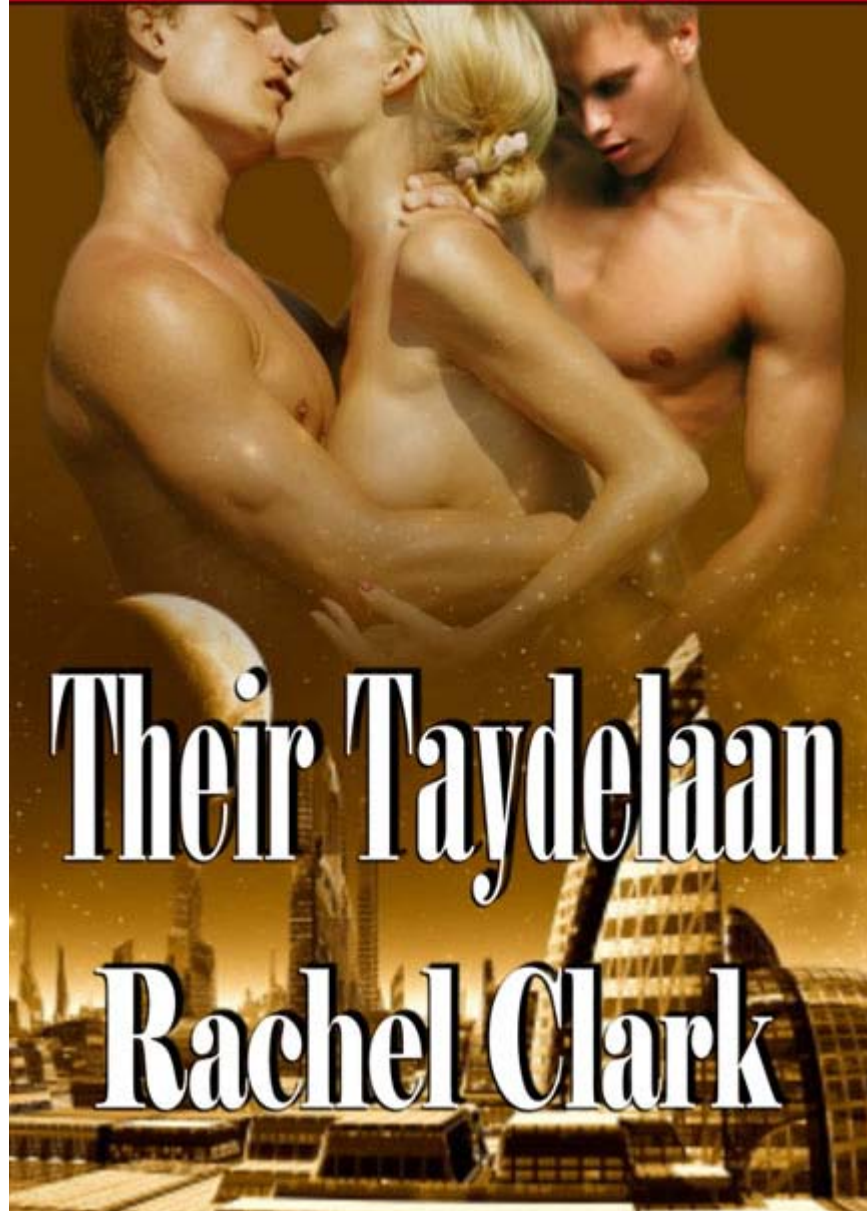


Siren Publishing

Ménage Amour



Their Taydelaan

Rachel Clark

Their Taydelaan

How did bumping into a man in a hospital corridor develop into dreams of red-hot threesomes?

Jade can't understand why she's dreaming of the man she literally bumped into three months ago, but when she actually meets the men from her dreams at her sister's party, things seem to spiral even further out of her control. Unwilling to believe her sister's explanation, Jade still can't deny the telepathic link she now shares with the two men.

Zack and Mitchell have finally found their third, the woman who completes them—their Taydelaan—but she seems intent on denying their future together. Can they convince Jade that being loved doesn't mean being dependent?

Genre: Contemporary, Ménage a Trois/Quatre, Science Fiction

Length: 20,558 words

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MENAGE AMOUR



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DEDICATION

For Kelli

THEIR TAYDELAAN

RACHEL CLARK
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Chapter One

Jade entered the hospital, a part of her cringing at the need for this visit. Kayla had sounded so excited on the phone, and Jade had smiled indulgently as her sister described Jessica and David's beautiful new baby. But when Kayla had slipped and described the child as her daughter, Jade had realized just how much of a fantasy her sister had been living.

She'd spent the last three hours in the car worrying for her sister's mental health. The fact that Kayla seemed to think she was in a loving relationship with a married couple had made it difficult for Jade to stay quiet. She'd only tried to talk to her sister once about it, but the conversation had deteriorated the way they usually did when they disagreed on something.

Jade squeezed past a group of people that seemed to be fawning over a young mother holding a wrapped baby in her arms. Every person was *ooohing* and *aaahing* over the small bundle, and Jade felt her heart clench just a little tighter. She'd accepted a long time ago that if the right man didn't come along soon that she'd never have a family of her own. She was okay with that—she really was—but happy little family scenes like that one were usually something she avoided.

Which is why this visit was doubly hard. Her sister was such a sweet person, and she deserved so much more than what the universe seemed inclined to give her. Hell, after the way one of her exes treated her, the woman should have enough karma points to live a long and happy life. But no, instead she'd somehow come to believe that a married couple loved her and that they would share their baby with her.

Trying not to look at the tiny bundle in the woman's arms, Jade didn't see the big guy until she slammed into him. "Sorry," she said instinctively, relieved to note that she'd walked into a tall, solid wall of muscle and not some frail new mother walking the corridors.

The man wrapped an arm around her middle, held her against him, and then smiled. She wanted to look away, but somehow she couldn't make her eyes obey. He raised his hand and dragged the knuckles down the side of her face in a move that felt very affectionate.

"Hello, beautiful," he said in a deep, sexy voice. Her previously dormant libido kicked in with surprising speed, and she gasped as she stared into the man's perfect face. He was the beautiful one—tall, sleek, muscular, with a smile to die for. Naughty fantasies played in her head even as she sucked in a horrified gasp of air.

Hell, for all she knew this guy was waiting for his wife to come out of the labor ward. Surprised and embarrassed at her willingness to be held by a complete stranger, Jade wriggled frantically to move away. After a moment's hesitation, he released his grip and let her stand on her own two feet.

"Sssorry," she managed to force past lips that seemed unwilling to obey. She went to walk around the man, but he moved and stepped into her path.

"What's your name?" he asked, using that sexy smile to best effect.

Desire unraveled in her belly, and she had to swallow twice before she could even shake her head. She tried to step around him once more, but he moved again, apparently unwilling to let her pass. She

shook her head anxiously as just a hint of fear wound through her brain. It'd been nearly a year, but it didn't stop the memory rising to the surface.

She took a deep breath, trying to control the rising panic. The man's head snapped back as if she'd hit him. The look he gave her seemed full of concern, but this time when she stepped around him, he let her go. She practically ran down the hallway, unconcerned about where she was going. She just needed to escape.

* * * *

Mitchell watched the woman as she hurried to the end of the hallway. Every instinct inside him screamed for him to follow her, but he'd felt her fear and didn't want to be the cause of more. The moment she'd fallen into his arms he'd been drawn to her in a way that hadn't happened since he'd met his partner Zachary. Just that brief touch had strengthened the link he'd felt with the woman, and now he could sense exactly where she was in the building.

He could also sense her distress. He barely held himself still, the instinct to go to her, to protect and comfort her, nearly overwhelming every other sensible thought in his head.

He had no idea how long he stood there, mentally tracking her movements after she'd turned the corner, but it wasn't until he felt Zack's telepathic touch in his mind that he roused enough to fully understand what had just happened.

"Everything okay?" Zack asked in a quiet telepathic voice. Mitchell nodded his head even though his lover wasn't in the same room. Thanks to their mate link, Zack would've felt everything Mitchell felt when he'd held the woman in his arms.

"I think you need to come down to the hospital." He smiled as he sent the words he'd often wondered if he'd ever get the chance to say. *"I just found our Taydelaan."*

* * * *

Fear was still thumping in her chest when Jade finally made it to the room where Kayla held a newborn baby girl in her arms. But something made her stop. Jade stood at the doorway, suddenly worried that she'd made the wrong decision. Kayla looked so content sitting there with a baby in her arms. Who was Jade to burst her delusional bubble?

But it wasn't her baby. The child wasn't her daughter. Genetically that just wasn't possible.

A quick glance at the bed showed Kayla's so-called partners cuddled together. David had his back to the doorway, but it was very clear that he was wrapped around his wife, holding her close.

Jade hesitated. She hadn't seen her sister in more than six months, and that had just been a brief visit. It had been tense and uncertain, and she'd left feeling even more wretched than the first time they'd argued over Kayla's choice of partners.

But where did sisterly concern end and unwanted meddling begin? Jade stepped away from the door and took a seat in the hallway. She'd once promised to try and understand Kayla's unusual relationship. If she upset Kayla now, would her sister push her out of her life completely? Would she refuse Jade's help when her relationship failed?

Making a decision she hoped she wouldn't regret, Jade left the hospital quickly. With a strange paranoid feeling of being followed, she slid into her car and headed for home.

* * * *

"I lost her," Mitchell said out loud as Zack pulled his car into the parking space beside him. His heart felt heavy, his gut hollow, like a part of him had been torn away. Zack quickly got out of the car and wrapped his arms around Mitchell.

“It’s okay, babe,” he said with a confidence he was far from feeling. “We’ll find her.”

“Zack, she was frightened of me. I caught a quick flash of memory, something in her past that scared her really badly, and somehow that fear transferred to me.”

Zack nodded as he held his lover tighter. He’d also felt the woman’s fear, had even understood it came from a memory and not Mitchell’s actions, but he had no idea what it meant for their Taydelaan link. Even now he could feel the way the woman had felt in Mitchell’s arms. In his mind he could feel her soft curves, smell her sweet scent. There was no doubt she was their third.

They just had to find her.

Chapter Two

Nearly three months later...

Jade woke from yet another erotic dream. She'd somehow expected that the dreams would stop while she visited her sister. Although, considering the fact that she'd packed her vibrator, even she hadn't really believed that.

Her nights were becoming increasingly disrupted by unfulfilled lust, and she was beginning to wonder if it was her brain trying to tell her that her biological clock was ticking. She pushed herself into a sitting position and ran a hand through her hair, trying to loosen the knots her thrashing about had caused.

She practically growled when she realized how badly her hand was shaking. At this rate she was never going to get any sleep. Her clit throbbed, her ass pulsed, her breasts ached, and if she closed her eyes she could still see her dream lovers. She tried to convince herself just to go back to sleep, but a full minute of tossing and turning convinced her it wasn't going to happen anytime soon.

After a moment of indecision, she finally reached into her suitcase and pulled out her battery operated boyfriend. She giggled a little nervously as she realized she'd probably used this toy more in the past three months than she had in the two years since she bought the damn thing. She stopped laughing when she saw the newest toy still in her suitcase—a beginner's butt plug. She'd never even considered anal play before, but since the dreams had started her imagination had gone completely wild. Hell, she'd even dreamed of being tied down and spanked.

Considering how frightened she was of being trapped and unable to escape, it had been very strange to enjoy such a dream. She wasn't even sure where the dreams of two men had come from. Somehow she'd woven a fantasy around the guy she'd run into at the hospital three months ago, but she couldn't explain how her overactive imagination had morphed that brief encounter into a blazing hot threesome.

She turned the vibrator on its lowest setting, sincerely hoping the noise wouldn't carry to the other occupants of the household. It was weird enough to be staying in her sister's home while her sister slept in bed with a married couple. The last thing she needed was to wake them with her nightly imaginary encounters.

Jade stroked the vibrator gently over her tingling nipples, and closed her eyes, her imagination picking up where her dream left off. Two men, the men from her dream, lay on either side of her. Each smoothed a hand over her stomach and up to her aching breasts. Gentle fingers plucked at her beaded nipples, and she sucked in a startled breath when they both pinched a nipple tight and then soothed the sting with their tongues.

Two heads, one dark, one light, dipped closer to her chest and laved the erect nubs soothingly. They each ran a hand over her abdomen and dipped lower, tangling in her curls before pressing against her mons. Gentle fingers stroked her slippery labia before pressing into her tight heat.

Trying not to lose herself in the fantasy, Jade lowered the vibrator to stroke it across her already swollen clit. Her legs shook as her orgasm beckoned, but she pulled the toy away, needing to prolong the sensation. She imagined the vibrator was a tongue rolling around her pussy, licking along her slit, dipping slowly inside her folds. She moaned as the feeling morphed, and she could almost feel hands holding her thighs wide, her lover thrusting his tongue deep into her core, another sucking hard on her breasts.

She pulled her knees up, pushing the toy into her pussy at the same time, fucking herself harder. She groaned as her dream lover moved over her and thrust hard into her body, claiming her, marking her, making her his own.

Harder and deeper he thrust into her, filling her, owning her, controlling her. She almost screamed as her orgasm shook through her, her legs shaking, her fingers going lax around the handle as her pussy grabbed at the small toy. The delicious sensations skittered over every inch of her body, her head falling back, her eyes closing as she savored the sensation.

She smiled sleepily as she felt whisper-soft kisses on her face as her dream lover withdrew from her with a contented sigh. But her eyes flew open as she felt her other dream lover slam into her. Confused to find herself still alone, Jade tried to deny the feeling of a long, thick cock fucking her hard and fast. She could feel her legs lifted high and wide even though physically she hadn't moved. She gasped as she felt her ass lifted off the mattress, her anus tingling as something hard pressed against her dark hole.

Orgasm slammed her, every muscle bucking, throbbing, jumping as liquid lava drenched her veins. She panted hard, trying to catch her breath, trying to quiet her low moan, even as the anus pulsed and the sensation of something hard being pushed into her continued.

Finally, gasping, sweating, exhausted, she fell back against her pillows and willed her breathing to return to normal. She closed her eyes as the actual sensation of the vibrator registered in her consciousness. Tiredly, she reached down and pulled the toy from her aching pussy. She barely had enough strength to turn the damn thing off before sleep claimed her.

* * * *

Mitchell woke from the dream just as hot cum pulsed onto his stomach. Holy hell, their woman was hot. He'd dreamed of her nearly

every night since bumping into her in the hospital. He knew that she shared those dreams—and thanks to their mating link, so did Zack—but he wanted it to be real. Wanted to really touch and love and cherish their Taydelaan. If only they could find her.

Zack lay on his side, wide awake, looking down at Mitchell. “I think she woke up this time,” he said with a huge smile on his face.

“Seriously?” It wasn’t that Mitchell didn’t believe his partner. It was just that the news seemed too good to be true. If their Taydelaan was able to retain her link to them even when she was awake, it meant that either their link was growing stronger, or maybe that she was physically closer to them. Hope rolled through his brain.

He glanced at the clock and realized that it was still very early. But as much as he wanted to roll over and go to sleep, the sticky evidence of his own orgasm stopped him. He grabbed the soiled sheet, wiped it over his chest, and then turned to Zack to do the same. His lover smiled indulgently as he touched Mitchell’s face softly.

“I wouldn’t mind a hot bath. What do you say, babe? Want to join me?”

Mitchell smiled and nodded his approval. They’d shared quite a few hot baths lately. Their midnight dalliances with their dream lover had often ended when their woman had woken up, leaving them both hard and aching for her. At least they’d had each other to slake their lust, but until tonight they’d worried that their Taydelaan had lain in her bed alone and unfulfilled.

Well she was alone—a fact he was selfishly grateful for—but at least she’d used her vibrator to find some relief.

As Zack went to fill the bath, Mitchell stripped the sheets from the bed and grabbed a clean set. He doubted that they’d get much more sleep today, but at least this gave them the option.

Zack was already running the bath by the time Mitchell joined him in the room. Even after such an incredible orgasm with their woman, the sight of his mate sitting naked on the edge of the tub as it

filled with water, had his cock rising with interest. Zack smiled when he noticed the lust in Mitchell's thoughts.

"Is that for me?" Zack asked in a teasing tone. "Or are you still thinking of our Taydelaan?"

"Both," Mitchell answered honestly. He loved his mates equally, even if he'd never actually met their woman. Zack grabbed a folded towel and dropped it on the floor at Mitchell's feet. He knelt at the same time that he wrapped a warm fist around Mitchell's hard cock.

Zack licked at the bulbous head, running his tongue over and around the slit weeping pre-cum. He smiled up into his lover's eyes and then engulfed the full length, sucking hard and pumping the base with his fist. Mitchell groaned as memories flashed into his head of the incredible dream sex they'd just shared with their Taydelaan. Zack closed his eyes as he sent his own memories into Mitchell's mind, sharing with him the incredible sensations of fucking their woman.

Mitchell gaped as a thick digit found his ass and pressed inside. The sting intensified for a moment as Zack pressed his dry finger into Mitchell's anus. Somehow the feeling seemed more intense without lube, and Mitchell moaned when the finger slid over his prostate again and again and again. He held Zack's head carefully as he began to rock into his mouth in the same rhythm. His groin felt hot, his blood seeming to boil as the feeling intensified and rippled through his body. Zack hummed against his cock. Mitchell held his breath a moment, his eyes squeezed closed, trying to hold on to the sensation a moment longer.

But Zack twisted the finger in Mitchell's ass, and he lost control. Fucking his lover's face, harder, faster, thrusting deeper, holding him tighter, Mitchell erupted in his man's mouth and held him close as he swallowed. Lovingly, Zack cleaned Mitchell's cock with his tongue, rasping over the hypersensitive skin as Mitchell tried not to move.

"Bend over the vanity," Zack ordered as he pulled the finger from Mitchell's ass. Mitchell moved quickly to comply, always turned on when Zack took control like this. "Watch in the mirror."

Mitchell watched his lover in the mirror as he squirted lube onto his fingers and then pressed the cold liquid against Mitchell's anus. Zack's fingers slid in, scissoring against the tight muscle to loosen it. Mitchell pressed back against him, eager to feel his lover's cock, but Zack slapped his ass and ordered him to stay still.

Mitchell groaned as the sting morphed into heat and flowed down to his balls. Amazingly, his cock stirred to life, and he had a brief moment to wonder where his sudden stamina had come from before images of fucking their woman while his lover fucked him filled his mind. He could sense Zack's satisfaction as he weaved the fantasy for the both of them.

Finally, Zack fit his cock against Mitchell's hole and slid deep. They both groaned at the amazing sensation. Zack pulled out slowly, slamming back in quickly as if he couldn't bear not to be inside his lover. Again and again he pulled out and slammed back in. Mitchell braced himself against the vanity as he watched his lover plough his ass, and together they imagined him fucking their woman.

Sweating, panting, gasping for air, Mitchell tried to slow his heated rush to ecstasy to no avail. Cum splattered the vanity as Zack pushed into him one last time. He could feel his lover's dick throbbing as he poured himself into Mitchell's back passage. Mitchell wrapped an arm behind him, awkwardly holding his lover close.

The image of their Taydelaan coming beneath them took them both by surprise. She shook, she screamed, she writhed, and it was almost as if they could both see her, feel her, taste her.

Finally the image slid away, and once again it was just the two of them, intimately joined in their bathroom.

"We have to find her."

Mitchell gulped in air, trying to catch his breath as he nodded in agreement.

Chapter Three

Jade tried to hide the lingering feeling of being well loved. Hell, even after she'd gone back to sleep she'd somehow managed to have another dream and another orgasm. She even felt a little swollen from fabulous sex that she hadn't really experienced. The vibrator wasn't large enough nor did it vibrate strongly enough to cause this sort of lingering feeling. She literally felt well and truly fucked.

"Good morning," her sister said as Jade wandered sleepily into the kitchen.

"Morning," she mumbled, heading straight for the coffeepot. She grabbed a mug off the shelf above and filled it to the brim with steaming black nirvana. Hopefully the caffeine would wake her up and stop her from saying anything stupid.

"You okay?" her sister asked, her voice laced with a good deal of concern.

"Sure," Jade managed to force out in a cheerful tone. When Kayla narrowed her eyes in disbelief, Jade hoped she'd be satisfied with a half truth. "Just didn't sleep very well. Miss my own bed." Kayla nodded slowly like she doubted her sister's story, but fortunately she let the subject drop.

"Thank you for coming," Kayla said quietly, and for half a moment Jade's brain misinterpreted the meaning of her words. Coming? Yep, she'd done that all right. But then the actual meaning of Kayla's words finally registered, and Jade smiled softly.

"You're my baby sister," she said in a teasing tone. "Where else would I be?"

Kayla smiled and laid a hand over hers. “I know this hasn’t been easy for you to understand, but they love me, and we all love our little girl, and well, it’s wonderful that you can share this special day with us.”

Jade nodded, trying desperately to hide her skepticism. “Our” little girl? Sometimes Kayla spoke as if she truly was the child’s mother, and as her older sister, Jade often felt the need to correct her. But again she bit her tongue. Their relationship had been strained for a while now, and she missed the closeness they’d shared when they were younger. If accepting her sister’s unusual relationship at face value was the cost to having Kayla back in her life, then that’s the price she would pay.

“So what happens at this ceremony?” she asked, trying to sound interested instead of concerned.

“It’s sort of like a christening in a way, but not really a religious thing. More of an introduction and naming ceremony in front of our friends and family.”

“How many people are you expecting?”

“Not many,” Kayla said as her eyes slid away from Jade. Her little sister had never been able to lie to her, and Jade snorted in disbelief.

“That many, huh?”

Kayla had the good sense to look embarrassed and then gave her a rough estimate. “About a hundred or so.”

Considering that Jade was Kayla’s only living family, that meant most of the guests were either friends or from Jessica and David’s families. Jade was about to prod for more information when the baby monitor kicked in and a baby’s high-pitched squeal broke through.

“Sorry,” Kayla said, not looking sorry at all, “Jessica and David are out, so I need to go change her.” Jade nodded her understanding and watched as her sister headed out the door. There was another advantage to a biological clock that was ticking toward the end—no dirty diapers. Jade had never been the clucky type, so it had been easy to convince herself that she was fine without ever becoming a

mommy. Even sweet little Emily with her big blue eyes and chubby wrists hadn't swayed her from her conviction.

She finished her coffee slowly, making sure Kayla had plenty of time to change and dispose of any dirty diapers, and then wandered down the hallway to the nursery. Maybe she should've knocked, but considering it was only her and Kayla and the baby in the house, she felt fairly comfortable that she wouldn't walk in on anything she wasn't supposed to see. Oh boy, had she been wrong.

"What the hell are you doing?" she asked before she could censor her words. Kayla looked up, shock filling her features before she took a deep breath and spoke calmly.

"I'm feeding my daughter," she said without taking her eyes away from Jade's face. She stared at her, almost daring her to show her disapproval.

"Do Jessica and David know you're doing that?" Jade asked in disbelief. Until this moment she hadn't realized just how delusional her sister had become. But Kayla simply smiled, half laughed, and nodded. Still freaking out, Jade blurted another question. "H...how are you doing that?"

Kayla smiled warmly and said, "Same way other mothers do it."

"But you're not her mother. You didn't give birth to her."

Kayla looked down at the child nursing at her breast and then looked over to her sister with a sad smile. "She is my daughter. I know that's hard for you to believe, but it's the truth." She seemed thoughtful for a while and then looked at Jade apprehensively. "David and Jessica want me to explain it all to you." She smiled as if she'd thought of something funny and then continued. "Jessica and David just pulled up in the driveway. They want to be here as well. Apparently," she said with a smirk as if she were talking to someone else in the room, "I'm liable to leave out some important details."

* * * *

Hours later, Jade's mind still spun with worries. Her sister was obviously delusional and her partners were feeding her fantasy. Hell, judging by the turnout at the naming ceremony, she'd fallen into a cult of some kind. Many of the people present had appeared to be trios not couples. And if that wasn't weird enough, most of them had children also.

The fact that Kayla's fascination with science fiction was being exploited and encouraged by a group of equally delusional people just made the whole thing a lot harder to deal with. Fuck, Jade had read stories about cults like these, and none of them had been pleasant. Once they sucked someone into their beliefs, it was damn near deadly to pull them back out.

"Are you okay," David asked as he sat in the seat beside her.

"Peachy," she answered sarcastically. It probably wasn't wise to antagonize the man who thought he was an alien, but she couldn't seem to get her emotions under control. David reached over and took her hand in his own.

"It wasn't easy for Kayla to accept either, but we'll help you through it. Anything you want to know, you just need to ask." Great, the man was already trying to pull her into their delusional little world. Annoyance rose strong and bitter in her throat.

"Sure," she answered with a grin that probably looked more like an aggressive show of teeth, "where'd you park the spaceship?"

David laughed and smiled happily. "Kayla said you had sarcasm down to a fine art. I'm glad to say she didn't exaggerate." He laughed quietly to something only he understood and turned his smile back to her. "Kayla also says that if you'd just pull the carrot from your ass you'd be a lot more comfortable."

Jade didn't smile. That was something that Kayla had been telling her since the brat had grown old enough to sass her. There might only be five years between them, but their parents' deaths so long ago meant that Jade had been forced to grow up a lot faster than she

would've liked. But Kayla had been barely thirteen, and someone needed to be responsible for her well-being.

"I know you care for her," she said to David, carefully trying to choose her words, "but surely you can see how unfair it is to let her believe that Emily is her daughter."

David looked slightly exasperated but smiled regardless. "I know you don't want to believe, but we are telling you the truth. Emily really is the child of three parents, just like many of the others here." Jade glanced around the room filled with strangers milling about. Everywhere she looked people stood laughing, socializing, enjoying the party. Only Jade seemed to be the odd one out. "How about," David said, obviously not thrilled with the idea, "you suspend your disbelief for one night and enjoy your time with Kayla. I know how much she misses having you in her life."

Tears prickled at the back of her eyes. She'd missed Kayla so much over the last few years that the job that she loved and the home that she'd decorated exactly to her own tastes had both started to feel stale, boring, lonely. More than once she'd considered throwing it all away and following her sister to this less than major metropolis. But following her sister like a lost puppy had simply felt wrong, so she'd dragged herself through her day-to-day life and somewhat convinced herself she was happy.

She nodded to David, and he smiled and wrapped an arm around her shoulders. "Come on," he said softly. "I know Kayla wants our daughter to bond with her Aunt Jade." Jade nodded and tried to be happy even as her head screamed at her not to fall headfirst into Kayla's delusions.

Chapter Four

“She’s here!” Zack said as soon as he stepped out of the car. His Taydelaan’s essence niggled at his senses. Mitchell nodded his agreement as they both clambered out of the car and headed into the reception area. If they hadn’t wasted all day searching the city for the one woman who could complete them, they would’ve found her hours ago. How lucky were they to find their Taydelaan at a Sesturian Naming Ceremony?

Hope and anticipation were quickly replaced with disbelief as they entered the main room and found their woman in the arms of another man. Zack’s temper flared white hot, and the woman stiffened and looked over her shoulder. He knew the exact moment she recognized him, because her eyes widened, her heartbeat sped up, and her panties dampened. Good, at least he wasn’t going to have to beat the crap out of the man with his arm around her.

The man beside her dropped his arm and turned to see what Mitchell and Zack’s Taydelaan saw. Zack finally recognized his old friend and breathed a sigh of relief that David was happily married. It didn’t explain why he had his hands on Zack and Mitchell’s woman, but it was a convenient way to finally learn her name.

“David,” he said through clenched teeth. He could feel the same tension coming off Mitchell. Goddess help David if he was stupid enough to get in their way. “Care to introduce us to your friend?” David looked startled at first but quickly brightened when he glanced at the woman beside him.

“She’s the one?” he asked, pointing his thumb at the woman with a wide grin plastered on his face.

“Yup,” Mitchell growled.

“Zack, Mitchell, I’d like to introduce you to my sister-in-law, Jade.”

That stopped Zack for a moment. Sister-in-law? Was their Taydelaan Sesturian? But then the other possibility entered his head and he breathed a sigh. The genetic scientists had assured them that their Taydelaan was a human female, that’s why they’d spent the last five Earth years on this backward planet searching for her.

“Kayla’s sister?” Mitchell asked in a rough voice. Zack could feel his lover’s nervous energy. He wanted, no needed, to claim the woman in front of them. Shit, Zack could even feel the enzyme starting to produce in Mitchell’s body. If he’d ever doubted Jade was the one, it was well and truly settled now.

“That’s right,” his woman said as she crossed her arms and gave him an aggressive look. He grinned at her attitude. His woman was fire and ice, and he was going to love every moment of their time together.

He could feel Mitchell’s caveman instincts roaring to the surface, but it was the niggles of fear coming off Jade that had him moving to calm his lover. He slid his arm around Mitchell and held him tight against his body, his hand running soothingly up and down his partner’s side.

“It’s lovely to finally meet you,” Zack said as he held his hand out for Jade to take. She looked at his outstretched arm but didn’t move to touch him.

“Finally?” she asked with an eyebrow raised to telegraph her skepticism.

“You mean, you don’t recognize the men from your dreams?” He grinned triumphantly as her eyes widened, but then she pulled the reaction back under control, glanced over her shoulder, nodded as if she’d been communicating with someone, and turned back to them.

“It was nice to meet you,” she said dismissively and turned to leave. Mitchell practically growled beside him, and Zack gave a

pleading look to David. After three months of sharing dreams with the woman, he already felt like she belonged with them, and to watch her walk away like this was sending his thought processes into chaos. His confusion was nothing compared to the instincts driving Mitchell.

They'd both heard stories of forced matings. They hadn't quite believed the wild descriptions about the enzyme, but considering the nearly out-of-control urges they were both feeling, the legends had to be true. Hell, at this rate one or both of them was going to do something truly stupid, like throwing the woman over their shoulder and dragging her back to their home.

David was studying Mitchell closely, and he cast a worried glance to Zack before Kayla joined their little group. She wrapped her arm through Jade's, effectively holding her in the conversation. Mitchell seemed to calm a little now that their Taydelaan wasn't about to walk away, but he was still on edge, still struggling for control.

"Why don't the five of us find somewhere more private to talk?"

"Private?" Jade squawked, looking terrified.

"Jade," Kayla said, calling her sister's attention, "Zack and Mitchell traveled a long way to find you. The least you can do is give them a few minutes to explain."

"Traveled?" Jade asked, sounding confused. But then it was like a lightbulb switching on. Her eyes narrowed, her jaw firmed, her lips drew into a thin line. Zack struggled to hold his lover back. The type of challenge their Taydelaan was throwing at them was the exact opposite of what Mitchell needed right now.

"Get her out of here," Zack whispered urgently, hoping, praying that David heard him clearly enough. He must've relayed the information to Kayla because she quickly turned her sister around and practically dragged her from the room. Jade looked confused and terrified and everything in between, but Zack could only concentrate on one lover at a time. Mitchell needed him. Needed to mate with his lover. Now that the enzyme was producing, his instincts were taking over, and he could no longer think clearly.

Zack very nearly had to carry Mitchell into a side room. He nodded a quick acknowledgement when he saw David take up a protective stance in front of the door. Zack turned to lock the door and found himself pressed hard against the wood, his lover's cock jammed between his ass cheeks, their clothes the only thing separating them.

"Need to fuck you," Mitchell growled brokenly as he scraped his fangs over Zack's neck and shoulder. Zack nodded, trying to soothe his lover with their telepathic connection. Shaking hands wrapped around him, cursing the belt buckle, the snap, and the zipper on his dress pants. Zack tried to help him, worried that Mitchell might resort to ripping the damn things just to get them off.

He managed to snag the small tube of lube from his pocket before Mitchell pushed the offending material to the ground. Thank the goddess that they'd been lovers for years. If this had been their first time together, the rough claiming might've shocked him. He managed to slick lube onto his hand and grab his lover's cock for the briefest of moments before the hard rod rammed into his back passage.

He nearly howled at the rough entry but could barely breathe as his lover pulled him far enough away from the door to bend him over and thrust deeper. Over and again, slam in, pull back, slam in again. A tight fist wrapped around Zack's cock, and he panted heavily as his lover reamed his ass. Trapped in his lover's suddenly superior strength, Zack grunted, trying to hold himself against the door, hoping it was solid enough to handle their incredible fucking.

And it was incredible. He'd never been taken this thoroughly before. He felt possessed and surrounded and owned but also completely and thoroughly loved. "Love you," Mitchell managed to breathe just a moment before his fangs sank into Zack's neck and pumped the enzyme into his blood.

Mitchell's movements turned explosive, and Zack moaned his release even as Mitchell held his cock tight, refusing to let him blow. Again Mitchell's speed increased, but Zack's knees gave out and he half collapsed against the door. With strength likely linked to the

enzyme's production, Mitchell held him up, dragging Zack back onto his cock again and again.

Mitchell finally withdrew his fangs as his own orgasm started. He grunted and held Zack hard against him. Zack moaned just before unconsciousness claimed him.

* * * *

Mitchell collapsed to his knees, remorse and fear for his lover warring with the relief that they'd finally mated properly. He pulled his cock gently from Zack's ass, relieved to see that there wasn't any blood. Zack looked red and sore and swollen, but at least Mitchell hadn't caused any serious injury. Thank the goddess his lover had retained the foresight to get some lube onto his cock. Mitchell knew without a doubt that he would've taken his lover without it if none had been available. He shuddered at the implications. Zack had loved him and protected him since the moment they met. Mitchell hated the idea that he would've let his man down if he'd been given the chance.

He shuddered as he lowered himself to the floor and pulled his lover into his arms, cradling him protectively as he tried to wake him. Fear nearly choked him before Zack opened his eyes, but when he did it was to smile seductively and pull Mitchell's head down for a slow, lingering kiss.

"Love you," he said as he caressed the side of Mitchell's face. Tears of relief filmed Mitchell's vision, but he refused to let them fall. Zack closed his eyes tiredly and slumped back against Mitchell's chest. "*Next time,*" he whispered into Mitchell's mind, "*we'll find somewhere more comfortable.*"

* * * *

“What the hell?” Jade groused as her sister drove the car like a maniac. “First you want me to talk to them, and then you drag me out of there like the place is on fire.”

Kayla didn't seem to be listening, and Jade growled in frustration. The woman was probably having one of her delusional, fictitious conversations with her so-called partners. Jade had always considered her younger sister quite intelligent, so how the hell had she let herself imagine voices in her head?

“Do you have any idea how delusional you are?” she yelled at her sister.

“Do you have any idea how much trouble you caused back there?” Kayla countered.

“Trouble? What the hell did I do?” She shook her head, trying to clear the strange emotions flying through her brain. She was completely pissed at her sister, so why the hell were her nipples tingling? She crossed and uncrossed her legs as heat swam through her veins and lust curled low in her belly. What the fuck?

Kayla finally slowed the car to reasonable speeds and took a moment to smirk at her sister.

“That's them you can feel.”

“Them who? And what the hell do you know about what I'm feeling?” She was tired of this bullshit. None of it was real. Fuck, somebody probably dropped a date rape drug into her drink. “Take me to the hospital,” she demanded as she suddenly felt the walls closing in on her. She gulped in a great lungful of air, trying to calm the rising panic. Usually she got this feeling from being trapped in an elevator or pressed into a crowd of people, not just sitting in a car.

“Kayla,” she practically begged. “Please take me to a hospital. I think I've been drugged.”

Kayla glanced at her in concern, but instead of turning the car back toward the hospital, she pulled off the highway and stopped on a side street.

“Jade, listen to me,” she said in a kind and calm voice. “You need to trust me, okay?” Jade managed to nod her head. She did trust her sister, despite her current circumstances and circle of friends. “You haven’t been drugged. What you’re feeling is the mating heat.”

“The what?” Jade yelled, feeling like she wanted to crawl out of her skin. “Enough of the space aliens bullshit, Kayla.”

“Those two men back there,” she said quietly as if Jade hadn’t just yelled at her, “are your Sesturian mates. You are their Taydelaan. You’re the one who completes their triad.”

“Fuck off,” she yelled, trying to understand how she could yell at her sister and still feel the urge to grab her vibrator. “If I’m their mate then how come you pulled me away? If I’m so fucking special to them—” She gasped as orgasm rolled through her. Shit, even with her sister beside her she couldn’t squash the incredible sensations. She moaned low in the back of her throat as her pussy convulsed, fisting against nothing.

Jade closed her eyes as complete mortification rose to bite her in the ass. She really didn’t want an explanation for that. She was pretty sure there wasn’t a drug capable of making a woman orgasm without some type of physical stimulation as well.

She laid her head back against the seat and silently prayed for her sanity. First the dreams with delicious strangers, then the actual face-to-face meeting with said strangers, and now an orgasm in the middle of nowhere with no stimulation—could things get any weirder? Maybe she was the delusional one and Kayla was actually sane.

“Don’t cry,” Kayla said quietly. “It’s not as bad as it seems. The mating link is quite pleasant once you get used to it.” Jade wiped at her face, surprised to find she actually was crying.

“I don’t understand any of this,” she said on a breathless whisper. “Why is this happening to me?”

“Simple,” Kayla answered with a shrug. “You’re a Taydelaan, and there are two Sesturian males who will spend the rest of their lives proving it to you.”

Chapter Five

Zack woke as a soft knock sounded through the solid wood door. Thank the goddess for solid wood. It would've been quite embarrassing if Mitchell's rough claiming had managed to push Zack through the door and into the party area. Hell, the way Mitchell had been under the enzyme's influence it wouldn't have been enough to stop him.

"Come in," Zack called when it seemed Mitchell wouldn't, or couldn't, talk. Zack glanced down at the last moment, remembering his state of undress, but was grateful to realize that Mitchell had managed to pull most of his clothes back into place. He looked ragged and thoroughly fucked, but at least he didn't have his ass hanging out.

David poked his head around the door without opening it all the way. "Everything okay?" he asked with a concerned frown.

"Of course," Zack said, still sitting in Mitchell's lap. "Everything's under control now."

David nodded and stepped into the small room, closing the door firmly behind him. He held something out and offered it to Mitchell. "Take it," he said. "It'll help suppress the enzyme for a short while."

Mitchell reached up to take the small rod, and Zack could sense his intense relief and gratitude. "Is Jade okay?" He looked really worried, and Zack stroked his hand down his lover's stomach, trying to soothe the man physically as he whispered mental reassurances that everything would be okay.

"She's confused and angry and really, really embarrassed but otherwise fine."

“Embarrassed?” Zack asked, not really understanding why Jade would feel embarrassment. It’s not like Zack or Mitchell had gotten close enough to say or do anything.

“Yes, embarrassed that she just had an orgasm in the car five miles away.” David laughed at the shock on their faces but then turned somber once more. “You’re already linked to her, aren’t you?” When they both nodded, he asked the inevitable question, “How?”

“She bumped into me at the hospital the day Emily was born, but she left before I could stop her. We’ve been dreaming about her ever since. Usually when she wakes up that’s the end of it, but last night it felt like she was closer, like even when she did wake up the three of us were still connected.” Zack felt Mitchell nod against the top of his head, confirming his explanation. “We traveled all over town trying to find her—”

“Which explains why you missed Emily’s naming ceremony,” David said with a quirked eyebrow.

“Yeah, sorry about that,” Zack said, apologizing for the timing rather than the actual nonattendance. “Anyway, as soon as we pulled into the parking lot, we felt her. By the time we got into the room, Mitchell was already producing the enzyme, and, well, you were there for the rest.”

David nodded, seeming to choose his words carefully. “Kayla is trying to explain everything to Jade as we speak. We’ve already told her most of it, but she doesn’t believe anything. The words ‘delusional,’ ‘cult,’ and ‘ridiculous bullshit’ have made quite a few appearances in our conversations.”

“I need to see her,” Mitchell said, sounding completely miserable.

David nodded. “I know, and I understand. When I couldn’t claim Kayla, I almost went insane. Hell, if Jed hadn’t been able to supply me with some of the suppressant, we might’ve lost Kayla before we could determine if she was truly our Taydelaan.”

Zack knew the story. Jessica, Kayla, and David’s mating had been just as unusual as Mitchell, Jade, and Zack’s was turning out to be.

Goddess, if only things had gone the way they were supposed to, Mitchell wouldn't be producing the enzyme yet, Zack wouldn't be worrying for both his lovers, and Jade wouldn't be scared half out of her mind.

"It'll work out," David said sincerely. Zack felt Mitchell's rise in hope, but David quickly burst the bubble by suggesting they go home without their Taydelaan. "Just for tonight," he assured them.

Mitchell surprised him by nodding in agreement, and then he helped Zack to his feet and climbed back onto his own. "We'll explain it all to her," David said confidently, "and hopefully we'll be able to set something up tomorrow night."

Zack grabbed his lover's hand and squeezed reassuringly.

"And if that doesn't work?" Mitchell asked anxiously.

"Then you can always visit her in your dreams."

David winked and left them to tidy up.

* * * *

Jade paced back and forth. They'd traveled the rest of the way back to the house in silence. Jade could still feel the lethargy from her embarrassing orgasm. But of course her baby sister was still trying to convince her that everything was okay.

"No, no, no, this doesn't make any fucking sense, and I refuse to listen to any more of your bullshit." This was ridiculous. How many times did she have to tell Kayla she wasn't buying the shit she was shoveling? Kayla looked upset by her attitude, and Jade was too tired to care. If Kayla didn't want to have this conversation all she had to do was walk away. Her sister looked angry enough to spit, but she suddenly calmed and a slow smile spread across her face.

"Fine. Whatever," she dismissed with a flip of her hand. "Ignore me. It's been a long day. Why don't you just go and get some sleep?"

Sleep? Oh, that was such a lousy idea. Sleep was what started this whole mess in the first place. Sleep wasn't going to help her, not by a

long shot. Her sister's smirk told her everything she needed. "You know," Jade accused in a tight voice.

"Know what?" Kayla asked in that innocent-sounding voice she'd tried to use since the day she'd been old enough to lie.

"You know about the dreams."

"Now, how could I know about the dreams," she said lightly. "According to you I'm delusional and not actually hearing my partners' thoughts in my head. Isn't that right?"

"No, I mean yes. I mean, what the fuck do you want from me?"

Kayla looked upset at her expletive. Well that was just too damn bad. Jade might've refrained from using swear words around her baby sister while she was filling the role of substitute parent, but according to Kayla, she was a parent now herself, so tiptoeing around her younger sister was no longer necessary. And quite frankly, Jade was just a little too freaked out to care about a swear word or two.

"Jade," Kayla said with a sympathetic smile, "I just want you to be happy. Zack and Mitchell are great guys, and if you just take a chance you'll learn that for yourself."

"Okay," Jade said tiredly as she turned toward the room she'd been using. "I'll try, but I can't promise anything. This is all just a little too freaky to take in all at once."

"I know how you feel. The day I saw the matter transporter dissolve a dozen boxes in the living room really freaked me out, too." She smiled fondly at the memory. "But I gave it a chance and I've never been happier. I want that for you, too. You deserve to be happy, Jade. Just let it happen."

Kayla reached over, pressed a kiss to Jade's cheek, and whispered softly, "Pleasant dreams."

* * * *

Mitchell was too agitated to do anything needing more thought than pacing back and forth required. He'd spent the last half hour

rubbing soothing lotions all over Zack. Hell, the enzyme had given him far more strength than he'd thought possible and he could've hurt both his mates badly. Thank the goddess that Kayla and David and Zack had been able to protect Jade from him. When she'd challenged him with that sassy stance, he'd nearly lost it. Every primitive emotion had risen to the surface, and he'd only been able to think in single words—dominate, subdue, possess.

He shuddered again as he imagined how frightened Jade would've been if he'd been able to follow through on his baser instincts. He swallowed painfully. What if he'd done to her what he'd done to Zack? Heat burst through his abdomen at the thought, and his cock roared to life once more. Damn.

"Babe," Zack said from his position on the bed, "come here."

Mitchell went to him gladly, relieved to hear his lover's command. He'd always assumed that being the more confident, more dominating of the two of them, that Zack would automatically be the partner to produce the enzyme. Feeling it build in his own body the moment he'd seen Jade had been quite frightening, the explosive effects terrifying.

"Don't," Zack said, again obviously hearing the fears in Mitchell's head. "You did nothing wrong. And you didn't hurt me." Mitchell closed his eyes again, still having difficulty believing his lover's reassurances. A firm hand lifted his chin, and Mitchell opened his eyes to stare in his partner's beloved face. "I quite enjoyed it actually." When Mitchell huffed in disbelief, Zack smiled and said, "Maybe not the part where you almost smooshed me through a door, but I loved how much you needed me, how much you wanted me, and I've never felt more loved. Look into my heart," he said reassuringly, "see the answers for yourself."

Mitchell did just that. He'd refrained from looking too closely at his lover's emotions since their lovemaking—if you could call that rough claiming making love—terrified of what he might find hidden in the depths of Zack's emotions. But when he finally opened his

heart and his mind to his lover, all he saw was nothing but love and deep respect. He closed his eyes in relief.

“Thank you,” he said sincerely, trying to let Zack understand every emotion he owned.

Zack pulled him closer. “I love you, babe. No matter what happens with our Taydelaan, we’ll always have each other. I promise you. Any time you need some relief from the enzyme, I will be here for you.”

Mitchell nodded his head and curled into his lover’s embrace, more than a little relieved to be held this way. “I need you,” Zack whispered, echoing Mitchell’s earlier words.

* * * *

Jade woke as she moaned in her sleep. Confused and disoriented, she moaned again as a featherlight touch whispered over her skin. Was this really happening? Or was she still sleeping? She didn’t even know what to believe anymore.

“Please,” she whispered quietly to the empty room. “What do you want from me?”

“*We just want to love you, Jade,*” a voice said inside her head. She somehow knew it belonged to Zack even though she’d barely exchanged more than a few words with the man. “*Are you in bed?*” She nodded her head in reply, but somehow he understood her, and she felt something akin to a wolfish grin tickle her mind. “*What are you wearing?*”

Surprised, she laughed out loud at the lecherous question. Fortunately the voice laughed with her, and Jade sighed when she got the feeling that he’d made her laugh on purpose. She managed to relax just a little. “I’m sorry about before,” she said sincerely. “I didn’t mean to upset you.”

“*Oh, beautiful,*” another voice said—she could tell this one was Mitchell—“*I’m sorry I scared you. Did Kayla explain about the enzyme?*”

“She said it starts producing when you make a strong link with your Taydelaan. Is that what I am to you?”

“*Yes,*” they answered in unison.

“Why?” she asked. This is the part Kayla couldn’t or wouldn’t explain. “How do you go about picking your Taydelaan?”

“*We don’t get to choose,*” the voice said seriously. “*A Taydelaan is determined by nature or genetics or the goddess. All we know is that there is one perfect match for us and you’re that one.*”

“So it’s not me you want, it’s my genes?”

“*We want in your jeans, yes,*” Zack joked, deliberately ignoring her question. How she knew it was deliberate she wasn’t sure, but she could tell that her question had hit a sore point.

“So how does this work? We meet, we fuck, we produce a baby, then what?”

She could feel disapproval at her flippant question, and a small part of her wanted to take it back, but she was being driven by emotions even she didn’t understand now.

“*Then we live happily ever after,*” Zack said just as flippantly. She could sense his determination to trivialize the matter simply by making it all sound like a corny fairy tale. But this wasn’t a fairy tale, it was her life, and if she was going to buy into this nonsense, she wanted to know how she—as the baby-carrying third—fit into the grand scheme of things. It was obvious that they loved each other deeply. She didn’t think she could live on the fringes of their love, collecting the scraps whenever they came her way.

“*Oh, for fuck’s sake, woman, you will drive a man insane. If I was there, I’d flip you over and tan that perky ass. Taydelaan just means the third partner to be found. It has nothing to do with rank or order or anything else. We will love you exactly the same way we love each other.*”

“But you don’t even know me,” she said, trying to hide how much the idea of Zack spanking her ass really turned her on.

“*Don’t bother trying to hide that thought,*” Mitchell said in her head. “*Remember that dream where we tied you down and spanked you to orgasm? We already know that you loved it.*” She flushed hot and cold at the memory. She’d woken covered in sweat and would’ve sworn her ass was bright red if the mirror hadn’t told her otherwise.

“So you know I have a kinky side, so what? That doesn’t amount to love.”

“*Baby, if I hadn’t promised your brother-in-law that we’d give you time, we’d be on your doorstep in five minutes quite happily showing you how much we do know about you.*”

“That’s just sex,” she said, feeling wretched inside. “You know nothing about the real me.”

“*Beautiful, if you don’t give us a chance to prove our love,*” Mitchell said in a voice filled with hope, “*how will you ever know if you’re right?*”

“*Have dinner with us tomorrow,*” Zack added. “*We’ll pick you up, spend some time getting to know each other, and if you’re not convinced, we’ll bring you back to your sister’s place. All you’ll have to do is tell us. We won’t stop you from leaving, but we’re asking you to give us a chance.*”

“What about the enzyme?” she asked nervously. “Will that happen again?”

“*No, beautiful, I have a way to suppress it for a short time so that we can get to know each other without the pressure to mate.*” Jade sensed his intense relief that he’d be able to control it. She even understood that it was a proven medicine and not some home remedy. “*Please, Jade, just give the three of us a chance.*”

“Okay,” she whispered, hoping she wouldn’t regret it.

Chapter Six

Mitchell frowned at the lopsided flower arrangement and scowled at the burned first course. He'd wanted everything to be perfect, but somehow that hadn't happened. He couldn't wait to get back to Sesturia. The primitive way of cooking on this planet had been the bane of his existence for three years.

"Relax," Zack told him as he came into the room. "Jade will appreciate that you tried. It doesn't need to be perfect."

"How do you know that?" he asked, unconsciously revealing insecurities he'd tried to keep hidden. "Is your link to her stronger than mine?"

Zack looked shocked by the question and took a moment to look deeper into Mitchell's mind. He frowned when he came across what Mitchell had been trying to keep from him. "I should whip your ass for even thinking that." Mitchell's cock twitched at the threat, and he tried to hide a smile by coughing into his hand. Zack grinned and stalked over to stand in front of Mitchell. "No, my link is not stronger. I just know Kayla. Jade took care of her when their parents died. She couldn't have raised someone as sweet as Kayla without being a special person herself."

Mitchell nodded in agreement. He should've thought of that, but he was just feeling so stressed he wasn't thinking very clearly. The fleeting thought of what Zack usually did to help him relax whispered through his mind, but he quickly squashed the impulse.

Zack pouted, but he smiled when he realized Mitchell's reason—Jade would sense what they were up to. "Maybe she could use a little

stress relief, too.” He winked but didn’t push. “Do you know she’s as nervous as you are?”

“She is?” Mitchell asked, surprised that he’d missed that. He’d probably sensed it but dismissed it as an echo of his own stress. He longed for the day when all three of them had a full mate link. Maybe that’s why he was so nervous about tonight. This was the beginning of the rest of their lives, and he couldn’t afford to fuck it up.

Zack hugged him once more and moved toward the kitchen to remove the casserole that Mitchell currently seemed to be burning. Damn.

* * * *

Jade glanced at her brother-in-law and tried not to be obvious when she ran her sweaty palms down her jeans. Mitchell and Zack hadn’t been impressed that she’d asked David to drop her off instead of letting them come for her. She hadn’t meant to be cantankerous, but things had seemed so far out of her control, she’d argued on the one point she felt she could win. It didn’t help that she was more nervous about this single date than she’d been with every other date put together. Why was she so damn jumpy?

“You can probably sense Mitchell’s stress, baby,” Zack whispered in her head. *“He’s more nervous than I’ve ever seen him. Be gentle with him.”*

She smiled at Zack’s teasing words but somehow understood the seriousness behind them.

“The link has gotten stronger,” David said with a nod of approval. She glanced over at her sister’s husband and tried to smile. She didn’t quite manage it, but he glanced over and smiled for her. “I’ve known Mitchell and Zack for years. They’re good guys.”

“So everybody says,” she answered, trying not to be sarcastic. Other than some really hot sex dreams she knew very little about them. The fact that she could hear them in her head and feel their

emotions several miles away did nothing to convince her that she wasn't insane. "How long have you known them?"

David looked a little uncomfortable and gave her an answer that didn't really satisfy. "Many, many years."

"How many years?" She couldn't quite shake the feeling that David was hiding something.

He breathed out heavily and finally gave her a proper answer. "About forty Earth years."

"What? Did you really say forty years? You're joking, right? You don't look a day over thirty, how can you have known them for forty years?" She could feel hysteria creeping over her. This couldn't be right. How could this be right? "How old are you?" she demanded, practically holding her breath as she waited for his answer.

"Seventy-four," he said, sounding resigned and maybe a little annoyed that he'd started this conversation. "And before you go asking, Jessica is a few years younger."

"Baby," Zack said with a singsong voice inside her head, "*tell David I'm going to kick his ass when he gets here.*" She couldn't help but grin at the threat delivered in such a sweet voice. David glanced over, looking at her worriedly.

"Zack says he's not happy with you." She delivered the message while trying to ignore the fact that she was essentially relaying a conversation with a voice in her head. David grinned, and a soft laugh escaped him.

"I reckon he probably wants to kick my ass," he said, confirming that he knew the man well. "I'm sorry, Jade. I didn't mean to start this conversation, but as a general rule, Sesturians have a life expectancy about twice that of humans."

"So I'll be old and gray while Zack and Mitchell still look young?" Despite all the jokes she'd made about maybe one day trying her hand at being a cougar, she really didn't like the idea of looking twice the age of her partners. She felt a swell of hope in her mind and

realized it came from Mitchell and Zack. Was she really thinking long term with these two?

“Not quite,” David said slowly, and she got the impression that he was once again trying to avoid answering. “Sesturian medicine is quite advanced, but I’m sure that’s something you and your partners can discuss at a later date.” She nodded, willing to let David off the hook, for now at least. “We’re here,” he said, sounding very relieved. “I have very strict instructions from Kayla to walk you to the door, threaten bodily harm to Mitchell and Zack if they fail to treat you properly, and then get my ass home.”

Jade tried to hide the smile threatening to break free but failed miserably. She could just imagine her sister giving those exact instructions. David smiled with her and whispered conspiratorially, “Just be glad she’s not in your head, too.” He grinned, obviously listening to Jade’s younger sister give him grief via telepathy.

“Thank you,” she said sincerely. David was a genuinely nice guy, and even though she hadn’t been happy when Kayla had begun her relationship with David and Jessica, it was obvious that they both loved her sister as much as they loved each other.

“Call me when you want to come home,” David said with a grin and a wink.

* * * *

Mitchell could feel her affection for David, and it was driving him nuts. He knew—absolutely knew—that it was just the emotions a woman would have for any member of her family, but a primitive part of him wanted to keep her all to himself.

“It’s okay,” Zack said in a soothing telepathic voice. “It’s just the effect of the enzyme. Once you’ve claimed her, things will go back to normal.”

“What if she never lets me claim her?” he asked out loud in a sullen voice. He was starting to understand the strange mood swings

pregnant woman went through. This whiny, negative, insecure feeling was pissing him off, but he couldn't seem to shake it.

"She will," Zack said confidently as he went to answer the door.

"Hello, baby," Zack said as he reached for Jade's hand, "welcome to our home."

The overwhelming urge to haul his woman over his shoulder and lock her in his bedroom for several days slid through Mitchell's mind, but he managed to control it for the moment. The suppressant David had given him was helping to stop the enzyme's production but didn't seem to do anything to control his possessive urges. He took a deep breath, trying to calm himself before he did something stupid. He glanced at Zack for reassurance and realized that the possessive urges had been there all along. It was just his fear that Jade would reject them that was magnifying everything.

"Hello, Zack." She let Zack pull her into his arms for a brief hug, and Mitchell felt his cock roar to life. Seeing both his partners together was a far bigger turn-on than he'd ever imagined. He wanted to grab them both, love them, protect them, and fuck them both until none of them could walk straight. Zack and Jade must've picked up on that thought because they both moved into the circle of his arms and held on tight. The feeling of finally being complete washed through him, and he held them both for a long time.

"Yup," David said as he stepped out the front door, "that's my cue to leave. Take care of her." Mitchell nodded his promise and relaxed even more when Jade stretched up onto her toes and pressed a soft kiss to the underside of his jaw.

* * * *

Zack had no idea how long they stood like that in the hallway, but eventually the smell of burning food reached his nostrils. He was tempted to simply ignore it, but figured burning down the house was probably not the best way to take care of their girl.

“How do you feel about pizza?” Mitchell looked startled by the question, but then the smell of burning food reached him as well. He pulled Zack and Jade closer for a brief moment and finally released them. A deep rumble of a laugh escaped his chest.

“So much for perfect,” he said, sounding calmer than he had all day.

Jade must’ve noticed the smell, too, because she smiled and nodded. “Pizza sounds great. Extra anchovies for me.”

“Ugh,” Zack said with a shudder. “You better kiss me now, baby, because once you’ve downed a few of those salty little things you’re going to need a bucket of mouthwash before I kiss you again.”

She looked startled at first but then realized that he was joking—well, maybe half joking. He really, *really* hated anchovies. Jade followed them into the kitchen, and Zack turned everything off, refusing to think of the cleanup they’d need to do tomorrow. Goddess, he missed the food processors on Sesturia. Perfectly cooked, nutritionally balanced, quickly delivered meals with very little cleanup. What could be more perfect?

“Good to know about the anchovies,” Jade said with a grin. “If I ever need a break from your kisses I know exactly what to do.”

“Doesn’t work with me,” Mitchell teased. “I’m fine with anchovies.”

She smiled at them both, but it faltered and she suddenly looked very lost. Her knees wobbled, and he went to steady her, but she held her hand up for him to stay where he was. She grabbed one of the chairs at the breakfast bench and sat heavily.

“I’m sorry,” she said tiredly. “I don’t even know you. I’ve never actually kissed you, so I don’t understand why I said that.”

“Beautiful,” Mitchell said as he stepped closer. He touched her cheek affectionately. “You do know us. You can already sense our emotions. You already hear our thoughts. The link is already there, and it will only get stronger.”

She looked from Mitchell to Zack and back again before she tried to say something. She had to swallow before she could voice her thoughts.

“I...I never expected to...to find someone. I thought I was just one of those people who was meant to be alone. I don’t understand how I could be your Taydelaan.”

“Do you want to be alone the rest of your life?” Zack asked as he tried to understand the myriad of emotions he could feel flowing through her. She shook her head, and he felt relief pour through both him and Mitchell.

“Then kiss me, beautiful,” Mitchell said, taking the seat beside her. “Kiss me and let the link grow. Then you’ll understand you belong with us.”

Her eyes were filled with tears when she looked at Mitchell, but she leaned over and pressed a gentle kiss to his mouth. Zack could feel Mitchell’s determination to let her control the kiss, and he watched, fascinated, as their Taydelaan kissed his lover for the first time. Her tongue touched Mitchell’s lips, and he groaned and stroked it with his own. Jade lifted off the chair and moved to sit on Mitchell’s lap as she deepened the kiss and raised the heat in the room.

With his hand rubbing gently over his own erection, Zack watched Jade turn to straddle Mitchell’s lap, pressing her crotch against his hard cock. Mitchell groaned and lifted her onto the kitchen table. He kissed her frantically, taking control of the kiss, stamping her with his possessiveness. She writhed against him, and Zack almost came in his jeans when Mitchell grabbed Jade’s shirt and ripped it from her body.

She gasped, the sound loud in the otherwise silent kitchen, but didn’t pull away. Mitchell dragged her bra away just as roughly, and Zack stepped closer to help with her jeans. He was more than willing to keep their woman naked for the rest of her life, but they might need her jeans if they planned to walk out the front door.

He managed to undo the material and wiggle them down her hips. Mitchell lifted her off the table, and Zack dragged the material down her legs and off her feet, taking her shoes with them. Mitchell placed her back in the middle of the table, finally breaking the kiss and moving away from her slightly.

She lay on the table like an offering from the gods. Zach could barely breathe as he moved to the side and lowered his head to kiss her. She wrapped her arms around him and welcomed his tongue into her mouth, sucking gently as he explored the dark recess. He felt Mitchell's deep satisfaction that they were kissing this way a moment before he lowered his head to Jade's pussy. Zack could feel her pleasure course through her as his lover lapped at her hidden folds.

Zack moved a hand to pluck at one of her beaded nipples, smiling when she arched her back and lifted from the table. Through the connection with his mates, he could feel Jade's surprise that she liked what Mitchell was doing, and Mitchell's relief that she was enjoying it. Zack felt the exact moment that Mitchell stiffened his tongue and started fucking her with it. She shivered and pulled Zack closer as her orgasm spiraled nearer.

Fucking her mouth with his own tongue, Zack matched Mitchell's rhythm and held their woman down, knowing from their dreams how much the immobility turned her on. He felt a moment of fear pass through her before her orgasm exploded. She moaned as every muscle shook with her release. Mitchell held her thighs open, prolonging her climax with the clever use of his tongue. Over and over she undulated against the hard table, her muscles rippling, her breathing labored, her heart and mind open to them both.

Zack thought he sensed something about a man from her past, but that part of the link dissolved before he could understand it fully. Mitchell leaned over the table, turned Zack's head with a firm hand, and thrust his tongue into Zack's mouth. Jade's taste burst on his tongue, and he moaned at the perfection of the moment. Even in their

dreams it hadn't been this intense. He could feel Jade's arousal winding higher again as she watched them kiss above her.

"Bedroom," Mitchell said in a tone that suggested he wouldn't take no for an answer. He smiled and watched Mitchell lift their woman into his arms. Zack followed them into the bedroom, almost surprised to realize that both he and Mitchell were still fully clothed. Jade lay in the middle of the bed, watching them shyly as Zack moved to undress his lover. He wanted to watch the two people most important to him connect in the most elemental of ways.

Mitchell grinned at the thoughts he so obviously sensed, pulled him closer, and ravaged his mouth in a kiss that left his knees wobbly. Zack fought to catch his breath as Mitchell undid his own jeans, kicked them off, and then turned his attention to Zack. He barely had the jeans to his knees before Mitchell took Zack's cock in his mouth. Zack groaned at the delicious and familiar sensation as his lover sucked hard against the head while swirling his tongue over the thick veins. Mitchell engulfed him and swallowed, dragging his cock deeper still. He could feel Jade's excitement as she watched.

Just knowing that the woman who completed them liked what she saw was almost enough to have him coming down his lover's throat. But Mitchell chuckled and slowly slid his mouth away from Zack's cock. "Do you want a taste, beautiful?" he asked Jade as he held a hand out to her. She nodded enthusiastically and quickly climbed off the bed to kneel at Zack's feet.

She wrapped a soft hand around the base of his cock and licked the end with her tongue. Over and over she laved him like ice cream. His eyes nearly rolled into the back of his head when she sucked him into her warm mouth. Mitchell knelt behind her, his hands roaming all over her, his groin pressed hard against her ass cheeks.

"Can you swallow him, beautiful," Mitchell asked out loud in a rough voice.

She nodded against Zack's cock and his excitement ramped much, much higher. Mitchell's large hands grabbed his ass, pulling him

tighter against Jade, forcing his cock deeper into her mouth. She fought his hold for a moment, but Mitchell whispered instructions and she breathed through her nose and swallowed around Zack's cock.

"Good girl," Zack managed to say even though he could barely breathe. He felt her happiness a moment before Mitchell pushed a couple of lubed fingers deep into his ass. Panting at the incredible twin sensations, Zack's eyes did roll into the back of his head as Jade sucked harder, pumping the base of his cock rhythmically with her hand, matching perfectly the plunge and withdrawal of Mitchell's fingers in his ass.

Practically lifting onto his toes, heat boiled in his groin, as his cock grew even harder. He nearly vibrated on the spot as his lovers pushed his arousal into the stratosphere. No longer in control, Zack flexed his ass muscles, grinding deeper, thrusting harder as he burst in Jade's mouth. He held her head to him as she swallowed and then suckled gently as his cock softened in her mouth.

Mitchell tapped him on the ass as he stood. "Back in a minute," he said as he headed for the bathroom. Zack watched his lover walk away then bent and lifted Jade off her knees and helped her back onto the bed. She snuggled into him, and he held her tight, loving the feel of her soft curves against him.

Zack heard water running for a brief moment and then sensed Mitchell giving himself an extra dose of the enzyme suppressant. He smiled at the protectiveness he could feel. Mitchell wasn't willing to force the enzyme onto Jade until she was willing to accept them both. Despite knowing that the enzyme would bind her to them for the rest of their lives—thereby shortcutting the necessity to woo their woman—Mitchell was determined that she come to them by her choice.

Zack couldn't have loved the man more than he did at that moment.

Mitchell came back into the room with a happy smile on his face. He knelt at the edge of the bed, touched Jade's face with his large

hand, and whispered the question they both wanted answered. “Can we make love to you, beautiful?”

“Yes,” Jade answered immediately, her gaze flicking between them both. “I would like that very much.” Mitchell climbed onto the bed and lay on his back beside her.

“Come here, beautiful.” Zack helped her to straddle Mitchell, holding the man’s cock steady so she could lower herself onto his hard length. All three of them groaned as she impaled herself slowly. She stopped for a moment, and Zack could sense her letting her body adjust to Mitchell’s thick cock. He realized with a jolt of surprise that it had been a long time for her since she’d had anything wider than her slim vibrator inside her body. Feeling ridiculously possessive, he ran his hands over her back and ass as she finally slid Mitchell’s full length inside.

She went to move, but Mitchell wrapped his arms around her and held her still. Zack could sense the man’s feelings of finally being complete and shared them. Finally having their Taydelaan in their arms was absolutely amazing, but it was the woman herself that made it so special. Even just the brief glimpses he’d had of her inner thoughts proved without a doubt that she was just as beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside.

Zack slid his hand down her spine, over her gorgeous, perfect ass, and dipped lower to caress Mitchell’s balls. Mitchell lifted his hips off the bed, pushing into her harder as he held her hips tight against him. She moaned, and Zack could feel her arousal gathering, building higher, winding tighter. She cried out as Mitchell lifted her off his cock, and moaned when he lowered her back down. Over and over Mitchell controlled her movements, fucking her as he held her tight.

Zack caressed her labia, feeling Mitchell’s cock slide in and out of the slippery flesh. He groaned when he found her clit swollen and begging for attention. “Yes,” she hissed as he squeezed the tiny bud. He teased her, sliding his fingers over and around the engorged flesh as Mitchell moved her harder, faster, more urgently.

She screamed when her release began, and he flicked her clit over and over as he felt Mitchell swell and burst, pumping his seed deep into Jade's body, marking her as his own. Mitchell closed his arms around her as she collapsed forward onto his chest, trapping Zack's hand between them. She giggled softly as he managed to extricate his arm, but she held her breath when he pressed his fingers against her anus.

"Have you ever had a man in your ass?" he whispered as he swirled his slippery digits around the puckered entrance.

She had to gulp air twice before she could answer with a shake of her head. He gently pushed the tip of one finger past the tight ring of muscle, and he smiled gratefully as Mitchell held her still and caressed her spine soothingly. "You'll love it," Mitchell promised as she relaxed against his chest and let Zack push his finger deeper. A fleeting image of the butt plug she'd bought recently flashed in his head, and he smiled. Their girl had certainly thought about it.

"Top drawer of my dresser," Mitchell said with a smile on his face. Curious, Zack slid his finger from Jade's ass, groaned almost in unison with their girl, and headed for the drawer. He nearly whooped with delight when he saw the contents. How the hell had Mitchell managed to buy beginner's butt plugs without Zack noticing?

He grabbed a new plug and hurried into the bathroom to wash it. He covered it with a generous amount of lube and headed back into the bedroom. Disappointment rose momentarily when he thought she was asleep, but then he realized that Mitchell was whispering instructions in her mind, helping her relax, promising to take things slowly.

As Zack approached the bed, Mitchell carefully hooked his hands under Jade's knees and pulled them up the bed, opening her ass cheeks wider. Zack climbed onto the mattress, wedging himself between Mitchell's legs and caressing the most beautiful ass he'd ever seen. He touched the soft plug to her back entrance. Jade stiffened momentarily, so he waited for her to adjust to the new sensation

before pushing the tip into her anus. Mitchell continued to reassure her through their telepathic link as Zack used steady pressure to push the plug all the way into her ass.

The widest part finally slid past the tight ring of muscle, and then he watched her muscles close around the thinner part, trapping the plug in her body. Goddess, the woman was perfect.

Chapter Seven

Jade sensed both men's deep satisfaction. She hadn't planned on falling into bed with them tonight, but something about it seemed so darn right. She moved slightly, and the muscles in her ass squeezed around the plug, sending heat blossoming outward. She gasped as the incredible sensation spun her arousal higher.

"Please," she begged.

"My pleasure," Zack whispered as he positioned himself behind her. He rubbed the head of his cock against her folds, and she felt a moment of fear. But Mitchell was there, holding her, soothing her, silently assuring her that she would enjoy being fucked this way. She relaxed, trusting them both.

Zack slowly worked his cock into her swollen pussy, gently sliding in and out until she thought she would go mad with her need for more. Zack lifted her partially onto her knees, and Mitchell slid his hand to her clit. As he swirled his fingers over the tight bundle of nerves, Zack finally increased his pace. He held her hips steady as he began to plunge deeper, breathe harder, fuck her faster.

She tried to push back against him, but he held her trapped, and she felt her arousal spin higher at the immobility. Images of the dreams she'd shared with them played in her head, and she practically screeched when her orgasm finally flowed through her. Pinpoints of color exploded behind her eyelids, every muscle shaking, every breath labored, every nerve ending finally satisfied.

She felt Zack's cock throb, pumping his seed deep inside her, marking her as theirs. Exhausted and well loved, she lay contentedly

against Mitchell as he played with her hair and whispered how much he loved her.

* * * *

Zack felt her spike in fear a millisecond before she sat up quickly.

“You love me?” she asked, her voice filled with shock, her eyes seeking Zack’s. Mitchell eased her back down to his chest, pressing her face against his heart.

“Of course we love you,” Zack said as he lay on his side and swept the hair from her eyes. “You can feel the mating link growing between the three of us.” She shook her head in denial, but he could sense her deliberate attempt to lie. “Lying to me will earn you a spanking, baby.” Zack nearly lost it when her eyes darkened with desire and she moaned softly, but he could still feel her intense fear.

“Jade,” Mitchell said seriously, “we don’t just love you because you’re our Taydelaan. We love you for being a beautiful person, too. We love you because we can see into your heart and your mind and know who you really are, not just who you pretend to be.” She blushed prettily but nodded her head in understanding.

“Then you know how confused I feel,” she said quietly.

“Yes,” Zack agreed, “but we can also feel how much you love us already. Jade, that will only grow as the link gets stronger. Eventually we’ll know everything about each other. Every thought, every feeling, every memory.”

Her complete panic caught them both by surprise, and she clambered off the bed before either of them thought to stop her. Her eyes filled with tears, her hands shaking, she shook her head in denial. “That’s not what I want,” she said, practically tearing Zack’s heart from his chest. “I don’t want you in my head twenty-four-seven. I want my own life, my own identity. I want to choose my own future, not go along with some predestined fate bullshit.”

* * * *

Afterward she couldn't quite explain how she'd managed it, but somehow she pulled on her clothes, called her sister for a lift, and waited silently for her to arrive. She'd felt the intense hurt from both men but refused to let it in, denying their link the only way she knew how—by ignoring it.

She'd made it back to Kayla's home before she'd remembered the plug in her ass. Once she'd removed it, she'd had every intention of discarding the stupid thing, but something held her back. She washed it, wrapped it, and packed it in her bags, all the while steadfastly refusing to answer her lovers' telepathic pleas.

And within four hours she was home in her own bed—tired, miserable, and more alone than she could ever remember.

* * * *

Zack held his lover in his arms, trying to come to terms with their loss. Jade had not only left the area, she'd somehow managed to block their connection in their dreams. It'd been the longest week in both their lives, and Zack was seriously considering taking his lover home to Sesturia for a while. At least there they would have the love and support of their families.

He sighed as he tried not to think of the woman who'd invaded his heart. She'd been frightened the first time she'd met Mitchell in the hospital, and neither of them had been able to learn why. Zack had set the problem aside, arrogantly assuming that once the mating link became stronger that they'd know. But it seemed that by not pressing the point or asking her directly, they'd missed an important problem. He felt certain that whatever caused her sudden, nearly violent withdrawal was also the cause of her fear.

"I'm sorry," Mitchell whispered for the hundredth time. He was blaming himself, worried that he hadn't controlled the enzyme well

enough, that he'd somehow scared their woman away. The link had been broken so completely that the enzyme wasn't even producing in Mitchell's body anymore. Nothing highlighted their loss more than that.

Zack heard the knock on the door and really wanted to ignore their unwanted visitor, but a moment later the bell rang several times, and it pissed him off enough to get his ass out of bed. He kissed Mitchell's cheek as he pulled the blankets back into place and then went to deal with their unwelcome guest.

But when he opened the door to Jed, his anger slid away, and he invited the official leader of the Sesturian community on Earth into their home.

Jed didn't waste any time with small talk. "I heard about your problems with Kayla's sister, and I wanted to make sure that you understood the situation."

Understood the situation? What was to understand? Jade didn't want them. End of story.

Jed watched him closely for a moment, as if he was reading Zack's body language, or maybe waiting for him to say something. Zack kept his mouth closed and his expression neutral. Jed may be the equivalent of a governor in his world, but he really didn't have a clue what Zack and Mitchell were going through.

"The concept of a Taydelaan is probably more complex than many of our people know. Your potential third isn't just one person, but rather a type of person," Jed began, managing to shock Zack into stunned silence in the process. Everything he knew pointed to a one and only Taydelaan, not a choice. "It's a combination of things that makes a Taydelaan a perfect match, but there is always more than one person who would fit the description. It's not a high number. It's something like one in half a million, but with six billion people on this planet, it means that there is a good chance that you will meet another woman who'll be your Taydelaan."

“But we want Jade,” Mitchell said from the doorway. He leaned against the door jamb, looking tired and beaten, but he held his jaw stubbornly.

“Jade has already closed her connection to you,” Jed said in the type of voice Zack had heard on self-help commercials—kind but firm. “If she wanted to be your Taydelaan, she wouldn’t have been able to do that.”

Zack could feel Mitchell’s determination falter. She *had* been able to shut them out. It certainly wasn’t the actions of a woman willing to love them. “What if she’s just scared?” Zack asked, trying to deny how desperate he must sound. “What if something in her past made it difficult for her to accept our love?”

Jed considered his words for a moment and nodded slowly. “I suppose that could be true. Fear can override some pretty strong emotions, especially if memories intrude. Did you sense anything in the partial link that you had? Any memory or trauma that could explain her sudden withdrawal?”

Zack shook his head in frustration, but Mitchell pushed himself off the wall and stood taller. “The day I met her,” he said, frowning as he tried to put into words what he’d felt, “she nearly freaked out when I tried to stop her walking away. I didn’t do anything that could be considered threatening, but her reaction was well out of proportion. She practically ran the length of the hallway when I let her past.”

“And after her...uhm...orgasm,” Zack added, glancing at Jed in mild embarrassment to be discussing something so private with a man who was virtually a stranger, “I sensed something about an ex-boyfriend or ex-lover, something that left her feeling unloved.”

Mitchell walked into the room and wrapped his arms around Zack. “I felt that, too,” he said quietly.

“Well, I think the best thing you can do is go after her,” Jed said decisively. “Find out what she really feels. If she truly doesn’t love you, at least you’ll know for certain and can move on with your lives.

And if she does love you, well I guess I'll see you at the Joining Ceremony." Jed shook both their hands and left without any fanfare.

"Let's pack some clothes," Zack said, already mentally planning their trip. Technically, Jade was only three hours away, so they could make the trip there and back in a day, but he had every intention of parking themselves on her doorstep until she admitted the truth or kicked them to the curb. Either way, he wasn't planning on it being a short visit.

* * * *

Jade pulled her car into the driveway and rested her head on the steering wheel, trying to find the energy to climb out of the car and into bed. Since leaving her men behind, she hadn't felt the inclination to do anything. She only went to work because she couldn't afford to lose her job, otherwise she would've stayed in bed for the entire week.

She caught movement out of the corner of her eye and looked over just as the door was flung open. Jade gasped as a rough hand grabbed her arm and tried to pull her from the car. The seat belt jammed, and a male voice cursed before leaning over her and undoing the clasp. Strong arms dragged her from the car and slammed her back against the door panel.

"Where the hell have you been?" The familiar voice made her cringe, and she really, really wished she hadn't come home today.

"Duncan," she said in a breathless, frightened voice even though she was trying to hide her fear, "why are you here?"

"I need more money," he growled as he kicked the car door closed and dragged her to the front door of her home. "And I don't like waiting."

She frantically searched through her bag, trying to find her keys with shaking hands. She knew from bitter experience that when he was like this the slightest thing could set him off. She swallowed

nervously as her fingers finally wrapped around the house keys. She tried to fit the key into the lock, but he grabbed them from her, undid the lock, and pushed her inside ahead of him. For a crazy moment she considered shoving the door closed in his face, but she knew he'd quickly find a way in and his resulting anger would bring far more danger.

"Money," he reminded her as she stood dumbly in the hallway, wondering how the hell she'd ever considered herself in love with this man.

"I don't have much at the moment," she said truthfully. Hell, she could barely keep up with the day-to-day bills lately, and thanks to this man, her savings were nonexistent.

"Well then," he said, taking a menacing step closer, "this visit is not going to go well for you, is it."

"Duncan," she said, trying to sound reasonable instead of scared to death, "I gave you everything I had last time. I can't give you what I don't have."

"Fine," he said, sounding really pissed off, "I'll take your mother's jewelry." The only thing of any real value in her mother's jewelry box was her engagement ring, and she'd fight tooth and nail before she handed it over to this asshole.

"It's never going to stop, is it?" she asked, finally realizing that he would always be back for more. After the last time, she'd thought it was over, that he'd finally taken everything of value and would never be back. Obviously, she'd been wrong.

He laughed at her, his golden good looks and bright smile belying the beast within. "Well that depends, darlin'," he drawled as he stalked closer, "on how quickly you can get them pretty jewels for me. I might stop if you ask really, really nice like."

The look he gave her had her heart hammering in her throat. She could barely breathe. Panic wrapped her gut, squeezed tight. She knew what came next.

Chapter Eight

As Mitchell slowed the car so they could find the correct house, Jade's fear slammed into them like a sledgehammer. Momentarily stunned by the link's reconnection, Mitchell stopped in the middle of the street and glanced over his shoulder at a small, tidy house. He was certain that's where Jade was, but he couldn't identify the source of her terror.

He put the car in reverse and backed up to park the car out front of Jade's home. A quick glance at the letterbox confirmed the house number Kayla had given them. As he stepped out of the car he felt Jade's sudden spike in terror. She wasn't frightened of them. She wasn't even aware they were here. Something, or someone, inside the house was the reason for her fear. Terrified for her, he didn't bother knocking. Just burst through the front door.

Mitchell dragged the man away from her, his fist landing on the man's jaw before he could even consider the implications. Zack moved to help Jade. She still had her jeans on, but her shirt had been ripped in two.

The man groaned, pushed himself to his feet, and growled in irritation. "Who the fuck are you?" he yelled. "Get the fuck out of my house."

Mitchell turned to Jade, trying to understand what the hell was going on. Kayla had said this was Jade's house, that she lived alone. Mitchell saw the man's swift attack just in time to counter it. Off balance, Jade's attacker fell awkwardly into the wall.

"Your house?" Mitchell asked as he stood over the man aggressively. "Explain to me how this is your house."

“Simple, that whore,” he said, pointing to Jade, “is my wife, so this is my house. Now get the fuck out of my house.”

“Jade?” Zack asked the woman in his arms. “You married this asshole?”

“Divorced him, too,” she said defiantly.

“Oh, look how brave you are now,” the man said as he pushed himself upright and took a step closer. Zack moved to stand between Jade and her ex-husband. The man smiled mockingly at Zack’s protective stance. “Don’t worry, slut, when they get tired of your constant nagging, I’ll be back to finish what I started.” He laughed as he stepped out the door. Mitchell wanted to follow him out and finish what he’d started with his fists. But Jade’s fear still called to him, and he moved to wrap her and Zack in his arms.

“I’m sorry,” she said as reaction set in and tears started to fall. “I’m sorry that I hurt you. Th...thank you for coming to help me.”

* * * *

Jade couldn’t seem to stop the tears. She’d never felt more alone than she had when Duncan had been tearing at her clothes. If Zack and Mitchell hadn’t chosen that moment to come through the door, she had no doubt that her ex would’ve followed through on his threats. He’d done so before. She shuddered at the filthy feeling the man’s touch had left behind.

“I need a shower,” she managed to sob through the unstoppable tears.

“Baby,” Zack said as he held her carefully, “you should report this to the police first. You’re already bruising around your breasts and stomach.”

She glanced down at her chest, almost surprised to see the circular, finger-shaped bruises. Adrenaline still pumped through her veins and seemed to be masking the pain.

“I don’t want to involve the police,” she said as embarrassment slid through her. She should’ve reported him the first time he raped her, but she’d always felt particularly ashamed that she’d invited that man into her life in the first place. Explaining her stupidity to officers of the law just seemed too humiliating. Duncan had been threatening and demanding money from her for years, and that just wasn’t something she wanted to explain in minute detail.

Mitchell nodded as if he’d heard every thought in her head.

“We’ll protect you,” he said in a strong voice, “but what happens to the next woman he chooses to harass?” Guilt warred with embarrassment even though she knew going to the police was the right thing to do.

“All right,” she said, trying to swallow her misgivings, “I’ll report him to the police. I never should’ve married the asshole in the first place.”

“Why did you?” Mitchell asked.

“I don’t remember,” she said honestly. “I was tired of being alone, could hear my biological clock ticking, and wanted a family. I guess I didn’t see the man for what he really was until it was too late.” She shook her head, disgusted at her own weakness. Had she been so desperate for a family of her own that she’d considered Duncan suitable father material? “It only lasted four months,” she said softly. “I didn’t even tell Kayla. But you’re right. I need to report him to the police. I should’ve done it a long time ago. I just wish I could do it without looking like the worst type of fool.”

“Maybe you could,” Zack said with a mischievous grin. “Derek does owe me a favor.”

“True,” Mitchell agreed.

“Who’s Derek?” she asked as a small hope unfurled in her belly. Dealing with Duncan without feeling completely humiliated would be a good solution.

“Derek is the Emnurian scientist in charge of human studies.”

“Emnurian?” she repeated, feeling completely lost by Zack’s supposed explanation.

“Sorry, baby,” he said as he led her over to the sofa and pulled her down beside him. “Emnurian is the name of the alien species behind most of the reported abductions. They usually put the test subjects back unharmed, but I’m sure Derek can leave enough fear in your ex’s memory to put him off trying to intimidate anyone. Derek could probably do a complete personality overhaul if he tried.”

“Would that stop Duncan from harassing me or another woman silly enough to fall for his lies?”

“Absolutely,” Mitchell said from the kitchen. She nodded her agreement but was sidetracked by his next question. “Where are your tea bags?”

“Tea bags?” Okay, that was getting to be an annoying habit. She had to stop repeating everything they said. Sheesh, any minute they were going to wrap her in cotton wool and hide her from the world.

“Is that what you want?” Zack asked in a strained voice. “To be coddled and sheltered?”

“Not really,” she said, finally realizing that the mate link was open and stronger than ever. “It probably sounds really selfish, but I want to make my own decisions, be responsible for my own choices, and choose the course of my own life, but at the same time I want someone I know I can lean on if things get too tough.”

She felt their surprised reactions but couldn’t seem to understand them.

“Baby, what you want is exactly what we’re offering.” She looked from Mitchell to Zack and back again, and then closed her eyes as she tried to find words to explain exactly how what she wanted differed from what they offered.

“You don’t understand. I had no *me* when I was married to Duncan. Everything I did was measured by his needs and wants, not by my choice, not ever,” she said, wishing she could just fall into their arms and pretend that everything would be all right. “I need to be my

own person. Sharing a mating link like the one you describe robs me of that.”

“How?” Mitchell said as he came closer, the tea bags obviously forgotten.

“It just does.” God, she was lame. Why couldn’t she explain how having them in her head all the time would take away her freedom to make her own choices? How the very thought of being left to the whims and manipulations of another person again scared her more than being alone? Why couldn’t she just tell them she needed to be a whole person, not just one part of a group of three?

“Is that how you really see the mating link?” Zack said, sounding slightly amused.

Anger curled in her belly at the feeling that he was somehow laughing at her. He growled and kissed her, thrusting his tongue into her mouth and the memories of what they’d shared into her head. “Baby,” he said when they finally came up for air, “the link only enhances our relationship. None of us will ever lose the part of us that makes us individuals. Does your sister seem any different since joining with David and Jessica?”

She shook her head. No, if anything, Kayla was more herself now than she was when she’d been dating that asshole who’d hurt her years ago.

“You know us,” Mitchell said as he sat on the sofa and pulled Jade’s hand into his own. “You know our personalities. You know what’s in our hearts. Why would you ever think we’d want you to not be the woman we fell in love with?”

“But I’m your Taydelaan. You didn’t choose me.”

“Now see that’s where you’re wrong,” Zack said, sounding rather cocky once more. “For every couple, there is more than one Taydelaan. Granted they are few and far between, but—”

She cut him off. “How few and far between, exactly?” she asked suspiciously.

“About one in half a million,” Mitchell filled in.

“But,” Zack said, looking exasperated by both of them, “the point is that of the twelve thousand possible matches on this planet, we chose you.”

“You chose me?” she asked, even knowing that she still sounded like a parrot but this time not caring.

“Do you think that if we hadn’t chosen you that the link would’ve continued to grow? What if you’d been married, or too young or...I don’t know...too nasty...do you think we would have been able to share the dreams we did?”

“I almost am too nasty,” she said, feeling guilty for the way she’d treated them. She’d reacted out of fear to a situation she didn’t fully understand.

“No,” Zack said as he tilted her face up to his with his fingers, “too wary perhaps, but never nasty. Even when you left us, we knew it was because something was frightening you, driving you away, not you deliberately being nasty.”

“I love you,” she whispered. She felt both of them relax as if they’d been holding their breath, waiting for her to demand her freedom once more. “I’m sorry I hurt you,” she said, knowing even as she said the words that she was forgiven. She smiled as she felt the mate link solidify even further in her mind.

“We love you, too,” they said in unison.

Epilogue

“I can’t believe I let Kayla talk me into that,” Jade complained as she fell into the closest armchair. “I would’ve preferred a small reception, not that massive party.” She grumbled out loud, but both of her partners could feel her satisfaction that the ceremony had gone off without a hitch.

She still wore her wedding dress, and Mitchell couldn’t imagine anything more appropriate. The soft, flowing material accented her shapely beauty and highlighted her natural coloring. She looked absolutely perfect in it.

But that didn’t mean he wasn’t dying to get it off her.

Mitchell smiled as Zack sensed his growing arousal, and then moved to lift their wife into his arms. Together the three of them had decided to spend their honeymoon at home and were eagerly planning to visit Sesturia on the next transport. Zack and Mitchell’s parents were already organizing another Joining Ceremony for when they arrived home. Mitchell just hoped that Jade didn’t find the experience too overwhelming. Fortunately Kayla, Jessica, and David had chosen to travel back to Sesturia at the same time, so Jade had her sister to turn to if she needed.

“You look beautiful in this dress,” Mitchell said. “But you need to take it off before I accidentally damage it.” She laughed softly as he sent images to both Jade and Zack of what would happen if she didn’t hurry.

“But first,” Zack said, “I promised you a wedding present.”

“That you did,” she said as Zack placed her on her feet and lifted the dress over her head. She wore a soft silk bra and matching panties.

Zack turned to sit on the end of the bed and slowly lowered their wife facedown over his lap. Mitchell felt his cock twitch and his blood pressure rise as he realized the present Zack intended to give them all.

Mitchell loved the feel of Zack's hand on his ass, but being able to watch both his lovers while feeling their reactions was almost enough to have him coming on the spot. Jade went willingly, trusting her mates to give her pleasure. Mitchell dragged his clothes off, desperate to release his cock from the tight confines of his pants. He could already feel the enzyme starting to build, and this time he would let it. Tonight he'd make them a true triad.

* * * *

Jade moaned as Zack caressed her ass through the silk panties. She'd been anticipating this night for days now, knowing that Mitchell would finally inject her with the enzyme. She shivered at the full implications and stories her sister had shared. Being claimed by your mate was supposed to be the most erotic of experiences and she'd waited with a mixture of nervousness and longing. She almost felt like a virgin bride.

But the gift that Zack was offering was just as special. She'd never actually been spanked before. The dream they'd shared had been exciting, but she'd wondered what it would feel like to be spanked for real. It looked like she was about to find out.

Jade relaxed as the first blow landed, the impact softened by the thin material of her panties, and smiled as Mitchell stepped closer. "Take them off," he growled at Zack. Zack caressed her ass as Mitchell roughly dragged the scrap of material down her legs. Zack pressed her head down further, pushing her off balance, making her feel more vulnerable. Mitchell undid her bra and let it fall to the ground.

The second blow was a lot harder, and she felt tears prickle the back of her eyes as the third hit lower on her thigh. Again and again,

over and over, Zack's large hand heated her bottom. She bit her lip, wondering why they couldn't feel her discomfort, but then something amazing happened. Heat swelled outward, inflaming her clit, heightening her desire. She started rocking into the blows, needing them, anticipating them, begging for the next one. Her world narrowed to this small room, her two men, her coming orgasm. She barely breathed as her climax swelled through her muscles, her body undulating against Zack's lap, her eyes squeezing closed as she shook violently.

Rough fingers pressed into her pussy, filling her, fucking her as her muscles pulsed against them. Zack adjusted her slightly, and Mitchell lifted her head to run his cock against her lips. She opened for him, gagging slightly as he thrust deeply. She managed to swallow but cried out when another hand found her clit and squeezed hard. Her orgasm rolled back through her as the fingers fucked her in time with Mitchell's thrusts. Mitchell pushed into her over and over, holding her face, giving her no reprieve. His frantic movements faltered, his orgasm taking him by surprise.

* * * *

Zack watched the man and woman he loved have the most incredible orgasms he'd ever seen. He felt everything they felt, heard everything they thought, and practically came with them. Only the thought of what would happen after Mitchell bit her with the enzyme stopped him from losing it right then and there.

She shook as her orgasm slowly ebbed, sucking lovingly on Mitchell's spent cock. She made a sound of disappointment as Mitchell finally pulled out of her mouth. He leaned over and caressed her face, smoothing the tears away from her eyes, watching her closely as they both used their telepathy to check she was all right. She smiled at Mitchell, assuring them both through their mate link that the tears weren't important.

“I love you,” Zack said to them both as he helped Jade to her feet. She clung to him, her legs wobbly, but she gave him the most brilliant smile. She must’ve seen the thoughts that flitted through his mind because she answered the one question he’d been too frightened to ask.

“Yes,” she said with a huge grin. Mitchell pressed up against her spine, pushing her into Zack’s embrace.

“Are you sure, beautiful? We have plenty of time to start a family.”

“Hello?” she said, sounding really confused. “I’m in my mid-thirties. If we don’t start now, we’re liable to miss our chance.” She was only thirty-two and he didn’t consider that mid-anything, but it seemed clear that she didn’t really know the full extent of the enzyme’s effects. That was the trouble with the mate link. Before it was complete, the information that came through was kind of like Swiss cheese, full of holes and incomplete.

“Baby,” Zack said as he pulled her closer, “the enzyme changes you a little, and makes you not quite human, but not quite Sesturian either. Once Mitchell injects you with it, you’ll only be able to have children with us, no one else.”

“I know that,” she said. She pressed a soft kiss to the underside of his jaw. “And I know that I need both of you to come inside me within a minute or two of each other, or even,” she added with a nervous swallow, “come inside me at the same time.” Zack smiled at the image she described. It brought a whole new meaning to the words “double penetration,” and he could barely wait to try it. But he wanted Jade to know they had options and didn’t need to start a family straight away.

“But what you don’t know,” Mitchell said with a soft laugh, “is that the enzyme extends your life expectancy...and your reproductive years.”

“Really?” she asked, sounding quite pleased. “You mean I won’t be old and gray, while you two still look in your thirties?” Zack smiled and pulled both his lovers closer.

“No, baby,” he said as she wriggled against him to get even closer, “we’ll grow old and gray with you.”

She was quiet for a moment, and the three of them stood together, simply enjoying the closeness. “I would still like to start a family tonight,” she said quietly, “but if you want to wait—”

Zack stopped her words with a smack on her thigh. “Tonight is a perfect time to start our family,” he said as he caressed the smooth skin. “Climb on the bed, baby. We’re going to help you relax.”

Mitchell helped her onto the bed, arranging her on her back, pushing her legs wide as Zack positioned himself between her thighs and pressed a kiss to her mons. He could smell her sweet scent, and only the promise of what was to come kept him from slamming his cock into her wet heat and fucking her until neither of them could walk.

She moaned, obviously picking up on his internal thoughts. Even without the enzyme their mate link was growing rapidly. He dipped his tongue into her pussy, pressing her thighs harder against the bed as she writhed against his mouth. Gently he explored her folds, pressing deeper, tasting the cream of her last orgasm.

“You taste delicious,” Mitchell said even before he leaned over and pressed his mouth to Zack’s. She lowered her hands, trying to hold them to her, trying to lift her pussy and fuck their faces, but Mitchell moved to gather her wrists and pin them to the bed.

* * * *

Mitchell watched as Zack pleased their woman, tormenting and teasing her pussy and clit until she was begging for release. But each time she neared the pinnacle, Zack moved away, slowing things down, heightening the anticipation.

The enzyme was building rapidly, and Mitchell wondered how much longer he could control the darker, more elemental impulse to claim his mates. He could feel both Jade and Zack inside his head, soothing him, encouraging him, calling to him. Jade stiffened a moment before orgasm claimed her, every nerve ending vibrating with her release.

Unable to control the enzyme's effects any longer, Mitchell leaned over her, trapping her against the bed, and his fangs lowered and he bit into her neck. The enzyme pumped into her blood, and she screeched as a second, more powerful orgasm slammed through her. Mitchell could feel his cock, hard and aching, leaking pre-cum as Zack lifted off the bed and hurriedly removed his clothes.

With his last scrap of sanity, Mitchell rolled onto his back, dragging Jade with him. She straddled him, quickly lowering onto his erection, sighing like she'd finally found where she belonged. He held her close, amazed to realize just how solid their mating link was now. Even his link with Zack had grown stronger.

Mitchell grinned as he sensed Zack climb onto the bed behind them and then drop a kiss on Jade's pinkened ass. She moaned at the reminder of her first spanking, and Zack promised them both in a sensual telepathic voice that it wouldn't be her last.

Zack pushed their legs open, kneeling between them, his hands roaming over the place where Mitchell and Jade were joined.

* * * *

Jade felt no fear. Even though she'd never done this before, even though the very idea made her worry how they would fit, she knew that her men would keep her safe regardless. No matter how turned on they felt, or even how harshly the enzyme affected Mitchell's thought processes, their first instincts had always been to protect her.

She could feel their love. Actually feel it growing as the link strengthened. She could see their memories, feel their emotions,

understand their motivations, and she knew—absolutely knew without a doubt—that they would love her for the rest of her life.

The enzyme still coursed through her, but she could easily discern her thoughts and feelings from Zack and Mitchell's emotions. She felt part of a triad but still herself. She was still the person she'd always been, but now she was loved and cherished and completely whole.

She gasped as Zack slipped his fingers into her pussy, caressing her inner walls and Mitchell's cock at the same time. Jade breathed out, trying to relax her muscles so that Zack could stretch her vaginal walls and she could take them both.

Jade giggled nervously as she felt Zack spread lube on his cock. She could feel his determination not to hurt her, and she loved him even more. Mitchell moved, pulling his cock out of her slightly, and she could feel Zack's cock rubbing against his, sliding together as they placed both heads against her slit and pushed in slightly. She moaned as her muscles embraced them, pressing their cocks together as they slid further into her body. Both men shook trying to slow their build to orgasm, but their possession felt so amazing that she found herself rocking against them, trying to hurry their pace.

Zack grasped her hips, pushing her harder against Mitchell, her swollen clit pressed between them, the intense sting and amazing heat spreading over her entire body. They thrust deeper, stretching her, possessing her, loving her. She lifted her ass, straining to take them both, begging with her body.

Orgasm slammed her, her pussy, her ass pulsing, throbbing, dragging them closer. She screamed as she felt them lose control, felt them press harder, deeper, faster. Each movement exquisite agony as they thrust into her together. She felt Mitchell's fangs, the brief sting, the heat of the enzyme, and her world exploded into a million bright colors and shiny stars. She felt them both swell and pour their seed deep into her body. Their whispered reassurances and loving caresses making her feel more complete than she'd ever felt at any time in her life.

“I love you,” she whispered to them both, squeezing her inner muscles as they slowly slipped from her body. “When will we know if we’ve made a baby?” Even as the words came out of her mouth she realized she already knew the answer. This mating link was going to take some getting used to. It was almost like she’d lived three lives instead of just her own. She had access to everything that Mitchell and Zack had learned over the years. She could see all of their memories, their experiences, their hurts, and their hopes.

Zack answered her question anyway. “Sesturian mating is more accurate,” he said as he slid to the side, pulling her with him so that she lay with her head on Mitchell’s shoulder and her ass pressed to Zack’s groin. “Technically, you’re already pregnant. In a few days we’ll be able to sense the life growing inside you.”

She nodded happily, amazed at how relieved she felt. She’d spent the last few years trying to convince herself that a life without children was what she wanted, but the deep sense of contentment flowing through her proved otherwise. She couldn’t wait to have their baby, to bring a small new person into this world. Even knowing that her child had three parents, and an extended family spanning two galaxies, wasn’t enough to dampen her excitement. She was exactly where she wanted to be.

But then a niggling thought flashed through her brain. Her sister Kayla hadn’t been the woman to give birth, but her link with her lovers meant she’d been able to breastfeed.

Suddenly Mitchell’s deep, rumbling laugh filled the room and she could feel Zack’s absolute horror. She grinned mischievously as she realized the truth, but couldn’t help laughing at Zack’s reaction.

“No, beautiful,” Mitchell said when he finally recovered a little from laughing. “I don’t think Zack has the right equipment.”

Zack growled, flipped her onto her back, and pressed her into the mattress with his weight. “No, baby,” he whispered as he thrust his hard cock back into her pussy. “The only one who’ll be breastfeeding our baby is you.”

“You sure?” she asked, smiling as he thrust harder, much harder. “I hear it can be a good bonding experience.”

Mitchell laughed and pressed a kiss to her lips. “I love you,” he said seriously, “and I look forward to watching you tease Zack for the rest of our lives.”

“Tease me enough, baby, and you’re liable to get spanked,” Zack said, punctuating his promise with a slap against her thigh. She smiled at both of her lovers as the sting morphed into heat, raising her desire higher once more.

Life couldn’t get any better than this.

THE END

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Rachel Clark loves a great romance.

She happily lives a *romantic* story all of her own with her *wonderful* hubby and *precious* teenagers and menagerie of *perfectly behaved* animals...and, well okay, for the real story you'll need to replace romantic with *hectic*, add *mostly* before wonderful and you can probably guess about the teenagers and animals.

But hey, Rachel loves to read romance and when her life lets her, she scribbles a few of her own.

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