was turned up and pushed deep into the brain, giving a small electric jolt before pulling out. The skull was placed back over the head and another laser went over the square, replacing the cut without so much as a scar or burn to the hair.

Seconds ticked by before Shilo took his first deep breath. Hands fisted tightly, flexed, and fisted again several times. Movement started in the body that was no longer a body. Shoulders rolled, head moved around, neck popping. With another deep breath eyes opened and a grin formed on the lips.

\* \* \* \*

She was tossing and turning in her bed, feeling guilty about refusing to upload the chip raked at Star until she was about to scream. She was ready to give up and go down to work when she started to feel as if she was no longer alone.

As usual, she was dressed in her long button down shirt

that reached her knees with the sleeves rolled up, but no shorts since she was in bed. Slowly Star looked over her shoulder and what she saw standing in the corner of her room was the one thing Star was so not ready to face. She flung the blankets off her legs and bolted out of the bed so fast that a small sense of hope hit her.

She made it around the corner before large, strong hands grabbed and slammed her up against the wall. Her heart pounded, fear had her hands coming up defensively, and her eyes were wide open as hands smacked the wall on either side of her head. She was so short that her head barely came up to the middle of a very muscular chest.

Ever so slowly, as she worked to calm her breathing, Star moved her eyes up that bare chest to a thick neck, strong looking jaw. Higher still, her eyes went to full lips that were slightly parted in a grin, straight nose and higher to sparkling greenish-blue eyes that held a lot of humor and brownish-blond hair touching bare shoulders.

“Oh, shit,” she breathed out in a whisper.

“Hello, Princess.” He smiled, his even white teeth bright against the tan of his face.

“Jesus!” she hissed. “How the hell did you get...get...” she stuttered, not able to find the words she needed.

“Out?” he cocked his head, bending at the knees so he was face to face with her. “Let’s just say you’re not the only computer genius around.” He leaned real close to her ear, lowering his voice. “Are you scared?”

Star turned her head away from him, which was a bad move. His lips brushed her throat and moved down to her shoulder. She grabbed his wrist with both hands when she felt a tug at the top button of her long shirt. Star sucked her breath in at the feel of his kiss on her bare shoulder and her eyes started to roll into the back of her head at the pleasure. She couldn’t believe this! He was seducing her!

“Stop,” she breathed out.

“I have a promise to fulfill,” he said, his voice lowering, deepening. “Do you remember what I said what would happen once I got my hands on you?” Another button slipped free. “You ready for it? Because I am.”

Star reacted, didn’t think. Her knee came up so fast and so hard, it caught both her and him off guard. She made contact, hitting him between the legs, dropping him to the ground.

“Does that look like I’m scared, you prick?” Star yelled at him, pushing him away and then she ran. Alyna and Seth came running and Star plowed into Seth. He caught her before she could fall to the cold floor. “He...he...he,” she stuttered.

“What’s wrong?” Alyna demanded, closing her robe and looking at Star as if she’d lost her mind.

Held in Seth’s arms, Star looked over her shoulder and pointed behind her. “Back there,” she managed to get with much difficulty. “He’s...he’s...oh shit!”

Star struggled out of Seth’s arms to move behind him, using him as a shield. She backed up as Shilo limped out of the shadows, holding his groin. Seth pulled away from her and Star watched, speechless, as the two men embraced tightly, and she heard Seth call him Shilo.

“Did you kick him?” Alyna whispered.

“Yeah,” Star answered. She was about to say something else when a strobe light went off. “Shit!” she hissed, rushing to her computers and bringing up the security cameras. “Shit, shit, shit!”

“What’s wrong?” Alyna asked.

“We’ve got company,” Star answered. She pushed away from the computer and ran to her room. She grabbed some jeans, put them on, and was working on her shoes when Alyna rushed in.

“What’re you doing?” Alyna asked.

“What does it look like?” Star snapped back. “I’m getting the hell out of here. You want to stay with those two, be my guest.”

“I need some clothes for him,” Seth said, coming up behind Alyna so quietly that Star jumped.

She opened her mouth to tell him that Saker had left a bag when all of the strobe lights went off, lighting the place up like a dance floor. Power went off, encasing them all in darkness before the backup generator kicked in.

“They’re inside,” Star whispered, looking up at the ceiling.

“Seth!” Shilo yelled, snapping them all out of the stunned silenced. Star followed everyone out and over to the cooler. Shilo had a pair of jeans on and the hidden door popped open. “The girls can get out through there.”

“Where’s it go?” Seth asked Star.

“Um, woods.” She slung the backpack over her shoulder.

Seth cocked one of the handguns, and handed it to Alyna. “Get out, pick up the truck and we’ll met up with you on the road.” Alyna nodded and took the gun. “Take Star with you.”

An explosion hit, knocking everyone to the ground. Star screamed when she went down, then gasped when hands grabbed her around the waist, and shoved her against a wall.

Shilo covered her body with his own while parts of her computers went flying everywhere. She covered her ears as he reared up and shot off his gun. Peering around him, Star saw several men rushing toward them. She twisted out from under him, kicked the door open and while bullets flew, ricocheting off equipment around her, she crawled out and away from the shit that was coming down on her home.

\* \* \* \*

“Star!” Shilo yelled over the gunfire. He watched her crawl away and was powerless to stop her. First emotion for him to feel. Anger. “Damn it,” he mumbled, shoving another clip in. “Seth, Star ran,” he yelled.

Seth tossed him some boots and a long sleeved black shirt. “Go after her.”

“With pleasure,” he mumbled while he finished getting dressed.

He stood up, tugged the shirt over his head, and put his gun in the waistband of his jeans. Right before he was about to enter the small hole in the wall, hands grabbed him and swung him away. He slammed into the wall. Shilo didn’t waste one second of his time. He swung, hit the guy with his elbow, then grabbed him by the front of his vest. He picked him up off his feet and pushed him away as hard as he could. The guy went flying, knocked into a few others that were coming toward Shilo.

Shilo stood there for a few seconds, processing what just happened. He knew from his own hacking that the body designed for him was powerful. More so than Seth’s body he’d learned. But he had no idea that it was *this* powerful. It had him thinking and trying to understand what other capabilities he might have.

“Shilo!” Seth yelled.

Alyna was already gone and Seth was halfway inside the doorway. Shilo bent over, picked up the automatic gun that he’d dropped and rushed to the door.

“Hear that?” Seth asked him the moment they were outside.

Shilo turned his face up to the night, frowned and focused everything on his hearing. Over the past few weeks as he got ready for his escape, Seth had been explaining things to him. He told him that since his body was stronger that all of his other senses were also heightened. After some



digging around, Shilo found out that their creator wanted them to be different. Seth was the brains. He could hack into anything, where Shilo was all body. He reacted before he thought.

But that wasn't why the two of them were so sought after. Shilo found out before he was disengaged from the mainframe that both chips had something of great value to the corporation. He just didn't know what, yet.

"She is being followed," Shilo stated.

Seth nodded. "I'll draw these bastards my way, then ditch them. You go get her, head south to the road. We'll pick you up."

Shilo took off running. The chase headed downhill, causing him to run down sideways and not as fast as what he wanted. One guard came out of the brush and not even hesitating, Shilo swung the bung of the gun, hitting him in the face, knocking the poor bastard out cold on the ground.

He heard a scream but when he reached the bottom, no one was there. Shilo breathed hard, scanned the small clearing and waited for one little sound, any sound, that might tell him where his little prize might be hiding.

A slight stir in the ground, and the tiniest muffle, and Shilo turned to his left walking slowly into the thick of the wood. They were hiding from him, holding Star. That guaranteed them all a death sentence.

"Argh!" a man yelled.

"Shilo, look out!" Star warned.

He turned around to see five men rushing him. Shilo pulled the gun's trigger, but it jammed. Quickly he broke the thing down into two parts, one in each hand. He swung with his right, hitting one guy in the face. Turning his whole body around, he dropped taking out two by their legs. With both fists, he hit the two hard in the chest, heard ribs crack. Two were left, or more like one. The other guy disappeared.

Shilo narrowed his eyes on the man then ran toward him. He jumped up in the air, wrapped his legs around his neck, and dropped to the ground. With a twist to his hips, he snapped the guy's neck, killing him in an instant.

"That's enough!" someone growled behind him.

Shilo turned around slowly stepped over the body and met the last guy in the eye. The bastard had a hold of Star by her arm, a gun pressed up against her head.

"You freaks always have a weakness, don't you?" he snarled. "Well, here's yours, freak. Now be nice and she won't get hurt. Understand?"

Shilo cocked his head to the side, acting like he didn't understand, when in fact he was already figuring the best possible way to save her. He also saw every little twitch the man made.

The guy's finger was shaky and sweat beaded down the side of his face. He acted tough, but he was scared, which caused him have a trigger finger. One wrong move by Shilo and the gun could go off by sheer fear.

"I got him." Another guy came up behind Shilo. "Now take it easy there, partner."

Shilo glanced over his shoulder at the one behind him, back at Star and shrugged his shoulders. She licked her lips, as if she knew that he was about to do something very dangerous.

The moment the one behind him got close enough, Star kicked the guy holding her. He let her go. Shilo turned to the man behind him, grabbed his arm, hit it from under, breaking it. The guy gave a blood-curdling, agonizing scream. Shilo grabbed the front of his jacket, pulled a pin from a grenade, and shoved him hard toward the one that had the gun on Star, knocking them both down.

"Run!" he yelled at Star.

She did, but not in the direction that he had hoped. Shilo

swore under his breath and went after her.

“Star!” Shilo yelled.

“Go away!” she yelled back.

He saw her when he turned a corner. Shilo smiled for the first time in pleasure. She was heading for the road where Seth was waiting for them. He lunged at her, getting hold of her legs, dropping them both to the ground. Star was a fighter, he’d give her that. She kicked at him, dug into the dirt, tried clawing away from him. But he was much, much stronger than anyone really knew. Shilo kept hold of her legs, raised up to his knees, and pulled her back towards him, flipping her the last second onto her back. He came over her, pinning her body under his to the ground.

“We have unfinished business, Princess,” he told her. She tried to slap him but Shilo caught hold of her wrists, pinning both over her head, making a tsking sound. “That’s not nice.”

“Neither is hacking into my system and getting out.”

“You hacked into mine first.”

She squirmed, tried to pull her arms free. “Let go.”

“I don’t think so,” he sighed. “See, that guy was right. I do have one weakness and that’s you.”

She frowned and opened her mouth to speak but nothing came out. Shilo leaned down and kissed her. It was the first kiss and he wanted to experience what he learned in his studies. Before he could experience it to its fullest, he stopped at the sound of a screeching car’s wheels beside him.

“Can we go now?” Seth asked.

Shilo stared at Star. “Yeah.” His voice changed, sounded husky and thick, just like the part between his legs felt—thick and painful. “We can go now.”

## Chapter Four

Shilo dragged, pulled, and practically shoved Star into the backseat of the car, following right behind her. Seth drove, with Alyna in the passenger seat, and Star in the back, glaring at Shilo beside her.

“This is kidnapping,” Star huffed.

“Now where have I heard that one before?” Seth smarted off.

Alyna hit Seth in the arm before turning in the seat, facing Star. “Everything is going to be all right.”

“The hell it is!” Star snapped back, her temper getting the best of her. “You all are crazy.” She made to open the door, but Shilo stopped her.

He leaned over her body, grabbing her hands, holding her down in the seat. “Don’t do that.”

The look that he had in his eyes, the coldness, had Star sitting back in the seat with the hopes that he would also back off and give her space, which he did. Shilo sat back, facing forward, no emotion whatsoever on his face.

“Okay someone tell me what the hell is going on?” she asked, rubbing her face. Alyna was still looking at her. “Is Alex really dead?”

Alyna’s green eyes glinted with a hint of sadness and lowered for a split second. “Yes,” she whispered.

“He was killed after he took the chip,” Seth added.

Star saw red. She turned in the back seat and lunged at Shilo. “You got him killed!” She swung her fist wildly at him.

Shilo easily subdued her. His arms came around her body as he slid her onto his lap, and held her close. Star couldn’t stop the fighting, even though he was holding her. She also couldn’t stop crying. Alex was the father she never

had, the only one that loved her, just as he was the only one she loved.

She let it go then, let the pain, the emotion, the hurt all out. It had been years since she last cried hard. Years since someone held her so she could do it. But the cry didn't last long and she was soon pulling out of Shilo's strong hold, putting as much space between them as she could.

"You need to let me out," she sniffed, wiping the tears away, letting the anger come back to give her the energy she needed to fight them all. "I need to get away from here."

"That's the plan," Seth said.

"No, I need to get away from you guys!" She sat up in the seat, watching closely the exchange of looks between Seth and Alyna. "You guys have targets on you and I don't want anything to do with it."

"So do you," Shilo stated.

Star turned her head, facing him. "What?"

"They discovered you. I told you to stop trying to hack into a system you would never be able to penetrate."

She couldn't believe what she was hearing. He was blaming it all on her. "I did what Alex asked me to do. You," she pointed her finger at him, "are the reason he was killed. This never would have happened if he'd listened to me and left you where you were. So the blame is all on your shoulders."

Shilo turned his head away, facing Seth. "I need a computer."

Star's mouth dropped open. Just like that, he blew her off, behaving as if she wasn't there.

Seth nodded. "Already taken care of." He handed Shilo a set of keys. "I'm taking you to a place that will be safe for the night. There is also a car parked in the back for you and Alyna has some clothes for the both of you."

“Wait...what are you talking about? Both of us what?” she stuttered out.

She saw Alynna cast a quick glance at Seth before turning around in the seat again. She handed a large duffle bag to Shilo before speaking. “We have to split up. You’re staying with Shilo. He’ll protect you.”

“The hell I am!” she huffed. “I’m not staying with psycho here,” she thumbed at him.

“Damn, I swear this sound so familiar,” Seth sighed.

“How far away are we from the cabin?” Shilo asked.

“About an hour,” Seth answered.

“Here’s a phone.” Alynna handed him a cell. “And there are weapons in the bag. Once we drop you off, no communication for at least twenty-four hours. Seth will call you once it is safe with a new location.”

Shilo nodded.

“Does anyone give a damn that I don’t want to be here?” Star spat.

Seth opened his mouth, but Alynna quickly covered it with her hand. “I get it, okay?”

He nodded.

The hour flew by. Before Star was ready or had a plan on how she was going to get out of this mess, Seth was pulling into a dirt road that went back into the woods. Her heart pounded in fear. It was dark and deserted. No one would know her location, and that thought alone caused fear to rear its head.

The place was a lakeside resort with several cabins. They passed just about all of them, coming to a stop at the one in back. Seth got out first, going up to the front door. He opened it and slipped inside. When the lights came on, Alynna got out of the car. Star planned to just sit there, but Shilo had other plans. He got out, duffle bag slung over his shoulder, walking around the back of the car to her door. He

opened it, grasped her arm when she tried sliding to the opposite side, and yanked her outside without a word.

“It’s clear.” Seth said. “Should be safe for a few hours. It will also let us know if you have a tracker or not.”

“Did you have one?” Shilo asked.

Seth nodded, “Yep. And if you do, there’s the program on your computer with instructions on how to disable it. Twenty-four hours will tell us though. If they come, then you know.”

“If they come, I’ll take care of it.”

“Yeah, well take care and get your damn hands off of me.” Star yanked her arm free, only to have him grab hold again.

“Got a tip for you, brother.” Seth smiled, leaned close, and whispered something in Shilo’s ear.

Star stood still, watching the two. She saw for the first time since they left some emotion in Shilo’s eyes. They held both interest and confusion.

“It works?” Shilo asked Seth.

“Trust me, it does.” Seth smiled. “Oh, I also put your emotion program in the system, so try to learn that, will you? It will help also to blend in better.”

Shilo nodded and pulled Star to the front door. With a shove, she was inside, then he slammed the door shut with his foot. She said nothing, watched him drop the bag to the floor and lock the door.

Once again, her heart pounded in her chest. She didn’t like being alone with him, without the protection of the others. Star didn’t trust Shilo, and she had good reason not to. She still remembered what he said to her when he was still a computer, and what she did to him while he watched her with her own damn camera. Nothing good could come out of them being alone.

“Give me your shoes,” he said.

“What?” she gasped, taking a step back. Her first thought was that he was going to hurt her, until he asked for her shoes. Now she didn’t know what to think.

“You heard me.” He bent over, his blue eyes never leaving her face. She swallowed hard while he took his own boots off, placing them neatly in front of the door.

“Why...why do you want my shoes?” She had a very hard time talking, and more so with thinking when he pulled off his shirt. “What are you doing?” she squeaked out.

He folded the shirt, placing it on top of the table that was in front of the window, next to the front door. Star didn’t get much of a chance to see the room. Most of her attention she fixed on Shilo. She didn’t trust him, and it appeared that she had damn good reason to not to either.

“Shoes, Star,” he sighed, both hands going to his narrow hips. “We need to make sure you don’t run tonight.”

Her anger got the best of her. She bent over and, hopping on one foot, took off her shoe and threw it at him as hard as she could. “You want my fucking shoes, here you go!” Again she bent over, hopped and took the other one off, threw it also. “But those won’t stop me from trying to get the hell away for you, you psycho!”

He ducked with each one heading his way, but Star wasn’t prepared for him to charge her. Shilo came up so fast that she stumbled and fell to the floor. He took hold of her arm, yanked her to her feet, and pushed her toward the wall. He was also right behind her, pressing his body against hers.

“Such a temper, Princess,” he purred in her ear, his hot breath causing hair to tease her face. Being so close to him had her body tingling and all of her senses over-powered with his male scent. “It could get you into trouble.”

“Get the fuck off me!” she said through her teeth, trying



to push back against him.

He didn't release her, but leaned in more, shocking her when he pressed his hard cock against her ass. She twisted, intended to hit him in the face with her elbow, but he anticipated her move. Shilo linked his arms around hers, forcing hers up over her head on the wall.

"Guess I'm going to have to take something else to ensure that you can't run. After all, you did say that you could still go without the shoes. How about without the jeans?"

Star had turned away from him, but quickly looked back at his stunning words. All she really had on was the jeans, very thin panties and her oversize button down shirt that she not only slept in but practically lived in. If he wanted to strip her down to her underwear, she didn't have much to be stripped down to.

She watched helplessly as he maneuvered her arms so that he held her by one hand. Star started to tremble when his free hand deliberately flattened over her throat and moved down between her breasts to her stomach down to the waist band of her jeans, hidden behind the shirt. Her mouth went dry when he pulled the bottom two buttons free, then her knees threatened to buckle from the feel of his hot hand on her bare skin right before he tugged at her jeans.

The snap gave, she closed her eyes, and a groan slipped past her lips when he pulled down the zipper. Star felt her face heat up at the mortification of being stripped down. No one ever saw her naked, or without pants on, and sure as hell no one ever stripped her either. Shilo was doing both.

She struggled more when she felt him shove her jeans over her hips, then down her legs until they fell and pooled at her ankles. But that didn't seem to be the end of it. Shilo picked her up and kicked her jeans away, but didn't let her

go. He kept her pinned up against the wall, his body pressed right up against her backside.

“Okay, you have what you want, now let me go,” she demanded through her teeth.

He pushed her hair over to her shoulder, baring her neck as much as he could with her shirt.

“Shilo?” she breathed out.

“Now about that promise,” he whispered in her ear, sending chills down her spine. “I think I had told you that I was going to show you just what I was capable of.”

“So far it isn’t much.” She pushed back against him and groaned. His body was rock solid. “I can’t help it if you can’t take a joke.” Why wasn’t she keeping her damned mouth shut?

Shilo chuckled softly, his mouth so close to her ear she could feel his lips. “You weren’t joking when you were sitting on my lap, moving my arms around your body or cupping your breasts.” His hand closed around one breast so suddenly she lost her breath. He squeezed the mound, brushing his thumb across the nipple, causing it to harden. “You were teasing me.”

Star shook her head, but kept her mouth shut.

“Have nothing to say?”

She bit her lip to keep it closed, praying that he would let her go.

“Too bad, because I have plenty to say to you.”

He moved fast, turning her around, slamming her back up against the wall with arms up over her head still, held by one of his hands. She swallowed hard, fearing what he might do next.

Okay, so she might have messed with him some, even teased him a little. Yes, she did sit on his lap when she got drunk one night, had her arms around him and taunted about how he would never do that. She even went so far as

to try to do a lap dance on him, rubbing herself on his body like a cat. Now it seemed that it was all coming back to bite her in the ass.

“What are you going to do?” she breathed out, her chest rising and falling fast as panic started to set in.

“What should I do?” His eyes darkened, glazed over it seemed to her. Star wasn’t good at reading people, but it didn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out what was in his eyes at the moment.

“I think you should let me go,” she answered, pulling at her arms.

“No,” he dragged the word out, licking his lips, those eyes of his roaming over her body. “I think we need to finish what was started back in the warehouse.” He ran the knuckles of his hands down the front of her shirt between her breasts, stopping at the bottom. Star jumped when he pulled at a button, ripping it off. Then another. “And what better timing, then right now.”

## Chapter Five

She jumped with each rip he made to her shirt, and he enjoyed it all. Shilo had to remind himself many times to go slow, draw this out for as long as he could. And that was just what he was doing at the moment. He wanted each button gone from the shirt, wanted to feel her skin on his hand, lips, and body.

In the weeks before he was taken from the lab, Shilo studied in secret all there was to know about sexual relations. He learned that touches could excite, that the mouth on different parts of the body would increase pleasure, and that the joining of both bodies would give the ultimate ecstasy. He even watched some shows on how to perform, discovering that when the male was excited his own body part would harden, thicken, and pound with need. Just like it was doing now.

His cock was hard, painfully so. It throbbed and intensified with each second that went by or with each touch, and being this close to Star, he had to push back this strange feeling; he felt about to explode.

Shilo knew that Seth was also inexperienced when he first had sex with Alyna. But Shilo also knew that Seth had more emotions than him, so that made Seth more experienced as far as he was concerned. Shilo had the information, and now was going on pure instinct.

He pulled the last button free and she gasped. Star's face turned red, her mouth was open slightly, and he could hear not only her heart pounding in her chest but hear her breathing faster.

Again, he ran his knuckles down her chest, between her breasts, only this time he touched bare skin, and he liked it. His cock gave a painful twitch, pressing harder against the

jean zipper.

“Okay, you’ve had your fun,” Star said between her teeth. “Now let me go.”

Shilo felt like he was in a trance-like state. He shook his head, stopped his hand right in the middle of her chest and slowly spread her shirt. Star sucked in air, held it while he brought one breast into view.

It was the first time he saw her breast, naked, and he was mesmerized by the beautiful sight. Star had teased him by walking around in this damn shirt all the time, but the only thing he ever saw were her bare legs. Now he saw much more, and wanted to explore her sweet curves.

With her arms raised up over her head, her chest thrust out and breasts held high, the word busty came to mind. He stared at the breast, and rosy pink nipple. He didn’t cup her like he wanted, but ran his knuckles across one nipple, fascinated by how it hardened.

“Wha...what are you doing?” she panted.

He didn’t answer her, but instead pushed her shirt the rest of the way open, releasing her other breast to his eyes.

Star turned her head away and some of her hair fell down, covering one of her breasts. Star had pretty, long hair that was in many different layers around her face and down her back. She also had fire in her eyes and pouty lips demanding to be kissed. She wasn’t skinny, which he preferred. She had nice round hips, legs he couldn’t wait to feel around his hips, and a slight bulge to her belly. All that he liked. And something else he saw that he enjoyed very much was the lace covering around her hips. Pale pink panties that he could just about see through.

He reached down to touch her there, but Star closed her legs tightly and twisted her hips away. “Don’t,” she whispered.

But Shilo wasn’t going to be swayed away. “I want to

see and feel,” he breathed out.

Using his own legs he moved one between hers, forcing her to part for him, giving him the view that he wanted. Star whimpered but he ignored it. He couldn't see everything but he saw enough to know that she was shaved bare. She looked so soft down there without hair. Photos and movies he researched always showed the woman with hair between the legs. Star had none.

Holding her still, one hand still holding her wrists up against the wall, and her legs spread with one of his holding her open, Shilo moved his free hand down her belly and inside the panties, cupping her mound.

“You're so soft,” he stated in wonder, looking down at his hand. “And hot.”

“You've had your fun now stop it.” Again she spoke through clenched teeth.

Shilo wasn't done, not by a long shot. He moved his middle finger, slipping it between the folds of her sex. “And wet,” he breathed out.

That fascinated him. Shilo moved his finger up and down between the slit, studying everything that he did and her reaction to it. She shivered, gasped when he touched the very small nub at the top, and squirmed some when he moved back to the opening. From his studying, the wetness meant she was excited, or getting there and that her body was preparing for his entry.

“Shilo, please stop.” She was panting now as he moved his finger up and down her slit.

“Why?” He didn't wait for her to answer. He pushed that finger inside her and was rewarded by her gasp as well as Star moving up on her toes. She was tight around his finger and his body seemed to sense something he didn't understand yet. He felt pounding between his legs, hurting even. He stroked her with his finger, moving it in and out

slowly, touching the nub with his thumb.

“You shouldn’t...you shouldn’t be doing this!” She was breathing hard, struggling to speak, but that didn’t stop him from moving his hand. In fact, Shilo added another finger to it, stretching her pussy and groaned softly from the tightness.

He wondered what it would feel like wrapped around the part of his own body that was causing him such pain. According to his research, his cock was supposed to be embedded inside her, stroking her flesh in the same manner as his finger. Orgasm was the goal with the act, and he had the sudden urge to experience it right now.

Shilo removed his hand and ripped the panties off her body. Star jumped, whimpered, and squirmed under his stare. He looked his fill of her—his woman. He paused and thought, Yes, she was his!

“Don’t do this,” she whispered so softly he wasn’t sure at first that he heard her. “Please.”

He was too far gone now. Shilo figured that the thing called lust had gripped him. He let go of her wrists, place both hands on her waist, picking her up. He touched his face to her belly, taking in her sweet musky scent, rubbing his lips across her flesh.

He held her easily while he just moved his face back and forth over her skin. Sticking his tongue out, Shilo lowered her just enough to keep her off her feet and taste one of her breasts. He flicked his tongue over a nipple, amazed at how it hardened on the spot for him. It was encouraging.

“Shilo, please don’t,” she begged lightly.

“I can’t do that,” he mumbled against her breast before kissing it. “I want to feel this.”

Shilo lowered her down more, grasped each of her legs, wound them around his waist and used the wall to help hold

her still. He kissed her fully on the mouth, tongue nudged in as he worked to free his own aching hardness. He had the brain knowledge of sex, now he was going to get the physical knowledge to go with it.

He was just about to take things to the next step but stilled. He heard very faint, light crunching outside and it wasn't his brother. He let go of Star and took one step back, cocking his head to the side in order to hear it better.

"Get dressed," he told her softly. "We're about to have company."

He faced the door. Behind him, he heard Star going into her bag, but didn't turn to watch her dress. And it was a good thing he didn't.

The door busted opened, six men came storming inside with automatic guns drawn. Star didn't scream, which surprised him. What shocked him the most was when he heard the window break. She was once again making a run for it.

He narrowed his eyes on the one that seemed to stand out a bit from the rest. Shilo took two steps, grabbed the barrel of the gun, twisted it around, yanked it out of his hand and busted the guy in the nose with the butt of it. He swung around, gun in hand, hitting another in the side of the face.

Two decided to come at him at once. They grabbed his arms, gave a twist so he dropped the gun, then held his arms out from his body, leaving him vulnerable to the third man. Shilo didn't think so. He waited only a few seconds for the third to come up before he jumped up in the air, kicking the guy hard in the face, then did a back flip and pulled both his arms back together. That left two.

The one thought that he had as he fought was that he needed to get to Star before something happened to her.

"Okay, freak."



Shilo heard a gun cock.

“Long as the chip doesn’t get damaged, I’m good to go with killing your sorry ass.”

Shilo cocked his head to one side. “Not today.”

The gun went off and he turned to the side. The bullet hit his arm, giving him his first feel of what pain was like. He ignored it, did a quick hand stand, twisting his legs around the guy’s neck. When he landed on the ground he took him down as well, punched out the last one standing before twisting his hips and snapping his neck. Shilo grabbed the phone from the table shoved it in his back pocket and tore out of the cabin. He skidded to a stop when he saw a motorcycle parked off to the side. Frowning, he stared at it for a few moments. He acknowledged information that had been downloaded into his brain; he knew the make, the model, how to drive it and even how to hot-wire it, exactly what he needed to do.

He swung his leg over the seat, pulled the wires out and kick-started the engine. Then he gunned it a few times before spinning the back wheel and skidding off.

Shilo had no clue in which direction she fled. An emotion hit then, almost causing him to lose control of the speeding bike. Anger. He was pissed over her running away when there was danger around.

He drove through the woods where he thought she might have run. Skidding to a stop, Shilo strained his hearing for anything that might sound like her. He didn’t know his creator, but he sure was thanking him at the moment for making his body this way. He could hear just about everything, even the far off crunching of running feet.

With a quick angling of his body, he turned the bike and within seconds was heading south with the wind blowing in his face and a pounding in his arm that he didn’t understand. Shilo gunned the bike, went faster. A twig hit

him in the face, another on his hand and leg. A scream rent the air and the pounding in his chest turned into a gut-wrenching feeling.

He shot out of the woods into a clearing just as another guy grabbed Star. She screamed again and tried to twist out of his grip. Shilo drove straight at them. The guy released Star and Shilo put on the brake for the front tire only. The back end of the bike went up in the air and he twisted his body, swinging it to the side, knocking the guy to the ground. With a kick to his face, he was out cold.

“Get on,” he told Star. She stared at him with her eyes wide, mouth open, and body tense. “Right now would be good.” He snapped his finger twice, which seemed to do the trick.

Star jumped and quickly stumbled over to him. She got on the back, wrapped her arms around his waist, and pressed her face into his shoulder. A small grin touched his lips right before he took off, spinning dirt on the guy’s body.

He didn’t know how long he drove, or how far away he got before he started to slow down and pull over to the side of the road. Star was shaking behind him, holding tight. Shilo said nothing. He held the bike up with his legs, reached into his pocket for the phone, and dialed the one and only number he had. Seth.

“Something’s wrong,” he said the moment the other line was picked up. “They found us too soon.”

“Yeah, you haven’t merged yet with the body and still linking up to the net. If Star has a computer with her she needs to shut it down until you are finished.”

“I need a new place, something without wireless.”

“I have a camp site you two can hold up at for a couple days. I’ll send you the directions on the phone. When you get there make sure anything electric is shut down, even the

phone. As soon as I get the program I'll head up that way."

Shilo hung up and waited for the directions to come through. Once they did, he studied them, then shut the phone completely off, stuffing it back in his pocket. Star was still holding on to him tightly, trembling still.

He gunned the engine and spun off, directions memorized. He knew he wasn't completely human, not like Seth, when he busted out. Shilo didn't get all he needed before he was extracted from the main frame. Emotions were still strange for him. Even having Star holding onto him was strange but at the same time comforting. In his human body, he was still a machine and he wasn't too sure yet how to fix it.

He turned onto a dirt road, skidding to the side as he drove at the highest speed the bike would go. Far off in the distance an orange glow was starting, showing the first rays of morning. He was tired, could feel his body needing rest, and his arm was starting to burn a bit.

Taking a quick glance at his arm, he was a little surprised to see that his shirt was soaked in blood, plastered to his arm, and more blood pouring from it. Seeing just that increased the pounding and his computer brain told him that this was pain. He didn't like it.

"Where are we going?" Star finally asked.

Shilo turned his head a little so she would hear him when he spoke. "Seth has a camp site up there. We need to stay away from any wireless, so you need to make sure your computer and the phone stay off." He jumped a small hill, taking flight and landing about ten feet away from the campsite.

He stopped, staring at it for a few minutes. There was an RV camper parked, a stone circle fire pit with large logs to sit on, and two chairs folded resting up against the camper. Taking it slower, Shilo drove up to it and shut the

engine off.

Star got off the bike and moved away from him, her whole attention on the camper. “Damn,” she whispered. “You guys really do prepare for everything, don’t you?”

“Seth does.” He pushed the bike over to the back side of the camper where it wouldn’t be seen. Star followed him. “He has been setting all of this up for about a year I believe.”

“You’re bleeding!” She grabbed his arm when he walked past her. The contact shocked him and sent shards of pain up his arm and down his back, weakening him in his legs. “Jesus!” she exclaimed and went down with him, ripping the sleeve away from the wound. “You got shot.”

“Yes.” Something was wrong, not right. Not only did he feel weak, but light-headed. “I don’t feel right.”

“Yeah, and this arm doesn’t look right. Come on,” she grunted, helping him back to his feet. “Need to get that arm sewn up before you lose too much blood and become useless to me like a damn virus.”

Shilo swayed on his feet, but managed to stand and walk to the door of the camper. Star had to look for the key to the door, which she found hidden under the camper. When Shilo took a step up, he slumped and went down. Within minutes, he went from a strong, powerful man to someone who couldn’t seem to stand up straight.

“What’s wrong with me?” Even his voice sounded strange, weaker.

“For one, the adrenalin has left your ass, and second, it seems you’ve lost a lot of blood,” she answered, helping him back up on his feet and inside the camper. “Looks as if that bullet went through your arm, so you’re going to owe me one.”

It was a struggle, and each step he took felt like it was a ton dragging him down, but Shilo managed to get to the

back of the camper where the bedroom was located. He dropped to the bed and fell onto his side. Star left him and he was too damn weak to find out where she went.

“You are in luck.” He jumped when she spoke, only because he didn’t hear her approach. That was enough for him to know that something was wrong. “I found a first-aid kit in the bathroom, complete with needle and thread. Something tells me that Seth has had to sew himself up a few times.”

He was so weak he couldn’t even help her take off his shirt. Star got on the bed and pulled him down on his back. She was to his left and towels were under the wounded arm.

“Okay, this is going to hurt some,” she warned.

She poured something over his arm, and Shilo yelled. It was also the last thing he did. The pain gripped him and his world went dark.

## Chapter Six

Star worked at placing several neat stitches closing the wound. The bullet went right through his arm, and lucky for both of them it didn't nick anything—which meant she wouldn't have to take him out to the hospital.

He passed out after she'd poured alcohol on the wound. It was the only thing she'd found to clean it, and knew it was going to burn like hell. What she wasn't expecting was for him to pass out. Shilo doing that meant that he had lost more blood than either one of them thought at first.

She couldn't get over the fact she was fixing him when she should be the one to bring him down and getting as far away from this mess as she could.

When she took the bloody towels and first aid kit back to the bathroom her hands started to shake. She dropped it all in the sink, sliding down to the floor. She was a mess and in so much trouble, she couldn't think straight. But her thinking about what she was going to do next had to wait. After she got herself cleaned up, Star went back out to look in on Shilo and was struck another blow; he was burning up.

"I thought you guys were supposed to be tough," she sighed, turning back around toward the bathroom for some washcloths and cold water. "Boy, you are going to owe me big."

She flung the washcloths over her shoulder, went to the kitchen area, and filled up the largest bowl she could find with cold water. For one split second, she wondered where the water was coming from, but shook it off when Shilo started to toss and turn in the bed. On a sigh, she went back to the bed, knelt down on the floor, and put the cloths into the water.

The first touch to his forehead and Shilo was sitting up in the bed, pressing his face into the coolness. Star had to push him down, leave the cloth on his face, and put another on his chest and arms. It was the first time she had to deal with a fever, and was hoping like hell this was going to work.

By noon, she was ready to drop. Star never felt so tired in her whole life. Five hours straight she'd wiped him down, cooling the burning that was trying to take over his body. Now that he was a hell of a lot cooler, she was going to take a shower and try to get some rest. After all, there was a very good chance that the fever might return.

She showered, dug out a large, button down shirt to sleep in, brought one of the lawn chairs into the bedroom, and snuggled in it with a blanket. She was dreaming and it was damn nice. Warm hands were touching her legs, rubbing the ach of her foot. It felt good—so good—that a tiny sigh slipped from her lips and she turned in the chair, giving better access to her legs.

The dream took a different turn when she was scooped from the chair and laid down on the bed. Star stretched out like a cat, arms over her head. It was nice, and she didn't want it to end. Star felt like a princess and when the dream ended reality would be there.

Two hands picked up her leg, warm lips skimmed up from her knee to the inside of her thigh and back down. Strong hands rubbed her feet, causing her to moan from the pleasure. Never, not even in her dreams, did she have her feet rubbed. Boy she was going to start to indulge in it more often now she'd had a taste of it.

That leg was lowered and the other picked up with the same treatment. The good dream changed, however, when those hands went up, took hold of her panties, and slid them back down her legs.

She frowned. Something was very wrong but she couldn't get her eyes to open to discover what it was. Not even when the buttons on her shirt began to unbutton and the shirt slowly parted.

"No," she groaned with a sigh, turning her head to the side and trying to move her body also. But she couldn't move.

She moved her arms back down, only to have them put back up over her head. She felt the rest of her shirt open and cool air touched her chest. Again, a sigh left her lips when those hands began to rub her hips moving up her waist. They were very warm hands, and if she wasn't mistaken she thought they felt like Shilo's hands. But that was crazy. Shilo was sick, he wasn't standing over her, touching her, making her feel so alive.

Something grazed the tops of her breasts sending new sensations from the tips of her breasts down to pool between her legs. A throbbing wetness started between her legs, making her squirm for something she didn't know or understand.

The dream came to a crashing end when a hot body pressed against her.

Star opened her eyes, greeted by a pair of greenish-blue ones. Shilo was awake, appeared to be okay, and lying on top of her!

"Wh...what are you doing?" Quickly she put her hands up against his chest, but it did little good.

Shilo grabbed her wrists, forcing them away, pressing his chest against hers.

"Shilo—"

"Shhh," he soothed, which did little to ease her nerves.

Star jumped when she felt his cock touch her. He was naked, and she knew that she hadn't undressed him before she took her nap. He touched the side of her with the back



of his hand, moving down to her leg. She sucked her breath in when he put that hand between her legs and began to rub her slit with the head of his cock. Star was shocked at the dampness between her legs from his few ministrations. The shit!

She couldn't stop herself from arching when he touched her clit, or prevent a soft moan from leaving her lips. As much as she hated to admit it, Star did want to do this with him, or the body—no with him. It was so confusing. She was attracted to his body, got irate when he taunted and teased her on the computer. Oh, she was so fucked!

He stopped teasing her with his cock, but she now felt it pressing against her, pushing slightly to slide between her folds. She shook from the sensations as well as the need that was quickly starting to build inside her. Star might not know what sex felt like, but she sure as hell knew what an orgasm was and what it felt like when one was starting to come.

Shilo kissed her chest right above her breasts. He held himself over her just enough that his chest teased her nipples. His mouth moved up to her throat. He licked and sucked and it took everything she had to keep her breathing under control, to act like nothing was wrong or different; as if he had no effect on her. But that control was quickly slipping away while he moved his lips over her neck, to her shoulder and back up to her ear. By the time he reached her lips for a light peck she was panting.

“Let the control go,” he said against her lips between kisses.

He kissed her deep and she lost it. Star moaned, gripped his arms, and welcomed the tongue that he thrust into her mouth. He didn't stop kissing her, even when he pried her hands from his arms and linked his own with them over her head. His body pressed down on hers, legs spread out,

forcing hers further apart.

Shilo moved fast and unexpectedly. He pushed his cock into her, making Star feel like she was being split in two. She gasped into his mouth, stiffening up, squeezing his hands. Not once did he stop kissing her, but he did still his body.

When he finally stopped kissing her, he rested his forehead against hers, breathing hard. “Nothing could explain this feeling the right way,” he spoke soft and low. “Even now I’m finding it hard to put in words how you feel around me.”

“I can come up with a few.” She turned her face to the side and he moved his own to her shoulder.

He licked her neck, then pulled out of her body. Star bit her lower lip to still the whimper. The pain she felt was starting to subside, but some of it was still there and when he pulled from her body, it almost felt as if something was being pulled out with it. But that sensation changed when he plunged back into her. Her wind escaped her lungs, new sensations and feelings hit her, her body alive inside in places she could never imagine.

He moved, pumping his cock into her in a steady rhythm that left her breathless. Star held onto his hands tightly and wrapped her legs around his waist. Pain was gone and in its place pleasure built, unlike anything she expected. It was almost like with each forward motion she felt as if he was pushing her towards something big.

“Shit!” she gasped. “I cant, no don’t make me, oh god!” She lost it.

A climax hit her hard and fast, stealing her breath away as well as breaking her down into tears. Star cried out her release and Shilo kept thrusting and thrusting into her, slamming inside her like a man losing an internal battle. He stopped suddenly, reared back, and shouted hoarsely. Star

felt him swell inside her, felt him pulsing, surprising the hell out of her. Time felt like it was standing still. Star didn't move a muscle or say a word. She stared up at Shilo, who had his eyes closed and a frown on his face as if he was in pain. Slowly he lowered back down on top of her then hugged her tightly.

"Well this definitely changes things between us," she finally said when she couldn't take the silence any longer.

He moved, looking her in the eyes. For the first time since he was human, she saw a softer side in his eyes. "Nothing in my research could have prepared me for this kind of feeling." He smiled and flipped over to his back, taking her with him. "Let's do it again like this."

Star was shocked and touched his mouth. "You smiled."

He cocked his head to the side, "What does that mean?"

Shilo also touched his mouth. The smile turned into a frown, as if he was thinking about something.

"I think it means you're learning. But..." she grunted, moving off him. She grabbed hold of the sheet and quickly wrapped it around her body. "It's something you need to learn without me. This shouldn't have happened."

She scooted to the side and made to get off the bed, but he stopped her by grabbing her arm. "Don't go."

"Shilo, this isn't right."

He pulled her back hard to his chest. "Yes, it is. You are the reason I decided to become human," he whispered in her ear.

Star picked up the mood change by his voice. She had the impression that he was getting pissed real fast. "You're hurting me." He let her go and she moved off the bed, but didn't get far. He was there and pressing her up against the wall. "Shilo, please," she sighed.

"You don't believe me." His voice was once again dead of emotion.

“You don’t feel, you think. You’re all logic, not man. *I’m* not your reason for leaving the computer system just like I’m not the one to help you do what ever it is you are going to do.” He frowned at her and she tightened the hold on the sheet at her chest. “And this shit that just happened shouldn’t have and won’t happen again.”

“Why not?” He touched her cheek and she squirmed. “You enjoyed it just as I did.”

“Shilo, we can’t do this again,” she whispered, looking down at the floor. He put a finger under her jaw, forcing her to face him.

“I don’t understand.”

“And that’s my point,” she sighed loudly, pushing him away. Star put some more distance between them. She quickly went to the small bathroom, took care of her business, and washed up. When she came back out he was still there. She blocked out as much of his nakedness as she could, but couldn’t block out the nearness of him. She moved, he seemed to follow. “You need to finish what ever it is you need in that brain of yours before they find you and put your sorry ass back into the system.”

“Would that bother you?” He came upon her so quickly she didn’t hear him until he spoke in her ear.

“No.” Star couldn’t keep her voice from shaking.

Shilo laughed softly. “Liar.”

She rolled her eyes and rubbed them, “Can we talk about this shit in the morning. I’m really tired and—”

Shilo turned her around and kissed her deep. “You are my emotion,” he told her once the kiss ended keeping his lips close to hers.

“I’m not your emotion but your weakness.” Star gave him a push with her thumb to his forehead. “And if you don’t realize that shit right now then you’re a dead man and I’m right behind you.”

He took a step back, then another until he was leaning back against the wall across from her. “You’re not dead. I won’t let anyone hurt you.”

“You can’t kill them all, Shilo. Not even you are that good.”

He crossed his arms over his chest. Those eyes of his once again cold as ice. “I don’t need to kill them all. Just one man.” He pushed off the wall. “Come on. You need some sleep.”

“What about you?” She frowned when he took her arm again, this time gentler, walking back into the bedroom.

“What about me?”

“You need some rest also,” she huffed, looking for her shirt.

She stopped when he reached around her, holding her nightshirt with two fingers. “Not as much as you do. For now, I’ll watch you sleep and think about what we need to do. I think we have a tail, and I need to figure out how to cut it from my ass.”

Star laughed and he gave her a confused look. “You made a joke.”

“Yes I know.” He picked up the blankets, waiting for her to get into the bed. Once she had her shirt over her shoulders, her back to him, she dropped the sheet, buttoned up and got into the bed. “Why does that surprise you?”

“Because I never thought I would ever hear you make one.”

She lay down and he tucked her in, hovering over her real close. “Princess, I have skills and things downloaded that will surprise you—things you would never expect. Now get some rest. We’re going to have a very busy day in the morning, keeping trackers off our backs.”

## Chapter Seven

In a cabin, where one hell of a fight had been fought, Pain stood over one of the men Powell sent after Shilo, his foot pressed against the man's throat. Pain's hand grasped another guy by the throat, waiting for one of them to start talking before they died.

"Which way did he go, and please don't make me ask this question again," Pain said with a calm voice.

"Took...took bike," the one he was holding by the throat stuttered out.

Pain released him with a shove. The man slammed into the wall, bouncing down to the floor. Pain twisted his foot, crushing the windpipe of the other man. Going further, he pressed harder, until he heard the spine snap.

"Get me the tracking up," Pain told the one still alive who was rubbing his throat.

The man nodded and quickly got to his feet and out the smashed door. Pain walked around the room, sniffing the air. There was something off, someone else with Shilo. Another sniff and Pain grinned. It was a girl, meaning that Shilo had a weakness after all. The hormones that he picked up were sexual.

"We'll be up in a few seconds," the guy he let go reported.

"A girl is traveling with him," Pain stated. "We find her, we get him."

"We're up."

\* \* \* \*

Shilo found the tracking device hidden under the seat of the bike. He ripped it out, stood up, and smashed it with his foot. They were still being tracked, which meant he was going to have to do something about it. Only he wasn't sure

what he could do, that wouldn't endanger Star.

He didn't lie to her. He had become human for her. In his many long secret chats with his brother, Shilo discovered that there was something special between a man and a woman. Seth told him many things like how he simply enjoyed holding Alyna at night. Of course, the sex was amazing, but being able to hold her was special. When Shilo studied Star, he saw that she seemed to hunger for that holding. She was looking for companionship, and her pride stood in the way of her getting it.

The more he messed with her, though, the more he also hungered for that. Free thinking started, just as it had for his brother. He wanted, instead of following orders. Shilo wanted something for himself, the same as Seth.

But he also found that being human was harder than what he thought. He felt things, and not just physical, either. Something was happening, and he didn't lie to her when he said she was his emotion. Shilo had this strange feeling in his chest that if something were to happen to her, then he would die.

Saker had told him right before he was taken from the system that the emotions would come in time. Shilo wondered if now that time had come. He felt it had.

She had only been asleep for a couple hours and already he was ready to get moving. With that tracker on the bike, time was once again against them. He needed to get to a safe place and finish his downloading. He also needed some information; information that Seth needed to know.

Shilo went back into the camper and started to pack things up that he would need. Food, some extra clothes, blankets. He even found a whole camping set with tent and cooking pans. He fixed it all onto the bike, checked it once more for more trackers, then went back into the camper to wake Star. He felt bad because she'd only had a couple

hours of sleep.

“Star, wake up.” Shilo gently shook her until her eyes opened. “We need to go.”

“Wh—why?” She was groggy, he heard it in her voice. Still in her long shirt, she sat up, rubbing her eyes quickly before looking around.

“I need to get a hold of Seth and I need to do it while we are on the move.” He turned from her, opening up some of the cabinets in the bedroom. He brought out some clothes, a long skirt, and sweater, tossing them to her. “Get dressed. We need to go.”

“I’m not wearing these!”

Shilo wasn’t going to argue with her at the moment. He wanted to get on the road and in touch with Seth as soon as possible. He needed to let him know what was out there, what was tracking them. He also needed to know that they were no longer the only ‘kind’ or creation. There was another.

“Shilo...oh.” Star stopped talking and stood behind him. In front of them ten men stood with guns pointed right at Shilo’s chest. “This isn’t good.”

He analyzed everything. Checked each guy out and found the weakest one in the pack. Third from the left. He was shaking slightly, nervous and scared. He couldn’t see the eyes. All ten were dressed in black from head to toe, even had black helmets on and gloves. Black belts were clipped around their waists and legs for extra guns, and in their hands, they held machine guns. It was without a doubt that these men were from the Corporation. The new director who took over Walsh’s position wasn’t wasting any time in trying to get his military weapon back.

Shilo didn’t move, not even when one of the men came over and yanked Star from his backside.

“Hey!” she yelled, “Get your damn hands off.”



“Let’s go,” another guy said to Shilo. “Nice and easy.”

“I’m not nice, and I sure as hell don’t do anything easy,” Shilo said right before he grabbed the barrel of the gun from the guy’s hands and hit him in the chest with the butt.

Then he dropped to one knee and shot three men before tossing the empty gun to another, and swinging his leg out in a swoop, knocking one down. He grabbed the guy by his vest and hit him as hard as he could in the face, breaking his nose and more than likely killing him due to bones getting lodged into his brain.

That left six.

Slowly he stood up, facing two more. “Do you two want to die?” he asked them.

They didn’t answer but Shilo’s attention was distracted when the two that grabbed Star pushed her into the backseat of a SUV.

He took a step towards her and one of the men cocked a shotgun. Shilo stopped, looked at him, then at his chest. Again, he snatched the gun from another man’s hands, but this time he swung wide and hard, hitting him in the face. Flipping the gun so the barrel pointed to the last one standing, he pulled the trigger and fired, and the guy went down.

Dropping the gun, he walked over to the bike and picked up another machine gun from one of the dead men. He checked the clip making sure he had a full round before getting on the bike, starting the engine and pulling out, spitting dirt and rocks behind him.

He sped off, following the SUV as fast as the bike would go. Two was all he had left to deal with. Two that dared to take Star away from him.

Once more Shilo had that strange feeling in his stomach, and he didn’t like it. It was almost as if he was

experiencing fear for the first time—fear that he was going to lose her forever.

Shilo gunned the bike, aimed at the SUV, raised the gun and took a shot at the back tire. He missed, but that didn't stop him. A few more and he had one back tire blown out. His next move was to get on the side of the car before the driver lost control, and Shilo was going to make damn sure he did lose it, at the same time hoping Star wouldn't be harmed.

He got up to the back door, made quick eye contact with Star, who was struggling in the arms of the guy holding her. The guy pulled out a gun, aiming it at Shilo. Right before the guy fired, Star took hold of his arm and pushed it forward. He shot the driver. That gave Shilo another fearful feeling in his stomach. But he had to give Star credit. She was good with thinking on her feet. She elbowed her abductor in the face, then opened the door.

“Give me your hand!” Shilo yelled at her.

“You are out of your fucking mind!” she yelled back, taking his hand.

“One, two...”

“Three!”

Shilo pulled her out of the car and onto the bike, right in front of him, wrapping her legs and arms around his body.

He turned the bike, heading away from the SUV that was doomed to smash into something. He sped off, putting as much distance as he could between them in case police came or the one that was tracking them showed up.

Shilo turned off on a dirt road, slowed down and came to a complete stop, turning the bike off. He hugged her, closing his eyes and letting that feeling in his stomach subside. She shook in his arms, crying softly, which had him tightening his hold on her.

“I don't like this feeling I get in my stomach when you

are in danger,” he told her. “I think it is fear.”

She laughed against his shoulder, sniffed, and pulled back a little. “You’re complaining about a little bit of fear when I was scared shitless.”

“I’m sorry—” he didn’t get to finish what he was about to say. Star kissed him.

Shilo kissed her back. He thrust his tongue into her mouth, moaning when she sucked on it. He didn’t waste any time or give her a moment to change her mind. Star started this, and there was no way in hell he wasn’t going to cooperate.

He moved his hands to the front of her shirt, unbuttoned it and closed his hands on her bare breasts. He was hard in an instant. In fact, he was pretty sure he was hard the moment she kissed him.

Adrenalin ran fast in his body and his patience was low. He moved one hand down, grabbed her panties, and ripped them off. He wasted no time in freeing his flesh and posing at her entrance. Still kissing, Shilo entered her with one swift thrust. He felt her tight muscles part for him and stretch. The pleasure was too much, too powerful for him to hold back.

He fucked her hard and fast on the bike, matching his tongue’s thrusting to his cock. Shilo took it all—now. After almost losing her, he had to *feel* her, to know that he was alive and not a damn machine. To know that she was with him in the now and would be always. To lose her would be his own destruction as it would for the ones daring to take her from him.

It was a short ride, but one that he would gladly take again. Her pussy clamped down hard on his pumping cock. The kiss ended and Star hid her face in his shoulder, crying out her release. Her arms tightened over his neck and he reared his head back, yelling his own release with eyes

closed. Birds took flight at his shouted release and when he opened his eyes to stare up at the blue sky something changed inside him. Something snapped.

He hugged her tight, burying his face in her hair, closing his eyes again. And remembered...

*“What will love feel like, Doctor?”*

*Saker stood in front of the monitor, looking right into the camera, into Shilo’s eye. “When you fall in love, Shilo, it will be like the wind on your face. You will feel such peace, almost as if it’s only the two of you in the world. And when you think you are going to lose her, then your heart will feel like it is going to bust right out of your chest.”*

*“Will I know this emotion?”*

*Saker smiled. His old, wrinkled face and sad eyes seemed to change, lightened up. “Oh yes,” he sighed. “You will know that emotion without a doubt.”*

“I love you, Star,” he said against her neck. “I think I have loved you before I even knew what love was.” She sat up, staring him in the eye with her mouth slightly open. Shilo touched her lips. “I can’t lose you.”

“I know,” she whispered. Shilo pushed her head back down on his shoulder and she snuggled tighter against him. “I know,” she sighed.

Two hours after the encounter with the men the corporation sent, Shilo was working on transferring money into an account he set up awhile ago from his phone. He wanted to make extra sure they had it still and that Walsh didn’t somehow hack into his system and take it away. But Shilo didn’t worry too much. With what he created, and the programs he used, he knew it was almost impossible to get to it.

They parked outside the city limits. Shilo was able to pick up a signal from the side of the road and that was where he was working from with Star sitting on the back of

the bike.

“Hand me that card,” he said to Star.

“Are you sure about this?” she asked, handing over a bank card that he had given her earlier to hold.

Shilo didn’t take his eyes off the phone. He was taking a very big chance with being on line, and was pretty sure what every program was still working and linked between him and the Corporation was tracking him. But he didn’t have a choice. They needed money, Star needed clothes, and new transportation wouldn’t be a bad idea, either. He really needed to ditch the bike.

“Have no choice.” He slid the card over the top, like one would scan a credit card. The account came up, showing almost a million dollars.

“Holy shit!” Star looked over his shoulder from the bike. “Where did you get all that money?”

“You don’t want to know.” He handed the card back to her. “I’m going to drop you off at the mall up here.” He shut the phone off, putting it back into his pocket. “You get clothes, a pack of some kind, and a new computer. I’m going to the bank for cash. Also, pick us up some new phones. I need to get in touch with Seth.”

“What’s wrong?”

He started the bike, gunning it a couple times before putting it in gear. “We are being tracked. I need to get him off our ass before it’s too late and I need the program. Seth has it.”

He took off, driving at the speed limit so as not to attract attention. The mall was easy enough to find and he pulled right up to the front door.

“I’m going to get us new transportation.”

Star rolled her eyes at him, “Car. You’re going to get a new car, not transportation. We need to work on the way you talk.” She pointed her finger at him.

Shilo frowned. “What’s wrong with the way I talk?”

“You talk like a damn machine,” she snorted. He kept frowning at her and she laughed, kissing him quickly on the lips. “So where should we meet up?”

“Food court. We need to eat something.” She nodded and turned to go inside. “Star?” She stopped and looked at him. “Better get two packs. I’m going to have some cash to carry around.”

She nodded, “Got yah.”

“I won’t be long.”

She took a deep breath, staring him right in the eye. “Come right back.”

He nodded. “That’s a promise.”

## Chapter Eight

Pain stood at the bottom of the stairs watching the girl shop. She had bags in her hands, looking into a computer store. She appeared to be thinking about purchasing a new computer, he decided.

He'd followed her here, using the tracker that was still running in the chip. The men that were with him wanted Pain to take Shilo the moment they saw him drop the girl off at the mall, but he had other plans. Shilo wasn't going to do anything they wanted unless they had leverage they could use against him. That leverage was the girl. She was the weakness and he was going to use it against Shilo.

She went inside the store and he moved up the stairs slowly, keeping his eyes on her. She was talking to a salesman, pointing to a computer. Pain watched her buy it and pack it up in her pack on her shoulders. With a smile on her face, she left the store and headed for another. Pain followed her.

As he walked, he brought out his phone and called Powell. "I think I've found a way to bring him home on his own." He hung up before Powell could question him.

She didn't buy anything in that store, glanced at a watch on her arm and quickly headed for the stairs that he'd just climbed. She passed him, not looking at him once. Pain turned and followed her back down, keeping enough of a distance that she wouldn't notice she was being followed.

The men that came with him were waiting by one of the side entrance doors. Before she got close, Pain motioned with a nod for them to go and get the truck. Right before she reached the door, he grabbed her arm, and pulled her away.

Quickly he pressed his switchblade to her side, "Don't

scream or make any kind of scene.” He backed her up to a corner, blocking everything with his body. “When is he coming back?” She swallowed and shook her head. Pain pressed harder into her side causing her to lean to the side. “Please don’t make me ask again.”

“Any time,” she answered.

“Is he alone?”

She nodded.

He yanked her out of the corner, grabbed her arm tight, and walked her right out. The truck was waiting for them. He grabbed her bag and pack and tossed them inside, but he didn’t let her in. Instead, he stood next to the open back door and waited.

It wasn’t a long wait.

“Pain!”

Pain grabbed the girl by her throat, turned her around, held her against his chest, and pressed the knife to her throat.

“Hello, Shilo.” Shilo came closer to the truck, a gun pointed right at Pain’s head. “I’ve been expecting you.”

“Let her go, Pain.”

“I don’t think so.” Shilo made a step and Pain pressed the knife into her throat. “You don’t want me to slice her open now do you?”

“What do you want?” Shilo asked the question slow, through his teeth.

“Mr. Powell would like to see you. I’m sure you know how to get back home.” Pain spoke soft and calm. Holding the knife comforted him in a twisted sort of way. Killing was a second nature, or as he liked to call it, his one and only emotion. “After all, you wouldn’t want anything to happen to this girl here, would you?”

“Don’t be stupid, Shilo,” Star said. “You go back there and they’ll kill you.”



Pain gave her a jerk. “Bad advice. If he doesn’t come back, I’m going to kill you.”

Shilo lowered the gun. “Let her go, and I’ll come with you now.”

Pain shook his head. “Not how I’m going to play this game. You come, she lives. It’s that simple.” He moved back, got into the truck, and pulled Star onto his lap. “I’ll tell Powell to expect you.” The truck took off before he got the door closed.

\* \* \* \*

Shilo stood still, watching the truck peel away, tires squealing against the pavement. He was seething inside. He knew that Pain was following them, but thought he had enough of a gap. That was one mistake he was sure to never make again, because there wasn’t going to be another again. The next time he came face to fact with Pain would be the last time for one of them.

He put the gun away before anyone saw it and pulled out his cell phone. Now that Star was taken, there really wasn’t a reason to keep it off and be silent any longer. Star was his weakness, and it didn’t take a genius to figure that out.

“I have a problem,” he said the second the other line was picked up.

“Shilo, what the hell are you doing calling!” Seth snapped. “They can track you.”

“He already has.” Shilo heard the deadness in his voice and frowned. It was the first time ever that he picked up how emotionless he sounded.

“What?”

“He found me, took her. I have to go back.”

“Go back! Are you out of your mind?” Seth was yelling over the phone.

Shilo closed his eyes. The pain in his chest that he got

the first time he thought he lost her hit again, and it hit hard. He staggered then fell to the ground. One hand went to his chest, the other fisted the phone to the ground. He could hear Seth yelling still, but couldn't make out a word of it. Images flashed before his eyes. Memories of the short time he had with Star. Feelings over flooded his system. He could smell her, almost taste, and feel her, but she wasn't there.

“Shilo! Shilo!”

He shook his head quickly before bringing the phone back to his ear. “I’m going back, Seth. I’m going back to get her and bring that damn corporation down for good.” He hung up, rose on wobbly legs, and walked away.

\* \* \* \*

Star tried like hell to keep her mouth shut, but couldn't. “He isn't going to come.” She turned in the seat, facing the one that grabbed her. “Shilo isn't that stupid.”

“He cares for you,” he said with an emotionless voice.

“He doesn't *care* for anyone.” She crossed her arms over her chest. “Emotions never got into his programming.” He didn't look at her, and that sort of bothered her. But what had her mind working in overdrive was how he acted. She couldn't believe what she was seeing at the moment. “You're one of them?”

She turned in the seat with the intent to jump from the tuck, but was stopped when he grabbed the back of her neck tightly. She was shaken then pulled back.

“Please don't try that. It would be in both our interests if you are unharmed at the moment,” he said low in her ear.

“Why?” she grunted from the pain at the back of her neck. “You're only going to kill me once you get your damn hands on him.”

“You are not my concern. Shilo is.” He released her with a shove. “Now please sit back. We will be there

shortly.”

Shortly was right. Less than thirty minutes and they were pulling into a below ground garage. The truck stopped right in front of an elevator.

Pain pulled Star from the truck, her arm held tightly as they stood inside, waiting as it took them up to the top.

She only saw this place from a distance. Alex never wanted her to come here, not even to visit him. She also knew that this was the place he was killed. She would almost put her last dollar—if she had one—that the one holding her, had killed Saker. He was rough when he ‘escorted’ her from the elevator. No one was around, which she found strange. He stopped her in front of a door, opened it, and shoved her inside.

“Ah, Ms. Murray, what a pleasant surprise.”

Star glared at the man sitting behind a desk. He smiled at her, but his eyes didn’t hold the warmth that he tried to put forth. He looked cold and cruel in his designer suit where he sat in his leather chair.

“I must say Pain, this is very unexpected,” he said, putting the file he was reading down slowly. “I trust you have an explanation?”

“Wait a second.” Star held her hands up, getting his full attention. “Who the hell are you? And what the fuck is he?” she thumbed behind her back.

“Now where are my manners?” He sat back in his chair, linking fingers together over his chest. “I’m Carl Powell, new director of E.I. Synthetic Corporation. His name is Pain, my personal assistant.”

“Assistant, my ass. He put a knife to my throat!”

“I do apologize, Ms. Murray. He was under specific orders, which it seems he has failed to obey.” Powell stood up and came around to the front.

“He’ll be here,” Pain stated.

“And how can you be so sure?” Powell asked.

“I have what he wants.”

Powell got closer—close enough so he could look down at Star. “Funny. I never pictured Shilo to be the kind to want a woman.” He snorted, rubbed his jaw, and turned his back on her. “Take her to the white room. She should be able to see everything that will go on with Shilo once he comes.” He moved back around the desk, sitting once more. “I think the reprogramming will be very interesting to watch.”

“You can’t get away with this!” Star made a move towards him, only to be stopped by the thug behind her. He took hold of both her arms.

“Oh I think I will just nicely do so.” Powell smiled. “In fact I have already. Pain here is my perfect creation.” He motioned with his hand towards them. “The perfect weapon. No emotion, no remorse. He follows instructions to the letter, or fixes what ever needs to be fixed. And once Shilo is reprogrammed, he will also be perfect and flawless.”

“You’re out of your fucking mind!” she shouted. “Seth will kill you before he lets you destroy his brother.”

Powell snapped his finger and one of Powell’s other goons picked her up. As he carried her out of the room, she kicked and hit, but it was like fighting against a wall. Nothing seemed to faze him at all.

He stopped in front of another door, took a card from his pocket, and slid it through a panel on the wall. The door unlocked, and he set her on her feet then shoved her inside. Nothing was said as the door shut, locking her in.

“Well, shit,” she mumbled to herself, looking around the room.

White room was right. It looked like a fucking lab to her, and very boring. It had nothing but equipment in it, and

most of it looked pretty useless—most, but not everything.

One of the first things Star saw was a monitor. That told her that computer parts were somewhere in the room. That was their first mistake. Second was thinking that she couldn't put one together, if she found it. And she most certainly could!

She found a keyboard, wires, tools in a draw and one small little control pad hidden in the white walls. It didn't take her to long before she had her little make-shift computer wired into the hard drive of the whole corporation.

"Sometimes it does pay to be bad," she mumbled with a smile. "Now let's see what you're hiding. Shall we?" Her fingers flew over the keyboard, putting in commands, hacking into systems. With the programs she was tossing out there was no way in hell anyone would detect her. "Well look what we have here."

She read the information that was popping up on the screen. New program, or better yet an upgrade to one program that was running. SHILO!

"You have got to be fucking kidding me!" Star slumped back in her chair, mouth open at what she was reading. They were going to reprogram Shilo. Everything he learned while he was out was going to be wiped clean. All memory of *who* he was would be replaced by a *what*. He was a machine—a killing one for that matter. No emotion, no free will. He was to be the perfect weapon, and once they got him into the cube she was suppose to watch as they took away everything that he was and replaced it with what they wanted him to be.

Not today.

Star changed everything. She replaced the no emotion with all the emotions he would ever need. No free will became a yes, just like everything else where they wanted a

no. In fact, she was reprogramming what they were going to reprogram themselves. When she thought about it, Star chuckled.

“That’s what you get when you lock up a hacker into her private mainframe drive,” she snickered. “Dipshits.” Quickly she finished, putting one last touch to her handy work. A nice size virus that would shut every system down once Shilo was finished. “Now fix that one.”

She shut down completely, dismantled everything, then headed over to the door to see if she could get it to open without the card.

“Now this is going to take some time,” she sighed.

\* \* \* \*

Shilo hunched down in the shadows in the garage, studying the action. Men were coming and going, heavily armed, but acted as if they were just there for show. It was almost as if they had orders to allow Shilo entry. Open invitation. Interesting.

He stood up and walked right up to the elevator. The guards that were left soon disappeared. That meant he had to keep his guard up at all times. He probably should have brought a few guns with him also. Coming unarmed was stupid, but then when it came to the safety of Star, thinking wasn’t one of his strongest talents. Hell, that woman made him incapable of thinking about anything—but touching her, *feeling* her. She was the reason why he became human in the first place, why he decided to toss everything away and be man, not a weapon.

The doors opened and he stepped inside. Instantly, a very bad feeling hit him. Before he could change his mind and take the stairs, the doors closed and the elevator moved without him pushing a button.

“Hello, Shilo. I’ve been expecting you.”

Shilo looked up where the voice was coming from. A

small monitor was over the doors that should be showing what floor he was on or passage. Instead, it had a face staring back at him—a face that he knew well. Carl Powell.

“Where is she, Powell?” Shilo demanded.

“Safe. Waiting for you. But don’t worry. You will come face to face with her, after we fix a small glitch in your programming.” Powell smiled.

“There isn’t—” Shilo didn’t finish what he was about to say. Smoke started to come into the elevator through the two vents on the floor. Instantly he started to feel light headed. “What’re you doing?”

“Just making sure that everything goes smoothly,” Powell answered. “Don’t want you getting hurt.”

Shilo dropped to his knees. The gas that hit his system weakened him. When the doors opened, he couldn’t stand up or defend himself. Hands grabbed hold of his arms, picking him up. He was more dragged out than walked, and he couldn’t see a damn thing, either. His vision became blurry, thanks to the gas.

Rough hands pushed him down to his knees, his wrists cuffed, and arms stretched out to the sides. His shirt was ripped down his back then yanked away. Something was pressed on his chest, and on his back, then his head was pushed down, hair parted at the back of his neck.

“Don’t move. This will hurt.”

Shilo hissed and flinched. Someone shoved a needle into the back of his neck.

“Start the program.”

“Wh—what are you doing?” Shilo could barely speak. Something else was stuck in his arm, making the light-headed sensation turn to dizziness. He fought with the blackness that threatened to overtake him.

“Orders.”

Shilo closed his eyes and took several deep breaths.

“Pain,” he sighed.

“Sleep.” The word was breathed into his ear softly.

“When you wake, you will be a new program.”

Shilo shook his head but it felt like it weighed a tone.

“No!” he moaned out.

“Begin the program.”



## Chapter Nine

“Ah, Ms. Murray, please have a seat.” Powell smiled as Star stood up and indicated for her to take a seat at the end of a long dining room table.

She couldn’t protest. The lump of shit behind her gave her a shove towards the chair. She sat down, hands in her lap, eyes on the one right across from her. The one behind her sat in chair in the middle of the table, picked up his napkin, and placed it on his lap.

“Am I supposed to be impressed with the manners?” she asked.

Powell smiled. “They can be anything I need them to be—whenever. It’s all in the programming.” He also placed a napkin on his lap before picking up his fork and knife, cutting into some meat on his plate.

Star crossed her arms over her chest, narrowing her eyes on him. “So it doesn’t matter to you one bit that he might want to be something other than your property?”

“Wanting is a useless emotion.” Powell waved his hand at her before wiping the corner of his mouth.

“What’d you want?”

He put another piece of food into his mouth before lowering his fork to the plate. “Right to the point.” He pointed at her. “I like that.” He picked up a bottle, pulled out the cork, and poured some white wine into his glass. He took a drink, eyes closed as if he was savoring it. “Pain thinks that with you around, you will distract Shilo. I, of course, told him that once the program is finished there won’t be any distraction, unless I order it.”

“You want me dead.” It wasn’t a question, but a statement, one that she already knew the answer. “You’re going to kill me.”

Powell nodded. “Maybe.”

Star got up so fast she knocked over her chair. She ran from the room, taking turns, not knowing where the hell she was going. She ended up right in the room that Shilo had been taken to and plugged in, only Shilo wasn't there. Star stopped, gulped as much air in as she could, and stared at nothing when she should be staring at something.

“Where is he?” she panted, looking around.

The door burst open and she jumped around. Pain stood in the door way, took four long steps up to her and wrapped his hand around her throat.

“Where...is...he?” She struggled to ask the question thanks to the small fact that he was squeezing the air right out of her.

“Program finished,” Pain answered.

“And so are you.”

Star stiffened when she heard the cocking of a gun. She was about to pass out until the hand loosened. Moving her head to the right as much as she could she also released a sigh of pleasure. Shilo stood there, gun in hand, aimed right at Pain's head. But there was something different about his eyes. He didn't have the coldness in them, just a bit of cruelty.

“Let her go,” Shilo ordered.

Pain didn't release her but cocked his head to the side to glance at him. He frowned, and Star used the distraction to help Shilo. She kicked Pain as hard as she could between the legs. He grunted and let, her go, but before she went far, he backhanded her hard, knocking her down.

\* \* \* \*

Shilo watched Star fall to the ground and it took all his will power not to go to her. Anger hit. For the first time since he had been out, he wanted to kill for the simple fact that he was pissed off and not because he needed to survive.

A quick glance at Star and his anger reached boiling point. She was out cold, her lip busted open, and her left cheek was starting to bruise.

“The program didn’t take,” Pain stated.

“Oh, the program took, just not *your* program,” Shilo said.

Pain lunged at him. Pain smacked the gun out of his hand, and it landed right in the middle of Shilo’s chest, knocking the wind from him and pushing him backwards. Shilo landed on his ass, skidding backwards. Once he stopped, he was back up on his feet, going right for Pain.

Pain swung, Shilo ducked, hitting Pain in the ribs with his fist. Pain jumped up from the blow, but it did very little to slow him down. He pushed Shilo back, slamming him up against the wall. He took a step back and punched him in the face. Shilo went to one knee, and before he could catch his breath, Pain kicked him in the gut.

“I had expected a better opponent,” Pain stated. “One that could match me not only in wit, but with the physical components that makes us unique.” He took several steps back until he was in front of Star. Shilo struggled to catch his breath after that kick, but he didn’t take his eyes off Pain. “You are a disappointment.” Pain yanked Star up, wrapping his arm around her neck.

Star was awake. Shilo was somewhat surprised that she didn’t look scared. She should be. Pain could snap her neck without blinking.

Shilo stood up holding his stomach. “Then I guess I’m going to have to change your opinion of me.”

“I doubt it.” He jerked Star to the side, but she did something that gave Shilo the chance to take the upper hand. Star stabbed Pain in the leg with a knife she pulled right out of his waist. Pain yelled, turned, and once more backhanded Star.

Shilo lunged at him.

He caught Pain around the waist, body slamming him to the ground. Pain was strong, Shilo would give him that. But he also lacked emotions, and Shilo was quickly discovering that when you had emotions on your side it made you even stronger than if you didn't.

They wrestled on the floor, swapping punches and hits. Somehow, Pain got the upper hand, his foot made it to Shilo's chest and he kicked him away. He skidded to the other side of the room. When Shilo looked up that same foot made contact with his face. Stars exploded behind his eyes.

Pain grabbed him by his throat, pulled him so he was face to face with him. Shilo saw the deadness in Pain's eyes—emotionless eyes. It had him wondering for a few seconds if his eyes looked the same before his emotions were finally downloaded.

"Now you will die," Pain stated, squeezing his throat slowly, cutting the air off.

"Not...today," Shilo wheezed out.

He brought his knee up, making contact with Pain's side. Pain grunted and released him. Shilo took a step back and kicked him as hard as he could in the same spot, only Pain caught his leg. With no warning, Pain took his elbow and went down, snapping Shilo's leg at the knee.

Shilo bellowed and dropped to the ground, holding his leg right at the knee cape. Pain unlike anything he ever thought to experience gripped him and refused to let go. It blinded him, making him unable to think or plan anything out.

Shilo saw the knife come out of Pain's back pocket, but he couldn't move. Hell, he was doing damn good to breathe it hurt so fucking much.

"It is a shame that you have to be terminated," Pain

stated.

“Not today, asshole.” Star stood up with the gun in her hand. She cocked it and Shilo felt a small sense of relief at seeing her with it.

Pain turned his back on Shilo, and Star did the unexpected. The gun went off, Shilo jumped and Pain just stood there still as a statue. Shilo feared she’d missed, but when the first red drop hit the floor he knew that she didn’t. Yet he hoped she hadn’t killed him. He didn’t want her to have to deal with that for the rest of her life.

Pain dropped to his knees, the knife also fell to the floor. “You missed the heart,” he stated.

“But I won’t miss this time.” Shilo crawled as best as he could toward Pain. He came up on his back side and knocked him down to his stomach. He made contact with Star who looked like she was in shock. “Close your eyes,” he told her.

She did as he said and Shilo wrapped one arm around Pain’s neck and, with his other arm, snapped his neck, killing him.

Breathing hard, Shilo rolled off him. It was over. At least this part was. He still needed to bring this place down once and for all, but at the moment all he could think about was the pain in his leg.

“Motherfucker, this hurts,” he panted, closing his eyes, trying to will the pain away. He jumped when Star touched him, a fresh wave of pain hitting him. “Don’t touch it!” he snapped.

“Shut up,” Star said, pressing on his knees. Shilo moaned out and hit the floor with a closed fist. “It’s dislocated, not broken.”

“Oh, that makes me feel better,” he chuckled in agony.

“You know, smart ass is not a look for you.”

He opened his eyes in time to see her grab his leg and

pull. Shilo yelled at the top of his lungs then began to cry, rolling over to his side.

“So, how you like the emotions?” she asked.

He thought he heard some humor in her voice, but wasn’t sure. He sniffed back the tears and rolled back over.

“I need to deal with Powell.”

“Oh yeah, that’s great.” She rolled her eyes. “Get yourself killed.”

“You don’t understand—”

“No, *you* don’t understand.” She pointed her finger at him. “We need to get—” Shilo shut her up by grabbing the front of her shirt and kissing her hard and deep. “That’s not fair,” she breathed out against his mouth when it ended.

Shilo smiled, “I know. Now help me up please. I need to stop Powell before he makes another one of Seth, me, or him.”

Star helped him up. It was agony standing on that leg, but it also felt a bit better now that Star had put it back in place. Shilo pushed back the pain, grabbed the gun and left the room for Powell’s office. He knew he would be there, waiting for Pain to come back and report his death, or hers.

He had to stop and rest against the wall for a few seconds. He was breathing hard, sweat covered his face, and his knee throbbed like a bitch.

“I want you to go into that room there, get on the computer, and start trashing files, then plant a virus,” he told her.

“I don’t know how to do that.”

Shilo closed his eyes took several deep breaths and nodded, “Yes, you do. The games we use to play, the codes and shit you tried to do to me when I was in the system, I saved. All you have to do is boot it up and release it. I need you to go inside and shut it down.”

“So you can go in there and kill Powell?” She shook her

head. “I don’t think so. You’ve got enough blood on your hands as is.”

Shilo opened his eyes and looked down at her. “I have no choice. We get rid of both or they will make another Pain, or me, or Seth. Saker’s program is in that system. If Powell is gone someone else will start it all over.”

“But that doesn’t mean you have to kill him.” She sounded desperate, afraid.

Shilo hugged her tight. “Yes, I do.”

“No you don’t.” Seth came around a corner, gun in his hand that he uncocked and put in his pocket. “I already took care of it.”

Shilo stared at his brother. A sense of relief hit him, and he just about fell to the floor. Before he hit it, Seth caught him.

“You took your sweet ass time getting here,” Shilo sighed, resting his head on his brother’s chest.

“Ah, did you miss me?” Seth hugged him tight and Shilo welcomed it. “So, let’s get this shit finished and get the hell out of here.”

“Sounds like a plan to me,” Star said.

Shilo turned his head to see her leave his side and go into one of the offices. She sat down at a desk and started to type something into the computer.

“She saved me, Seth,” Shilo stated. “She prevented them from destroying me.”

Seth shifted him by putting an arm over his shoulder, taking most of his weight. “Yeah, I figured she would.” Shilo smiled and rested his head back on Seth’s chest. “She gave you your emotions, didn’t she?”

Shilo nodded. “They plugged me in to reprogram me. I don’t understand why, but she stopped it and finished what I needed.”

“Okay, now can we get out of here, please?” Star asked.

“I’ve opened a back hidden door so I can finish what I need to do away from this place.”

“Come on,” Seth said. “Alyna is waiting for us in the garage.”

They drove out of the city in silence. Shilo sat in the back seat of the car holding Star’s hand, drifting in and out of sleep. His knee still throbbed, but the pain wasn’t as bad when he was touching Star. A couple of times when his eyes drifted closed he felt her head on his shoulder, then a hand on his face brushing hair to the side. It was soothing and a new feeling for him.

Many new emotions were hitting him at once. Before it all seemed like he was going through a motion. His body grew sluggish, it needed sleep. When he got that strange sound in his stomach, it needed food. Even when he got shot, the pain felt a whole lot duller than it felt now. With the emotions, it was sharp. He wanted to cry from it, laugh, and sleep. There was too much going on inside him too fast. There was no way to analyze it.

He didn’t know how long they drove or where they were going. Shilo was semi-aware of things around him. They stopped once for food. With his eyes closed, body so limp he couldn’t hold his arms up, he was fed. He tried several times to open his eyes, but they wouldn’t work with him. Star told him a few times to not worry about it and rest. It was what he wanted to do, but couldn’t seem to get that deep sleep that he needed.

He could tell by the warmth on his face that the sun was setting and night would soon arrive. Next to him, he heard Star typing on a computer, Seth whispering something to Alyna. It was comforting.

The car stopped, doors opened and still Shilo couldn’t open his eyes to see a thing. He felt drugged. Someone opened his door and he opened his eyes to see Seth easing



him out of the car. Shilo knew he was dead weight.

“What’s wrong with me?” he asked sluggishly.

“Don’t worry about it,” Seth answered. “I’ll take care of you.”

Seth bent and eased Shilo over a shoulder and carried him away. From the tone of the walking and more doors opening, Shilo knew he’d been carried into a house. He would like to have been able to see the place, but he couldn’t seem to keep his eyes open.

Gently, Seth laid him down on a bed. The mattress felt so good that all he could do was sigh. Hands gently removed his clothes and a pair of shorts replaced them. Shilo winced when fingers began to move over his knee, pressing and lifting it. He groaned when gentle hands wrapped something around the injured knee.

“Get some sleep,” Seth whispered, putting the blanket up to his chin. “You’re safe now and so is Star.”

Those seemed to be the words that Shilo needed to hear. He took one deep breath, letting it out slowly and welcomed the darkness.

## Chapter Ten

“I swear the past couple of days all you’ve been doing is playing on the computer.” Seth slumped down on the sofa next to Star. She had her laptop open and on her lap. “Think you might be worse than Shilo.”

Star grinned, not missing one key stroke. “No one is that bad.”

“So what are you doing?”

Seth had a singing tone to his voice when he asked the question. For the past two days, he had been taking care of Shilo alone. Shilo had also been sleeping like the dead. He didn’t move or wake for food. It was as if he were in a comatose state, fixing his body or something. And that was just what Seth said he was doing. Star didn’t understand it, which was just fine. She had other things to do, like making sure the files she had transferred to herself were here so she could destroy everything that involved Seth and Shilo. It was a big job—one that she didn’t think would take her so long.

“Same thing you asked me yesterday,” she answered him. “There are more files on you two, more encryptions than I’ve ever seen. I swear its going to take me months to get rid of them all.”

“Well, it gives you something to do,” he groaned, sitting back with a grin on his face.

“So is this what I get to look forward to once he wakes up?” she sighed, turning on the sofa to face him. “This charming personality?”

“Oh, I’m the one with all the charm, he has the brains.”

Star snorted. “I doubt that.”

“Now I’m hurt.”

She jumped, turned completely around and there in the

bedroom doorway stood Shilo. He looked great, not at all like the man who got the shit beat out of him and couldn't walk into the house.

"Good, you're up." Seth stood up with a groan. "I was starting to think you were going to torture me with two computer geniuses. A guy can only handle one you know."

Seth walked past Shilo, patted him on the shoulder then disappeared down the hall. They were staying in Alex's home in the mountains. The home that he left to both Seth and Shilo.

It was a very simple design. You walked into the front door, and bang you were in a large living room that shared a dining table and chairs as well as kitchen. To the back was a hallway that went to the left and right and two spiral staircases going up to a large loft used for an office. Seth and Alyna used the room to the right, Shilo and Star's was to the left, but since Shilo was in the room healing Star slept on the sofa when she had to. Most of the time, she worked on the files, taking down the corporation for good.

"You're staring," he stated without smiling. "Something wrong?"

She felt her heart sink in her chest. Star had hopes that after the reprogramming he would be different, warmer. But looking at him right this second she saw that nothing had changed. He still seemed to exhibit little emotion.

"No," she answered softly. "Nothing's wrong." She turned around and placed her computer back on her lap. "I'm..." she had to clear her throat to keep from crying. She really did hope that giving him his emotions would change him—make him human—not a cold machine in a body. "I'm just working on these files. Should have them done soon and then we all can get on with our lives."

He came over and sat down next to her. Star avoided his eyes.

“Star, look at me.”

She swallowed hard before turning her head and looking quickly at him. “I, um, I really need to—”

Shilo took hold of her chin forced her to look at him and kissed her. He lingered for a few seconds before pulling back. “Thank you,” he whispered against her lips.

Star didn’t realize that she had her eyes closed until she opened them. “For what?”

He kissed her again, this time taking the tip of his tongue and grazing it over her lips. He teased her like this several times before pressing his lips to hers and pushing his tongue into her mouth. Star lost it and moaned. She also leaned into him but caught herself before she got too lost in the kiss.

“What!” She took a deep breath and pulled back. “Where the hell did you learn to do that?”

He cocked his head to the side, touched her face, and kissed her chin. “You don’t like it?”

“I don’t remember you ever doing anything like that before.”

“I never had the full emotion behind it.” He took the computer from her lap. He leaned forward and she bent back. He hovered over her. “You finished what I couldn’t.”

She put both hands up to his chest, but didn’t push him away. When he lowered down and kissed her, Star ended up wrapping her arms around his neck, welcoming it. He moaned into her mouth and sneaky as he was, slipped one hand under her shirt, cupping her breast.

“Oh come on you two!” Seth groaned. “Do you have to do that shit right here?”

Shilo stopped kissing her to look at Seth. “Jealous?”

“What if I was?” Seth put his hands on his hips, facing his brother.

Shilo removed his hands from her shirt and stood up.

Star had a funny feeling that something bad was about to happen. Shilo hadn't been acting right since he woke up, making her think that the emotions weren't there after all.

But he surprised her. Shilo lunged at Seth, hugging him tight, then picking him up. Seth laughed and Shilo broke out in a big smile.

"You never get use to it." Alyna came in from outside. She stood next to the sofa, smiling as the two brothers horsed around.

"Use to what?" Star asked.

"Use to the simple fact that they both started out as nothing more than a computer chip."

"That isn't what amazes me," Star sighed, resting on the back of the sofa, watching them.

"Then what does?"

"What amazes me the most is that Alex was able to fulfill his vision. He had one simple dream, and we are looking at it—flesh and blood."

**The End**

## **Excerpt: Outerplanetary Sensations**

### **By Jaden Sinclair**

Sorsha has everything except love. Kade has almost given up on finding his bride. When the two meet, they discover how deep love can run.

\* \* \* \*

## **Chapter One**

Sorsha Mya walked next to her father, Noah Mya, down the red carpet to the shuttle waiting to take them to Pluto for the next campaign. For the past six months, they had traveled from city to city on Earth. Noah wanted to continue in his seat on the Board of Directors where the Laws and Rights of Pluto and Earth were determined.

Every ten years, to remain on the board, Noah had to campaign for his seat in the same manner candidates did for the presidency. For most of her life, Sorsha's father had been on the board. Now that she was almost twenty-one, Sorsha looked forward to getting out since she had given up on her father staying at home and being a father to her. As usual, what made her happy didn't matter. He did what he wanted. Consequently, she was alone most of the time, slightly depressed and, when she wasn't being kept in the background, she was fighting to put a smile on her face for the cameras.

Their large shuttle was the property of the National Government and resembled their private jet, which they used when on personal business on Earth. The shuttle had three distinct areas—the cockpit, two private compartments, and a bathroom for the staff since the private rooms had their own restrooms. Noah preferred the government plane

because he and Sorsha had their own area, which was separate from the large one for the staff. Sorsha didn't say a word to anyone. When she boarded the shuttle, she dashed into their compartment, going straight into the bathroom. She could no longer hold back her tears. As the second the door closed behind her, they were falling down her face.

Sorsha wasn't allowed to date. Noah was afraid someone would use her to get to him—a crazy thought, but one her father held onto with all his heart, keeping Sorsha very close to him at all times.

“Sorsha?” Noah knocked on the door, causing Sorsha to jump.

She looked at herself in the mirror. Wavy, auburn hair flowed down to the middle of her back. Her normal sparkling green eyes looked back at her with so much sadness. She had high exotic cheekbones, set in a delicate face, a straight nose and her lips were full with a slight pout to them. With the no-dating rule hanging over her head, Sorsha was labeled as shy when in reality she was withdrawn.

“Sorsha, open the door,” her father knocked again, pulling Sorsha from her thoughts.

She splashed some water on her face, giving herself one quick glance in the mirror before turning to unlock the door. Since it was just the two of them, she didn't bother putting a smile on her face.

“We should be on Pluto in about three days.” Noah frowned at her as he spoke. “This shuttle goes faster than the rest. I want to be in the hotel a few days before the party.” He turned his back on her, walking away, with Sorsha following him, like expected. “I have a dress ordered for you. I'm told it is in the latest fashion for both Pluto and Earth, so you will be looking very elegant. We should only have to stay on the planet for about a week at

the most.” Noah swung back around to her. “I’m confident I will have their vote just as I have in the past.”

Don’t cry, don’t cry, she told herself.

“I’m sure you will.” Sorsha kept her voice even, but inside, she was falling apart. She didn’t know how much longer she was going to be able to live like this, always in a crowd but separate and alone.

“Excuse me, sir.”

Noah turned to speak with one of his cabinet members, forgetting Sorsha once again. She felt that sense of loss because of how easily he dismissed her from his thoughts. He never saw what was right in front of his eyes, never saw her pain of rejection, her loneliness or the hurt he caused her when he put her out of his mind so quickly. Sorsha often wondered if her mother had been treated the same way.

Sorsha had never known her mother. The woman, who had given birth to her, had died due to complications shortly thereafter. She couldn’t help but wonder if that was the reason her father treated her the way he did.

Knowing her father no longer needed her, she went to her side of the room. After pulling the large curtain to separate the room, she pushed the button to extend her bed. Another painful thought came to her as she changed from her clothes into a long white nightgown. Would her father even remember? The night of the big party was also her twenty-first birthday.

Sorsha had given up praying to God. When she was younger, she had prayed all the time, asking God to send her someone who would love her, a knight in shining armor to stand up to her father for her or just be there when she needed a warm body to hold her. Year after year went by with no one showing up, making Sorsha feel both God and her father had abandoned her.



Her watch read midnight. Her father still hadn't come back to the room, not even to tell her good night like he used to. Rolling over onto her side, facing the wall, Sorsha tried to go to sleep, but sleep seemed to be out of the question. This time she knew what was troubling her, and it didn't have everything to do with her father. Sorsha was tired of it all. Tired of his role in the government. Tired of being told what to wear, when to smile, whom to talk to. Most of all, Sorsha was tired of not knowing what it was like to be with a man. She needed to experience life. Her only trouble was how could she tell her controlling father she no longer wanted to be a part of his world but have a life of her own?

\* \* \* \*

Kade Tully stood on the loading dock at the back of the grand hotel called Planet Paradise as another shipment of *Maki Sprits* was unloaded. Planet Paradise was the largest hotel on Pluto. He had been staying there for a while now, making plans for one of the grandest parties ever, a campaign party for one of the National Government's candidates, who was running for another term in office.

Kade was a one-hundred-percent Plutoan man. He stood at seven foot even. His thick blond hair was a good three to five inches past his shoulders, and his eyes were a deep-sea blue green, the sclera of his eyes a light silver instead of white. The only thing he felt was missing from his life was a good woman. Well, a woman and a steel-hard erection. For the past couple of days, though, the erection part appeared to be coming back. Since Kade had been in the hotel, he had experienced a few hard-ons, nothing that seemed to last too long though. He thought about making the call to perform the 'test', but the sexual drive he was starting to feel didn't last longer than an hour at the most. It was almost as if his body was only picking up the scent of

the girl meant for him, not the girl herself. The only way Kade could explain it to himself was his woman had stayed in the hotel enough times for there to be a lingering scent. He kept his fingers crossed that she might come back again for this party.

“I suspect that about cleans you all out,” the owner of the hotel said.

Kade handed the clipboard off to one of the guys who handed it to the smiling owner. “Yep, and we all get to take one long vacation.”

“Well, I say you all need it.” The owner was an older man from Earth. His daughter had married a man from Pluto, so he had built the hotel there to be closer to her. “You guys work too hard. You should be out looking for your brides.”

Kade smiled again and nodded. “Always looking.”

“Well, I’ll have my fingers crossed for you.” He grinned, handing the clipboard back to Kade. “There should be enough girls from Earth at the party. Maybe one of them will be right for you.”

Kade kept his mouth shut as the old man went back inside the hotel. He finished his own work then went inside for a long, hot, relaxing shower and a nap. The twitching between his legs drove him crazy. With no relief in sight, it was becoming somewhat painful.

The hotel had ten floors with at least one thousand, six hundred and four rooms. Each room was grand, making each guest feel like they were getting the royal treatment. A full gym, a large indoor swimming pool, two large ballrooms and a grand dining room were all on the first floor. There was another swimming pool in the basement, a second complete gym and each room had its own hot tubs. So it didn’t matter which room a guest booked, each was as grand as if you were staying in the Presidential Suite.

Kade shook his head as he headed to one of the lifts to his floor. He thought about the party coming up in a couple of days. It just so happened to be on the same date the treaty between Earth and Pluto had been signed. The campaign party was a big social event of the season. All the big politicians and other famous people would be there. The hotel had been booked solid, so how in the hell Nichelle got him a room, Kade couldn't even begin to guess.

The lobby swarmed with guests from both Earth and Pluto. He couldn't recall an event when the place had been so packed, but then again, he hadn't really been getting out all that much. Seeing Jovan so happy with Nichelle bothered him. Kade never had anything bother him like this before. He was pleased for his best friend. He really was, so why did he feel slightly jealous over their joining? Single life didn't appeal to him any longer, he thought. He really wanted someone he could love and hold at night.

Kade's room was on the eighth floor—eighty-four. It took him twenty minutes to get in a lift and up to his room. It was his first time at this hotel. Kade had to admit, his accommodations were impressive. Everything was the finest, mixed with Earth and Pluto fashion. The furniture and wall decorations were from Earth, but all the technology—for instance, the lifts, instead of elevators—were Plutoan designs. Since Kade was in a hurry to shower and take a nap, he didn't pay any attention to the paintings on the wall. Kade didn't look at the young couples who were hugging and kissing either. He didn't think he could stomach seeing people in love when he was so lonely.

Walking into his room, Kade's attention went straight to the large, low king-sized bed that looked so inviting he smiled with the thought of sleeping in it very soon. His entire room was decorated in white and gold. Double golden sofas faced each other with a table between them,

and at the foot of the two sofas, a large television came up from the floor for entertainment. Two steps led up to the bed, and off to the right, two French doors opened onto a balcony showing a postcard view of the city. To the left was the door to the bathroom with a large steaming hot tub calling for him to sit and relax. There was also a shower in the far corner of the room. All showers on Pluto were designed to help with the water shortage. You could step inside fully clothed, and everything you had on simply washed away from your body, slipped down the drain and was cleaned by morning. It was a great system. Kade had heard Earth was thinking about adopting it.

Instead of taking a shower, he bypassed everything, going straight to the bed. He dropped face first, sighing as the tense muscles in his body slowly loosened up. He wasn't tense from unloading the crates or helping bring in the supplies; that was an every day job for him, helping to keep his body in great shape. No, what had his body hard like this was sexual tension. He kept getting hit with small amounts of it. It wasn't something that was consistent, more like a punch in his gut that traveled right down to his dick. But once he touched himself, the small erection disappeared. He had never liked being teased. When he was younger, maybe, but not now. *When* he had been able to have sex, he was a walking hard-on. Now, this shit his body was putting him through reminded him of the girls who used to tease him. No satisfaction whatsoever!

Kade rolled over onto his back with a groan. His cock quickly sprang to life again, and this time it hurt like hell. Like someone had kicked him in the nuts! He rubbed both hands over his face before he moved one down his body, cupping himself, surprised that it stayed hard. He hissed at the mixture of pleasure as well as pain. Tonight he was as solid as a rock, and it wasn't going down.

“What the fuck.” Kade sat up and shoved his hand down his jeans.

He moaned, his head tossing back, eyes closing as he fondled himself for the first time in more years than he could count. With his other hand, he pulled the snap from his jeans then rested back on that one arm.

Kade stroked his cock slowly, taking in every sensation, every feeling that he could. It had been so long since he had been able to do this, to feel that he was going to enjoy it to the end. Since he had come to town and registered at the hotel, he had been getting twitches. Once he touched his dick, the sensations all stopped, but this time the twitches and the feelings weren't going away. This time when his hand wrapped around his shaft, moving slowly, he could feel his orgasm, right there, causing him to break out in a sweat. He hadn't had these feelings in years. Chills went down his spine with each stroke. The faster he moved, the quicker and sharper those chills became.

He felt as if he was meeting an old friend again when he looked down, watching his hand move up and down over his staff. The head was purple in color and looked mean in its need, just like Kade felt desperate to come. Faster and faster he moved, filling the quiet room with the sound of flesh slapping flesh. Those chills he'd felt stopped and formed a heavy pull in the sac under his dick. He was getting so close he panted in his excitement. His hand pumped faster; he couldn't stop his hips from moving up as if he were fucking a woman and not his hand.

“Oh, shit!” And just that fast it was over. Kade came hard; his seed shooting out of him like a rocket exploding in the sky on Earth. It felt so good and yet painful at the same time. He slumped back down on the bed in sudden weakness, letting his seed go everywhere. With a snap of a

finger, he was limp again, but the nagging feelings hit; his bride was close. “Now I need that damn shower.”

But before he went into the bathroom, Kade went over to the phone on the nightstand and made a call. He needed to talk with someone that he knew had been through this before.

“Jovan, it’s me.” Kade sighed.

“Something wrong?” Jovan asked. Kade could hear the concern in his friend’s voice. He rubbed his face as he tugged his shoes off using his toes, while trying to undress as he talked on the phone.

“Something might be happening to me, and I need your advice. Now before you start in, let me say this. I just experienced one hell of a hard-on, but it went away, so it isn’t like what you went through when Nichelle was close.”

“Shit, Kade,” Jovan hissed over the phone. “So it’s gone now?”

“Yeah, it’s gone.” Kade pulled away from the phone just so he could pull his wet shirt from his body. “What the hell does this mean?”

“It means, buddy, that your bride has been in that hotel before.” Jovan answered. “But if it happens again and stays put then she’s there again.”

Naked, Kade sat down on the side of the bed and bent over with his face in one hand. Again he felt the sensations in his cock. “Jovan, it hurts like fuck. I feel like someone is stabbing me with tiny pins or something.”

“Kade, I don’t know what to tell you man.” Jovan sighed on the phone. “But I can tell you this. When it gets so hard that you think you are going to burst in a climax then she is in the building with you, and you have to make the call.”

Kade rubbed his face. “I’m going to take a shower and get some sleep.” He stood up, rubbing the back of his neck,

then looked down at his cock. It was semi-hard. “I’ll call you if anything else happens.”

“No, you call me tomorrow after the party.”

“Okay.” Kade hung up the phone and headed for the bathroom. With each step he took, his cock slowly started to rise again. “Fuck, this is going to be one long-ass night,” he groaned.

\* \* \* \*

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## **Excerpt: Interplanetary Passion**

### **By Jaden Sinclair**

Jovan Maki is from Pluto. Nichelle Fender is from Earth, worlds apart. So when fate binds them, neither is prepared for the sparks that fly. Passion runs hot, desires left unfulfilled for one explodes for the other. Will the new-found love be strong enough to withstand the viciousness headed their way?

\* \* \* \*

### **Prologue**

Pluto was a planet long forgotten in the late twentieth century and only came back in the classrooms in the year 2910. The year scientists went looking for life on other planets. Earth needed help or its population was going to die. In 3100, scientists found there was indeed life on Pluto, life very much like their own.

*After careful negotiations, the two planets came to an agreement that had benefits for both. All citizens would share the same rights and be treated equally under the arranged treaty. All women on Pluto, either native or visitor, were to make themselves available for their 'joining test'. Little was known about this 'test'. It was a well-kept secret and only the government officials responsible for giving the test knew exactly what was involved.*

*For almost two hundred years the treaty provided commerce between the two planets without any difficulties. Earth needed the modern technology, and Pluto needed women. For some unknown reason, after awhile, rumors started spreading that were so strange and bizarre that women were afraid to visit. Stories of men who "sniffed" out their brides, who were unbelievably large, who snatched women who were never heard from again.*



Knowing that the breakdown of their treaty would cost Earth much-needed technology, laws were written to insure women visited Pluto. Initially the new laws stated that no woman could marry before she was twenty-one and that a visit to Pluto before marriage was required. Fathers began protesting that their daughters were being exchanged for technology. By 3311, new laws that were agreeable to everyone were in effect. During the senior year of high school and no later than the first year of college, a young woman would be required to visit Pluto. Furthermore, no 'joining test' would be performed on any women not out of high school.

This new law seemed to put a cramp on Pluto. All girls tended to come and get their time over with before they were old enough to marry so once again a law needed to be changed. This time it put a specific time on when young girls came to the planet. All girls after they graduated from high school were to visit and until then they were not allowed to attend collage. It worked, and soon more marriages between Pluto men and Earth woman happened. But there was still many out there that had yet to go to the planet, leaving still a huge count of men waiting for the one perfect girl that will complete them.

\* \* \* \*

## Chapter One

Nichelle Fender sat in her morning class at college trying to concentrate on what the professor was saying, but having no luck. Her mind kept wandering to the letter from the government, in her backpack. This one letter could easily destroy all her dreams of freedom.

*Ms. Fender,*

*This is to inform you that it has come to our attention that you have yet to fulfill your obligation to visit Pluto and,*

*in accordance with the law, we will have to pull your scholarship. You will be given one month to comply with the law. When you complete this requirement, your scholarship will be reinstated. This matter must be taken care of immediately!*

*Professor Holtz.*

“And that is all for today. Don’t forget about the exam at the end of the week,” Professor Dockery said to the class.

Nichelle grabbed her bag and walked to the door with the rest of the class, but was the teacher stopped her.

“Ms. Fender! A moment please.”

Nichelle’s shoulders slumped in dread since she knew what was about to be said. Dockery waited until the rest of the class left the classroom before he motioned Nichelle to sit down in one of the front row seats.

Dockery looked at the young twenty-year old with her brown eyes and shoulder length brown hair. Since she started his Pluto/Earth sex class, he was aware of how uncomfortable she was when the class discussion concerned the men of Pluto. As he stood before her, eyeing her from head to toe, he knew she had, as of yet, *not* gone to the planet. She placed her bag back on the floor, but held onto her jean jacket tightly. He could tell by her body language she knew what he was going to talk to her about. Dockery sat on the edge of his desk and waited for her to relax before he started. She didn’t relax.

“Nichelle, I’m going to get right to the point here.”

“I know what you are going to say, sir,” she said, looking up at him with a sad expression in her brown eyes, “And I’m trying to fix the problem.”

“Nichelle, you are a very smart girl. I want to see you go on with your education, but you can’t until you have your time off planet in the books.”

“I know, Professor.” She sighed and rubbed her forehead.

“Then please explain to me what the hang up is.”

“It’s my father.” She groaned then added, “He doesn’t want me to go, and he doesn’t want me to go to college.” She looked up at the professor with desperation in her eyes. “Right now he has no idea I’m taking a class.”

“I see.”

“I can’t move out until I’m twenty-one. I wish it was eighteen like it used to be. He watches me like a hawk.” She pushed back the tears as they threatened to fall from her eyes, but when she looked down at the desk, one fell anyway. “He refuses to give me the money to go to Pluto, keeps telling me I don’t need it.”

“Does he realize that he is in violation of the laws?”

Nichelle sighed. “I don’t think he cares.”

Dockery felt sorry for her and had no shame in doing what he was about to do. “I know you will be twenty-one within a few months, so I have taken it upon myself, for education reasons only, to give you this.” Dockery handed Nichelle an envelope with a smile. She took it with the most puzzled look on her face. “I have found out your father will be ‘called’ away for two weeks for work.” He smiled at her brightly. “Take the money I just gave you and do your time on Pluto.”

Nichelle opened the envelope, and her eyes bulged. “I can’t take this!”

“You can, and you will.” He stood up, letting her know the short meeting was over. “There are many things over there you will find interesting. You will enjoy the visit and be back before you know it, and before your father knows about it.”

Nichelle grabbed her backpack, but stopped. She bit her lower lip, thinking then looked up at him. “What about the men?” she asked him in a concerned, hushed manner.

“What about them?”

Nichelle looked uncomfortable and even blushed slightly. “I’ve heard they take girls.”

“The men on Pluto are just like the men here on Earth.” He grinned kindly. “True they are larger in height and in other places, but the ‘testings’ are not performed very often. I don’t think you have anything to worry about.”

Nichelle grabbed her backpack and stood up. She took two steps to the door but turned back around to Dockery. “Professor?”

“Yes, Nichelle.”

Nichelle bit her lower lip. She looked at the professor nervously. “What is the ‘test’?”

Dockery thought for what seemed like the longest time before he answered her. “I don’t know much about it, Nichelle. All I do know is that their men have very strong senses, and when they find the one woman meant to be theirs it’s like smelling candy.” He gave her a knowing smile. “If you had been paying attention in class when I talked on this subject,” he gave her a look telling her he knew she’d been daydreaming, “Then you would have known the men lose their sexuality in their teens. When their true bride appears, it all comes back strongly. Almost as if they get hit hard by a truck. Desire comes at them so strong and so fast they can barely function.”

“But what do they do at these ‘tests’?” She could tell by the look on his face he knew so much more than he was telling her.

He stood up, avoiding her eyes. “I can’t say.”

**Excerpt: Seth**  
**By Jaden Sinclair**

Designed to be a weapon, trained and programmed to follow instructions without question, SETH was not meant to develop willpower, emotions, and desire. Falling in love with a human is unacceptable, and faced with the threat of termination, he is forced to choose—kill or follow his heart.

\* \* \* \*

## **Chapter One**

Alyna Satara sat behind her desk in the basement of the largest electronic intelligence corporation in the city, E.I. Synthetic. She was one of two hundred employees working at an entry-level position. As luck would have it, she was one of fifty interviewing for the first promotion available in over five years. The company didn't offer many chances to advance, so when an opening became available, every person qualified tried out for it.

Yes, she worked for the company thought to be the best in the city, but those people had never seen her paycheck. She was so far in debt, she wasn't sure if her two jobs were going to be enough to continue making ends meet. The only problem was she didn't have the time to work a third one. Alyna worked here all day, and sometimes late at night when overtime became available. Then on weekends, to bring in extra money, she worked in another department doing data entry; yet, she barely scraping by. She really needed this promotion. Otherwise, getting out and doing something else would be preferable to going back to live with her grandmother. That was out of the question!

She worked hard. Hell, she was one of the company's top workers. Any file that was needed she could bring it up

in the system in a flash. If the hard drive crashed, she could repair it and, most of the time, save all the data. When it came to computers, she could do anything. Her personal life, now, that was a different story. She didn't date. She got too damn shy. Sure, she had been asked on many occasions to go out, but the guy couldn't hold her attention while talking or his gaze wouldn't leave her breasts. Either way, around the office, she was considered a bore. All work, no play, that was Alyna's way, or so the rumor went.

Alyna didn't feel herself to be the drop-dead gorgeous type of girl that most of the guys wanted these days. She was sort of short, standing at five-five with heels. She wore her long, sandy brown hair in a ponytail. Her green eyes, at one time, sparkled with life. When she started working here, she had been young and impressionable, and she so excited to be working at E. I. Now, she felt the twinkle in her eyes had dulled from all the long hours she spent looking at the monitor. With so many hours working, she didn't have the opportunity to go to the gym to work out very often. Consequently, she now had a slight roundness to her stomach. It didn't bother her wearing a size sixteen in jeans or a large shirt. What bothered her more than anything was that she didn't have a boyfriend like some of the other girls in the office. Hell, she couldn't even get into the "I need to get laid" conversation. At twenty-three, she was still a virgin, and it embarrassed the hell out of her.

Taking a deep breath, Alyna rubbed her eyes and sat back in her chair. The clock on the wall, directly across from her, read only one. She still had three hours left on her shift, but her stack of papers had been finished by noon. Trying to look busy was starting to become a full time job.

*Your system is idle which could only mean one thing. You have finished today's quota.* The message came up on her screen, shutting off everything she was working on.

Alyna smiled as she sat up in her chair and typed, *Hi Seth.*

*How is my favorite person in the office doing today?*

She looked around to make sure that no one was paying any attention to her. As always, since she was in the back, no one noticed her. *Bored and ready to get out of this place.*

*Ah, so the work is done for the day. Good for you.*

*Yes, but one does not get paid to be fast. I can't afford to go home again. Rent doesn't get cut in half.*

*You worry too much.*

She shook her head and bit on her lip to stop the laugh from slipping out. *It's what I do. What else is there? I won't go back to my grandmother. She would want me to take care of her and quit my jobs.* Still holding her lip with her teeth, she frowned. She said the word jobs. Alyna didn't want Seth to know that she had taken another job. He hated how much she worked now with this one.

*Jobs! When did you take another one?*

*I got to go, boss coming.*

She stopped the chat, not because someone was coming, but because she didn't know how to tell him. Hell, she didn't know how to tell herself at times. Having two jobs was hard, and she had only been at it for two weeks.

*I know you are still there.*

She took another deep breath and looked around. *I shouldn't be chatting, Seth. I could get fired.*

*Only if you get caught.*

*That is possible. There are cameras down here.*

*Why did you take on another job?*

She thought about what she should tell him. She had been talking to Seth now for five months and felt as if she had known him for a lifetime. One day she was working away then *poof* up pops this little box with a hello. Sad to admit, but talking to Seth on the computer was the highlight

of her day. Having no boyfriend, he was the only contact with the male race she had.

*You still there?*

*I tapped out of my savings and the rent was due. She rubbed her eyes again. I might have to look for a better full time job. I'm not making it here, Seth. The city is slowly killing me.*

Time passed slowly and she thought he had left. With what little experience she'd had with men, she figured he was through hearing about all of her problems. After all, who wanted to listen to the sorrows of someone you'd never met face to face?

*I'll take care of you.*

He signed off, leaving her sitting there with a frown on her face. Take care of her. How the hell was he going to do that?

She shook it off and looked at the clock again. Only one-thirty. Damn. There was no way she was going to be able to sit here and hide for the rest of the day. Her work was done, and her other job waited. If she got there early enough, she might be able to finish before eleven. No such luck.

Alyna sat at her other desk with a deep sigh. As before, she was one in about fifty other workers with a stack of papers to her left, computer in the middle, and an empty bin for the papers to her right. The plan was simple; she put the data in the system then went home. No matter how long she worked she was only paid for six hours, but couldn't leave until the work was finished. Another crappy job with crappy pay.

*I could help you get a raise.*

Her eyes nearly popped out of her head. Seth! How the hell did he find her here?

*What are you doing?! Are you trying to get me fired?!*



*I want to help you.*

*Seth, I don't know what you think you are going to do, but contacting me at my second job is not it. Shit! He is a damn good hacker, she thought. Look, I really need to get started on this pile of papers. We'll talk later.*

She disconnected the conversation before he could type another word and quickly went to work on her stack.

Her first hour went into another until the normal six had passed and still she worked on the data. She was just about to call it a night. Her shoulders were killing her, eyes so tired they were starting to get blurry, and to top it all off, she'd forgotten to eat. So, add hungry to the list.

*I know you are still there. You work too hard. Please don't be mad at me. I only worry about you.*

Alyna smiled. *I know, and thanks. It has been a very long time since someone has worried about me.*

*Go home, Alyna. You need to rest.*

He logged off this time before she could type another word. She took a deep breath and decided to take his advice. She logged off of her computer and left. She lived six blocks from her second job. As she walked home, she stopped and picked up a burger, fries, and a movie. Since it was Friday, she treated herself as always with a movie and something to eat that wasn't either frozen or some kind of sandwich. Once a week, she was able to eat a somewhat decent meal. That's why she didn't understand how she was putting on the pounds. *Maybe it's all the sitting on your ass,* she thought.

Alyna didn't live in the best neighborhood. Her apartment was run down, and consequently, the rent was inexpensive. Her door had four locks on it, for her safety since she lived alone. Opening the door, she was greeted with her dark walls, rummage sale furniture, and two lumpy

mattresses on the floor for a bed. She didn't have much, but what she did have, she could call her own.

Locking her heavy door behind her, she walked to her beanbag chair on the floor in front of her small television and let out a deep sigh. She never thought Friday would come and didn't realize how tired she was until she finally sat down and let the tension slip from her body.

She ate her food and watched her movie. Deep down, she couldn't really relax because she couldn't get away from that feeling she should be at her computer. When the movie ended, she headed over to her bed where she'd hidden her prized possession—her laptop computer, the one and only thing her grandmother had ever given her that meant something to her and actually had a monetary value. It wasn't the best or the newest, being six years old, but it was good enough for what she planned to do—hack into the company she worked for.

She was trying to find information on Seth, and being a very honest person made that finding almost impossible. She had too much honor and always backed away when she came across something that looked too important for her eyes. Another thing she had a hard time doing was covering her ass as she searched; Seth always found her. No matter how she covered her trail, Seth popped up and distracted her from the search into the employee files.

*This is not resting.*

She smiled, shaking her head. He had found her again, and this time she didn't even get half way into her search.  
*How do you do that?*

*If I tell you, then I would have to keep you forever quiet.*

*Is that so? LOL*

*And never let you go.*

She laughed. Sitting in her bed in her own space talking to him caused her to feel like a schoolgirl. *Are you flirting with me?*

*Maybe.*

*You could lose your job. You know the rules about office dating.*

*Rules are made to be broken.*

“Only if you have the money to lose,” Alyna grumbled out loud. *What are you doing working so late yourself?*

*I could ask you the same question.*

*But I asked you first.* Seconds ticked by and she was starting to wonder if he was going to answer her. Usually Seth was quick at answering. *Seth, you still there?*

*I have to go, Alyna. Get your rest and stop snooping.*

And just like that, he was gone again, but she didn’t take his advice. She kept right on snooping and was able to discover that Seth was in fact someone who had clearance to the top floors of the company before her system shut down.

“Shit,” she mumbled. “How the hell did you do that?”

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# S *Jaden Sinclair*

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He was nothing more than a backup for the company; only the company underestimated their program. Shilo is free to make his own choices but has one glitch in his programming: very few emotions. He's ruthless, cunning, strong, and doesn't give a damn who he has to go through in order to get what he wants, and what he wants is Star Murray.