



SLAVE AUCTION

SPACED OUT FOR LOVE, BOOK 1

STORMY GLENN

Slave Auction

By Stormy Glenn

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DEDICATION

To Judie, Geo, Jo, Chris, Cherie, Terri, Nikyta, Jamie,
Samantha . . .

You wanted werewolves in space. You got 'em.

CHAPTER 1

"I'll take him."

"Captain, maybe you wish to choose another pet?" the auctioneer said. "This one is not yet properly trained, as you can see."

As Rojan Ja'Dar watched, the young human that had caught his interest struggled against two of the guards as they stripped his scant clothing from him. He knew the human would have been screaming except for the ball gag in his mouth, helpless desperation clear on the man's face.

The guards fastened the human's hands to chains hanging from above his head, and a spreader bar between his legs, cuffed at the ankles. The ankle bar was fastened to the floor, immobilizing the man in one place. No matter how much he struggled he couldn't get away.

Rojan saw one of the guards pull a leather flogger from a nearby cabinet. He knew even before the guard turned back to the bound human that the guard would beat the little man. Rojan growled, the muscles in his arms tensing. He felt an overwhelming need to protect the human. Besides, if anyone was going to mark the little man it would be him.

He reached over and grabbed the auctioneer by the scruff of his collar, lifting the sour smelling man several inches off the floor before leaning in until their faces were only inches apart. "I want him unmarked," he growled, showing a bit of fang.

"Ye-- yes, cap-- captain," the man stammered."

"The only marks he will wear will be mine," Rojan snapped before he released the man and tossed him away. His eyes went back to the man suspended from the chains in the ceiling. He really was a beautiful specimen.

Rojan had seen many humans in his lifetime, most of them slaves, but also a few men freed by their masters. Humans were considered an inferior race, not good for anything beyond entertainment and servitude.

As small as they were, they couldn't fight and win against those of Rojan's race, the Phangars, or even most of the known universe. He had yet to meet a human that stood as tall as his shoulders let alone strong enough to best him in a fight, fair or not.

Most of the universe believed they didn't have the mental capacity to be an advanced race. Their primitive world proved that, Earth having only discovered space travel in the last fifty years. The Phangars had been in space for centuries.

As pets however, humans seemed to do extremely well, making them desired throughout the universe. They were easily mastered and just as easily trained. Their bodies, smaller and less muscular than Rojan's people, were desired for their softness and sexual compatibility with the Phangar race.

Rojan hadn't been looking for a pet to warm his bed but he wasn't adverse to the idea. His trips through the universe as a black market courier made for many nights alone in space. He had considered finding a lover from his race or another more advanced race, but soon decided against it when he realized he had a need to dominate someone.

He liked the power he had as captain of his own flag ship. He had a competent crew, handpicked and personally trained by him. They answered to him and only him. He was the boss. He wanted the same relationship with the creature who warmed his sheets.

A human pet seemed to be the answer. They looked pleasing to the eye, soft to hold, and trainable, nearly a perfect match to what Rojan needed in his bed. He realized it would take time to train the human to his wants and needs but soon he could have the pet of his dreams.

"I want to examine him," Rojan stated firmly.
"Alone!"

The auctioneer quickly crossed to the glass enclosed room and knocked to gain the attention of the guards. He gestured madly to the human then to Rojan. His arms crossed over his chest, his feet spread slightly apart, Rojan took on his *don't fuck with me or I'll rip your head off* stance, one that intimidated most people, and waited.

The guards quickly left the enclosure. Rojan walked in. He could hear the harsh breathing from the human. He could smell the man's fear. It surrounded him like a cloak, overwhelming almost every other scent in the room.

But not quite. Rojan could detect a sweet masculine scent underlying all of the human's terror. It reminded him of the *massa* fruit coveted by many and found only in the farthest reaches of the universe. Rojan smuggled many boxes of the precious cargo through the system. It always garnered him a high price and a pocket full of money.

Rojan walked up behind the man and looked down at the top of his head. He truly was glorious, all sleek lines and lean muscles. Rojan ghosted his hand over the curve of the human's ass with the lightest of touches. The man arched away from him, a cry falling from his lips through the gag.

Rojan stroked a little harder. The man arched again. Rojan wondered why he would move away when he had nowhere to go. He hung suspended from the ceiling, his feet anchored to the floor. He couldn't get away.

He moved his hand down the man's luxurious white-blond hair, shuddering at the soft feel of the silky strands moving through his fingers. He wondered if it would feel as good wrapped around his cock while the human sucked him off. It didn't matter really. He intended to find out later.

Rojan grabbed a handful of the man's hair and pulled his head back. It was only then that he noticed the blindfold covering the human's eyes. *Interesting*. It was as if the trainers used sensory deprivation in his training. Rojan would have to remember that.

"You're mine, pet," Rojan growled into the human's ear. He felt the man's entire body tremble against him. An increase of fear spiked the air. Rojan reached down and stroked his hand across the man's chest trying to calm him but the man bucked against him, whimpering behind his gag.

Rojan pulled the gag from the man's mouth then removed the blindfold before stepping around in front of him. He watched the man blink several times, licking his

lips until his vision cleared. Suddenly, the man's eyes widened and his mouth dropped open.

"Shit!" the man gasped. "You're an alien."

"Did you expect something else?" Rojan asked, arching one eyebrow.

"When everyone mentioned little grey men I don't think they pictured you. I think they were thinking of beings much smaller."

"I'm quite sure your primitive race never saw anything like me." Rojan chuckled. "Besides, I'm not grey."

The human's eyes roved down Rojan's black-skinned body then back up to meet his eyes, blinking several times. "No, you're not."

"Do you know why you're here, little human?" Rojan asked, watching the man's reaction carefully.

"Little human . . ." the man hissed. "I'm not going to like this, am I?"

Rojan chuckled. "You might," he said as he rubbed his knuckles over the man's nipple, feeling the little nubs harden to beads. He enjoyed the little hiss that escaped the human's mouth. He could tell that the human would be very responsive to touch.

"I think it depends on your ability to accept your training," he continued, watching the human's eyes widen again at his words.

"Training?" the human squeaked.

"I told you that you were mine now, pet."

The human paled, gulping audibly. "Pet?"

Rojan waved his hands around the glass enclosed cage. "You're in an auction house, pet. The highest bidder gets to keep you." Rojan smirked. "I'm the highest bidder."

"An-- and that means what?"

"Accept my rule, obey me in all things, and I will take you out of here," Rojan replied. "Don't and you go up on the auction block for the next highest bidder and I take my money back."

The human's brow scrunched together. "You actually bought me? How can you do that? I'm a free man. I didn't agree to this."

Rojan shrugged. "Obviously someone at some point thought you would make a good pet. Humans usually do once they settle in. You were procured for auction and brought here."

"Procured?"

Rojan arched his eyebrow again at the vehemence of the man's words. Seems his new pet had a temper. Rojan would both enjoy that and adjust it with his own hand.

"I was home sleeping when someone came into my room and took me. I woke up here. That's kidnapping!" the human snapped.

"I'm sure you believe that. However, as your race is a primitive one and has not joined the United Planetary Alliance, you have no rights except those given to you by your master and that would be me."

"And you're okay with that?"

Rojan's interest peaked. The human sounded outraged. While he felt sure that he didn't like being kidnapped from his home, Rojan knew the man would learn to appreciate his ownership.

"Humans don't have rights as far as the United Planetary Alliance is concerned. Until a planet joins the UPA their citizens have no rights at all. In fact, all citizens from Earth are required to have ownership papers. Any human caught without a sign of ownership or a master could be imprisoned or executed." Rojan leaned down until he was nose to nose with the human. "Is that what you want?"

The human's eyes widened again. "N-- no."

"Then you have two choices, pet," Rojan said. "You can obey my every word and accept me as your master or I can leave you here to be trained by the guards then sold at auction. What's it going to be?"

"Wha-- what does being a pet mean?"

"It means you belong to me and only me." Rojan smirked as he walked around to stand behind the human. He reached down to grasp the human's ass cheeks in his hand, giving them a gentle squeeze. "Obey me and you'll be rewarded."

Rojan let loose with a quick swat across the man's ass. "Disobey me and you will be punished." The man cried out, his body arching away from the smack. Even if his cries denied it, the human's body couldn't hide his response. He enjoyed it.

Rojan's hand roamed around the human's body to grasp his hard cock. He stroked it a few times, the human's almost silent gasps heightening his own arousal. He pictured a future of dominating his little pet and almost came in his pants.

The human's body quaked in his arms. Rojan could feel the drops of pre-cum on his fingers as he stroked them over the mushroom-shaped head of his cock. The human was so damn responsive. Rojan wanted to take him right

then but knew he needed to wait until they got back to the ship. Besides, anticipation was half the fun.

"Well, pet?" Rojan whispered into the human's ear. His hand continued to stroke the man's length. "Do you go home with me or do I turn you over to the guards?"

"Please."

When the little man's hips thrust against his hand, Rojan decided to let it go. Normally, he'd deny the human's orgasm until he wanted it but the man had a lot of learning ahead of him. Letting him come this once was a small price to pay for the human's agreement to be his pet. True, he didn't really have a choice. Rojan owned him fair and square but having the man's acceptance would make their future a lot easier.

"Are you going to come for me, my little pet?" Rojan crooned. He knew his larger body hid the human from anyone watching them, which was good because he didn't want anyone else seeing his pet in the throes of passion. He was just too damn beautiful.

Rojan licked his finger, getting it nice and wet, before reaching down and pushing it between the man's ass cheeks. The man struggled, but restrained as he was, not only could he not get away, but his legs were spread just enough that Rojan could push his finger right into the man's

tight hole. The man bucked and cried out. Warm liquid splashed over the hand Rojan had wrapped around his cock. Rojan stroked the human a few more times then dropped his cock and pulled his finger from the man's ass.

The sweet scent of the human's spunk rampaged through his body faster than a firestorm, imprinting the man's scent on Rojan and letting him know he held more than just a pet in his arms. He held his mate.

Rojan growled low in his throat, the need to claim the human almost more powerful than his control. Rojan was stunned. He'd come to the auction house to deliver cargo. He had no idea he would discover his mate.

He grabbed a handful of the man's white-blond hair and pulled his head back. Dazed grey-blue eyes blinked up at him as Rojan stroked his finger down the man's flushed face. "Mine!"

The human seemed confused. His forehead scrunched, his lips drew into a thin line. He looked like he wanted to say something but he wasn't quite sure what.

"You belong to me. You'll learn to obey my every command, my every wish. You will live for my pleasure. Do you understand?"

The human paled, gulping so loudly that Rojan could hear it in the silence of the room. His lips twisted as

he tried to suppress his grin. He liked this human. Besides his sex-on-a-stick good looks, Rojan suspected the human would give him just enough resistance to keep life interesting.

Rojan couldn't wait.

"Well, human?"

"Ye-- yes."

Rojan stroked his fingers down the man's cheek again. He smiled, showing off his fanged teeth. "Very good, my pet," he said. "I expect you to be quiet now until I tell you that you may speak. Is that understood?"

The man nodded obediently.

Rojan pulled the blindfold back over the man's eyes then gestured for the guards to come in. He needed to get his new pet back to his ship, Phangar 1, where he could start his training. Rojan stepped back out of the room as the guards rushed in.

"Put a mark on my pet and I'll put a mark on you," he warned as they passed him.

The guards carefully lowered the human to the floor. They continuously glanced at Rojan as they released the young man, the fear evident in their cautious movements. Rojan wanted to grin but it would have ruined his intimidating glare.

He knew he had a reputation as a fighter and mercenary. He didn't take shit from anyone and hadn't since he had been a small child on his home world. He didn't start fights but he was more than happy to finish them.

In truth, he was basically a pirate. He took the courier contracts he wanted, went where he wanted, and socialized with the people he wanted. In his time he had made friends and he had made enemies. Rojan's friends would back him every time in everything. His enemies wanted him tortured before they killed him.

Rojan was proud of the man he had become but it hadn't garnered him someone close, which explained why he had considered the smelly auction house on Rigel 4. He was in need of companionship.

"Leash?" Rojan asked the auctioneer. He eyed his new purchase, frowning. "He'll also need something to wear. Something simple that will not mark his skin."

"Yes, captain," the smelly man replied quickly. "Right away, captain."

Rojan rolled his eyes.

He really hated *yes* men. Granted, he liked getting his way. He always had, but he hated men that kowtowed because of how much money he had. Granted, few knew

exactly how much money he had. Rojan preferred it that way. But he also liked the luxuries money brought him.

The man being covered by a long black cloak was proof of that luxury. Rojan hadn't waited until tonight's regular slave auction. He didn't have time. He had cargo to deliver on another planet. He needed to make his purchase and leave.

Dropping off some cargo had gained him quick access to the closed slave market. Once glance at the soft curve of the human's ass had intrigued him enough to offer twice what the slave was probably worth.

Still, it had been a mighty fine ass. It curved so naturally into two rounded globes that it made Rojan's teeth ache. He could still feel the supple skin in his hands. Rojan vowed to purchase cream to rub into the human's skin to keep it silky soft.

Add the white-blond hair that fell nearly to the man's ass and Rojan knew the man was his. He had never seen hair quite that white. It was like looking directly into the sun and being blinded. The man's slightly golden skin was an added bonus.

Rojan's interest peaked when the auctioneer ran over to the two guards and began frantically gesturing with his hands as he whispered to them. He took a deep

cleansing breath and tuned out the surrounding noises until he could hear just the conversation ahead of him.

"Get him out of here as quick as you can. Take him out the side entrance," the auctioneer whispered. "The other patrons are arriving. If they find out we released a slave before auction, one not trained and never seen before, we'll have a riot on our hands."

Rojan smirked.

"Skoran's going to be angry when he finds out you sold his little playtoy," one of the guards said.

Rojan's ears perked up. Skoran? Who the hell was Skoran and what did he have to do with Rojan's mate?

"With what the captain's paying for this human we can buy ten more just like him," the auctioneer replied.

"Skoran never has to know."

"He's expecting to see the blond human tonight," the guard objected. "How are you going to explain him not being on the auction block? You promised Skoran an *untouched* human."

"Skoran will deal," the auctioneer said. "Besides, this auction house belongs to me, not Skoran. Once the human is gone, there's nothing he can do. We'll just tell him the human died."

The guard didn't look convinced.

"I'll make it worth your while," the auctioneer wheedled. "A bonus maybe?"

One guard looked questioningly at the other and then they both nodded.

"Arrange for a transport and get them both out of here before Skoran arrives," the auctioneer ordered.

Rojan had no idea who Skoran was but he felt pretty much the same as the auctioneer. He wanted out of there before the man arrived and had no problem being ushered out the side door. The little human belonged to him now and he wasn't about to give him up.

When the auctioneer hurried over and handed him a vidpad, Rojan quickly read through the contract then placed his thumb print on it before handing over a bag of coins to the auctioneer. In exchange, the auctioneer handed Rojan the human's ownership papers.

Rojan tucked them in his pocket then stalked across the room to take the leash from one of the guards. The human was still bound, the leash attached to a collar around his neck, his hands tied together in front as he lay on the floor.

Rojan didn't like the way the plastic cuffs on his wrists marred the skin there. He leaned down and flicked a claw out and tore through them effortlessly, the clear

plastic falling to the floor. A small whimper came from the human, a shudder raking through his thin body.

Squatting down next to the human, Rojan could smell his pet's unique scent now that they were out of the small training room. It wafted over him, sinking into his pores, and made his cock ache. He gloried in the anticipation of claiming his mate and the ache of denial knowing he had to wait until they were back onboard his ship. It would be a close thing, though. He wanted the golden human badly.

Rojan tucked the cloak tightly around the human then picked him up, carrying him effortlessly towards the nearest exit. He was done here. He needed to get back to his ship and lift off before he could enjoy his new mate.

"Oh, captain, please," the auctioneer said, running alongside of Rojan, "we've arranged for your transport back to your ship, if you'll just come this way?"

Rojan snarled but followed the slimy auctioneer anyway. He was led through a small series of corridors until they reached a small servant's hallway. The auctioneer opened the last door, holding it open while Rojan carried his prize out. A transport awaited them.

He shook his head as the door opened and he climbed in, his precious bundle in his lap. The auctioneer

was a moron but he had good merchandise. Rojan gave directions to the spaceport and then settled back in his seat to get a better look at his pet.

Rojan lifted the little man up and settled him against his chest before pulling the blindfold off and stuffing it in his pocket. No sense scaring his new pet more than he had to at this point. The man's eyes were closed.

Rojan suspected the excitement of the moment had worn him out. He twitched and trembled just a little, murmuring in his sleep. Rojan decided sleep was the best thing for his new mate. It was fine for the time being, but once they arrived back onboard Rojan's ship the human would have to face him.

"Sir?" the driver said, glancing in the rear view mirror, "I need to take an alternate route. There seems to be some sort of commotion up ahead."

Rojan heaved a sigh. "Very well." He watched as the driver moved them around several other transports then started to turn down a thin alleyway. Just as the transport turned, Rojan caught sight of the auctioneer and apprehension spiked through him.

A large man held the auctioneer several feet off the ground as he shook him. Rojan couldn't tell what the man said but he had a pretty good idea. The two guards from his

mate's cage lay on the ground. The amount of blood surrounding them made it obvious that they were dead.

Rojan had a sneaking suspicion that the furious man who held the auctioneer was Skoran and Rojan felt more than sure that the man's anger had something to do with the little human he held in his arms.

He reached up and hit the communication button on the device in his earpiece, waiting for his communications man, Keillor, to come on the line.

"Hello."

"Lor," Rojan said, "tell Rav I want the ship powered up and ready for takeoff the moment I get there. And have Seron meet me in the airlock."

"Will do, boss," Lor replied.

"I want a full security alert, Lor."

"Problems, Rojan?" Lor asked, suddenly all business.

"Nothing I can't handle, Lor. I just want to be cautious. I specifically want you to watch out for a man named Skoran."

"Got it."

Rojan hung up then glanced down at the man in his arms. "I sure hope you're worth this, pet."

CHAPTER 2

Tyion woke up slowly. A loud buzz sounded in his head, trickling away to a low hum. He let the sounds around him filter through his fog-ridden brain before opening his eyes just a crack, glancing around the sterile white room.

He thought he might be in some sort of medical infirmary, what with all of the strange looking equipment in the room, blinking lights, and the electrodes hooked up to his chest. But he could be wrong.

He knew before he had opened his eyes that he wasn't home in Seattle asleep in his bed. He had known that for days. Some things a man couldn't forget, like a large bright light blinding him and sucking him up into the air.

Tyion had heard all the stories about being abducted by aliens but he never believed them until three days ago. Now he knew that aliens existed. He also was sure that he was in some sort of living hell.

He'd been abducted, flown through outer space on a spaceship, and dumped on some planet in a freaky alien auction house. To top it off, a seven and a half foot alien

with midnight black hair, pointed ears, fangs, claws, and a tail had declared him a pet, owned property.

Tyion shivered just thinking about the huge alien. There was something compelling about him but damned if Tyion knew what it was. He felt incredibly confused about his reaction to the man. He'd never come like that in his life, and for a complete stranger, an alien, at that.

"Ah, you're awake."

Tyion jumped. His eyes quickly tracked around the room until they landed on a blue figure standing by the doorway. He was nearly as tall as the man that had declared Tyion a pet, but not quite.

"Uh . . ."

"I'm Doctor Seron," the man said as he walked further into the room. He went to a large cabinet and opened it up, pulling several items out. Tyion wasn't quite sure what they were and he didn't think he wanted to know.

"I'd like to know some of your medical history before we start," the doctor said.

"St-- start what?" Tyion could feel panic begin to set in. He started to sit up so that he could run, only to find his arms and legs strapped down to the bed he lay on. Okay, panic was in full force now.

The doctor glanced over at him and smiled. "It's nothing to worry about, just some inoculations and stuff like that."

"Then why am I tied down?" Tyion cried out.

Tyion's panic rolled into full-scale terror as the doctor walked across the room towards him, a strange looking instrument in his hands. It was long, thin, and seemed to be made of some sort of silver colored metal. Tyion had heard about things like this. Everyone had. They were called probes. Everyone knew that aliens used probes to torture their victims.

The closer the doctor came, the more alarm filled Tyion. He jerked at the restrains holding his arms and legs down to the table but they held fast. His chest felt as if it would burst from the pressure building inside him.

Tyion closed his eyes to hide from the visions filling his head and *screamed*. The edges of his sight faded to dull grey as the room spun around him. He heard someone talking, felt hands move over him then a sharp pinch on his arm. After that, everything seemed hazy.

"Open your eyes, pet."

Tyion opened his eyes to see his huge alien leaning over him. He frowned for a moment then quickly looked around the room. The other alien, the one with the probe, was gone. Only the large black-skinned one remained.

"Are you okay to sit up?"

Tyion glanced back up at the black haired alien in confusion. He suddenly realized that the restraints no longer held him down to the table. Tyion nodded his head and the alien pulled him into a sitting position. The man was still taller than Tyion.

"How are you feeling?"

"I'm okay." *Wasn't he?* Things seemed a little fuzzy. Tyion couldn't remember much except the blue guy with the probe.

The man watched him for several moments, then nodded as if he had come to some sort of conclusion. "I'm going to call the doctor back in here," he said. "I want you to answer his questions. Understood?"

Confused, Tyion nodded. He glanced over when the door opened and the doctor walked back in. Tyion's eyes widened. It was the blue skinned alien with the probe. He couldn't see the probe but he knew the man had one.

As the doctor walked across the room, Tyion started inching his way closer to the other alien. Every step the

doctor took pushed Tyion into the bigger man's arms until he was nearly climbing up the man's broad chest.

"That's enough, pet!"

Tyion froze. He didn't know anything about aliens, but he knew that tone. The man wasn't happy with him. In fact, he sounded downright pissed. Tyion remembered the man's words about punishment if he didn't obey, and the swat to his ass.

Tyion didn't want the man to get mad at him, but he didn't want the alien doctor anywhere near him either. He tried to weigh his options. If he continued to resist, the large guy would be mad at him and he might be punished somehow. If he gave in, he might die a horribly painful death. Neither seemed a good choice.

Tyion grabbed the larger man's arms and looked up at him. He felt tears well in his eyes as he readied himself to plead for his life. He felt like such a coward. "Please," he whispered.

The alien's golden eyes seemed to soften. Tyion closed his eyes as the man's hands stroked over his hair soothingly. He leaned his head against the alien's chest. Surprisingly, he could hear a strong heartbeat under his ear. He didn't know aliens had hearts.

"Doc's not going to hurt you, pet," the man said quietly. "I promise. He just needs to check you over and make sure you're healthy."

A hand under his chin lifted Tyion's face to look up at the alien.

"I'll stay right here with you, okay?"

Tyion nodded then turned to look at the doctor when the man cleared his throat. He nervously watched the doctor's every movement. Even with the larger man's promise, Tyion pushed back against him when the doctor walked to the edge of the bed. He felt the man's hand pat his shoulder as the doctor began speaking.

"As I was saying before, my name is Doctor Seron. Most people just call me Doc. You may also."

Tyion nodded. The doctor grabbed a small slim square box about the size of a book and began hitting buttons on it. Tyion's curiosity almost overrode his terror but not enough for him to move away from the man professing to be his master.

"Now, what is your name?" The blue man asked, looking back up at Tyion.

"Tyion Rhodes."

The doctor pushed a few more buttons. The lights on the little device blinked. Tyion realized the doctor held

some sort of device like a hand held computer and he was entering Tyion's information in it.

"How old are you? In Earth years?"

"Twenty three."

Again, more buttons and more lights flashing.

"Have you ever been sick?"

Tyion frowned. "Of course. Everyone's been sick at one time or another."

"Please explain the nature of your illness. I need a complete medical history."

"I had chicken pox when I was two, a broken arm when I was nine. And I've had a few colds over the years." Tyion shrugged. "Other than that I'm fine."

"How many sexual partners have you had?" the doctor entered even more information on the strange box.

Tyion's panic started to rear its head when he felt the hand on his shoulder clench. He could feel his chest start to tighten again. "Tw-- two."

"Male, female, or both?" The doctor just kept asking questions as if they weren't discussing something terribly personal and embarrassing. When Tyion didn't answer, the doctor glanced up at him. "Male, female, or both?" he repeated.

"Do I really have to answer that?" Tyion asked.
"Couldn't we just leave it at two?"

"I need to know the extent of your sexual experience before Rojan begins your training," the doctor explained. "While our two races are generally compatible, there are some differences and it's important that I know what your body can handle. That includes a complete medical and sexual history as well as an examination."

Tyion's cheeks flamed. He ducked his head, totally embarrassed.

"It's all right, pet," Rojan said, "just answer the doctor's questions."

"Male," Tyion whispered, his cheeks heating even more. He felt Rojan's hand stroke his hair again. He thought he heard a soft rumbling sound from the alien's chest but it was gone before he could tell.

"Can you explain the nature of your sexual relationships with these two males?"

Tyion gaped at the doctor. *Could he what?*

"Tyion," the doctor turned from his box to look at him again, "I need to know what kind of sexual relationships you've had. Anal intercourse? Oral? Hand stimulation?"

Tyion turned his head and buried it against the alien holding him. He was going to die of embarrassment, he just knew it. He'd never discussed stuff like this with anyone, not even the two guys he'd slept with.

"Answer him, pet," Rojan instructed.

No way, no how! Tyion shook his head.

"Doc?" he heard Rojan say. "Can we have a moment please? I need to convince my pet of the merits of obedience."

"Certainly, Rojan."

A moment later, Tyion heard the door swoosh as it closed. He started to lift his head but yelped instead when he was lifted up and turned over, his body held down to the bed by the heavy weight of the man's arm.

"I know you don't understand, pet, and I'm sorry for that," Rojan said. "However, I believe it's best if we start out as we mean to go on. You need to understand that my orders will be followed at *all* times whether you like them or not."

Tyion tried to move away from Rojan but the weight and strength of the man held him in place. He heard a soft tearing noise then cold air brushed over his ass. Tyion wiggled. He struggled. He squirmed. He pushed against the man's hold. He did anything he could think of to

get away from what he suddenly knew was coming. None of it made any difference. Rojan was too strong for him. Tyion cried out as the man's large hand landed on his bare ass cheeks.

"Stop!" Tyion shouted. "That hurts, damn it!"

"You will obey me, pet," Rojan smacked Tyion again, then again and again.

Tyion lost count of how many times Rojan paddled him. The pain in his ass felt so intense, so burning, he thought he might never sit down again. By the time Rojan finally lifted him up the glare in Tyion's eyes was hidden by the silent tears falling.

Rojan held Tyion securely in his arms, keeping the pressure off of his aching ass. He lifted Tyion's face to his, looking down at him. Tyion continued to glare at Rojan.

"Are you going to obey me now?"

Tyion curled his lip angrily.

"I can't hear you, pet."

"Bite me!" Tyion snapped. He couldn't believe he had just had his ass spanked. He hadn't been spanked since he was a small child. "Who I sleep with is none of your damn business."

"You belong to me now," Rojan growled.

"*Everything* you do is my business."

Tyion pushed Rojan away from him and jumped off the bed before the surprised man could stop him. He backed away, his eyes never leaving the big alien. He pointed his finger at his own chest.

"I belong to me and no one else. I don't care what your damn rules say. You don't have a right to keep me." Tyion's heart thundered at the fierce look on Rojan's face as the man advanced on him. He was in deep shit and he knew it.

"I bought you fair and square, pet," Rojan snarled. "You belong--"

"I am not your fucking pet!" He slapped his chest. "I have a name. Tyion, Tyion Rhodes."

Rojan glowered. Tyion didn't think it possible but the man's features actually darkened. "You will obey me!"

"Not likely!"

Rojan advanced some more and Tyion started looking around the room for something to defend himself with. He didn't really want to hurt the guy but he didn't want the guy to hurt him either.

Tyion was so surprised by Rojan's sudden movement that he barely had time to blink before he was captured, the large man pinning him to the wall with the

power of his body. Rojan's breath beat down on his neck sending chills down Tyion's spine.

"I told you what would happen if you disobeyed me, pet," Rojan spat out through gritted teeth. "You will be punished for your defiance."

Tyion frowned. He was pretty sure he'd already been punished. What did Rojan consider the spanking? A love tap?

"It's obvious to me that spanking you isn't going to make you behave so I will have to try something else," Rojan mused.

Tyion shuddered when he felt the man sniff at his neck.

"Do you want to know what I'm going to do to you?"

Tyion did but he wasn't about to admit that to Rojan. He suddenly had an inkling of how Rojan would punish him when he felt the man's hands slide down his body to wrap around his semi hard cock, stroking it quickly to full erection. Rojan was going to torture him.

Tyion groaned when the man's thumb pressed against the small slit in the head of his cock. He couldn't stop himself from thrusting his hips forward, driving his cock through Rojan's tight grip. He yelped when he was

suddenly lifted in Rojan's arms and carried over to the exam table. His eyes widened and he forgot all about his cock when his hands were quickly pulled over his head and strapped to the table. His feet were strapped down next.

Rojan stepped to the bottom of the bed. Tyion struggled against the straps holding him down. He didn't like being restrained, it made him feel too helpless. Then Rojan separated the stirrups holding Tyion's legs and stepped between them.

The air caught in Tyion's breath as he realized the benefits of this position. The hard bulge in Rojan's pants pushed right up against the bottom of Tyion's ball sac. Tyion's full cock bounced between them like a beacon.

Tyion didn't like the gleam in Rojan's eyes. He knew before the man even grabbed his cock that he'd lost the battle between them. Rojan was going to torture him and Tyion would give the man whatever he wanted. He could open his mouth and admit it now and skip the torture, but the feel of the man's large hand wrapping around him felt too good. Besides, he wanted to know what the big alien considered torture.

At least, he *thought* he did. As Rojan began to stroke him, Tyion wondered if that were true. He also wondered if he'd survive whatever Rojan did to him. The

big alien just seemed to know exactly how tightly to grip Tyion's cock, how fast to stroke him.

Rojan had Tyion mindless and babbling within moments, which didn't bode well for Tyion's future resistance against the man. The pleasure was mind-numbing, fire burning throughout his entire body. When a large lubed finger pushed between Tyion's ass cheeks and breached him, Tyion couldn't take any more. He would agree to anything Rojan wanted if the man just promised not to stop.

"Please!" Tyion begged, thrusting his hips up in the air then back down to impale himself on Rojan's thick finger. "Don't stop, please don't stop."

Tyion gripped the mattress above his head as a second finger pushed into him. As big as Rojan was, two of his fingers were as large as anything Tyion had ever taken up his ass. He was afraid to find out how big the man's cock was.

"Do you want to come?"

"Yes!" Tyion could feel himself get closer, moving right towards the edge of his orgasm. His breath caught in his throat. His hips worked frantically to propel himself between the hand the gripped his cock and the fingers in his ass.

When Rojan's fingers suddenly curled up Tyion knew it was all over for him. His body stiffened. He groaned as he started to fall over the edge only to cry out when the fingers in his ass suddenly pulled free and the hand gripping his cock grabbed the base and squeezed, preventing his orgasm.

"No!" Tyion wailed in protest. "Please."

"Do you want to come, pet?" Rojan asked again.

"Yes!"

"Are you going to behave yourself?"

"Yes!"

"Are you going to answer the doctor's questions honestly and openly?"

"Yes!"

Rojan was suddenly leaning over Tyion, his golden eyes staring intently down at him. "I want you to remember this moment, Tyion, remember who is in charge because it's not you, my pretty little pet."

Tyion nodded, desperate for Rojan to move, to let him come. He would have agreed to *anything* at that moment.

"Say it, pet," Rojan demanded. He stroked his hand up and down Tyion's cock. "I want to hear the words so that there is no misunderstanding. Who's in charge?"

"You!"

"Good, pet," Rojan replied. "Remember how I told you that if you obeyed me you would be rewarded?"

Tyion eagerly nodded his head. He cried out, his eyes rolling back in his head as Rojan's fingers pushed deep inside him again. Reward and punishment rolled into one until Tyion didn't know which was being administered. He just knew that if he wanted the exquisite pleasure to continue he needed to do exactly what Rojan wanted.

"Are you going to obey me now, pet?" Rojan asked.

"Yes," Tyion groaned.

"Then you may come."

Both of Rojan's hands suddenly started moving. Pleasure rocketed through Tyion's body, overwhelming his senses until he couldn't feel anything but the touch of the huge man hovering over him.

Tyion was so close to the edge that it didn't take more than a few strokes of Rojan's hand before he erupted, ropes of pearly white seed shooting out over his stomach and Rojan's fingers. Tyion cried out, his entire body trembling at the intensity of his orgasm. The strength in his body faded as his muscles melted right into the exam table. His chest heaved. Tyion turned his eyes to the man that

rocked his world just in time to see Rojan licking his hand clean. He shuddered in renewed arousal at the image.

"Fuck, that's hot," Tyion murmured.

Golden eyes flickered up to meet his. Tyion felt his face flush. He had to look terribly wanton. His arms were secured above his head. His legs were secured and spread wide. To top it all off, he had spunk all over his naked stomach.

"Uh . . . could I--" Tyion yanked at his bound hands. "Could I get dressed?"

Rojan shook his head. He unbuckled Tyion's legs then moved around to do the same to his arms. He grabbed Tyion and helped to sit up then handed him a cloth to clean up. "Doc is going to want to examine you, pet. You can cover up with this in the meantime."

Tyion was grateful for the white sheet Rojan offered to him. He grabbed it and wrapped it around his body, tucking the ends together under his arms. His hands still trembled, his legs shook, but Tyion never remembered feeling so relaxed in all his life.

"Now, the doctor is going to come back in here and I expect you to answer *all* of his questions fully and without hesitation," Rojan said after a moment. "Is that clear?"

"Yes," Tyion muttered sullenly.

"Good pet."

Tyion rolled his eyes as he watched Rojan walk to the door through the curtain of his hair. He felt more confused than he could ever remember feeling in his life. His future had just been made clear to him in an unmistakable way.

He was a slave. He had no rights, no say in his own life except for what someone granted him. And that someone was a seven and half foot tall black-skinned alien who meted out pleasure as a form of punishment.

Tyion shifted uncomfortably as the burn in his ass turned to a dull ache. He'd bruise. He always did. His mother was Irish and Tyion had inherited her pale skin. If he didn't visit tanning booths back home he'd look like an albino. His pale skin caused him to bruise way too easily and they always looked worse than they really were.

The door opened and the doctor came back in. Tyion watched him walk across the room with Rojan, the black man walking to stand behind Tyion. Doc picked up his computer pad and started with the questions again.

Tyion made sure he answered each question as quickly and honestly as he could. He had no way of knowing if they could tell if he was truthful or not, but he

wasn't taking any chances. As much as he wanted to experience Rojan's form of punishment again, he was afraid to find out what the man would do if he were *really* mad.

He kept his hands clenched together in his lap to keep from protesting the series of questions. Tyion didn't even protest when the doctor made him drop the sheet and examined him inside and out. He just closed his eyes and wished himself anywhere else. It was so embarrassing.

"Okay, I believe that is everything that I need," Doc said as Tyion sat up. "He needs some rest. I'd say twenty-four hours of uninterrupted sleep would be about right, and then he should be fine." The doctor glanced at Rojan.

"Would you like me to give him something to help him sleep?"

"No, I think I can figure out how to get him to rest," Rojan smirked.

"Very good," the doctor said dismissively.

"Come, pet."

Tyion climbed gingerly off the table and walked over to stand next to Rojan. He lowered his hands to cover his naked genitals. Rojan had pretty much destroyed what he had worn before and he had no idea where his own clothes were.

"When would you like him marked?" the doctor asked offhandedly as he cleaned up the room.

Marked?

"Before we make our next docking, but I haven't decided what I want yet," Rojan replied. "I'll let you know."

Tyion wanted to ask what they were talking about but he was too afraid to open his mouth. His stomach churned with anxiety and frustration. Life back home hadn't been a picnic, certainly, but he hadn't been this uncertain about things.

He didn't know exactly what the big alien wanted from him. He sort of had a clue considering all of the *hands on* attention he'd been receiving but beyond that . . . nada. Back at the auction house Tyion had been intrigued by the man who now owned him. He had seemed like much better choice than being put on the auction block. Now he wondered if that were true. *What he had gotten himself into?*

He was in an alien world, a place he didn't understand. Icy fear twisted around his heart as he realized that his very life depended on obeying someone who had already shown he could get Tyion's agreement to anything with just the touch of his hand.

There really was a hell, and this was it.

CHAPTER 3

Rojan could smell the confusion and fear rolling off his pet as he wrapped a cloak around the man's naked body. He knew Tyion feared him after receiving the punishment, but there was nothing he could do about that. His mate needed to understand who was in charge. He made the rules and it was his mate's duty to follow them, whether the little man agreed with them or not. He didn't regret spanking his mate, but he did regret that the man was now afraid of him.

While he had initially purchased the man to be his pet, the man was also his mate. Rojan realized that in the eyes of everyone except those of his race, the man would be seen as a human pet with no rights except those granted by his owner. Thankfully other Phangars would be more tolerant of his mate's antics. He had a feeling they would both need allowances to be made for them by others, especially during this initial training period.

Rojan treasured the fact that he had finally found his mate. The connection that would be forged between him and the smaller man would last a lifetime. Despite what Tyion might think, Rojan did regret he'd have to treat the

man as a pet in company, but it was that or risk losing him. That was not an option.

As Rojan escorted his mate down the corridor to his quarters, he wondered if the fear Tyion felt was such a bad thing. The human would be more willing to follow orders if he thought he might be punished. It would create less havoc between them. Rojan frowned when he saw Tyion sway on his feet. His beautiful mate still wouldn't look at him, and his face was flushed. Maybe he should handle Tyion a little more carefully for a little while. The man had to be freaked out. He'd been procured for the auction house so he obviously wasn't here of his own free will. No one procured for the auction house ever was. Add the unwilling captivity to the fact that the man was from Earth and suddenly faced with things so far outside of his experience they weren't even a consideration, and Rojan was rather surprised Tyion hadn't lost it before now. He was pretty sure it would come, though. Actually, it probably wasn't too far off. *Great, a time bomb.*

Stopping before the door of his quarters, Rojan placed his palm on the handprint security system. A green light flashed under his hand and the door parted with its usual *swoosh*.

He tapped a couple of buttons before grabbing Tyion's hand and holding it firmly on the security reader until the green light flashed again. Now, Tyion would be able to get in and out of their quarters. Only Rojan could override Tyion's access or stop him exiting his rooms.

"Putting your hand on the security pad will open and close the door, pet," Rojan said as he showed Tyion into his new home. "No one else can open the door without the proper security clearance." He glanced over at Tyion when the human stopped abruptly in the middle of the room. His mate seemed so anxious, it was worrying. Rojan decided to keep an even closer eye on the little man. "Why don't you have a look 'round while I get us something to eat?"

Tyion nodded absently. As his pet's grey-blue eyes darted up to meet his own yellow ones, they widened in fear and his face paled.

Rojan frowned. Tyion seemed more afraid of him than he should be. Granted, he had smacked the man's ass and then pleased him as punishment but he hadn't been cruel about it. At least, he didn't think he had. It wasn't like he had actually *beaten* the man or anything. He shook his head and walked into the small kitchenette. Rojan usually ate in the canteen with the rest of the crew but he had a

small kitchen in his quarters in case he wanted to cook something himself.

He gathered some ingredients together, mixed them, and placed them in the hotbox to cook. Stepping back into the main room he was surprised to see Tyion still standing where Rojan had left him. The man hadn't moved a step.

"Are you hungry, pet?"

Tyion looked over at him. He seemed a little dazed. His eyes didn't look like they were focusing and kept darting nervously around the room. Tyion was clutching the cape around his hunched shoulders like a shield and his hands clenched and unclenched as he trembled.

"Yes."

"Then come sit down and eat." Moving slowly to help calm the clearly unsettled human, Rojan walked back into the kitchenette and grabbed their food out of the hotbox. He set the food down on the little table and returned to the kitchenette for two plates.

Tyion stood next to the table when he walked back out of the kitchenette. His mate was staring down at the food Rojan had cooked with a perplexed look on his face. Rojan chuckled. He'd bet his life Tyion had never tasted *prohat* before. The dish was a mixture of cheeses, meats,

and vegetables from Rojan's home world. He ate it often as *prohat* was a personal favorite and easy to prepare.

"Sit down, pet."

Tyion flinched just a bit when he sat but the look was quickly cleared from his face.

Rojan frowned in dismay at his pet's actions and took the seat across from Tyion. He served them both a plate, placing one in front of Tyion, and began to eat the delicious meal. Rojan had already taken several bites when he realized that Tyion hadn't started eating. He paused, his fork half way to his mouth, to look over at Tyion. "You need to eat, pet. It'll be bedtime soon and Doc wants you to rest."

Rojan waited, watching his mate until Tyion had taken a few bites before turned back to his own food. He have to give this whole punishment thing another thought. Tyion seemed to be a lot more traumatized then Rojan had expected. He didn't know if it was the spanking or the pleasure afterwards or just everything that happened to the man, but he behaving as if he was truly distressed. Rojan was beginning to get really worried about his fragile little mate. Rojan sighed as he made a decision: in the morning, they could begin his training and Tyion would learn what

was expected him. In the meantime, he hoped a good night's sleep would do the man some good.

"Are you done?" Rojan asked when Tyion set his fork down on the table next to his plate.

"Yes, thank you," Tyion murmured tonelessly.

Rojan rose to his feet and held out his hand to the man. He needed to get his mate into bed before the man fell down. Tyion looked exhausted and he would probably be out cold for several hours, if not the entire night.

"Come on, pet, let's get you to bed." Rojan coaxed.

Tyion took his hand and followed Rojan into the bedroom. Rojan dropped Tyion's hand and moved towards the bed. He pulled the covers back then looked up at his pet. "The bathroom is through there," he said as he pointed to a door on the far wall. "Do you need to use it?"

"No."

"Then put the cloak over on the chair and come get into bed." Rojan sat down on the side of the bed and started pulling his boots off. He'd already seen Tyion naked so he knew what the man looked like, and he looked damn good, but maybe a little privacy would make him feel better.

Rojan knew he had made the right decision when he felt the bed give under Tyion's weight. He smiled as he dropped his boots on the floor, *maybe he was starting to get*

all this mating stuff right. Pulling his comlink from its place in his ear, he set it on the nightstand and pulled the covers up over them both.

Turning to face Tyion, he found the man had burrowed under the covers. Rojan shook his head and cuddled up next to him, pulling the small human back into his arms. He needed to go to the bridge pretty soon but he wanted to wait until Tyion was asleep first.

"Go to sleep, pet."

* * * *

"Doc?" Rojan called out as he walked into the infirmary the next day. "Do you think you could take a look my pet? He's been sleeping since yesterday and I'm starting to get worried about him."

Rojan was even more concerned than he let on to the doctor. He hadn't told *anyone* his little human pet was also his mate as he had wanted to wait until he claimed the man before he announced that piece of news. Now he was worried that he might not get the chance. Tyion wasn't doing anything except sleeping.

"Certainly, Rojan," Doc replied. "I'd be happy to."

"Should he be sleeping this much?" Rojan tapped his fingers restlessly against his thigh as he waited for the doctor's answer.

"Well, he's been through a lot of trauma in the last several days, emotional and mental trauma as well as the effects of space travel and his procurement. Sleeping is one of the body's ways of giving a person enough time to process what they might be going through."

Rojan frowned with frustration. "What sort of trauma?"

"You know Earthlings are a primitive race, Rojan."

Rojan nodded.

"For a young man to be basically abducted from his home and everything he knows by alien creatures and auctioned off to the highest bidder, the mental and emotional turmoil must be overwhelming."

"I guess I never thought about it that way." Rojan mused. He wasn't sure he liked the direction this conversation was heading. It made him sound like a major part of Tyion's trauma. The black alien's head began to swirl with sudden doubt. *Had he contributed to Tyion's condition?* "Doc, do you think he'll be okay?"

Doc shrugged. "It's hard to tell. Earthlings are delicate creatures, my friend. The strongest of them could

fold under the pressure and the weakest could have a backbone of steel. You can never tell."

"Do you think my buying him was too much for the human?"

"Again, that's hard to tell, Rojan," the doctor replied patiently. "I don't know what he can or cannot handle. Only time will tell how strong your pet is. And if you hadn't bought him, someone else would have."

Rojan detected a hint of censure in Doc's voice and the guilt he felt doubled. His hands clenched into fists. Tyion was his mate. Giving the little human up was no longer an option. He couldn't do it, even if he hadn't claimed the man yet.

"I can tell you your pet needs reassurance, understanding, and a gentle hand, at least until he acclimates himself to his situation. The changes in his life in just the last few days have been staggering. He has nothing from his former life. The food isn't even the same. He's going to need some time to get used to what is basically a completely different life."

Rojan clamped his lips together in irritation as he nodded his head. The doctor's words made him feel like the monster he was sure Tyion thought him to be. He'd never

thought about things from his mate's point of view before. It wasn't a happy one.

He'd have to rethink the way he treated his little mate. Rojan felt positive that back on Earth Tyion was considered a strong man. Rojan had seen the vidcasts like everyone else. Human television was humorous and he was now glad he had used it to distract him on lonely nights. It gave him a look into the way humans thought. According to the things Rojan had seen, Tyion would be considered very attractive in human eyes. He would have been at the top of the food chain, so to speak, much like Rojan was on his home world.

For a man like that to be abducted then sold as a pet, it must be daunting even to the strongest of men. And Rojan felt sure that Tyion thought himself a strong man and not a delicate creature that needed protection from nearly everyone around him. Rojan didn't think Tyion would take very well to that change in his circumstances.

The spanking he had administered must have been humiliating for Tyion. While he had just meant to punish the man, Rojan suspected the spanking had had a far more detrimental effect on Tyion than he'd wanted.

Doctor Seron had given him something to think about. In the meantime, Rojan started thinking about what

he could do to create a more comfortable environment for his mate.

"Doc, is there something I can get for him or feed him that might make him feel better?" Rojan said tentatively. "While it's imperative that he follow my orders, even if it's just for his own safety, I don't want to see him totally freak out."

"Have you thought of returning to his home and gathering his belonging?" Doc asked carefully. "It's not out of the realm of possibilities, you know? It wouldn't take us more than a few days to reach Earth, and I'm sure having his own things would give him some measure of comfort."

Rojan was too startled by the doctor's words to do more than stare for several moments. Truthfully, he'd never even considered it, but the idea made perfect sense. Tyion would forever be at Rojan's side, never to go home again. He would miss the things from his home unless he had a few of them with him.

"I'll have Rav start us in that direction immediately." Rojan had started striding towards the door when he paused, turning back to the doc. He knew he needed to tell the doc everything. "Hey Doc?"

"Yes?"

"Tyion is not just my pet. "He's my mate."

Seron actually looked startled, his eyebrows rising as he just stared at his captain for a moment. "Have you claimed him yet?"

"No," Rojan said. He shrugged his shoulders a little. "I wanted to wait until you examined him and then he needed rest, and well--" Rojan pushed his hand through his long black hair uneasily. "It just hasn't happened yet."

"Mmmm," Doc mused, "you might want to wait awhile."

"Wait?" Rojan asked in a strangled voice. He didn't want to wait. He needed to claim Tyion as soon as possible, make the man *his*. The drive to do so would increase with every moment until Rojan wouldn't be able to control his behavior.

"Give him some time, get to know him a little," the doctor said. "Let him get to know you. I think you'll find your little mate much more willing to submit to you if he's more comfortable with you."

Rojan supposed the doctor had a point but he didn't have to like it. He nodded distractedly to the doc and walked out, grumbling to himself all the way to the bridge. He'd have to give Seron's words some thought. But he didn't *want* to wait for Tyion to be his.

"Rav," Rojan said the moment he stepped onto the bridge and spotted his second-in-command at the control center. "Plot a course towards Earth."

"Earth?" Rav turned to look at Rojan in surprise. "You want to go to *Earth*? Whatever for?"

"Yes I want to go to Earth," Rojan replied, crossing his arms over his chest and glaring at the man. "You don't need to know why, just do it."

"Oh, yeah, sure," Rav turned back to the console. He began punching buttons on the console as he pouted. "Don't we have cargo to drop off in the Vyer system?"

"We do and we'll deliver it on the return trip. This takes precedence. I'll give you the exact location once we arrive in Earth's atmosphere."

"Yes, captain."

"Keep me apprised of our progress and make sure we're in stealth mode." Rojan smirked. "Earthlings don't take well to invaders from outer space."

Satisfied that Rav would follow his instructions, Rojan spent most of this morning completing his captain duties around the ship: filling out logs, checking cargo, making vidcalls to potential clients. It was all very boring, but necessary.

Now finished with it all, he headed back towards his quarters. He needed to check on his little human and let him know they'd be returning to Earth to gather his possessions. Besides, he was eager to see his little mate, smell him. The need had been distracting him all morning. He wanted to know how Tyion had fared on his first day on the ship.

Opening the door to his quarters, Rojan immediately looked towards his sleeping platform . . . his *empty* sleeping platform. A frantic search through the rest of his quarters found the rooms empty of life.

Rojan was about to hit his comlink and order an all out search for his mate when he remembered asking Doc to take another look at the man, maybe something was wrong and Seron had moved Tyion to the infirmary. He sped out of his quarters and down the corridor, hoping whatever it wasn't life-threatening. There was so much he didn't know about his mate.

His heart beating frantically, Rojan ran into the infirmary and spotted Tyion lying on one of the exam tables. He raced over to the bed, thankful to find Tyion's beautiful eyes open and staring at him. *It didn't look like anything was wrong.*

"You are ill, pet?"

Tyion's face flushed and he glanced away, avoiding Rojan's gaze. "No."

Rojan looked the man over carefully, trying to find a wound, an injury, anything to explain why he was in the infirmary. Doc should have just been able to look Tyion over in their quarters. "Then why are you here? Why are you not in our quarters?"

"Doc came and he-- he just wanted to look me over."

Rojan could tell from the way Tyion would look at him that something more serious was going on. He reached over and gripped Tyion's chin in his hand, turning the man's face up to his. Leaning close, he narrowed his eyes and snarled. "Want to try again?"

Tyion inhaled swiftly. His face paled and his eyes widened briefly before he lowered them. "I-- I have bruises," Tyion whispered. His breath seemed to catch in his throat. "My-- my mother is Irish and we have pale skin and we bruise easily so when you-- when you span-- when you--"

Tyion spoke so quietly, so quickly, that Rojan had a hard time following his speech. He did hear the word *bruises* though. Rojan wasn't accustomed to the feelings of rage and self loathing that flooded his senses, but he

realized the only way Tyion could have bruises was by Rojan's own hand. Rojan dropped his hand from Tyion's face and wrapped his arms around his mate. He easily pulled the smaller man into his arms and cradled him to his chest.

"I'm sorry, pet," he said softly as he nuzzled his face against the top of Tyion's blond head. He felt Tyion's body jerk as the man hiccupped against him. "I truly did not mean to bruise you. I promise I will take more care with you in the future."

"Ho-- how?" Tyion whispered.

Rojan opened his mouth to reply, to tell Tyion that he wouldn't bruise him again, but before he could someone spoke from behind him, suddenly reminding him that they were not alone in the room.

"I have just the thing," Doc held up the blue bottle in his hand. "This is my own little concoction, a mixture of various herbs and plants. If you rub this on Tyion after his punishment it will relieve the bruising."

From the way his pet shuddered in his arms, Rojan wasn't sure that was the answer to their problem. He might need to figure out a new way to punish Tyion besides spanking him. Still, he took the bottle the doc held out to him and shoved it in his pocket.

"Is there anything else you need to check, Doc?"

"No, that's all," Seron answered. "He needs food, as he's slept the last twenty four hours or so. Other than that and the bruises, he's fine Captain."

Rojan nodded his thanks and carried Tyion out of the room. The already quick trip from the infirmary to their quarters was made that much faster by Rojan's rapid strides. He wanted to get his mate alone so he could check the bruises he'd caused for himself.

He let them into their room and secured the door before hitting his comlink. "Rav? I'll be in my quarters if you need me. Please let me know when we get within three hundred light years of our destination."

"Gotcha, Rojan."

Placing his comlink on a nearby table, Rojan walked across the room and sat down on the edge of the bedding platform, cradling Tyion in his arms. The little man still wouldn't look him in the eyes and Rojan was beginning to hate it. He wanted to see his mate's expressive grey-blue eyes, and maybe get a handle on what was happening between them.

Remembering the bottle of lotion the doc had given him, Rojan reached into his pocket and pulled it out. He

held it up in front of Tyion. "Should we rub some of this into your bruises? It might make the pain go away?"

Tyion shrugged indifferently.

Rojan frowned. He wasn't thrilled with that answer. "I expect an answer when I ask you a question, pet," he ordered. "Now, should we rub some of this into your bruises?"

"If that's what you want."

Again, Rojan wasn't pleased with the answer he received but he wasn't sure what to do about it. Tyion *had* answered him. "Stand up and drop your pants, pet."

Rojan was surprised when Tyion did exactly what he told him to do. He stood up and dropped his pants to the floor then just stood there, his hands fisted at his sides, his lower body naked to Rojan's eyes.

"Come here, pet," Rojan said as he gestured to his lap.

Tyion stepped forward and laid himself across Rojan's thick thighs. Small shudders rocked his body. Rojan could immediately see the damage he'd done with his punishment. Large purplish bruises marred his pet's delicate skin, all shaped in the form of a large hand. His large hand.

Rojan clenched his jaw as he gently stroked his hand across the abused flesh. His anguish felt like a steel weight in his chest. *He'd* done this to his mate. He'd bruised the person who was now the most important being in his life. Popping the top of the lotion bottle, Rojan squirted a generous amount out onto his hand. He dropped the bottle on the bed beside him then began to carefully rub the lotion into Tyion's bruised butt. Rojan didn't like the feelings racing through him as he looked at the bruises he'd left on Tyion. He simply meant to punish the man, to exert his dominance. He never meant to leave marks on him. Rojan closed his eyes, feeling utterly miserable. Tyion was his mate, his to care for and protect, even from himself. Yet all he had shown the man was punishment and pain. How could he possibly expect Tyion to learn to trust him if he continued to abuse him? He needed to show Tyion that he wasn't a monster, as he was sure that was how his mate thought of him. Rojan just wasn't sure how to do that. So far, every single thing he had done had backfired on him somehow.

Rojan's ears twitched when he heard the small catch Tyion's breathing. He suddenly realized that while he had been berating himself for his stupidity, his hand had gone

from merely rubbing the lotion into Tyion's ass to caressing the rounded globes.

He perked his ears and listened carefully as he trailed a finger down Tyion's ass crack, grazing over the top of his puckered hole. He smiled in relief when he felt the small shudders racking Tyion's body. Maybe he could prove he wasn't a monster.

Rojan grabbed some more of the lotion and squirted it on his fingers. He dropped the bottle to the bed again and went back to caressing Tyion's ass, paying special attention to the tight pink entrance that held such fascination for him. Rojan couldn't wait until the moment he felt his cock slip into that hole. As it was, he could barely keep himself from tossing Tyion down on the bed and fucking him into the mattress right now. It already felt like he'd waited forever to claim his mate and Rojan wasn't sure how much longer he could wait.

"Do you like that, pet?" Rojan asked as he pushed one finger into Tyion's ass. He frowned when he received no response other than a small tremble. He could feel Tyion's hard cock pressed against his legs so he knew Tyion was enjoying himself. It wasn't something that could be faked, not from a man. "Pet?"

"Yes," Tyion mumbled.

Something wasn't right. Rojan had thought Tyion was taking pleasure in what he was doing, but the broken whisper of his words said differently. Once Rojan thought about it he realized he wasn't scenting desire and lust from Tyion, either, but rather fear. Tyion shouldn't be feeling afraid while Rojan pleased him. That was wrong. Rojan pulled his hand away from Tyion's ass and grabbed the man, pulling him up so he could look at his mate's expression. New anguish speared his heart when he spotted the tears streaming down Tyion's face.

"Why did you lie to me, pet?" He said with as calm a voice as he could manage considering the turmoil boiling up inside of him. "I want the truth. Did you enjoy what I was doing to you?"

Rojan loosened his grip on Tyion's arms and let him go when the man pushed away. The fear blazing on Tyion's pale face momentarily stunned him. He seemed to be terrified, his entire body shaking as he knelt on the floor at Rojan's feet and looked up at him as if pleading. Rojan's breath slammed into his chest as Tyion spoke.

"Please, tell me what I did wrong?"

CHAPTER 4

"How can I do what you want if you don't tell me?" Tyion asked as he desperately gripped Rojan's shirt. He didn't know what he'd done wrong but he didn't want to be punished again. "Please, tell me what I did wrong and I won't do it again."

Rojan opened his mouth as if to say something, then snapped it closed. His features darkened, his pointed ears flattened backward. Rojan looked like he'd been slapped in the face. Hard.

"Please!" Tyion cried out. "I didn't mean to make you mad. I'll do whatever you want. I'll be a good pet, I swear. Just tell me what you want me to do." Tyion's heart stuttered in his chest. Their movement caused him to glance at Rojan's hands and his eyes widened as he watched claws extended out of the alien's fingertips. Fangs also dropped down from Rojan's upper lip as it curled back and Tyion heard a small growl escape.

Oh, crap. Tyion knew he was in trouble now. He dropped down onto the floor and curled into the smallest ball he could, wrapping his hands over his head in fear. He couldn't breathe as he waited for the blow to fall.

But it never came. Tyion felt Rojan move, and a moment later the door swooshed open and closed. Tyion waited a minute, then slowly lowered his hands and looked up. The room was empty except for him. Rojan had gone.

He didn't understand.

Rojan had been so angry and Tyion didn't know why. He crawled onto the bed and burrowed under the covers for comfort. He wished he knew where Rojan kept the sleeping pills the doctor gave him so he could take some. Sleeping sounded much better than dealing with any of this shit. Tyion's life had gone to hell and he didn't see any way out of it. He was a bought pet, owned by an alien he could never overpower. He'd never see his home again, pet his cat, or even lounge in front of his television. He couldn't even watch football. Well, he wouldn't miss that sport too much but he did miss the choice to watch it or not.

He was a slave. His life wasn't going to get much better than that and now he'd angered his master somehow. He had no idea what he'd done wrong. Rojan started out rubbing lotion into his bruises but it quickly turned to more punishment. Maybe his bruising so easily was what pissed Rojan off, but there was nothing Tyion could do about that. It was genetic.

If Rojan would just tell him how to behave, he'd know what to do. It wasn't as if he *wanted* to be a slave or a pet or whatever, he just didn't want to be punished. The situation gave him mixed feelings and he wasn't sure how to deal with it all. It was just too much.

Rojan had brought Tyion unimaginable pleasure, more than he felt with anyone else in his life. But it only came as a form of discipline. Rojan hadn't touched Tyion because he desired him, it was done merely to punish him. *Maybe that in itself was a form of punishment?* Never to feel Rojan want or need him, but to only feel pleasure as a form of punishment? Tyion didn't know, and that confused him even more. He didn't know how aliens did things. Tyion was still confused when he fell into a fitful doze.

"Tyion," announced the door, "I need to speak with you."

Tyion sat up, frowning as he looked at the source of the voice. "Doc?"

"Can I come in, Tyion?"

"Um, yeah, just give me a moment." Tyion scrambled to the edge of the bed and grabbed his pants, quickly pulling them up his legs. He walked over to the

consol on the wall next to the door and stared at the many buttons with confusion. "Uh, Doc, how do I open this?"

"Did Rojan put your palm print into the security system?"

Tyion frowned as he tried to remember. "Yeah, I think so."

"Then just place your hand on the pad," Doc explained. "It will open the door."

Tyion did as the doc said, jumping just a little when the door instantly swished open. "Hey, Doc, what's up? Do I need another exam?" *Maybe Rojan had talked to the doc?*

"No, but I need your help."

"My help?" Tyion was stunned. What could the alien doctor need *his* help with?

"Has Rojan claimed you yet?"

"Claimed me?" *What the hell?* Tyion folded his arms over his chest and glared at the doctor. "Yes, he got me from the auction house. You know that."

"No, Tyion, has he bitten you yet?"

Tyion's jaw dropped as he registered what the doctor had said. "He's going to *bite* me? Wher-- why?" he whispered in shock. Visions of being in a large stewpot or on a spit over a roaring fire raced through Tyion's head.

"He has to bite you to claim you."

"Claim me for what?" Tyion didn't know what to think when the doctor frowned.

"Didn't Rojan explain any of this to you?"

"Explain what exactly?" Tyion said.

The doctor suddenly rubbed his temple before looking over at Tyion again. "Okay, look, I don't have time to explain this to you right now. It's obvious that Rojan didn't explain any of this to you but there's nothing I can do about that right now."

"About what?" Tyion asked. "What's going on?"

"Rojan has lost his mind."

Duh, Tyion mentally rolled his eyes.

"I'm serious, Tyion," Doc said. "I don't know what happened between the two of you but Rojan has gone crazy. He's tearing the galley apart right now. We can't even get anyone in there to tranq him."

"The galley?"

"Where we eat," Doc said patiently.

"And he's tearing it apart?" Tyion asked. "Why?"

"I can only assume it's because he hasn't claimed you yet."

"You keep talking about this *claiming* thing," Tyion rubbed his hand over the nap of his neck distractedly.

"What is it?"

Doc reached out and grabbed Tyion's arm. "Look, I really wish I had time to explain this to you but I don't. I've never seen Rojan this bad before and I've seen him in some pretty hairy situations. We need to go stop him before he hurts himself or someone else."

"But what can I do?" Tyion asked as the doctor pulled him out of the room and down the corridor. "I'm just his pet."

"You're a lot more than that and right now I'm pretty sure that you're the only one that can get through to him."

"Me?" Tyion cried out. "Why me?"

"Because you have a connection to Rojan," Doc kept dragging Tyion down the corridor.

"You're crazy!"

They turned a corner to find several large, armed men standing around a doorway. They all seemed to be watching something that was happening inside the room. And whatever it was made a *lot* of noise. Tyion could hear yelling, growling, crashing, all manner of noise. It sounded like World War III in there!

Without warning Tyion was shoved forward. He suddenly got a really good look inside the galley. What he saw froze him in his spot. It was Rojan but not. The

creature inside the galley looked like Rojan but it was larger, the face broader, its arms and legs thicker. Large claws extended from the fingertips and sharp fangs flashed when it opened its mouth.

"Oh hell no!" Tyion backed away when the Doc tried to push him inside the doorway. He started to struggle but several strong hands grabbed him and forced him into the galley. Tyion turned to run back into the corridor when the door closed, leaving him locked in the room with the creature.

Hearing a low growl behind him, Tyion spun back around and saw that Rojan had stopped tearing the place apart. His face was angled slightly up as he sniffed at the air like an animal. A series of low growls and grunts came from his mouth.

Rojan's head suddenly snapped in Tyion's direction and he let out a loud roar as he prowled closer. Tyion backed up nervously. He was being stalked and he had no way out. He was the prey and Rojan the hunter.

"Oh god, I'm gonna die," Tyion whispered as he squeezed his eyes tight. He was so scared he couldn't even get his body to fold up into a ball to make a smaller target. He just stood there like a deer in the headlights, waiting to die.

Seconds passed . . . minutes . . . and nothing happened. Tyion heard a small huffing noise. He opened his eyes slowly, shocked to find Rojan kneeling in front of him. It startled him to discover that when Rojan was on his knees they were eye to eye.

Rojan was sniffing him delicately. The big man pressed his face against Tyion's chest and neck and rubbed against him, almost like a cat seeking attention.

"Okay, Rojan," Tyion breathed, his hand trembling as he slowly reached out to pet Rojan's head. "Let's not eat the nice Tyion, hmm?"

Tyion nearly fell over in surprise when Rojan leaned into his hand and purred. Well, sort of purred. It was a more guttural sound but the peaceful look on Rojan's face told Tyion it was a happy noise.

"He's calmed down," Tyion cautiously called out to the men behind the closed door. "I think you can come in now."

As the door swooshed open, two things happened. Every muscle in Rojan's strong body tensed, and Tyion yelped as he was suddenly picked up and held in Rojan's arms. Rojan's thunderous roar filled the room again.

His heart pounding with fear, Tyion glanced up at the man holding him so tightly. Rojan's golden eyes glowed

with a savage inner light, his face was drawn tight, and his lips curled back in a vicious snarl. Even his nostrils flared with anger. Tyion just knew his death really was at hand this time when Rojan reached for him with one huge, clawed hand. He nearly passed out from shock when the touch against the side of his head was so gentle it almost wasn't there. He had expected Rojan to hurt him, not caress him.

"Rojan?" he whispered softly in confusion.

When Rojan glanced down at him, his face softened. Rojan leaned down and rubbed his cheek over the top of Tyion's head, the happy purring sound rumbling in Rojan's chest again. Tyion could swear he saw loving affection in Rojan's gaze.

Then someone in the doorway moved.

Rojan's head snapped up, his eyes narrowed and he growled again. Tyion could feel the muscles pressed against him bunch up and tense.

"Back off," Tyion made shooing motions at whoever was trying to come through the door, gesturing for them to get back. "He seems to be calm as long as you all keep your distance."

"Can you get him to your quarters, Tyion?" Doc poked his head through the door to ask softly.

"I can try." He just didn't have any idea how to do it. Tyion reached up and laid his hand on the side of Rojan's face, forcing the man's gaze back to his. Once again, Rojan's face softened and he purred. And *that* was getting really weird.

"Okay, put me down, big guy," Tyion ordered. When Rojan didn't do anything but frown at him, Tyion pointed to the floor. "Put me *down*."

Tyion was gently set on his feet, although Rojan still kept an arm wrapped around him, keeping them pressed body to body. The arm around his waist moved to his shoulders when Rojan gracefully rose to his feet, once again towering over Tyion.

Tyion swallowed hard. The chest in front of his face was damn impressive. He doubted Rojan had ever lost any battle he might have been in. He looked strong, his body sculpted with powerful muscles. Cautiously, Tyion raised a hand and patted the hard flesh.

Damn! Just damn!

He didn't jump this time when Rojan purred and rubbed a cheek over the top of his head. He was beginning to think he just might be the safest person on the ship. Rojan handled him with the utmost care, as if he was fragile and could break into pieces at any time.

Tyion grabbed Rojan's hand and started backing toward the door. Rojan frowned and didn't budge from his spot. It was like trying to pull a train with a string. Rojan just stared at him with longing in his eyes.

"Come on, big guy, let's go back to our room, okay?" Tyion motioned with his free hand and tugged on Rojan's with the other.

Rojan looked reluctant but slowly moved forward as Tyion walked back through the doorway, motioning for everyone to get back. Apparently they didn't move fast enough because Rojan growled and bared his teeth, snarling at anyone that was still too close to the two of them.

Tyion was a bit confused when Rojan hovered over him, wrapping one arm around his waist and pulling him back against his chest. More than anything, Rojan seemed to be protecting him from the others standing in the corridor. His touch was careful, even the arm wrapped around Tyion's waist was gentle. The purring though, that was really getting to Tyion. He could feel Rojan's entire chest rumble with the noise. Strangely, it made Tyion feel better, less afraid, than he had felt when he walked into the galley. Scratch that, when he was shoved into the galley.

"Come on, Rojan," Tyion urged, feeling a little more confident. He pointed down the corridor. "Let's go that way."

Rojan grumbled and lifted Tyion into his arms. He nuzzled Tyion's hair once again and started walking in the direction Tyion had indicated.

They were almost past everyone when a rather large man with brown hair stepped into their path. Tyion could feel the way Rojan's body stiffened and immediately decided the man was an idiot.

"Are you out of your mind?" Tyion asked incredulously, even as Rojan growled low in his throat. "He's going to kill you."

Tyion could feel the tension in Rojan's tight muscles. He knew the man, er, beast, was about to attack. Rojan felt threatened for some reason. His protective instincts had been triggered. And Tyion had realized by now that somehow those instincts centered on him. He had to distract Rojan from killing the moron standing in front of them.

"Rojan," he whispered as if he was talking to a small child . . . or a rabid dog. He cupped his hand around Rojan's cheek and directed the man's golden eyes back down to him. Figuring it was something Rojan might

understand, Tyion leaned up and nuzzled his face against Rojan's neck.

The taut muscles in Rojan's body instantly relaxed and the purring started up again.

As he rubbed his face against Rojan's dark, hot skin, Tyion began to notice a strong masculine scent. It was rich, thick, musky, and made Tyion feel achy in all the right places. He leaned up farther, wanting more. Tyion stuck his tongue out and licked a small patch of skin under Rojan's pointed ear, causing a full body shudder in the big man. Although Tyion's own actions confused him, they also made him burn. He had no idea why he was so intrigued, so captivated by Rojan.

He was so intent on smelling and tasting Rojan, Tyion wasn't even aware they had made it back to their quarters until he felt Rojan lay him down carefully on the bed. Rojan's large body hovered over him, blocking out a large amount of the light in the room.

Tyion was mesmerized but strangely unafraid when a large claw moved in his direction. He still couldn't keep from trembling a little when Rojan used that sharp talon to slash his shirt right down the middle. Rojan flicked the torn fabric aside, baring Tyion's naked chest.

A low, appreciative noise rumbled from Rojan, half growl, half purr. And it was totally hot! Tyion had no way to explain how enthralled he felt by the man gazing at him with such intense fascination, especially after the way Rojan treated him earlier. He should be terrified out of his mind, but he wasn't. He didn't even feel more than a momentary spark of unease when Rojan shredded his pants too, leaving him totally naked.

The same hand that tore through his clothes like butter softly caressed Tyion's skin as it moved up his leg, past his groin, and over his chest. The still gentle touch settled around Tyion's throat, arousing him further.

Rojan's eyes hungrily devoured Tyion but he seemed hesitant to do more, almost as if he awaited permission to do so. Tyion started to ache, his cock filling as one continuous purr came from Rojan's chest.

Impatiently Tyion grabbed the side of Rojan's face and pulled him closer, groaning when Rojan rubbed his face against Tyion's naked chest. It felt so good he arched his head back and spread his legs in invitation, which caused Rojan's purr to become even deeper than any Tyion had heard before. A delightful shiver of wanting racing through him and Tyion's heart pounded erratically with the feelings racing through his body. Rojan's touch was so

different this time, not hard and punishing, but wanting, *needing*. This was a purely sensual experience, one that Tyion wanted badly.

Tyion groaned and pushed himself closer to Rojan. He was overwhelmed by his own eager response to the touch of Rojan's lips on his nipples, his chest, his throat. It made Tyion feel hot, achy, and so very needy. Rojan licked and stroked, nibbled and tugged, but never once caused pain as he continued to explore Tyion's soft ivory skin with his mouth. When he lifted his legs to wrap them around Rojan's body, Tyion had just enough reach to lock them together in Rojan's lower back. *Wow!* He might be huge normally, but Rojan was truly massive in this form!

And it felt like heaven as Tyion's gorgeous, tightly muscled alien covered him and focused on giving Tyion as much pleasure as his body could handle. Small whimpers broke from Tyion's throat as he felt Rojan's large, callused hands stroked over his sensitive skin. No place on his body was left untouched.

Rojan's sharp canines scraping over his throat sent pleasure racing through his body, pushing his arousal even higher. Humping his hips wildly against Rojan's body, Tyion's whimpers became moans as the friction created by

his cock sliding against the alien's silky smooth abdomen sent shivers up his spine.

His cock felt like a steel pipe but it was nothing compared to the hardness he could feel butting against his balls. He ached to feel that thick shaft inside his body, which was a switch for him considering he hadn't bottomed since the he had first experimented with man on man sex. Tyion liked being on top during sex, he liked being in control. He couldn't figure out why the thought of feeling Rojan's thick cock inside him excited him so much, but just the thought of the man pounding that big dick in his ass made drops of pre-cum leak from his cock in anticipation.

Tyion just couldn't wait any longer. He braced his hands on Rojan's shoulders and wrapped himself around the man. He clung as tightly as he could without actually being under Rojan's skin. Tyion desperately needed Rojan to take him.

And he wasn't above begging.

"Rojan, please!"

The purring from Rojan soothed him somewhat. The slick finger that pressed into him sent his heartbeat rocketing. His breath hitched in his throat and he briefly wondered where Rojan had found the lube, then forgot

everything except the fullness that filled his ass as Rojan thrust another finger in.

Tyion winced from the slight burn cause by Rojan's fingers, but the pleasure he created was unimaginable. His hips moved of their own accord, thrusting back against Rojan's intrusion, wanting more, asking for more.

But as much as Rojan stretched him, Tyion couldn't keep the small moan of pain that escaped when Rojan added a third finger. Rojan's fingers were *really* big, the three of them combined larger than anything Tyion ever even *thought* of having up his ass.

When Rojan scooted down his body and started nuzzling his cock, Tyion thought he would lose his mind. He eagerly anticipated having those lips wrapped around him but the small glint of white fang peeking out from under one lip gave him pause.

"Fangs, Rojan," Tyion tensed as Rojan's mouth moved over him, swallowing his cock whole. Tyion's loud moans filled the room as Rojan seemed to suck him right off the bed. Every twinge of pain from Rojan's exploration of his ass faded away to be replaced by overwhelming pleasure. Flames of desire licked up his body. His head thrashed back and forth on the pillow. Tyion's hands tangled in Rojan's hair as he clutched desperately for an

anchor. All that existed for him was Rojan and what the man was making him feel.

Tyion thought he was going to die as passion caused his blood to pound so hard it felt like he would just explode right where he lay, the pleasure spiraling through his body too intense for anyone to live through. Tyion cried out as he came, his body seizing with pleasure as Rojan drank him down.

As melted as he felt, Tyion didn't have the energy to give more than a marginal protest as Rojan lifted his head and pulled his fingers free of their snug embrace.

Clawed hands rolled the smaller man over onto his stomach. Rojan gently grabbed his hips and pulled him back to his knees, his head amazingly remaining on the pillow. Although he was still floating from the intense orgasm, Tyion tensed when he felt the head of Rojan's cock nudge his aching hole. Rojan felt *huge*. Then he heard a soft rumbling noise. *Rojan was purring again*. Every bit of tension in Tyion's body faded away and he relaxed, Rojan slipping easily into his ass.

Even as calm as he was, Tyion still had to take several deep breaths when Rojan finally bottomed out, his balls resting snugly against Tyion's ass. He'd just been

impaled on a telephone pole. It would sure take a while to get used to, *but if every time was like this, bring it on!*

Luckily for him, Rojan seemed inclined to give him a moment. He just knelt there, his cock deep inside of Tyion as if he needed to savor the feeling. Rojan was so hot against him, hot and hard.

Tyion's eyes opened and the fog surrounding his brain started to clear when Rojan's purring lowered into a deep growl.

Tender hands lifted Tyion's shoulders until he straddled Rojan's thick thighs. His back pressed against Rojan's muscular chest and his head fell back to rest on Rojan's sweaty shoulder. Rojan purred again as he nuzzled the curve of Tyion's neck.

Something in that purr, in the way Rojan cuddled against him, spoke to Tyion on a level he'd never experienced before. It built a strong need in Tyion, one he didn't know how to quench. Tyion reached up and gripped large handfuls of Rojan's long black hair with both hands. He ached to feel Rojan move inside of him. He needed Rojan to fuck him more than he needed his next breath.

Tyion almost jumped out of his skin when he felt something warm and silky wrap around his cock. He looked down, his eyes nearly bugging out of his head when

he saw something long and slender encircling his long shaft. *Rojan had used his tail!*

"Rojan!" he cried out in surprise.

Big huffs of breath moved across the skin of his neck. The hands holding his hips started lifting him until just the head of Rojan's cock remained inside of Tyion. Then they slammed him back down, impaling Tyion powerfully on Rojan's cock and ramming the man's full length deep inside him. Once started, it seemed that Rojan could not stop and the pace steadily increased, driving the human to full arousal in spite of his earlier release.

Each thrust caused Tyion to cry out in pleasure. His body was no longer his to command, accepting everything Rojan did to him. The sound of Rojan's growls in his ear spurred Tyion to greater heights of passion. The tail stroking his cock in time with the alien's thrusts only increased Tyion's need, the silky strands of fur adding a dimension of sensation Tyion had never experienced before.

Tyion was cresting the ridge of his second orgasm when he felt a large steel-hard arm wrap around his waist and a hand grasp Tyion's hair to tilt his head roughly to the side. Tyion protested neither, too caught up in the maelstrom of ecstasy burning his body alive.

Long sharp teeth sinking into the nap of his neck sent Tyion's senses reeling. The shock of pain was almost immediately wiped away by more pleasure than Tyion had ever felt rocketing through his body. Tyion screamed. His cock pulsed and spurted out rope after rope of pearly white seed. The harder Rojan thrust, the more cum Tyion expelled until he didn't think he could take another moment of the paradise he experienced. Tyion was so caught in pleasure, he only vaguely heard a loud roar as felt hot spurts of lava filled his ass. Small drops of liquid trailed down his chest and clawed hands dug into his skin, but it was all eclipsed when Rojan's cock *changed* and something latched onto his prostate.

The explosion was instantaneous. One moment Tyion floated in a haze of spent passion. The next, hot fire once again burned through his entire body, exploding in a white light that blinded Tyion until he saw and felt nothing more.

CHAPTER 5

Opening his eyes slowly Rojan felt like his head might explode.

He knew something was different but for the life of him couldn't figure out what. Then he felt movement next to him. Rojan's breath caught in his throat as he glanced down to find Tyion cradled to his chest, the small man facing away from him. They were pressed so closely together that Rojan could feel every breath Tyion took.

Rojan slowly brushed the white-blond curls back from Tyion's heart-shaped face. He didn't understand why Tyion was there beside him. Especially considering the things Rojan had done to the human, but the small smile on Tyion's lips said he wasn't unhappy where he was.

Still, Rojan didn't understand what had happened. The last thing he remembered was leaving their quarters after discovering the bruises he'd left on his pet. There should be no reason for Tyion to be sleeping peacefully in his arms, looking as happy as fuck to be there.

Rojan started to roll over when he suddenly realized that he was buried balls-deep inside Tyion, his knot unsheathed and attached to his mate. His tail was firmly

wrapped around Tyion's flaccid cock, the tip tucked around Tyion's balls. His eyes dropped to Tyion's neck, wincing when he spotted the deep fang marks. Rojan groaned and let his head drop back down to the pillow. He'd claimed Tyion, mating him. *Rojan could never be parted from Tyion again.* He'd die without him, go literally insane if separated for long periods of time, and kill anyone who tried to take the little man away from him.

Tyion was Rojan's mate until they both took their last breath. No other would ever taste as sweet. No other would even cause Rojan's dick to stir. He'd not want another living soul as long as he lived. That part didn't bother Rojan so much since Tyion had looked perfect from the first glance. What bothered him more was that his possessiveness and protective instincts would be the outward expressions of his love for Tyion. If the man thought he was overbearing and dominant before, he hadn't seen anything yet.

He would be unable to control his need to protect Tyion from any perceived threat either to Tyion's safety or to Rojan's territorial feelings where the man was concerned. In other words, if anyone looked cross eyed at Tyion, or just basically looked at him, Rojan would feel the uncontrollable urge to rip their throats out. Although Tyion

might seem powerless against Rojan's greater size, the smaller man now held the power in their relationship. Tyion provided the light to Rojan's soul. He would be the one thing Rojan treasured above all else. Tyion's happiness and contentment were now Rojan's main goals in life. Everything else was secondary.

A soft whimper from the man plastered to his chest brought Rojan out of his deep thoughts. He glanced down to see Tyion's eyelids fluttering as he woke. Grey-blue eyes looked up at him a moment later. Rojan swallowed past the lump in his throat, not sure of the welcome he would receive from the man that was now his mate. Would Tyion be terrified of him now? It wasn't like Rojan had a great track record where the man was concerned.

"Hey," Tyion reached up to cup his hand tenderly along the side of Rojan's face. "You're back. How're you feeling?"

Rojan's jaw nearly came unhinged as he stared at Tyion in amazement. "Are you-- aren't you afraid of me?" He braced himself for Tyion's response, trying to guard his heart but it was too late. It had been gift wrapped with a pretty little bow and handed over to Tyion the minute they mated.

"Should I be?" Tyion chuckled contentedly. He turned back over to face the other way and snuggled back against Rojan. "If you wanted to hurt me you would have done it last night when you lost your mind and destroyed the galley."

"I destroyed the galley?"

"Yeah and you almost took a piece out of some guy with brown hair too."

"Rav." Rojan knew immediately who Tyion spoke of.

"Rav?" Tyion turned his head to look back at Rojan. "Who's Rav?"

The frown on Tyion's face and the jealous glint in his eyes sent Rojan's heart racing. "Rav is my second-in-command." Rojan grinned when Tyion's eyes narrowed. "We've never been anything more than friends, never will be. I've never been more than friends with any of my crew. Besides, I have you now, pet. I don't need anyone else."

"Do you always have to refer to me as your pet?" Tyion huffed as he settled to his side again. "Can't you just once call me by my name?"

Rojan grabbed Tyion's jaw and turned his head back so that they were face to face. He could see the hurt in Tyion's grey-blue eyes and that just wouldn't do. "Tyion,

my beautiful Tyion," he crooned before lowering his mouth the last few inches and claiming Tyion's lips with his.

The kiss was like the smoldering heat that joined two metals, searing them both. Even though he was knotted in Tyion and buried deep within his ass, Rojan could feel himself harden even more as Tyion opened and surrendered to the kiss. Rojan's tongue traced the soft fullness of Tyion's lips before delving inside to explore and claim his mate. His hand brushed the side of Tyion's body to find an answering hardness at the man's groin.

Wrapping his hand around Tyion's hot shaft, Rojan stroked him softly until the man moaned carnally into his mouth. Rojan started moving his hips, thrusting gently into the tight silk that held him so snugly. It was so perfect he could have cried. As it was, he found himself panting heavily.

Tyion suddenly pulled away from their kiss and turned his head, tilting it toward the bed. "Bite me, Rojan, bite me like you did last night."

Rojan didn't need to be asked twice. He leant down and sank his canines into Tyion's soft skin, the sweet taste of the man's blood flooding his mouth instantly. Rojan growled around the flesh in his mouth, overcome by the sensuality of taking his mate.

Crying out, Tyion filled his hand with cream. The scent of his mate's come combined pleasantly with that of his skin. Knowing he had pleased his mate was all Rojan needed to pushed him over the edge. He felt his cock thicken inside of Tyion to the point he could barely move. The knot attached to Tyion's sweet spot vibrated as Rojan's release roared through him, filling the smaller man with his essence. Rojan's eyes closed and a wave of pleasure rolled over him just as Tyion moaned brokenly and more hot liquid covered his hand.

Retracting his teeth, Rojan licked the small bite mark, savoring each drop of blood that crossed his tongue. He could see Tyion's rapid breathing in the small beat at his neck. It made him happy to realize it matched his own racing heartbeat perfectly.

"My beautiful Tyion," he whispered as he nuzzled the side of Tyion's face. "My beautiful little human mate."

"Mate?" Tyion suddenly turned to look at Rojan, a curious frown covering his face. "Does that have to do with all that claiming stuff Doc was talking about?"

"It might," Rojan answered cautiously, not sure what Doc had told Tyion.

"Does it have anything to do with the fact that you can't leave my ass right away?" Tyion shrugged a little as

his face flushed. "Not that I mind, you understand. It's kind of nice that you have to cuddle with me. I just wondered what that was, that thing inside."

"It's called a knot," Rojan was amused by the redness of Tyion's face, especially considering they were still connected. "When a Phangar claims his mate, his cock swells during the claiming and knots inside his chosen one."

"Why?"

"For many reasons, I suspect," Rojan said. "If my chosen mate had been a female it would ensure that we were together long enough that my seed would take root."

Tyion snorted. "Well, that ain't gonna happen."

"No, but it ensures that we have time together after having sex, time to hold each other and just be together, maybe talk or sleep or whatever it is that we want. We just have to do it together."

"Will it happen every time we have sex?"

Elation filled Rojan at Tyion's words. Tyion wanted to have sex with him again. He wrapped his tail around his mate's thigh, grinning when the tip brushed Tyion's balls and the man groaned. "It might."

"So . . . this means I'm your mate?" Tyion held his breath.

Rojan could hear hesitation in the broken question. He grabbed Tyion's chin once again until the man looked up at him. "You *are* my chosen mate, Tyion."

Tyion blinked uncertainly. "What does that mean?"

Rojan let Tyion turn his face away and cuddled the man closer to his chest, tucking Tyion's head under his chin. "It means that you belong to me."

"I belonged to you before, remember?" Tyion's voice was heavy with sarcasm. His jaw clenched grimly. "You bought me. I'm your pet."

"I knew who you were at the auction house, that you were my mate," Rojan said. "Doc suggested I give you time to get to know me before I claimed you."

"Well, that was stupid," Tyion snapped. "I would much rather be your *mate* than your *pet*."

"To the outside world you will always be my pet," Rojan resigned himself to pissing his mate off. He seemed to be extremely good at it. "Only a few races recognize a mating bond with humans. Most will see you only as my pet. And to the outside world, to keep you safe, we must continue that practice."

"Does tha--" Rojan felt Tyion's hard swallow. "Does that mean you're still going to punish me?"

"I don't want to spank you if I don't have to, Tyion, but you have to understand that there are rules that have to be followed, rules that will keep you safe." Rojan took a deep breath and let it out slowly. He could feel the tension in Tyion's body. "You're in a world you don't understand and I don't want anything to happen to you."

"And the other?"

"Other?" Rojan frowned. He hadn't realized a person's face could get as red as Tyion did.

"Whe-- when you to-- touched m-- me in th-- the exam room," Tyion stuttered quickly before burying his face in the pillow.

Realization dawned on Rojan and dropped him into a pit of hell. This was why Tyion had been so upset when Rojan rubbed the lotion on him, why he lied. Tyion thought he was being punished again. It also explained Tyion's pleading.

"No, I will never punish you again in that manner, Tyion, I swear," Rojan said fiercely. "I never meant it to be a punishment and I'm sorry it was perceived that way. You were just so upset and I thought if I could take your mind off of what was happening . . ."

"So you thought you'd jerk me off?"

"Jerk you off?" Rojan frowned. "I am not familiar with this term."

"Jerk me off . . . play with my dick."

Rojan cocked his head to one side and arched an eyebrow. "It worked didn't it? You forgot all about what the doctor was doing and concentrated on me *jerking you off*."

"I also hated you for it," Tyion snapped. "Is that what you wanted? For me to hate it when you touch me?"

Rojan closed his eyes, remorse at his words and his actions filling him. "No, Tyion," he said softly, "that's not what I wanted. I *never* want you to hate me touching you. I was just trying to help you."

Tyion was quiet for so long that Rojan began to worry he'd torn something apart with his callous actions that might never be repaired. He felt it in the ache in his heart, the tears prickling in the corner of his eyes. "I'm sorry, Tyion."

"Just don't do it again," Tyion said. "If you're going to touch me, touch me, but don't use it as a form of punishment. I don't want to hate you."

"What do you want?" Rojan was overjoyed when he realized Tyion was going to give him a second chance.

"Well, I'd like not to be punished at all but somehow I don't see that happening. I think it would be best if you just told me exactly what you expect of me."

Rojan regretfully felt the knot recede. He carefully pulled free of Tyion and rolled him onto his back. He wanted to look at his mate while they talked. He wanted to see the expressions on his face, to be able to look into those beautiful grey-blue eyes.

"I'd like to be able to tell you that none of this will ever be a problem but I don't want to lie to you. You're in a world that you aren't familiar with and it's not an easy one. With the exception of those currently on this ship, I don't trust *anyone*. Never have and never will. It's kept me alive."

"You make this sound like a horrible place," Tyion frowned.

"It's not that bad, not really, but there are dangers."

"Like what?"

"Well, I told you that humans are not part of the United Planetary Alliance. As such, they have no rights." Rojan was choosing his words *very* carefully.

"Do you know how wrong that is?"

"Wrong or right, it's the way it is, Tyion. Unless you carry my mark, anyone can take you from me. Anyone

outside of those on this ship will consider you a piece of property."

"Yeah, about that marking thing," Tyion started playing with a strand of Rojan's long midnight hair. "What exactly is it?"

"Every pet has to have his or her owner's mark. It tells everyone that you are legally owned and belong to me. As long as you wear my mark, it is illegal for anyone to take you from me in any system governed by the UPA"

"Wait," Tyion said as he smacked his hand against Rojan's chest, "someone might take me?"

"Humans are very prized in many systems. They make very good pets. With your coloring and your looks, you would be an even bigger treasure. I have no doubt that that there will be many that will want you."

"You won't let them, right?" Tyion asked quickly. "I belong to you and you're going to keep me, right?"

Rojan stroked his hand down the side of Tyion's face. "Oh yes, I am keeping you. That's where my mark comes in. It is also why you must always do as I say. There are many dangers out there as I explained to you, dangers you do not understand. If you always do as I say I can keep you safe."

"Will it hurt?"

"Will what hurt?"

"The mark? Will it hurt?"

Rojan caressed the soft skin of Tyion's throat as he thought about the marking process. "It might," Rojan wished he could promise his mate differently, "but just for a little while. I could have Doc put you to sleep while we did it, wake you up afterwards."

Tyion shook his head. "I'd prefer to be awake for it."

"Very well, pet." Rojan was enjoying the sensation of his mate's soft skin under his fingers. "Would you like to know what sort of mark I've decided on?"

Tyion nodded.

"There is a design that symbolizes my clan, my people. There is also a design that symbolizes my family name. If I combine the two and add my own special touch, we could have it tattooed here," Rojan trailed his hand around Tyion's neck. "Everyone would know you belonged to me."

"And you?" Tyion whispered. "Will you get a mark too?"

"Would you like me to?" Rojan watched, fascinated, as Tyion's face turned a rosy red. He could tell from the way Tyion avoided his gaze that the man did want

him to wear a mark. "I think matching marks would be nice, but mine'd have to be on my arm, okay? Only pets have marks on their necks."

Tyion shook his head. "No, it's okay, I understand. I'm just thankful that you're willing to wear something for me."

"We're mated now, Tyion. I belong to you now just as much as you belong to me. I can never be with another. I'll never even desire another."

Tyion's head cocked to one side. He looked a little shocked, his eyes wide, his mouth open. "Really?"

"Really." Rojan grinned. "Any desire I may have had for anyone except you is gone."

Tyion chuckled lightly. "I kind of like that idea."

"However, it does create a new set of problems for you." Rojan grinned at the confused look on Tyion's face. "You are mated to a Phangar, one of the fiercest races in the galaxy. That ferocity comes with a lot of aggression."

"And that means what?"

"Never stand too close to someone. I may perceive it as a threat to what belongs to me. Never ever do anything to put yourself in danger. If something happened to you, I wouldn't be able to control my rage. And please try to be understanding when I get possessive."

"You mean when you start rubbing on me and purring?"

Rojan briefly closed his eyes and nodded. "Yeah."

"Actually," Tyion said shyly, "I kinda liked that part. It made me feel safe and loved."

"Just remember that when I'm in that state, your safety is my *only* priority. I will kill anyone who tries to keep you from me, even if they're a friend. You'll be the only person I recognize. Your scent, your taste. But you are never in any danger when I'm like that. I'd die before I'd hurt you."

"I figured that out in the galley."

Rojan smiled. He leaned his head down and rubbed it against Tyion, letting a small purr escape. He was stunned by the power it seemed to have over his little mate. The man groaned in pleasure and arched into him sensually.

"God, I love the way your chest rumbles when you do that."

Rojan purred louder. He hadn't seen this side of his mate before and it intrigued him. It was also a side he wanted to see more of. Tyion looked so uninhibited, as if they were just two lovers in bed instead of master and pet.

The possessiveness Rojan felt for Tyion suddenly took control of his emotions. He needed to get his little mate marked so that everyone would know who he belonged to. He had to see his mark on Tyion *now*, for his own peace of mind.

"Tyion, pet, I want to go get you marked."

"Now?" Tyion's eyes popped open and he leaned back to look up at Rojan like he was crazy. "As in, right now?"

Rojan nodded.

"Um, okay."

"Do you not want to be marked?"

Tyion's face flamed again. "No, it's not that." His eyes dropped as he shrugged his shoulders. "I just kind thought we were going to . . . well . . . you know."

Rojan was thrilled to his toes. Tyion was expressing a desire to be intimate with him. He couldn't have been happier about that turn of events, but as much as he wanted to fuck his little mate again, right now he needed to see his mark on the man. *Then* he'd fuck him into the wall.

"Oh, we are, I promise you. Over and over, and over again." Rojan rolled to the side of the bed and stood, reaching back for Tyion. "But right now I want my mark on you."

"You and your mark." Tyion laughed as he took Rojan's hand and climbed from the bed. "You're obsessed with it."

"I want to see my mark on you," Rojan said defensively as he began dressing. "I want everyone to know that you belong to me."

Tyion rolled his eyes and planted his hands on his hips. "Fine. Since we're leaving our rooms, do you think you can find me something to wear? *Someone* shredded my clothes last night."

If Rojan's cheeks could have turned red through the darkness of his skin, he'd be flaming right now. Without saying a word he walked over to panel on the wall and pushed it, causing a door to swoosh open. Rojan grabbed a grey body suit out and handed it over to Tyion.

"You expect me to wear this?" Tyion incredulously held the suit up to his body. It fell to the floor and then some, obviously way larger than Tyion's small body.

"Just put it on, pet, trust me."

"Yeah, uh huh," Tyion stepped into the pant legs of the suit then pulled the rest up his shoulders.

Rojan smiled at how adorable Tyion looked in clothing that was obviously too big for him. He zipped it

up. The moment he closed the button at the top of the zipper, the bodysuit shrank to fit Tyion's smaller form.

Tyion yelled and pulled at the material, panic written all over his face.

"Tyion, relax, it's fine" Rojan reached over to grab the man's hand when Tyion started yanking on the neck of the bodysuit. It was all Rojan could do to keep from laughing. "The material is made to fit whoever is wearing it. The button at the top activates it."

"Why didn't you say that in the first place?"

"I really didn't think of it, I'm sorry." Rojan shrugged. "I guess I'm just used to it."

"Well, say something next time, okay? That was really freaky." Tyion pushed his shaking hand through his hair. "I thought I was going to choke to death."

"Well, if it's any consolation, you look fantastic in it."

"Really?" Tyion started twisting this way and that as he tried to get a good look at himself in the grey bodysuit. It seemed his panic of a moment before was suddenly forgotten in favor of a tight bodysuit.

Rojan wasn't lying, the man looked fucking amazing. The grey fabric hugged Tyion's body like it was painted on. Rojan was almost against taking him out in it.

The only reason Tyion would be leaving the suite wearing it was that it was a very common outfit and no one but Rojan would find anything wrong with it. Rojan wrapped a possessive arm around Tyion and pulled the man into his embrace. "Just remember to stay close, hmm?"

Making sure he kept Tyion by his side, Rojan led them down the corridor to the infirmary. They passed a few of Rojan's crew but the glare he sent their way caused them to scurry on quickly. Rojan imagined that after the previous night, not many of his crew wanted to deal with him right now. He'd have to explain everything to them later, *much* later.

"Doc?" Rojan spotted the blue-skinned doctor coming out of another room, a chart in his hands.

"Rojan, you don't look any worse for wear," Doc said. "How are you feeling?"

"Embarrassed."

"Nonsense," Doc placed the chart down on the table. "You weren't in your right mind. All of us know that. I'm just glad that your pet was here to bring you down."

Rojan watched the doctor look Tyion up and down. He knew the doctor did it out of concern for Tyion's well being but he was unable to keep a small growl from

escaping. Doc's eyes instantly snapped up to his and the man took a step back.

"Well, I see that Tyion is okay." The doctor clasped his hands together. "Can I assume you have mated?"

"Yes, Tyion is *mine*." Rojan didn't realize how growly his words sounded until he felt Tyion's elbow jab into his abdomen. Even though the tap didn't hurt in the least, Rojan grunted so that Tyion would know he got the message. "I'm sorry, Doc. Tyion and I are here to get our marks."

"*Our* marks?"

Rojan smiled. "Yes, Tyion will be getting his around his neck. I will have a matching tattoo on my arm."

Doc's lips twisted together for a moment then he nodded. "Very well. Please have your pet hop on the table and pull his suit down to his waist." he walked to a cabinet and started pulling items out. "Rojan, will your pet be put to sleep during the procedure?"

Rojan chuckled when Tyion rolled his eyes. He knew Tyion didn't like being talked about like he wasn't there, but until Rojan gave permission, Seron would not directly address the man. It was against the Laws of Ownership.

"Tyion, aren't you going to answer Doc?"

Tyion's eyebrows shot up. "You mean I'm actually allowed to talk?"

Rojan could have sworn he heard a small snicker from the doctor but when he looked over, the man's face looked completely serious. Rojan turned back to Tyion and lifted him up onto the exam table. He unhooked the top button for him and watched his pet pull the bodysuit down to his waist.

Arousal filled him instantly at the sight of Tyion's naked chest, lightly rippled abdomen, and slick pale skin. Tyion truly was the perfect mate. Rojan groaned and licked his lips. It was all he could do not to reach for the man.

Tyion arched an eyebrow and wagged a finger at him warningly. "Don't start."

Rojan grinned and turned to Seron when he walked up with a vidpad. "What exactly do you want for the mark, Rojan?"

"Something like this," Rojan took the stylus pen from Doc and started drawing on the pad. After drawing for several moments he felt he had the design he wanted, so he held the vidpad out to the doctor. "Here, and I'll be having the same on my forearm."

The doctor didn't say anything, but Rojan saw the corners of his lips turn up as he went to get the marking

machine. Seron walked back over to them and stood next to Rojan as he turned the little device on and punched several buttons.

Rojan saw Tyion stare with horror at the small device and chuckled lightly. "It won't hurt much, Tyion, promise."

"How the hell does it work?"

"See the design I drew?" he pointed to the vidpad screen.

Tyion glanced over at the drawing, his mouth dropping open. For a moment, Rojan thought Tyion didn't like the design until the man looked up at him. "Rojan, this is wonderful. You drew this?"

"Well," Rojan was pleased as punch by Tyion's reaction to the design. "I had a little help. The tribal designs for my people and my family were already in the computer. I just put my own spin on them to come up with a design I liked."

"It's beautiful, Rojan." He smiled as he looked up at his master. "I really thought you were going to come up with something outrageous but this is really nice. I like it. It's going to look really hot on your arm."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah." Tyion's eyes widened as Doc leaned toward him, the marking device in his hand. The little man leaned back and pointed to the device. "Um, how does that thing work?"

"Now that the design has been transferred from the vidpad, Doc just takes it along your neck and the marking tool does the work. It won't take more than a few minutes."

"Wow, cool," Tyion was amazed. "Tattoos back home take hours."

"This is a little different than an Earth tattoo, Tyion. It can't ever be removed."

"Never?" Tyion choked.

"Nope, it's coded to both your DNA and mine. As your owner, I have the choice to make the mark temporary, which means it could be modified if I sold you to someone else, or to make it permanent."

"And?"

"It's permanent, Tyion. It can't ever be removed or changed."

Rojan hadn't realized how much tension was in Tyion's body until the man let out a loud sigh. He reached over and wrapped a warm arm around Tyion's waist, pulling the man against his chest. "I'm keeping you, Tyion. No temporary marks."

Rojan's skin tingled as Tyion's hand rubbed over his forearm. "Even for you?"

"Yes, pet, even for me."

CHAPTER 6

Tyion stretched his chin up again, turning it left then right as he tried to get a better look at the tattoo marking his neck. He hadn't been lying when he told Rojan that he thought it was beautiful. It was. It was also very weird seeing it on his skin.

"It looks very sexy," Rojan purred in satisfaction.

Tyion glanced at Rojan's image in the mirror. Damn, that man was big. Standing straight up, Tyion's head barely came to Rojan's nipples. His eyes caught sight of the matching tattoo on Rojan's arm and he couldn't help but smile in satisfaction.

A perverse possessive part of Tyion liked seeing the mark so blatantly displayed on Rojan's body where everyone would see it and know that the big man belong to him. Where that feeling came from considering his situation, Tyion had no idea.

"I have a surprise for you," Rojan said as he walked over to sit on the bed.

Tyion glanced over his shoulder curiously. "Oh?"

Rojan seemed to regard him carefully before he responded. "You know you're mine now, no matter what, right?"

Tyion frowned. His heart suddenly started to pound with fear. What in the hell was that supposed to mean?

"You said you wouldn't be selling me."

"Oh, no," Rojan jumped to his feet and quickly crossed the room to wrap his arms around Tyion. "I have no intention of giving you up, ever. You belong to me and always will."

"Then what did you mean?" Tyion couldn't keep himself from leaning into the hand Rojan cupped around the side of his face for comfort. He smiled a little when he realized the hand covered the entire side of his face.

"I know this has all been very hard for you."

"This?"

"Being taken away from your home, taken somewhere you've never been before, sold into slavery, and being mated to an alien."

The corner of Tyion's lips lifted up. "It hasn't been *all* bad."

"Yeah?"

Rojan's breath was hot against Tyion's neck as he tilted his head back. It sent shivers down his spine, but in a

good way. Tyion moaned as soft kisses were placed against his skin. He wasn't sure he'd ever get used to the way Rojan seemed to crave him.

"Is this your surprise?" Tyion whispered.

"No." Rojan chuckled. "This is because I can't seem to keep my hands off of you."

"I'm okay with that."

"I'm taking you home to--"

"You're taking me home? Why? What did I do?"

Unable to keep the anxiety out of his voice or face, he looked up at Rojan, his blood running cold as he imagined Rojan taking him back to Earth and leaving him to the lonely existence he'd suffered before.

"I'm taking you home so that you can gather your belongings, Tyion. I want you to have something of yours to make you feel more comfortable in your new life." Rojan gripped Tyion's chin tightly, his eyes intent. "But hear me well, pet. You won't be staying. You belong to me and you go where I go. Understand?"

Tyion quickly nodded his head in agreement. He didn't protest when Rojan hugged him close. Tyion just buried his head in the crook of Rojan's neck. He felt like he was losing his mind. He didn't know which way was up.

He was a slave now, a pet, something that he should have hated with every fiber of his being. Instead, the thought of being taken home and never seeing Rojan again sent fear and panic racing through Tyion so strongly he thought he might pass out. Tyion's hands felt clammy. He couldn't quite seem to catch the breath in his lungs and his chest ached right where his heart was. The stronger Rojan held him, the more the man talked of keeping him, the better Tyion felt. And if that didn't confuse the shit out of Tyion, he didn't know of anything that could.

"I have a cat," Tyion said softly as he rubbed his cheek against Rojan's chest. "Can I keep my cat?"

"I'd rather talk to Doc before I give you permission, Tyion." Rojan's hand stroked the back of Tyion's head. It was a soothing gesture and Tyion guessed that the man could feel his agitation. "I need to make sure that your cat can travel through space before I say yes. I wouldn't want anything to happen to it."

"Okay, I can understand that." Tyion nodded. He hadn't thought of that. He'd be devastated if anything he did harmed his closest friend and confidant. Harry'd stood by him through thick and thin. "I really get to have my stuff?"

"Tyion, I don't want you to be miserable with me," Rojan said. "This isn't punishment. If having your stuff, things familiar to you, makes you more comfortable, it's my duty as your master to make sure you have them."

"But?" Tyion just knew there was a *but* coming.

"Before we land you need to fully understand that you will not be staying. I want your promise that you'll leave when I say it's time to go, no arguments." Rojan's face grew grim. "If you can't give me that promise, I can't allow you to leave the ship when we reach Earth."

Tyion started to open his mouth to answer when a terrifying thought entered his head. He sat up quickly and looked at his master. "Rojan, what happens if someone sees you?" Tyion didn't think Rojan would blend into the general population. Besides being huge, he had pointed ears, and fangs, a *tail*. There was no way he wouldn't be noticed.

"We'll just have to hope that doesn't happen."

"Hope?" Tyion squeaked. "Rojan, we're not talking about blending in with the population here. You have pointed ears and a tail. I don't think we're going to be able to hide that."

Rojan chuckled. "You'd be surprised, pet. My people have been coming to Earth for centuries. We haven't been caught yet."

"Hello, Roswell?"

"Roswell?"

"June 1947, an alien ship crashed near Roswell, New Mexico," Tyion said. "They discovered extra-terrestrials, alien corpses, and advanced technology that the Air Force exploited. It's where microwave ovens come from, you know."

"Tyion, the heating effect of microwaves was discovered in 1945 by an American engineer named Percy Spencer, when he was building magnetrons for radar. It was not technology brought to Earth by extra-terrestrials."

"Says you." Tyion crossed his arms over his chest and glared up at Rojan. Tyion was suddenly crushed against Rojan's rumbling chest as the man laughed. He rolled his eyes and leaned into Rojan's chest again.

"Not to worry, pet, we have ways of hiding our appearance from humans."

Tyion frowned, the corners of his lips turning down. "I just don't want anything to happen to you." He plucked absently at a piece of thread on his jumpsuit. He didn't understand the feelings he had for the man who had bought

him, claimed him, and marked him. It went against everything he believed in. And yet, Tyion couldn't deny that he was having them. The thought of anything happening to Rojan made Tyion's stomach cramp. The thought of never seeing Rojan again made him feel ill.

"Rojan, maybe we shouldn't go," Tyion whispered. "I like my stuff and all, but I'm not sure it's worth you being discovered. If anything happened to you, I'd . . ." Tyion shook his head as he imagined the worst case scenario. "I've heard about what our government does to aliens. It's not pretty. They'd experiment on you and . . . and . . ."

Tyion wasn't prepared for Rojan to set him down on the bed. He looked up, worried he'd said too much. He had no idea what went on in a master/pet relationship. No idea how Rojan might react to his feelings. Tyion didn't even know if he was *allowed* to have possessive feelings about Rojan, he was just a pet after all.

He watched Rojan walk across the room and open a small panel on the wall, pulling out a small black device that looked like a large bracelet. Rojan closed the panel and move back to the bed. He fit the device onto his wrist and pushed a few buttons. The air around Rojan shimmered and lost focus for a moment.

Tyion's breath hissed from his chest and he quickly scooted up the bed and away from the stranger that suddenly stood before him, a totally human looking stranger. The only thing that was the same was the size of Rojan's body and the black color of his skin. Everything else was gone, the claws, the fangs, the pointed ears, even the tail. It was all gone.

"Ro-- Rojan?"

"It's still me, pet."

Well, at least the voice was the same. Tyion slowly crawled closer until he knelt on the bed right in front of the man. He hesitated then reached out to touch Rojan. The man *felt* the same. Tyion could even feel the same slick, hairless skin under his fingertips. Rojan just looked different, really different

"How . . .?"

"It's called an animated displacement device, or ADD," Rojan reached down and punched a few buttons on the bracelet. The air around him shimmered again. When it settled back into place, Rojan once again stood before Tyion. "It's only good for small amounts of time but it will at least get us into your quarters and back out again."

Tyion laughed, and then covered his mouth with his hand when he realized his laugh had a slight hysterical tone

to it. Masters and pets, aliens, outer space, and animated displacement devices. Tyion was losing his mind.

Rojan seemed to feel Tyion's anxiety. He took off the small wrist device and placed it back in the wall panel then walked back to sit on the bed next to Tyion. He sat there patiently, waiting, not saying a word.

"This is all very confusing, Rojan," Tyion whispered as he reached down and grabbed Rojan's hand for comfort.

"I know, pet, and I can only hope it will get better with time." Rojan squeezed Tyion's hand. "Just remember that you're not in this alone, pet. We're mated, remember? It's the two of us together forever."

Rojan's words filled Tyion with hope and a sense of belonging he didn't remember feeling, even back on Earth. Tyion had had boyfriends on Earth. He'd been on countless dates and had several one night stands. He'd even lived with one guy for a few months.

Tyion just never remembered feeling truly wanted, not before Rojan. Tyion suddenly felt an overwhelming urge to show Rojan how much the man meant to him, even if he was afraid to voice his feelings. He moved around and dropped to his knees between Rojan's legs, reaching for the button at the top of Rojan's bodysuit. A strong grip around

his wrist stopped him. Tyion looked up, worried he may have overstepped his boundaries. It was kind of hard not to. He didn't know what they were.

"What are you doing, pet?"

Tyion grinned and pulled his hand away from Rojan's. He reached for the button on the bodysuit again, hitting it then slowly pulling the hidden zipper down until it pooled around Rojan's waist.

A small tug at the stretchy material helped Rojan's hard cock pop free. Tyion scooted forward until his face hovered over the large mushroomed head. He peeked up through his eyelashes as he stuck his tongue out and licked up the small droplets of pre-cum glistening on the top of the head.

"Tyion," Rojan groaned. Tyion swallowed as much of Rojan's length as he could. He felt Rojan's hand grip his hair, bunching it between his fingers as the big man shuddered. "Fuck, Tyion, your mouth . . . *god!*"

Tyion licked his way up the hard shaft and sucked at the engorged head to taste his mate's essence. He moved up and down Rojan's cock, letting the head graze the back of his throat and then moving up to suck and swirl his tongue over the head. He could feel Rojan thicken and tense in his mouth. Rojan became so thick that Tyion's jaw

began to ache. He started bobbing faster, unsure of how much longer he could last. He reached down and stroked his finger across Rojan's balls. The small silky sac instantly drew up close to Rojan's body.

Rojan came hard, shouting out his release and Tyion swallowed greedily, savoring the sweet and tangy taste of his lover's seed. He continued to lick and suck, refusing to release the cock in his mouth until Rojan went limp.

Licking his lips clean, Tyion glanced up to see Rojan staring down at him. His golden eyes were heated, lustrous. Tyion's blood pounded with desire. Rojan looked sated, happy. Tyion eagerly climbed into the arms Rojan held out to him.

"Thank you, pet," Rojan said more softly than his usually gruff, dark, and deep tone. Tyion started to lift his head to ask Rojan if he was okay but the larger man tucked Tyion's head against his chest. "Sleep, pet. We should be to your planet soon and you need your rest."

Tyion's cock was hard but curiously enough, he didn't feel the need to have an orgasm. The blow-job he'd given Rojan satisfied him way more than any sex he ever remembered having with anyone else. He was hard, yes, but he was content.

Tyion curled into Rojan's larger body and relaxed. He could feel Rojan's warmth wrap around him as the man's hand gently stroked his hair. Rojan began to purr. Tyion let the soft, comforting rumble he could feel against his cheek lull him into sleep.

* * * *

Tyion woke up alone and didn't like it much.

He'd spent the night with Rojan's large warm body wrapped around his and without the man he was cold. He rolled over and glanced around the room, dismayed to find it empty.

Climbing to the side of the bed, Tyion searched for the bodysuit Rojan gave him earlier. Instead, he found a new one folded neatly on the chair by the bed. Tyion smiled at Rojan's thoughtfulness and grabbed the garment. Trying to remember how Rojan had worked the shrinking outfit as he pulled it on, he cautiously hit the button.

This one was two-tone blue, and fit Tyion like a glove just like the last one had. Tyion chuckled as he checked it out, turning this way and that. He shook his head, amazed at how well the strange material hugged his ass. He looked *good*. He hoped Rojan thought so as well.

Tyion smiled and headed for the door. He wanted to track Rojan down, then get something to eat. Tyion was starving. This time he remembered how the handpad worked and the door swished open immediately. Tyion stepped out of the room and racked his brains for the way to the galley. Chuckling, Tyion realized he had been a bit distracted last time, so he figured he'd do his best. He figured he could always ask for Rojan if he got lost.

After a couple of wrong turns, Tyion finally found the galley. He could actually hear the noise from inside the vast room before he even reached the doorway. Tyion's steps faltered as he looked inside. The room seemed filled with people, but Tyion quickly realized there were only a few people inside. They were just all so huge.

Searching the room, Tyion's heart skipped when he spotted his dark-skinned, black-haired mate sitting at one of the tables. He only had eyes for the gorgeous man as he made his way across the floor to Rojan, although he could feel several sets of eyes watch his progress across the room. By the time he reached his destination, the galley had fallen silent. Tyion stopped next to Rojan and glanced around apprehensively. He shakily realized that he and Rojan were the center of attention.

Tyion started to tremble with apprehension. He didn't know what was expected of him in public as Rojan's pet and he didn't want to embarrass the man or make him upset. The decision was thankfully taken out of Tyion's hands when an arm wrapped around him and pulled him down onto Rojan's lap.

Tyion curled into his mate for comfort, gripping the front of the man's bodysuit as a cheek was rubbed soothingly against the top of his head. When the purring started, Tyion instantly relaxed. He breathed in deeply. He didn't understand how Rojan's purr made him feel safer but he wasn't above wrapping the sound around him.

"Did you sleep well, pet?"

Tyion nodded.

"Are you hungry?"

Again, Tyion nodded. He didn't want to lift his head and acknowledge the people in the room around them. He much preferred staying in the small circle of contentment he felt while wrapped in Rojan's arms. The hand lifting his chin lifting wasn't going to allow that, though. Tyion looked up into Rojan's topaz eyes.

"There's the beautiful face I missed."

Tyion arched an eyebrow at Rojan. "You wouldn't have missed it if you'd stayed in bed with me."

A soft chuckle from across the table let Tyion know that Rojan wasn't the only one who'd heard his words. Tyion could feel his face heat up as he turned to look at the man sitting across the table from them. Tyion recognized the man as the one Rojan called Rav.

He was tall, but not as tall as Rojan. His skin wasn't black like Rojan's but rather a dark brown, almost chocolate, color. The man did have the pointed ears, claws, and tail though. That and golden eyes seemed to be the only features he shared with Rojan. *Rojan's eyes were prettier*, Tyion thought loyally.

"Pet, this is Ravcor, my second in command," Rojan said. "We just call him Rav. Rav, this is Tyion, my mate."

Tyion nodded at Rav. He ignored the cocked eyebrow and small smirk on the man's face. "You're the one that tried to stop Rojan earlier." Tyion snickered. "That was really stupid. Rojan was ready to rip your arms out and beat you with them."

The smug look quickly fell away to be replaced by a pained grimace instead. "Yeah, well . . ."

"Be nice, pet," Rojan admonished, grinning. "It's Rav's job to keep everyone safe onboard the ship. He's in command when I'm not."

Tyion wasn't sure he liked that. "Does that mean he's in charge of me too?"

"Only when it comes to your safety."

"And I still don't think going to Earth is a safe move," Rav frowned at his captain.

Tyion tensed when he felt Rojan's body stiffen beneath him. He peeked up at the man through the soft fall of his hair. Rojan's jaw was clenched and he didn't look happy.

"Consider how you would feel if someone kidnapped you in your sleep, took you away, and sold you into slavery on Earth, a world you know nothing about. You have nothing of your own, nothing that looks familiar, and some alien-looking creature telling you that you're now their slave." Rojan's fist clenched as he set it on the table. "Would it make you feel better if you were allowed to have some of your personal possessions with you?"

Tyion was stunned that Rojan understood how out of place he felt, then chose to defend his feelings to a friend. He leaned up close to Rojan's ear. "I like this particular alien-looking creature," he crooned. Rojan's arm tightened around his waist. A small kiss was placed on the side of his head.

"I like this particular slave too," Rojan whispered before turning his attention back to Rav. "I know you don't like it. You don't have to. You just need to make sure we land close to Tyion's quarters and that we remain undetected by Earth radar."

"Fine, but I still don't like it." Rav shook his head and waved a hand at Rojan. "You never would have agreed to something like this before your little pet came along. Having a pet has obviously made you lose your senses."

Rojan started to open his mouth. Tyion knew his mate was going to argue, he could feel Rojan's thighs bunching with tension under him. He reached up and placed his finger over Rojan's mouth, receiving a dark arched eyebrow in response. Tyion just smiled and glanced over at Rav mischievously.

"Are you saying you wouldn't want a human pet of your own if you had the chance?"

"I may desire a human for a pet but I would never let him sway my way of thinking or let him effect my decisions that way."

"Really?" Tyion asked incredulously. "When we get to Earth, let me introduce you to a friend of mine. He might change your mind."

"Tyion, you can't let anyone know we're there,"
Rojan said quickly. "If someone discovers us . . ."

Tyion soothingly patted Rojan's arm. "Not to worry,
Rojan, Cory would never say anything if I asked him not
to."

"Cory?"

"Cory was, is, my best friend besides Harry. He--"

"Harry?"

"My cat, Harry Houdini." Tyion chuckled.

"Harry Houdini?" Rojan frowned when the name
sounded familiar. "Wasn't he a human magician known for
being an escape artist?"

"Yes, which is exactly why I named my cat Harry
Houdini," Tyion said. "He can escape from anywhere.
Harry could escape from a round room with no doors or
windows."

"How?" Rav folded his hands together and leaned
forward as if very interested in what Tyion had to say.

"That just doesn't make sense. How could someone escape
from a round room with no doors or windows? Can he
disappear or fade through walls?"

Tyion blinked. *Was this dude serious?* "Um . . . that
was just a figure of speech. Harry is just very good at
getting out of places."

Rojan chuckled and pulled Tyion back against him. "Just finish telling us about your friend, Cory."

"Oh yeah, well, like I was saying, Cory is my best friend besides Harry. He'd do anything for me, as I would for him. I hate the thought of leaving him behind." Tyion looked down and started plucking at the fabric of his bodysuit. "I'm all Cory has. He's all I have. It's always just been the two of us, and well, Harry. I don't know what he's going to do without me."

A sudden thought came to Tyion as he thought about Cory being all alone without him. He glanced up at Rojan. "Can you own two pets?"

"Tyion--"

"Please?"

"Pet, it's not that simple," Rojan said.

"We'll be good, I promise," Tyion said quickly as he reached over to clutch at Rojan's bodysuit. "You'll never have to punish either of us. We'll do everything you say."

"Tyion, stop, that's enough." Rojan grabbed Tyion's hands and pulled them off his clothes, squeezing them tightly in his hands. "Under normal circumstances, I could have two pets. Hell, I could have a hundred pets if I wanted them but we're not in normal circumstances. You're more than my pet. You're my mate. That means only you."

While Rojan's words warmed Tyion's heart, they also made him sad. He dropped his head down onto Rojan's chest and tried not to let his tears free. He already missed Cory and it had only been a couple of weeks. He didn't know how he was going to feel knowing he'd never see the man again.

"I'll take him."

Tyion's mouth dropped open as he lifted his head and stared across the table at Rav. Surely the man hadn't just said what Tyion thought he did. Rav had no reason to take Cory on as a pet.

"Why?"

Rav shrugged. "One human pet is as good as another one."

"No, I don't think so."

"Why not?" Rav asked. "You want your friend to come with you, don't you?"

"I want Cory with me, but I don't think you'd be very good for him."

"Why not?" Rav seemed genuinely interested in Tyion's response. He also seemed to be totally oblivious to the callous way he talked about Cory, as if he were an object to be bought and sold.

Tyion suddenly realized there was a huge difference between Rojan and Rav, the main one being how they thought. Tyion knew to the outside world he would always be considered Rojan's pet but the man treated him like a mate. Rav saw him as just a pet.

"You don't see me or Cory as anything other than a commodity to be bought or sold, do you?" Tyion asked as he watched Rav closely. He wanted to see every reaction the man had to his words.

"You *are* a pet."

"And that's exactly why I don't want you to have Cory." Rav looked confused, as if he truly didn't understand Tyion's meaning. "We're living, breathing beings, Rav. We have feelings, wants, and desires. We are no different than you or Rojan."

"You're only human."

"And you're not."

CHAPTER 7

Rojan held tight to Tyion's arm as they stepped out of the spaceship and walked onto planet Earth. He'd watched a lot of vidcasts about Earth, but nothing prepared him for how different it was from his own world, or any of the others he'd visited.

For one, there were trees everywhere. Rojan wasn't sure he had ever seen so many trees in his life. The sky was blue and the grass was green and there seemed to be a lot of both. In a word, Earth was beautiful.

It also seemed to be very primitive. Cars drove on the ground, the buildings were made of trees, and people were dressed in the strangest manner. Rojan suspected he looked much the same as they did, dressed as he was in pants and a shirt rather than his usual bodysuit. He still felt very weird about it.

"I'm down the street here," Tyion pointed, "just a few blocks."

Rojan nodded and followed after Tyion, Rav right behind him. He knew his jacket hid the weapon holstered under his arm, but he felt nervous enough that he wished he could carry his weapon in his hand. Rojan didn't like going

about on unexplored worlds without protection. He kept a close eye on everyone they passed. Except for a few strange looks, which seemed to send Tyion into peals of laughter, no one paid them any attention. Tyion tugged him down a cement sidewalk until they reached an older red brick building.

"This is it," Tyion gestured to the stairwell leading to the second floor. "I'm upstairs."

Tyion seemed excited to be home. Rojan was wary. He didn't want to have to force his mate to go back to the spaceship with him if Tyion changed his mind about staying. Rojan would do it, though, because leaving Tyion behind was not an option. He just didn't want to force the man.

"This is my apartment," Tyion said as he stopped in front of one of the doors. He looked a little abashed. "I, uh, I don't have a key."

Rojan grinned and reached over for the door handle. He turned it until it snapped and the door swung open. Tyion walked in, Rojan and Rav right behind him.

Leaving Rav to wedge the door closed, Rojan looked around the room that his mate called home.

It didn't seem like much. A well-used and faded couch sat against one wall, a small wooden coffee table in

front of it. Near the kitchen was a small dining table with two chairs. There were three doorways on the far wall. Rojan could see through them just enough to recognize that two were bedrooms, the other a bathroom.

The small apartment seemed well organized, but also well-worn. There were a few items here and there that Rojan knew would be coming with them just by how well-kept they were. Others he hoped they could leave behind.

Rojan couldn't understand how Tyion could be so attached to the place until the man let out a delighted squeal and raced across the room. Rojan crouched down low and started to reach for his weapon until he saw Tyion pick up a small furry creature and cradle it to his chest.

The smile Tyion sent him was brilliant, happy. In that moment, Rojan didn't care what he needed to do to make sure *Harry* was safe. If this furry little black creature made Tyion so happy, then the damn cat was going with them into outer space.

"Harry, I presume?"

Tyion nodded happily and brought Harry over. Rojan frowned when the cat hissed and jumped out of Tyion's arms to run across the room and cower under the scratched and chipped coffee table. Tyion went rushing

after the small cat, cooing and making strange mushy noises.

"I don't think your cat likes me, pet."

"He just doesn't know you," Tyion insisted. "He doesn't like strangers much. He'll like you once he gets to know you."

Rojan doubted it. "Tyion, he's a cat. I'm a Phangar. I'm not sure we mix well." Rojan sighed when Tyion looked up at him, his eyes desperate. "But, I'll try to get along with him." Rojan knew he'd made the right decision when he was once again graced with Tyion's brilliant smile. Yeah, he was a sucker for that smile and he knew it. He'd get along with the damn cat or one of them would die in the trying.

Rojan was betting on it being the cat.

"Find something to put Harry in, pet, and grab the rest of your stuff, whatever you want to take with you. We need to get going back to the ship. Our ADD's will only last so long."

Tyion nodded and ran to his bedroom. He was back a moment later with a small tan-colored box. It had holes in the sides, a handle on top, and a metal grate across one side. Tyion set it on the floor, spread a small blanket inside it, and then fished Harry out from under the coffee table.

The cat growled and spat but went into the small box without too much fuss. Tyion quickly closed metal grate, locking Harry inside. He leaned down and stuck his fingers through the metal grate and crooned again.

"Tyion!"

Tyion jumped, his face turning red as he looked up. "Sorry, I just wanted to make sure Harry was okay."

Rojan nodded and waved his hand. "Just get to it."

Tyion climbed to his feet, lifting Harry's box and setting it on the table. A moment later, Rojan was watching as his mate raced around the apartment, grabbing item after item to take with them. It was all placed in stacks on the coffee table next to Harry.

His mate was just coming back into the living room with a suitcase when the front door started to push open. Rojan was across the room in the blink of an eye, putting himself between Tyion and whoever might be coming in.

"Tyion?" a tawny-haired man said as he opened the door and stepped inside. "Are you here?"

"Cory?" Tyion peeked cautiously around Rojan's body.

Rojan eyed the small man. He had to be at least a couple of inches shorter than Tyion. He had light brown hair that was lightly frosted on top, and a lean body that

might have aroused Rojan in the past. Now he could only appreciate the man's good looks.

The low growl that came from Rav, however, told Rojan his second-in-command was appreciating a lot more than just the man's good looks. Rav seemed riveted, his eyes watching every move the smaller man made.

"Tyion!" the man shouted in glee.

"Cory!" Tyion stepped out fully from behind Rojan.

Rav's growl became even more intense when Cory raced across the room right past Rojan to hug Tyion. Rojan wasn't too pleased with the sight of his mate in another man's arms either, although he was pretty sure Rav hated it for another reason. With the way Rav was behaving, Cory just might be joining them whether he wanted to or not.

"Where the hell have you been?" Cory demanded, thrusting Tyion from him. He planted his hands on his hips and glared at Tyion. "Do you have any idea how worried I've been? Harry was going out of his mind." Cory frowned and glanced around the room. "Where is Harry, anyway? He's been greeting me at the door every day when I come home since the night you left."

Tyion gestured to the cat box on top of the coffee table. He looked apprehensive, as if he were waiting for the

screaming and yelling to begin. Rojan briefly wondered what type of man Cory was if he made Tyion this nervous.

"Are you leaving, Ty?" Cory asked softly as he looked at the stuff stacked on the table next to Harry. Rojan could see the anguish in Cory's eyes as the man looked back up at Tyion. "You're leaving? Were you even going to say goodbye to me?"

"Yeah, about that." Tyion twisted his hands together. "I am leaving but I was kinda hoping you'd come with me."

"Where're you going?" Cory asked. He suddenly frowned. "And where have you been? You've been missing for more than two weeks. You just left, no note, no phone call, nothing. You were just *gone*."

"It's a really long story and--"

"Tyion," Rojan interrupted as his animated displacement device began to beep, letting him know that his time was running out. A few more minutes and his disguise would shimmer away. "You need to hurry up, pet."

"Yeah, I'm getting to it," Tyion said as he glanced back at Rojan. "I just--"

"Pet?" Cory asked, clearly astonished. "He calls you *pet*?"

Tyion's head whipped around. "Oh, it's not like that. Rojan is--"

"Running out of time, pet." Rojan poked Tyion in the shoulder with his finger.

"I'm hurrying, swear."

"Tyion, what the hell is going on?" Cory asked quietly as he leaned toward Tyion. "Who are these men? Did they have something to do with your disappearance? And where did you find people so freaking big?"

"Rojan? No, of course not," Tyion said as he turned his attention back to Cory. "Rojan kind of rescued me and--"

"Tyion," Rojan smirked as he interrupted and poked his mate again, "you need to save the explanations for later."

"Okay, I just--"

"Rescued you from where, Tyion?" Cory snapped in irritation. "From who?"

"Like I said, it's a long story and I'd be happy to tell you but--"

"But, we're running out of time, pet," Roland said, poking Tyion for the third time. He was starting to enjoy the irritated little glares Tyion kept giving him. It was cute.

"Tyion, what's going on here?"

"Look, I'd love to explain it to you right now but--" Rojan poked Tyion for the fourth time. Tyion swung around, his face reddening with frustration. His eyebrows were drawn together in a deep frown. One hand landed on his hip, the other wagged at Rojan in annoyance. "Would you *stop* that?"

"Ty, he seems really big," Cory said cautiously. Rojan could see Cory grab Tyion's hand and tug on it. "Should you be talking to him that way?"

"To Rojan?"

"Ty," Cory whispered as he looked past Tyion to Rojan, "he could fold you in half without breaking a sweat."

Tyion snorted and stroked his hand over Rojan's chest even as he glanced over his shoulder at Cory. "Rojan would never hurt me."

"Says you."

Rojan rolled his eyes, suddenly understanding where Tyion got that particular phrase. It had seemed weird when Tyion used it before. He didn't quite understand it, but one thing was suddenly becoming clear, Cory and Tyion shared a brain.

The small device on Rojan's wrist beeped again, more urgently this time, the little lights glaring red. Rojan

grimaced as he reached down to touch one of the buttons. "Time's up, pet," he warned as the air around him began to shimmer.

Cory cried out and took several steps back, dragging Tyion with him as Rojan's animated displacement device shut down and his true form appeared. Rojan could see Rav shimmer into normality just beyond him.

"Run, Ty," Cory screamed. His face was pale, his eyes as wide as they would go.

Rojan growled low in his chest at the thought of his mate running from him. Thankfully Tyion tugged his arm free of Cory's grasp and started walking back toward him. He didn't like anyone trying to keep his mate away from him. Tyion was *his*.

"Come, pet!" Rojan immediately wrapped an arm around Tyion's waist when he neared, pulling the smaller man into the curve of his body. Rojan purred to let Tyion know he wasn't upset and leaned down to rub his cheek against the top of Tyion's head.

"Ty-- Tyion," Cory stammered. "Wh-- what's going on?"

"This is Rojan," Tyion gestured back at Rojan. "I guess you could say he's my master."

"Master?" Cory blanched, going even paler than he was before.

"Owner?"

"Ty . . ." Cory looked panicked. He bounced from foot to foot, his eyes darting wildly from Rojan to Tyion to Rav and back again.

Tyion sighed heavily as he leaned back in Rojan's arms. "Look, it's real simple Cory. I was kidnapped, taken right out of my bed and *kidnapped*. Whoever took me, well, they weren't from around here."

"You think?" Cory scoffed.

"You're not helping, Cory."

"Sorry."

"Anyway, I was taken into outer space, and yes, I do know how strange that sounds but Rojan and Rav kind of prove I haven't completely lost my mind. You probably guessed they're not from around here either."

"Yeah, the ears and tail were kind of a dead giveaway." Cory mocked sarcastically.

Tyion nodded. "Yeah, I thought so too, so imagine my surprise when Rojan showed up in an alien auction house and bought me."

"He bought you?" Cory gasped. "Like a slave?"

The disgust on Cory's face was evident to everyone in the room. Rojan determined that he might need to do a little more research into Earthling customs. He knew slavery happened every day in a large part of this planet but apparently it wasn't something Tyion or Cory were used to.

"It's not as bad as that."

"You're a slave, Ty," Cory snapped. He gestured to the arms Rojan had wrapped around Tyion's waist. "How can it not be as bad as that?"

Rojan's heart swelled at the small chuckle that fell from Tyion's lips. "I may be a slave but this particular master comes with benefits."

Cory suddenly lost his panicked look and took on one that seemed almost interested. Rojan sincerely hoped so for Rav's sake.

"Oh?"

"Rojan comes from a race that mates for life."

Tyion grinned. "And I'm his mate."

"Mate?"

Tyion tugged the edge of his shirt down, showing off the mating tattoo on his neck. Cory inhaled sharply. Rojan grinned as he pulled up the sleeve of his shirt, baring the matching tattoo on his arm to Cory's stunned gaze.

"You got a tattoo?" Cory whispered.

"Mating mark," Tyion corrected. "Rojan and I both have one so that everyone knows we belong to each other."

"You sound almost excited." Cory frowned.

"I am," Tyion agreed. "Rojan can show me worlds I've never even dreamed of, things I have never seen. There's so much to explore and I get to do it with him protecting me, so being his slave isn't so bad. Rojan won't let anyone hurt me."

Cory gestured to Rojan and Rav. "Does everyone look like them?"

"No," Tyion shook his head, "the doc is actually blue." He made a gesture at the top of his head. "He has little antennas at the top of his head."

"Blue?" Cory croaked. "*Antennas?*"

"Yeah, but he's cool, for a doc. He likes to get a little too personal when he's examining you but not in a sexual way. He just asks a lot of embarrassing questions."

"We need to get going, pet," Rojan said as he pushed Tyion toward his stuff. He wanted to give Tyion and Cory more time to talk but they needed to get back to the ship and offplanet as soon as possible. Every minute they remained meant a greater chance of discovery. "Your little friend needs to decide if he's going with us."

"You really want me to go with you?" Cory was starting to pale again. "Into outer space? With Aliens?"

"Phangars, actually, and yes, I want you to go with us." Tyion stepped away from Rojan and grabbed Cory's hands. "We've been roommates forever, friends even longer. I'm leaving and I want you to go with us. I don't know when we'll be back or even if we'll ever be back. I don't want to leave my best friend behind."

"You're not coming back?"

Tyion shrugged. He dropped Cory's hands and turned to start packing his stuff into his suitcase. Rojan could see the tears starting to form in Tyion's eyes and knew the man had turned away from Cory so he wouldn't influence Cory's decision.

"I belong to Rojan now, Cory. I wouldn't want to leave him even if I could. I'm happy with him." Tyion glanced over his shoulder at Cory. "Can you really say you're happy here?"

"Well, no, but . . ."

"Problem solved then," Tyion said. Rojan thought Tyion might have left a few important facts out, but he didn't know Cory well enough to know if they would be important to him or not. "You'll come with me."

"I don't know," Cory said. "This is all . . ."

"Cory!" Tyion interrupted sharply, but Rojan didn't think he meant it in a nasty way. "Get a grip, sweetie. We're going to pack our stuff and leave this lousy planet behind, go off and have us an adventure, okay?"

"Do I get a master too?"

Tyion's face snapped to Rojan, paling. "I . . . er . . ."

"Rav will be your master, Cory." Rojan felt Rav's glance even as he watched the man step toward Cory. He knew Rav felt a connection to the man. The heat arcing between the two men was almost visible. "He'll be responsible for your safety but you'll have to answer to him just as Tyion answers to me. You'll be Rav's pet."

"Do I get one of those tattoos?" Cory asked as he pointed to Tyion's neck.

"That is entirely up to Rav."

Rojan carefully pulled Tyion out of the way as Rav rushed the last few steps to Cory and grabbed the man. Cory let out a high pitched squeak as Rav's arms wrapped around him. His small body was almost totally taken up by the larger man hovering over him, surrounding him.

"Ty!"

Tyion leaned back in Rojan's arms and chuckled at the look of total panic on Cory's face. "If Rav is anything like my Rojan, you're not going to want to fight this, Cory,

believe me. Just let him take care of you. And for god's sake, whatever you do, don't misbehave."

Cory's eyes widened. "Why?"

"These guys have a thing for spanking."

Rojan didn't think it was possible considering how pale the man was, but Cory suddenly turned bright red. Rav growled low in his throat and tightened his arms around the small man further. Rojan was pretty sure a spanking was in Cory's future whether he had been bad or not.

"Captain, we have company," warned a voice over the comlink.

Rojan frowned in dismay as he hit the communication device in his ear. "Report."

"Another ship just entered the atmosphere," Tathen reported, "a C-Class fighter."

Rojan tensed. A C-Class meant bad news. They were used for one thing and one thing only, fighting. They were equipped with several pulse cannons and had the ability to pursue any ship at high speeds. *Not good.*

"Has our location been detected?"

"Not yet but it's only a matter of time. They know we're here and they're scanning for us now."

"Understood," Rojan pushed Tyion toward his stuff. "Be prepared to lift off the moment we return. In the

meantime I want the ship locked down and secured, no one on, no one off."

"Will do, Captain."

Rojan heard the comlink disconnect and turned to Tyion. "Get your stuff together, pet. We need to leave."

"What's going on?"

"Someone followed us." Rojan had a good idea who it was, but he refused to voice it. One, he didn't want to upset Tyion. Two, he could be wrong. But he didn't think he was. Skoran had seemed a tad too pissed off when Rojan bought Tyion out from under him.

"Just grab your stuff, Tyion." He turned to Rav and Cory. "Rav, you need to let Cory get his stuff too. You know as well as I do he won't be coming back. He needs his things to feel more comfortable. Don't make the mistake I did and forget what he needs."

Rav growled low in his throat but his arms slowly loosened from around Cory, finally dropping away completely. Rojan knew the man was barely holding onto his control when Rav ordered Cory to gather his belongings.

Cory had a strange, confused look on his face but did as he was directed. He ran around the apartment with Tyion, both of them throwing items into a pillowcase.

Several minutes later, Tyion and Cory set two full pillowcases and a couple of suitcases in front of Rojan and Rav.

"Is this everything?" Rojan gestured to the items.

"Well, except for Harry."

Rojan smiled. No, he couldn't forget Harry. He grabbed several of the bags, Rav getting the remaining ones. "Grab your cat, pet." The moment Tyion picked Harry up, Rojan grabbed one of his wrists and pulled him toward the door.

"Wait," Tyion dug his heels into the carpet, "how are you going to get back to the ship looking the way you do? Someone could see you."

Rojan pushed a few buttons on his animated displacement device. His features shimmered as he became a tall human. Rav did the same. Tyion gasped.

"I thought you said the device had stopped working?"

"It recharges when it's turned off," Rojan explained. "If it charged enough, we might have enough time to get back to the ship before it shuts down again, but we need to hurry."

Tyion nodded as if he understood but Rojan knew he didn't. Still, the man did hurry out the door, Harry's cage

in hand. Cory looked totally bewildered as he ran after Tyion. Rav and Rojan just looked at each other and shook their heads as they followed their mates out the door.

CHAPTER 8

Tyion's heart pounded with each step he took towards the spaceship. He just *knew* they were going to be discovered. They would be found and Rojan would be taken away from him. He had tried to run to the ship but Rojan made him walk normally, as if they were just out for a stroll in the park. Rojan said they had less chance of being discovered if they blended in with everyone else. Tyion had no idea how Rojan could possibly think he and Rav would blend in with anyone else. Even with his stupid little disguising devise, Rojan couldn't hide the fact that he was seven foot, five inches tall. People stared, a lot.

By the time the great big grey spaceship came into sight, Tyion was almost hyperventilating. He could feel tears gather as he spotted it. Maybe they would make it after all.

"Hurry, Cory," Tyion said as he reached over to grab Cory's arm and drag him toward the ship faster, "the ship is right over there."

"That thing is going to take us into outer space?" Cory whispered. "It looks so small. I thought spaceships were huge. Does that thing actually fly?"

"It's actually bigger than it looks. I haven't had a chance to see all of the inside of the ship yet, but Rojan and I have our own room, there's an infirmary, and a galley where we all eat together."

"We're allowed to see each other?"

Tyion stopped running to stare at Cory, stunned by the lost sound in his best friend's voice. "Of course we get to see each other. Did you think I'd ask you to come with me and then we'd never see each other?"

Cory shrugged, his face looking as lost as his voice sounded. "I don't know. I don't understand how this whole master thing works. What if Rav won't let me see you?"

"You may see your friend, pet," Rav said suddenly from behind them, reminding Tyion that he and Cory were not alone.

Tyion turned to see Rav and Rojan standing behind them in their normal forms. Rav seemed to be devouring Cory with his eyes. Tyion remembered that same kind of desperate look in Rojan's eyes when he was changed. It was a little eerie to see it now in Rav, and directed at his friend, Cory.

"See, I told you, Cory," he said as he followed Rojan's gesture and urged Cory toward the ship's entrance.

"Rav will let us see each other. We're all going to be on this ship together. There's no way we can't see each other."

Cory nodded as he walked quickly beside Tyion. He kept glancing back over his shoulder at Rav as if he didn't know quite what to make of the man, but was intrigued anyway.

Tyion hoped so. He hoped that Cory developed a relationship with Rav like the one he had with Rojan. It really wasn't that bad, even if most of Rojan's universe saw him as a slave. Tyion and Rojan knew differently and that was all that mattered.

"Pet," Rojan said as they entered the ship's large doors, "I want you to take Cory back to our quarters for now. Rav and I need to check in on the bridge. We will join you after we take off."

"Okay."

Rojan's arm suddenly snaked out and wrapped around his waist, dragging Tyion against Rojan's larger body. Rojan leaned down to rub the side of his head against Tyion, purring slightly. "Stay safe, pet, or I'll paddle your ass until you can't sit down."

Tyion grinned. He turned his head and kissed Rojan's neck, then stood on tiptoes to whisper into his ear. Thank goodness the man tended to lean down toward him

or Tyion would have spoken into his chest. "Same goes for you. Anything happens to you and I'm going to be very pissed off." Tyion chuckled at the arched eyebrow Rojan gave him. "Human or not I would still find a way to whoop your ass."

"I just bet you could, pet." Rojan chuckled, amusement moving over his face and sparkling in his eyes. It was a good look on the man. "Now, do as I said. Rav and I will bring your stuff down in a few moments."

Tyion smiled and grabbed Cory's hand, dragging him down the corridor. He was eager to show Cory the ship. He was even more excited to show Cory what outer space looked like. It was an awesome sight.

When they reached his quarters, Tyion placed his hand on the security pad and waited for the door to open. When it didn't, he frowned and tried again. The door still wouldn't open.

"Damn thing," he said. "I never understand these frigging things."

"What's wrong?"

"I don't know. The damn door won't open."

"Did you try the doorknob?"

Tyion snickered. "Um, Cory, there is no doorknob. The door opens using my handprint."

"Dude!"

"I know." Tyion laughed. "You should see Doc's probe. That will really blow your mind."

"Probe?" Cory squeaked.

"Yeah, it's this-- aahhh!" Tyion cried out as the door to his quarters suddenly swooshed open and a large hand grabbed his arm, yanking him into the room so hard Tyion thought his arm might come out of the socket. He dropped Harry's cage to the floor and stuck his hands out to break his fall as he tumbled to the hard floor. Tyion barely had time to catch his breath before Cory was tossed down onto the floor next to him.

"Well, well, what have we here?"

The deep voice that spoke sent shivers down Tyion's spine. He turned and looked up, then up some more. The man standing over him rivaled Rojan in height, that was for sure, but he didn't look nearly as good. In fact, the sneer on the man's face gave him a sinister look. Another man stood next to him, this one looking just as fierce. Still, it was the gun-like thing he held in his hand that scared Tyion the most.

"You shouldn't be in here," Tyion said. He grunted a moment later and rolled to his side, arms wrapping

around his middle as pain exploded in his stomach from the boot jammed into him.

"I didn't say you could speak, slave."

Slave? Tyion's eyes widened at the implication those words gave him. Oh shit, they were in so much trouble. Tyion didn't know who this man was but he obviously came from Rojan's world and not Earth.

"I don't answer to you." Tyion tried to gather his courage, which was hard considering it was fleeing with each glare sent in his direction. "I answer only to my master."

"I am Skoran and I am your master, boy!"

Tyion cringed and hugged his stomach as a kick was aimed in his direction. He felt it glance off his arm. That seemed to anger the man standing over him. He aimed several more kicks at Tyion. Tyion winced and bit his lip to keep from crying out. He didn't want to give this monster any satisfaction, but one well-placed kick landed squarely on his arm. Tyion felt the bone break and screamed in pain. He cradled his broken arm to his chest as he glared up at the man causing him so much distress. Tyion had to bite his lip to keep from crying. His arm throbbed, the agony bringing tears to his eyes.

"Maybe now you will understand who is in charge here."

"Rojan." Tyion grinned despite the pain rocketing through him. He knew it was a stupid thing to say even before he said it, but he just couldn't seem to help himself. Tyion didn't understand who this man was, or how he and his friend got into a secured ship and into Rojan's private quarters. All he knew was that no one got to tell him what to do except Rojan, then Rav if Rojan wasn't available. He didn't have to listen to anyone else and certainly not the maniac standing over him.

The monster standing over him seemed to go crazy at Tyion's words. The anger that filled Skoran's face made his skin turn a deep red as he continued to inflict as much pain as possible on the small human. Nothing Tyion did stopped Skoran from beating him. Tyion felt the first few kicks to his middle and lower body, the punches to his face, the claws that raked across his body, but after awhile the pain was so intense it all ran together until Tyion was one big aching wound.

Tyion absently wondered if Skoran came from a planet of people with red skin, like Doc was blue. It would make sense, both of them being aliens and all. Tyion also

wondered why he was *wondering* about that when he was having his ass handed to him?

He could hear Cory screaming in the background but it was a far off sound, like listening through a cotton filled funnel. He wanted to reassure his friend that Rojan and Rav would come to save them but he couldn't seem to make his voice work like it should. Every time he opened his mouth, small cries fell from his lips instead of the words he wanted to say. Tyion finally just gave up and let the pain surrounding him take over.

As his eyes started to flutter closed, Tyion saw Skoran pick Cory up and carry him kicking and screaming out of the room. He absently hoped that Rojan and Rav stopped Skoran before he could get away with Cory.

His best friend just wasn't set up to be the slave of a madman.

CHAPTER 9

Rojan started to realize something was wrong before he reached the bridge of the ship. It was too quiet. Granted, there weren't a lot of people onboard but he should have at least passed *someone* in the corridor.

Not receiving an answer on his comlink increased his anxiety and sent a shiver of dread down Rojan's back. Lor should have answered him at least. The man was his communications officer, it was his *job* to communicate. Even in an emergency.

His feeling something terrible had happened was confirmed when Rojan found the door to the bridge open. He had ordered the ship secured, under full lockdown. That meant the bridge was to be closed down tight unless you had security clearance. An open door meant either his orders hadn't been followed, which Rojan doubted, or they had a security breach, a bad one. Rojan was definitely leaning toward a security breach. None of his people would disobey his orders. They'd been through too much together and were loyal to a fault.

Rojan pressed himself against the wall beside the bridge doorway. He motioned for Rav to do the same next

to him. He drew his pulse gun and snuck a look through the doorway, quickly pushing himself back against the wall. He held two fingers up to Rav to indicate he saw two people on the bridge and motioned to where they were located in the room. Rav nodded and drew his own gun, waiting for Rojan's signal.

Crouching low to make the smallest target possible, which wasn't easy considering his size, Rojan edged toward the entrance of the bridge again. Moving as quietly as he could, Rojan leaned around the doorway and took aim at one of the two intruders in the room. He could see the barrel of Rav's gun out of the corner of his eye, aiming for the other man. Nodding his head, Rojan and Rav managed to fire their guns in unison, thanks to past boarding experiences. Both men went down instantly. Rav jumped to his feet and raced into the room, heading directly to the security consol to quickly engage the security protocols and restart lockdown.

Securing the ship was first priority, even before searching for lifesigns. Rojan prayed that his people were still alive. He let out a large sigh of relief when the computer reported that most of the crew was locked in the galley.

"They're in the galley," he told Rav as the man walked over.

"And our pets?"

Rojan stopped breathing. *Oops!* The fact his mate should be safe in his quarters had meant he'd been able to follow procedure thus far, but locating them was now necessary for his peace of mind. His hand trembled as he quickly did a scan for human life signs. His heart dropped to his stomach when he only discovered one individual. At least the person *was* in the Captain's Quarters. It meant that Tyion had obeyed his orders, but it also meant he didn't know if it was Tyion or Cory. Rojan noticed worriedly that whoever it was seemed to be fading fast.

Rojan's stopped his hands moving over the console only briefly so he could give instructions to Rav. "Go release everyone and tell the doctor to get to the infirmary fast. Mel needs to get up here on the bridge *now*. I'll go to my quarters once he is. I don't want to stay on this planet any longer than we have to." Rojan cursed the fact that someone had to get everything ready to go.

"Who is it?" Rav asked as he gestured to the red shape lying on the floor of Rojan's quarters. His voice was tense. The computer only showed the general shape of a body, not who it was.

"I don't know." Saying the words caused a physical pain in Rojan's chest. If he lost his pet, he would be lost too. *We haven't been together long enough for this shit!*

Rav stared at the glowing red heat signature on the screen for a moment then nodded his head. He turned and started for the door, pausing to look back over his shoulder at Rojan. "He's my mate, you know?"

"I know, Rav."

"I can't . . . he's . . ." Rojan saw Rav's fists clench as the man shook his head. "If he's hurt or . . ."

"I *know*. Just go, Rav," Rojan said. He did know how Rav felt, and his emotions mirrored the other man's. "The faster we do this, the sooner we find out what's going on."

Rav nodded and hurried out of the room.

Rojan hit a few more buttons on the consol to complete the initial take-off procedure. Mel could finish the steps needed to get them in the air. With one last look at the security consol to insure the ship was completely locked down, Rojan ran off the bridge and headed for his quarters.

His stomach jittered the entire way. Rojan had no idea what he would find when he reached his quarters but whatever it was, it wouldn't be good. There was only *one*

life sign. *Was one of the humans dead? Please let Tyion be okay.*

Rounding the corner of the corridor, Rojan's steps slowed. The door to his quarters was opening and closing over and over again, unable to completely close due to the cat carrier stuck in the doorway. The door just kept slamming against the box. Mewls from inside the box indicated that although Harry wasn't happy, he was okay.

"Tyion?" Rojan called as he neared the door. Not getting a response didn't make Rojan feel any better. He grabbed the cat carrier and pushed it into the room in front of him, and then stepped into his quarters himself.

The amount of destruction done to the room's contents unsettled Rojan, but not nearly as much as the sight of Tyion lying unmoving on the floor in a crimson pool of blood. Rojan cried out as anguish filled him. He raced across the room and dropped to his knees beside his human, uncaring of the bloody mess his pants became. His hands fluttering uselessly over Tyion, Rojan realized he didn't even know where to touch Tyion to see if he was still alive. Every inch of his pet seemed to be covered in blood. Bruises, long scratches, and horrendous claw marks marred his beautiful body. Tyion's arm sat at an odd angle.

"Oh, my pet, who did this to you?" he whispered, his heart already grieving the loss of the man who had come to mean so much to him. Rojan didn't see how anyone, especially a human, could survive the injuries he saw on Tyion's body.

Rojan hit his comlink, hoping Rav had already released the crew from the galley. "Doc?"

"Yes, Rojan?" Seron answered. "I'm on my way to the infirmary now, as requested."

"You need to come to my quarters and bring your medical equipment. I don't think Tyion can be moved."

"Understood." Rojan could hear Doc's pace pick up speed. "I'm on my way."

"Just hurry. I don't . . . I don't even know if he's alive, Doc."

"Check his pulse, Rojan, it's at the base of his ear, right under the edge of his jaw line. If you feel a small beat, then he's alive."

Rojan's hand shook as he did as the doctor directed, reaching over to press his fingers gently to Tyion's neck. His heart fell when he didn't feel anything, but he moved his fingers closer to the jaw line and a slight pulse beat against his skin.

"Oh damn oh damn, oh damn," Rojan chanted as relief filled him.

"Well?"

"He has a pulse but it isn't very strong, Doc," Rojan answered. "I think you need to hurry."

"I'm getting what I need right now. I'll be there in a moment."

Rojan didn't even bother disconnecting the call. He just hit the comlink again and buzzed Rav. "Rav, Cory's missing. Go to the bridge and scan for him. I've already checked the ship. Whoever took Cory must to be from our world, which means there has to be some sort of trace. Tath said we were followed here. Start there."

"Understood."

"And Rav, we *will* get him back."

"Yes, we will," came the determined reply.

Rav was gone before Rojan could say more. His heart ached for his friend, but it also hurt for what Cory might be experiencing. With Rav in pursuit of the missing human, Rojan turned his attention back to his damaged mate.

Rojan settled down onto the floor next to Tyion so that he could be closer to his pet. Reaching out with a gentle, bloody hand, he brushed the caked and matted hair

back from his mate's bruised face and sighed. "Oh, my poor baby, maybe I should have just brought you home? You would've been so much safer." Tyion was so badly injured, Rojan didn't know if the man would survive it. And if Tyion didn't survive, Rojan didn't want to either.

Rojan was a big strong warrior, a rogue who went where he liked and did what he wanted. He was in control of his own life. Waiting for Doc to arrive was almost as painful as watching his pet lie there injured when he was unable to do anything about it. He felt totally helpless, something he couldn't remember feeling in all his years roaming the galaxies.

When the door behind him suddenly swooshed open, Rojan growled and crouched over Tyion's body instinctively. Spotting the doctor, he slowly fought his own nature to relax his stance and make room for the blue man.

It was hard to move back and let the doctor get close when all he wanted was to stay close and protect his mate. Small growls escaped when Doc started poking and prodding Tyion, running scans and generally checking him over, but Seron just smiled sympathetically at him and continued his work.

The waiting was excruciating.

"Well, Doc?" Rojan asked when he couldn't stand the silence anymore.

"We need to get him to the infirmary, Rojan, right now. Do you think you can carry him there for me?" Rojan started to reach for Tyion, eager to feel his mate in his arms, when the doctor stopped him by grabbing his wrist. "Carefully, Rojan, I think he has several broken bones and maybe some internal injuries."

Rojan nodded and moved even more carefully. He slowly lifted Tyion's body and gently rolled the man against his chest. He nearly cried when Tyion didn't even whimper, the man's head just flopped against him lifelessly before coming to settle against Rojan's chest where it belonged.

Rojan quickly followed the doctor down the corridor to the infirmary, walking as smoothly as he could so he didn't jar Tyion's body in any way. Doc opened the door to the infirmary and Rojan carried Tyion right over to the exam table, gently lying him down.

"Is there anything I can do, Doc?"

"Talk to him," Doc ordered as he ran a small handheld device over Tyion's body. Buttons flashed and beeps sounded. Rojan didn't have a clue what they did but

it didn't sound good. "Tyion needs to hear your voice. He needs to know that he's going to be okay."

"Is he? Going to be okay, I mean?" Rojan couldn't keep the hopeful tone out of his voice. He needed Tyion like he needed his next breath.

"It's too soon to tell, Rojan," Doc cleaned away the blood at Tyion's mouth and placed a breathing device over his mouth and nose, "but the more connection Tyion has to this world, the less chance he will go into the next one."

Rojan's eyes snapped up to the doctor at the man's words. He tried desperately to keep his emotions at bay but Seron's words deepened his anxiety even more. He suddenly realized that he could really lose Tyion. His mate could *die*. Rojan couldn't keep his body from shuddering at the thought. He was careful to keep his claws retracted when his anger at the situation overcame him. Instead, Rojan leaned down close to Tyion and started purring for his mate.

"What did you do?"

Rojan was so intent on Tyion he jumped when the doctor spoke. He glanced up at the man and frowned.

"What do you mean, what did I do? I haven't done anything."

"No, just now, you did something." Doc gestured to the small device he held in his head. He looked excited.

"Tyion's vital signs improved."

"I . . . er . . . I purred," Rojan said, feeling his face flush. "Tyion likes it when I purr."

"Do it again."

Rojan leaned closer to Tyion's head and started purring again. He kept glancing back at Seron, watching the man nod his head the louder Rojan purred.

"Keep it up, Rojan, it's working," the doctor said as he started cutting Tyion's clothing away. "I'm going to clean him up and see what we have."

Rojan purred louder, watching as the doctor worked on his mate. Little by little, the blood was cleaned away and they both got a good look at the extent of Tyion's injuries. "Well?"

"His arm is broken for sure, as are a few of his ribs. One rib has punctured his lung, which explains the blood he was spitting up. I also believe he might have a ruptured spleen. Other than that, it's just a lot of nasty cuts and bruises. I'll fix what I can but a large amount of this is up to Tyion. He has to *want* to get better."

Rojan returned his attention to purring for his battered mate.

The internal damage seemed to take the longest to fix. Doc had to wheel in a large machine which hovered over Tyion for what felt like hours, shooting a large green ray of light down onto his stomach. After healing Tyion's numerous broken bones, the doctor closed up the cuts, scratches, and abrasions.

When the doctor finally cleaned everything away and covered Tyion with a blanket, Rojan looked at him in surprise. "That's it? You're done?"

"His injuries are healed, Rojan, the rest is up to him."

"If the damage has been fixed, why in the hell hasn't he woken up yet?" Rojan demanded.

The doctor smirked as he wiped his hands on a towel. "I suggest that you order him to wake up. He is your pet after all. He'll listen to you."

Rojan's jaw dropped in shock. "You think he won't wake up unless I tell him to?"

Doc shrugged. "Couldn't hurt." Rojan watched Seron turn and walk out of the room, before returning his gaze to his sleeping pet. *Could it be that simple? Seriously?*

"Tyion." Rojan cleared his throat. The lump that had settled there when he found his mate unconscious in a pool of his own blood kept Rojan's voice from sounding masterful. He needed to sound strong, demanding, and safe. "Tyion, you've slept long enough. I want you to open your eyes and look at me."

Nothing! Rojan waited, watching Tyion's face closely as he hoped for some small sign that the man was okay. Rojan was pretty sure he wouldn't feel like Tyion was better until the man was giving him shit again.

"Tyion, I've had enough of this," Rojan said, louder, firmer. "Open your eyes or I will paddle your ass and not in a way that you will enjoy." Rojan's breath stopped. *Was that a flutter of an eyelid?* "I'm waiting, pet, and I don't like to be kept waiting. Open your eyes."

There it was again! Tyion's eyelids moved just a little. Rojan's heart pounded when he felt Tyion's fingers move against his hand. Joy blossomed in his chest as he realized that Tyion was trying to fight his way back to him.

"That's it, pet, open your eyes."

More fluttering of Tyion's eyelids and a soft inhale of breath was all Rojan needed to prod him into grabbing Tyion and pulling the smaller man into his arms. He cradled his little man against his chest as he sat down on

the exam table. His hands roamed over Tyion's body as he tried to reassure himself that his pet truly was healed.

Tyion suddenly flinched and began flailing his arms about, hitting and scratching as he screamed so loud that Rojan's eardrums hurt. Rojan grabbed Tyion's hands and pinned them to his side, wrapping the man tightly in his embrace.

"Tyion, damn it," Rojan shouted, giving Tyion a little shake, "snap out of it."

Tyion stopped struggling. His eyes opened fully and he stared up at Rojan for several moments. He didn't even blink. He just stared. "Rojan?"

"Hey, pet." Rojan felt relief overwhelm him to the point that if he had not already been seated, they would have fallen to the floor. "How are you feeling?"

Tyion finally blinked, looking confused. "Okay, I guess."

"Does anything hurt?"

"No, not exactly. I feel a little funny, tired like I did when I first got here but . . ." Tyion broke off as he inhaled sharply and his face drained of color. "Cory! He has Cory!"

"Who, pet, who has Cory?"

Tyion was shaking. His hands griped Rojan's shirt so tightly that his knuckles were white. "He-- he said his name was Skoran, that he was my master."

Rojan remembered that name and it made his blood run cold. How Skoran ever found out who Rojan was and how to find him, Rojan would never know. He did know, however, that he needed to track this man and he had a pretty good idea where to start.

The auction house.

"Rav, are you there?" Rojan waited. "Rav?"

"Sorry, Rojan, but Rav took one of the short runners. He's gone, man."

"*Fuck!*" Rojan stood up and moved to carry Tyion out of the infirmary. "Lor?"

"Yeah?"

"You get Rav on the line and I don't care how you do it. I want to speak to him. I also want you and Tath to get this bucket of bolts off the ground and away from this bloody planet as fast as you can. The longer we're here, the more danger we're in."

"Understood."

"Rojan?" Tyion asked after a moment.

"Yes, pet?"

"What's going on?"

"When you were at the auction house, before I bought you, you were slated to be sold to a man named Skoran."

"That's the man that took Cory."

"Yes, I think he came here for you. He wanted to get his hands on you pretty badly, pet. I saw him kill a guard outside of the auction house when he found out you were gone."

"He-- he came here for *me*?" Tyion squeaked.

"I'm afraid so, pet."

"But he took Cory instead." Tyion's body stiffened. "Why didn't he take me if I was the one he wanted? Why did he take Cory? Oh my god, this is *all my fault*."

Tyion looked like he was about to go into a meltdown. "No, Tyion," Rojan stopped walking. He grabbed Tyion's chin and forced the man to look up at him. "*None* of this is your fault. Skoran is crazy. If it's anyone's fault, it was mine for claiming you. I suspect he didn't take you because of the marking tattoo."

"The marking tattoo?"

"Yes, remember how I explained it can't be removed or altered without my DNA? Skoran knows that. Anyone that saw you would know you didn't belong to him. Anyone from my home world would recognize the design

and know you were stolen. And while slavery is not outlawed, stealing another man's property is. He would go to prison for a very long time."

"So he took Cory instead because Cory doesn't have a mating tattoo?"

"I believe so, yes."

Tyion's hand tugged on Rojan's shirt urgently. "We have to get Cory back. This man is evil, Rojan. He could kill Cory or worse."

"We will, pet, we will." Rojan grimaced. "I suspect that Rav is already pursuing Skoran and Cory as we speak."

"How do you know that?" Tyion asked intently. "He won't return your call."

"Because he took a short runner."

"And that means what?"

Rojan chuckled. "A short runner is a small two man ship. We have a couple of them in the cargo hold. We usually use them for short hops or emergency escapes because they don't have any weapons and are built purely for speed."

Tyion's fingers loosened on Rojan's shirt and he slowly leaned back in Rojan's arms. "Do you really think Rav will find Cory?"

"I have no doubt that Rav will find him and bring him home, pet. He won't stop looking until he finds Cory. Just as you are my mate, my pet, Cory is Rav's."

CHAPTER 10

Tyion could hear people talking as he walked onto the bridge. He quickly scanned the room looking for one specific man. His heart beat faster as his eyes settled on a tall dark haired figure standing in front of one of the ship's consoles. Crossing the room, Tyion pressed his body against the stunning man, wrapping his arms around the man's wide chest and pressing his face into the strong back. He took in a deep breath, feeling his body's reaction all the way down to his toes. *Damn, my mate smells good.*

"If I told you that I've been very bad, what would you do about it?"

Tyion felt the man's chest rumble as he laughed. An arm snaked back and grabbed him, pulling him around in front of Rojan. Tyion giggled as he was lifted up into two strong arms and held up against a broad chest.

"I might have to punish you, pet."

"Promise?" Tyion grinned. His eyes sparkled with happiness at the wide smile Rojan gave him. Tyion doubted he would ever get tired of seeing it. Rojan was gorgeous when he was happy. He was gorgeous when he was unhappy too, but Tyion definitely preferred him happy.

Tyion tended to get laid more often when Rojan was happy and he was all for getting laid. Rojan was magic in bed. The man knew things Tyion never even heard of. This outer space thing was turning into quite the adventure.

Rojan leaned in to kiss Tyion. "I have good news for you, pet."

"Oh?"

"We've heard from Rav."

Tyion's lust-filled thoughts of a moment ago fled as he was reminded of his missing friend. It had only been a couple of weeks but Tyion felt the ache from Cory being gone on a daily basis. Knowing he was being held by Skoran made it even worse.

"Well?" Tyion prompted when Rojan didn't say anything. "What did he say? Has he found Cory?"

"He has," Rojan said. "We're headed in their direction as we speak."

"Really?"

"Would I lie to you, pet?"

Tyion buried his face in Rojan's neck and tried to breathe normally. It was hard to do when his heart beat so fast he thought it might jump right out of his chest. He felt overjoyed that Cory had been found and couldn't wait to see him.

"Is he okay?" Tyion asked as he lifted his head to look at Rojan. His hands clutched at Rojan's shoulders.

"How soon are we going to get there? Can I see him? How bad was it? What happened to Skoran? Did Rav kill him?"

"Whoa, pet, slow down." Rojan chuckled as he held a hand up and placed his finger over Tyion's lips to stop him from talking. "Rav just sent a message that he'd found Cory and where they were. Rav asked if we could come get them. I don't know any more than that."

"Oh." Tyion was disappointed, but at least Rav had found Cory.

"I'm sure everything is okay," Rojan soothed. "Rav wouldn't have asked us to come get them if there was a problem."

"Well, when will we be there?"

"We should reach them in a couple of days."

"Two days?" Tyion gasped. "That's like, forever."

"You've waited this long, you can wait another couple of days." Rojan grinned and carried Tyion out of the bridge and down the corridor. "Now, weren't you saying something about being bad?"

Tyion nodded and wrapped his legs around Rojan's waist, pressing his cock against his mate's abdomen. It started to harden right up as Tyion's mind wandered back to

the large man holding him. He grinned at the flush that suddenly came over Rojan's face. It was almost as good as the cock he felt harden against his.

"I've been very, very bad."

Rojan grinned. "Bad enough to deserve a spanking?"

"Worse."

"Worse than a spanking?" Tyion almost melted at the dark eyebrow arched playfully on the face looking down at him. "You must have been very bad indeed. I suppose I must devise some new punishment for you. I certainly can't have my pet going around misbehaving."

Tyion started panting at the lust he could see burning in the golden eyes staring down at him. Rojan could be very imaginative in his *punishments*. Tyion usually ended up an exhausted pile of cum covered goo with a huge smile on his face. He loved it.

"Yes, please," Tyion winked at the handsome man holding him. "Master."

The End

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stormy believes the only thing sexier than a man in cowboy boots is two, or three men in cowboy boots. She also believes in love at first sight, soul mates, true love, and happy endings.

Stormy lives in the great Northwest region of the USA, with her gorgeous husband and soul mate, six very active teenagers, two boxer/collie puppies, two old biddy cats, and three fish.

You can usually find her cuddled in bed with a book in her hand and a puppy in her lap, or on her laptop, creating the next sexy man for one of her stories. Stormy welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website at www.stormyglenn.com.