

The Problematic Princess: The Voyage

By

Abigail Webster

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Chapter One

“Do you think it acceptable for a man to spank his own wife?” Princess Dulcie demanded of her eldest brother, Prince Judd. She was still trying to make sense of the fact that her Kingly father married her to a man without so much as mentioning it to her first... and that new husband believed in spanking!

“Not only is it acceptable, it is necessary at times,” he answered solemnly. “It is a firm expression of love and concern, little sister.”

“You have spanked Magar?” Dulcie asked, shocked by the very thought of her mild mannered brother doing something so terrible.

“Shhhh. Keep your voice down if you wish to continue this conversation, Dulcie. I would not have Magar embarrassed.” He paused and then said, “I have spanked my wife several times, and she is sitting on a well-spanked backside right now.”

“Why?” Dulcie was concerned. “What did she do that was so awful?” She truly wanted to know so that she could scold whoever was responsible.

“She railed at me, and at Father, because he wed you by decree without discussing it with you first and giving you a traditional wedding.”

Dulcie felt her eyes fill with tears. “She did that for me?”

“She loves you as much as we all do, little sister. However, I could not allow such disrespect to go unpunished. I used her hairbrush until she expressed remorse for her sharp words, and then I told her that both Father and I agree the whole affair was handled badly. We do love you, and want only your happiness. Father is positive that a normal man from this galaxy would not be able to provide the kind of love you need. Leader Canton is strong, fair minded, and he will not use you cruelly. If you receive a punishment it will be because you have earned punishment. Leader Canton will not enjoy making you cry in pain any more than I enjoy seeing Magar’s tears. It will be up to you to adjust your behavior to what is acceptable in your new home, little sister,” he said kindly, giving her a smile. “Now, please smile and wave to your nephew before Danine takes him from the hall for a lesson in decorum.”

Dulcie’s lavender eyes quickly sought out the three-year-old son of their brother, Danine, and she gave him a big smile and a wink and a wave with her finger. Danine saw the gesture and then leaned down to have a word with the child. Jakob nodded vigorously, but winked back to let Dulcie know he loved her best of all.

Canton was aware of the exchange between his wife and Judd and vowed to find a moment to thank the other man for his words. They were exactly what Dulcie needed to hear and he hoped that Judd made a good impression upon her and she would react in a manner befitting her station as a Princess and as the wife of a Leader. He did not want to be harsh with her.

Dulcie managed to remain polite throughout the meal, and when the greetings, well wishes, and speeches started, she was attentive and smiled when appropriate, laughed when laughter was expected, and she acknowledged each and every person who rose to say something with a circumspect nod.

Canton held his breath when his younger brother got to his feet to speak, dreading what Kardoe would say to his bride, and dreading his wife's reply. To his vast relief, he need not have worried. Kardoe welcomed her to the family, stated he was pleased by his brother's taste in women, and said he looked forward to getting to know her well as his new sister. Dulcie smiled and replied in kind, thanking him for his welcoming words. Canton reached for her hand and gave her fingers a gentle squeeze. She looked at him, startled, but when he smiled she smiled in return, her expression telling him she understood the little squeeze.

Dulcie was thankful when it was time to rise and bid her Father a formal goodbye. Her butt hurt so badly that she wanted to cry. Standing was pure relief. She said the words expected of her and when King Betarn leaned down to whisper that he loved her, she was able to return the words.

"Be happy my child," the King gave them his blessing, and then Leader Canton swept her from the hall. He knew his brother and the others from his ship who came to the formal breakfast would soon follow. He led the silent Dulcie through the hallways and to the landing station connected to the castle.

"We will wait in the receiving lounge and greet the others when they return. I will introduce you to each person, but do not worry if you cannot recall all of their names immediately. They will remind you if you forget."

"Is there anything I should not say?" Dulcie did not want to offend anyone by saying the wrong thing."

"You will always address me as Leader Canton when speaking to me in front of others. You will not leave the room without asking me for dismissal. If you disagree with me, you will wait until we are alone to tell me of your feelings. You already know that you do not stand or leave the table without asking my permission."

They heard the men coming and Canton gave her an encouraging smile. He introduced his brother first, and then ten others. "There are five others aboard, Princess Dulcie, but they are at their stations. They will greet you later." He turned to Kardoe, "Prepare to take off."

"Yes, sir." He saluted, and then hurried to do as he was bid. Canton nodded at the others and they, too, went about their duties.

“I will now show you to our private quarters, Princess.”

Dulcie accepted the arm he offered, and quickly learned that their quarters were at the opposite end of the very large ship. She felt them lift off, even though it was very smooth and spoke of practice and skill, and there was not a pause in the tour Canton gave her. The ship was laid out very well, and similar to the ones her father owned. Finally they reached a door and Canton waved his hand over the print screen and the door unlocked. He ushered her inside the large cabin and said, “This is our home when we travel, Dulcie. If you do not like the decorations in here, they can be changed to suit your taste.”

“The colors are the same as this dress,” she said.

“This shade of blue is the color of our family’s flag of recognition. You will wear it at formal gatherings, of course, but at other times, you may wear the colors you wish.”

“I prefer to wear longer dresses or pants,” she told him.

“You will feel out of place if you dress in such old-fashioned garb on Anopy,” he told her kindly. “I do not wish anyone to fault you over something so simple to correct. I have had a new wardrobe made for you, Dulcie.”

“I feel too exposed in this dress,” she announced.

“You look lovely,” he complimented her.

“Thank you,” she replied.

“Do you have something you wish to ask me?” He looked down into her puzzled eyes and smiled. “I am pleased with your behavior in the dining hall and afterwards. You have earned relief from the plug if you will but ask me to remove it.”

Dulcie felt her cheeks flood with color, but she was anxious to rid herself of the plug. She had been wearing it for well over four hours and she was truly miserable. “Will you please remove the plug, Leader Canton?” she asked in a tiny voice.

“Can you not look me in the eye when you ask, Dulcie?”

“No,” she whispered, shaking her head and refusing to look up at him. “I am embarrassed and shamed enough just speaking the words.”

He sighed in disappointment, but said quietly, “Go into our chamber, take off your panties, and kneel on our bed with your legs spread wide. I will be there in a moment to give you relief.”

Dulcie did as she was told, knowing her face was a deep, burning red. This was one punishment she did not wish to have repeated. She waited for what seemed like an hour before she heard Canton behind her.

“Your bottom is still red from the spanking I gave you, little Princess. Your skin is very sensitive, is it not?”

“I am in pain,” she stated, seeing no reason to lie to him.

“You will not wish to make the strapping you will receive at bed time any worse, then, now will you?” he asked quietly, his hand resting on her bottom and feeling the heat she was giving off.

“I do not wish a strapping at all, sir,” was her answer.

“You will still receive what I have promised, Dulcie. I do not wish to be harsh with you, but you need to learn that I will be obeyed. It is better you learn this now than when we arrive on Anopy and you could be heard sassing me. I have no wish to bare my own wife in public for a sound thrashing.”

“I would hate you if you did that,” she declared.

“Then best you suffer a strapping tonight to learn that I mean what I say.” He gave her sore butt a hefty spank and then said, “Relax and make this easier on yourself, little Princess. Do not be surprised if you feel as though you need to relieve yourself immediately. It is a normal reaction.” He was gentle as he removed the plug, but even so, he heard her sniffing and trying to cry quietly. He took the plug to the bathing room and cleaned and sanitized it before putting it away. When he went out to the bed chamber, she was lying on the bed, her face buried in a pillow.

Canton lie down beside her and pulled her over to rest her head on his chest while he held her and caressed her back. “There is no need to cry now, little one. You accepted that little punishment well and it is over now.”

“My whole life is turned upside down, Canton. Do you even care that nothing is as I planned? In less than one day’s time, I find myself married to a man I do not really know and on my way to another galaxy, and treated as if I have no mind of my own. I cannot make any choices that please me unless they also please you!” She took a deep breath and continued. “I have no one to turn to, while you have everyone who is familiar to you surrounding you. My ways are not your own, and I cannot even wear the clothing that pleases me. I am upset and sad, Canton, and I have a right to cry.”

“Would a warrior cry like a silly little girl?” he asked in a teasing tone of voice.

“A true warrior would have found a way to kill you and free herself,” she claimed.

“Would you really see me dead, little Princess?” he asked quietly.

“I do not know.” She was telling the truth. “I would suspect the answer is ‘no’ since you are still alive and I am wearing this terrible dress.”

“The dress is not terrible, Dulcie. You make it look beautiful and you do me proud.”

“If you say so.”

“Are you hungry?” he asked in a solicitous manner.

“No!”

“Then I suggest you rest for a while, and explore our rooms. You will find everything you need within your storage spaces and within our bathing room. Should something be missing, you need only to ask and it will be provided if at all possible. I am going to speak with my crew and make sure all is as it should be. You will have no obligations until we dine this evening. The rest of the crew will wish to meet you then. I will inform you in plenty of time to dress.” He headed for the door of their bed chamber and turned to add, “Should you wish to learn more of Anopy, the computers are filled with knowledge.”

He did leave her then, and Dulcie was relieved to be alone. She was startled to realize that she was feeling sorry for herself! Where was her pride? She had promised herself that Leader Canton would not find her so easy to intimidate, but here she was, crying and feeling beaten. So what if he had managed to carry her off? She would make him regret his actions. She was a Princess, a warrior, and she would not bend! If Canton had any feeling for her at all he would have told her he would not give her another punishment that night! What kind of man would promise another punishment when his wife was so very upset?

Leader Canton was well aware that his crew was watching his every move as he made his way to the deck to check on their flight. Apparently they thought he would shirk his duties to stay closeted with his bride. They were wrong. Dulcie needed some time alone to think. She was on the verge of another tantrum, and if he was not in the rooms with her she could vent all she wanted without his needing to punish her again. She was sore enough that he was sure she would behave through dinner with his crew. If not, then she would regret her behavior even more come time for the strapping at bedtime.

“Brother,” Kardoe greeted him with a big smile as he approached. There was no one else in the Captain’s overlook to hear him. “I thought you would be with your pretty little bride...”

“I am still Leader and that responsibility does not end just because I now have a wife,” Canton stated firmly. “What is our position now?” he asked, just as he had countless other times. Kardoe answered with the respect due his brother, but once the immediate business was handled he asked in genuine concern, “Are you having problems with your wife so soon?”

“No problems. Dulcie is just anxious at leaving her home.”

“She is a feisty woman and possesses a temper worth watching,” Kardoe said lightly. “I have talked with her brothers and they insist she thinks she is a warrior.”

“She has told me this herself,” Canton said with a smile.

“Should I be worried for your safety, brother?” Kardoe asked with a grin, teasing Canton.

“You have seen how tiny she is. Do you think I cannot protect myself from a mere woman?” Canton joked.

“Do not be too harsh with her, Canton. The ways of King Betarn’s land are not as strict as ours. Princess Dulcie will require patience.”

“This I already know, little brother,” Canton said quietly, touched that his brother cared enough to express his opinion. He knew that Kardoe only wanted his happiness.

Canton checked in with the other departments on board the ship, making sure that any problems were promptly dealt with. Time passed swiftly as it normally did on such a large ship. It was imperative that they always be alert to danger. There were enemy ships who would accost them, especially when they realized the Leader of Anopy was aboard. And, there were sky pirates to deal with. They would not only kill his crew, but would hold him, and perhaps his brother, for ransom. And Princess Darcy... they would make sport of her before ransoming her to her father, and then sending her back dead. Canton was diligent in warning his crew to call him at the first sign of another ship. He did not want them to think he should not be disturbed because his wife was on board. Dulcie’s presence was the very reason he needed to be notified immediately.

It was growing close to time to go to the dining hall. Canton used the communication system and his voice filled his quarters. “Princess Dulcie, it is time to prepare for dinner. I am sure you will find something suitable to wear.”

“I will be ready.”

“Do you recall the location of the dining hall?” he asked. “If so, I will meet you there.”

“I am not a simpleton to get lost aboard a ship,” she replied sharply, and Canton realized he would have to warn her that she could be heard by others if they were near him.

“Princess, you are fortunate that Kardoe has stepped out of the Captain’s Overlook and did not hear your tone of voice. Have you forgotten that I will wield a strap against you this night? Only a simpleton would speak so rashly when due a punishment strapping.” He heard her sharp intake of breath. “I will meet you in the dining hall in forty-five minutes and I suggest you are prompt.” He shut off the communicator before she could say something he would be forced to make her regret.

Dulcie was furious that Leader Canton thought he could command her like he would his crew and it was time he learn a very important lesson. She was a Princess and she would be treated befitting her station in life. While the customs on Anopy dictated she be subservient to him as her husband and as Leader, the customs in her Father's land taught her just the opposite. She was at the very least his equal and she would not bow to the rules of Anopy when marriage to him was not of her choice. She was used to the people waiting for her to arrive and standing when she did. It would be lesson one for her new husband. Lesson two would be that she, as Princess, would wear what pleased her. If he and the people of Anopy did not like her choice of clothing, then that was their problem. She would not go about half naked, and fearful of crossing her legs and exposing her privates to the world. She preferred the freedom of pants. While her sewing was not the best, she had managed to fashion herself some comfortable pants to wear with one of the ridiculously short dresses of Anopy design. Princess Dulcie was going to make a grand entrance!

Chapter Two

“Perhaps Princess Dulcie is lost, Leader Canton...?” Kardoe spoke politely to his silently fuming brother. Everyone was standing beside their chair, waiting for a signal to be seated, which was never given until all were present. Being late for the evening meal punished everyone aboard as it permitted the hot food to grow cold and the cold food to grow warm.

“Perhaps you are right, Kardoe,” Canton replied quietly, knowing full well that all ears were on their conversation. He moved toward the door only to have it open and Princess Dulcie appear in the opening. The little brat was posing, making a grand entrance, and she was deliberately late! Canton decided she would pay for her mistake when he took her to their chambers after the meal was ended. He spoke loudly in order to be heard clearly, “I am sure Princess Dulcie will wish to apologize for allowing our food to grow cold while waiting for her...?”

“Why is the food served before everyone is seated, Leader Canton?” she asked, expressing surprise. “At my father’s castle, the servants are instructed to serve after he is satisfied all are present. It would seem another custom that I find very strange indeed!” Her lavender eyes were purposely wide and only Canton realized she was acting. “Please, begin your meal. I am terribly sorry if your food is cold because of me. Leader Canton did not explain that even *this* custom is backwards!” Her voice was light and filled with humor, but left no doubt that she did not approve of their ways. Canton added more strokes to the total she would receive with the strap.

As she moved forward through the tables to take her seat beside Canton, he was aware that his crew was trying to hide their shock. At first he attributed their reaction to her blatant insults to their way of doing things aboard ship, but then he was able to see her clearly and felt his anger rise at her audacity! The little brat was wearing pants! Poorly made pants that fit her much too snugly! His dark eyes met her amused lavender ones.

“You are improperly dressed, Princess Dulcie.”

“No, Leader Canton,” she said calmly. “I am properly dressed as befits a Princess from my land. I choose to dress as is comfortable for me.” She heard the men murmuring. She turned to face the others in the room. “I am aware that the women of Anopy wear dresses, but I am very uncomfortable with their length. I wish to establish another form of dress for women on Anopy... one that gives them a choice. My husband, I am not a sheep to be led.” She looked at Canton and suddenly realized that perhaps this first night aboard his ship was not the proper time to assert herself and her opinions. It was clear he was angry and his crew was shocked!

The little brat was challenging him, and Canton was not about to permit her to get away with it. He forced a smile to his lips and said, “I wanted marriage to a feisty woman and it would seem I got my wish. As Leader, little Princess, I will assure you that you will become accustomed to the customs and the laws of Anopy. Our women dress as women, as you will do from now on. Our women are smart enough to issue dares in private, and not in a room full of family and

friends. When a wife openly challenges her husband in front of others, he deals with it swiftly, and just as publicly.”

Dulcie wanted to run when Canton rounded the table, but she was rooted to the spot. She was a Princess and she did not run from anyone... even when running was the prudent choice!

Canton reached for Dulcie and then he pushed dishes aside on the main table so he could sit on the corner. He pulled a struggling Dulcie to him and lifted her over his left thigh. He then brought his hand down on her posterior in a loud smack.

Dulcie could not believe this was happening... Not again! He was spanking her in front of people, and it hurt! She kicked her legs, and tried to push herself off his knee, using the table for leverage. He was so strong, and the arm he had around her waist held her down and kept her in position for the humiliation of a public spanking!

“Do you still think that playing this little joke on your husband was worth this, little Princess?” he asked, his voice full of amusement.

“I am a Princess!” she reminded him. “I do not have to change everything about me to suit you!”

“I am afraid you do, little girl,” he said, struggling to maintain a humorous tone of voice. He did not wish to have to take her to the punishment room and issue a serious punishment in front of the crew, but if she kept baiting him, he would have no choice at all. He spanked harder, aiming for her sit spots. Her cries of pain kept her from making any more comments he would need to take seriously. “I know you are already missing your home, little one, but daring me in this manner is not acceptable. I am going to stand you on your feet, and you will remove these offensive pants and sit down and eat your meal. Is that understood?” he asked firmly.

“Yes!” she quickly agreed, anxious to stop the spanking.

Canton gave her a harder spank, right on her left sit spot and followed it with another to her right sit spot. “Yes...?” he prompted.

“Yes, sir!” Dulcie tearfully corrected herself. He stood her on her feet, his dark eyes warning her to mind her manners... or else. Dulcie was shocked by her own behavior in the face of his reaction. He had warned her that such behavior was not tolerated and she had challenged him when she had no real chance of winning the battle. Canton was not one of the men who lived in her land. He was not afraid of her. It was a huge shock. Canton’s eyebrow shot up and she immediately realized he was waiting for something, and she quickly remembered that she was to remove her pants. The short dress would leave her feeling bare and exposed, but apparently her feelings did not matter in the least. The world as they knew it would come to an end if a female dared to wear pants on Anopy, or on one of Anopy’s ships! Using the table to balance herself, she removed the colorful pants.

“Hand them to me, Princess Dulcie,” Canton said firmly, holding out his hand.

“That is the job of a servant, not a Princess!” She would not bow before this man.

Canton looked at her. “You are not in your land, wife. I am your husband, and you will obey me.”

Dulcie swept them off the floor and threw them in his face. Before she could stop herself she giggled at the expression of disbelief on his face.

Canton could see a couple of his crew were trying to suppress their mirth at Dulcie’s antics. He forced himself to smile, but he grabbed her arm and marched her to a corner of the room and put her in the corner, facing the walls. “I can see you are not hungry this night, wife, since you could not be on time for dinner, and since you have taken amusement in testing me. I will leave you here while the rest of us eat.” He leaned closer and whispered, “You will stand here without moving and obey me or the strapping you get this night will be given in the punishment room, with the crew present. You have crossed so many lines I do not know where to begin, and pushing me further will cause you much pain.” He slapped her bottom hard five more times, making her cry out in pain. He turned to the room and said, “My apologies for the domestic discord, gentlemen and ladies. My little Princess is a bit feisty but she will come to know our rules before this journey is over. If your food is unacceptable, we will ask Chef to reheat.”

Dulcie wanted to bolt for the privacy of their chamber, but she would not be able to enter the rooms until Canton reprogrammed the locks. She had nowhere she could hide that he would not be able to find her, and what is more, no one would help her... Dulcie immediately realized that she had alienated everyone in the dining hall by behaving like a child having a tantrum. She felt tears sting her eyes as she stood facing the corner. Her bottom was throbbing and burning, and her back started to ache the longer she stood there without moving. She wanted to rub her backside to try and ease the sting, but she feared that she had pushed Canton so far that he would punish her publicly if she so much as rubbed the itch on her nose!

Leader Canton kept his eyes on his wife throughout the meal. For whatever reason, probably the threat of a public strapping, she was finally behaving herself. The crew kept stealing glances at her, wondering at her nerve to dare the Leader in public! Canton wanted the meal over with so he could dismiss everyone, but their obvious curiosity made them linger over their food. Finally, a good hour after he bade them sit, the last person was finished. He stood and said, “I will dismiss everyone now to their duty or rest. Goodnight.”

“Leader Canton, may I please say something first?” Dulcie asked, turning to face him.

Dulcie did not realize it, but anyone requesting permission to speak was granted that permission. He nodded gravely, praying she would not make matters even worse for herself.

Dulcie whispered, “Thank you,” in his direction and then raised her voice. “I wish to apologize to all of you for my behavior. I was not raised to behave so rudely, and I will make an effort to be pleasant for the rest of our journey and beyond. I fear I have upset my husband beyond his endurance... and I also apologize publicly for his embarrassment. I am truly sorry,” she ended

her little speech, and then bowed her head. She was shocked when there was polite applause. She quickly looked up to see that Canton was smiling at her.

“Your apologies are accepted, Princess Dulcie.” He waved to let the crew go on their way, but the ones who had not yet been introduced to his wife stayed behind. Canton made short work of giving her their names, and then he excused them. “We will retire to our rooms now, Princess Dulcie,” he said formally.

Dulcie could hear the underlying anger in his words and she felt butterflies in her stomach. She was in trouble and she knew it. Canton might accept an apology, but that did not mean he would forget the punishment. She could not believe she made matters worse by acting like such a bitch. Tears filled her eyes once again and she did not try to stop them from rolling down her cheeks. “Canton, I am truly shocked at the way I acted tonight. It was not well done of me, and I am remorseful. Will you please forgive me?” she asked as they walked closer to their rooms.

“I have already forgiven you, little Princess,” he said softly. “Will you now accept the punishment you have earned?” he asked just as earnestly.

Dulcie bowed her head, but then found her courage and looked at him and replied, “Yes, sir.”

He nodded. “Just what I would expect of a Princess and my wife,” he stated. He unlocked their doors and ushered her inside, making sure to lock the door after they entered. He did not want his brother to stop by without announcing himself; no one else would dare enter without permission.

“You behaved badly tonight, Dulcie. Why? What did you hope to prove?” he asked, wanting to hear her side of things.

“I have apologized, Canton,” she said. “Please do not scold.”

“I know you have apologized, and I accepted your apology and you are forgiven, but now you will be punished, and I would understand your reasoning before I decide on a punishment that is fair.” He looked at her tear-filled eyes. “You can speak your mind, Dulcie. I will not punish you for your thoughts.”

“Everything is just ‘wrong’ to me, Canton. This dress feels awful. It is too short. Bringing the food to the table before everyone arrives is wrong. Having to ask your permission to leave a room is just wrong. I was not raised this way, and you seem to care nothing for my upset at being uprooted from my traditions. How would you feel if you were to suddenly have to live in my father’s castle and I told you how things would be? How would you feel if I told you that you could not wear the clothing you are accustomed to but instead you must wear something that leaves you feeling bare?”

“Dulcie, that is not going to happen. A man brings a woman to his home. The problem is that you are not trying to adapt. You are rebelling as a child rebels. Your father spoiled you and gave you your way too often. Your own people found your behavior shocking. Your father

despaired of finding a husband for you... one who could deal with your outlandish behavior. I asked for you, and when I assured him that I could make a true, loving wife of you, he granted me the privilege of proving myself right. I have been fairly gentle with you, but your behavior this evening has proven I need to be very firm. You respect strength, and before this journey is over, you will know you have met your match and that I am worthy of you.”

Dulcie looked at him in horror. “You have already punished me harshly. The spanking you gave me in the dining hall was extremely painful on my sore bottom! Standing in the corner like a small child was humiliating. I feel punished.”

“Those were a child’s punishment. I will punish you as a woman of Anopy now. If I had not emphasized that your actions were those of a wife testing her husband, you would be stripped, restrained, and waiting for a serious strapping in the punishment room at this moment. If anyone else aboard this ship, including my brother, behaved in such a disrespectful manner toward me, it would have been dealt with immediately. Your behavior the next couple of days will determine whether or not you will face public punishment before we arrive on Anopy. My crew will lose their respect for me if you continue to insult me. Is that clear, Dulcie?”

“Yes, sir,” she answered meekly, knowing by his solemn expression that he spoke the truth.

“Very well. What we do now is give you a reason to accept the changes in your life. We teach you to speak with respect when addressing me, especially in front of others. We will give you a chance to know the difference between naked and the garments of Anopy.” She looked at him in dismay and he knew he was on the right track. “You are to be punished now, and you will accept this punishment and you will not ask me to stop or show you mercy. You will do as I say, when I say, without discussion or argument. If you fail to do as I ask, you will add an extra punishment. The next few hours will not be pleasant for either of us. You will cry, and I will not enjoy seeing you cry. By the time I permit you to go to bed tonight, you will have a different attitude, or you will face another round of punishment tomorrow. I am stronger than you, Princess Dulcie. I will not harm you, but I will have your respect and your obedience. Hopefully, one day I will also have your love.” He added the last with a sad smile and a gentle caress to her tear-stained cheek.

“I do not handle punishment well,” Darcie said, feeling helpless. “I might not be able to keep from begging!”

“Not begging is a part of your punishment,” he patiently explained. “It will teach you self-control.”

Dulcie wished she could run and hide from the look of purpose in his dark eyes. He was more serious than she had seen him, and she suddenly realized why he was Leader. He was powerful, and the raw power he exuded did not bode well for her in the moment.

“We will start by teaching you the difference between naked and clothed, Dulcie. You will remove all of your clothing and stand before me completely nude.” Her lavender eyes opened wide in shock and disbelief and he could see she wanted to refuse. “The penalty for refusing will

ensure another punishment is added to those already planned for this night. Prompt obedience is expected, wife.”

Dulcie wanted to die. She knew he had seen her entirely without clothing the night before when he made love to her, but that was so much different than what he was asking of her now! She wanted to refuse, but if she did, he would add another punishment, and she knew she did not want that to happen. Her hands went to the fasteners on the dress and she slowly began undoing them.

“A bit faster, Dulcie. I would like for us to be able to get to bed at a fairly decent hour this night.”

Her hands moved just a bit faster; enough that he could see she was moving a bit quicker, but she was in no hurry to be bare to his gaze.

Chapter Three

“If you are taken to the punishment room, you will be stripped of your clothing and then you will be placed in restraints. Your actual punishment will not happen for at least an hour, and more than likely, it will wait until my work shift is over. Anyone and everyone is free to come in and observe you, and there will always be at least two people whose job it is to constantly remind you why you are awaiting a strapping. If you feel ashamed to bare your body in front of your husband, how do you think you would feel being exposed to everyone aboard this ship? In Anopy, even more people would witness your shame, and the punishment itself would be even harsher.” He was purposely trying to frighten her, and he could see by her shaking hands that it was working.

Dulcie was aghast at the things he was telling her, and she knew he spoke the truth. She did not wish to be punished in that manner. “I promise I will not bring that kind of shame upon us, Canton.”

“A small taste of what you can expect will only strengthen your resolve,” he told her. “Drop the dress on the chair,” he ordered, watching as Dulcie slowly pulled it over her head. She put the dress over the arm of the chair and then looked at him. “Dulcie, I told you to remove everything. That includes your breasty and your panties.”

She removed her shoes, and then stood there with her eyes closed, trying to gather her courage. She already felt shamed at being so exposed, and she simply could not remove the skimpy underclothing; her hands would not move.

“Very well. You have earned the extra punishment, and the count is one hundred. If you wish to make it two hundred, you will continue to stand there making me wait for obedience.”

Dulcie’s eyes flew open at his harsh tone of voice. She looked at him and saw disappointment and anger in his dark eyes. “It is difficult for me, Canton. I am not trying to be defiant.”

“Then do as you are told right now.”

There was no compromise in his voice and Dulcie knew that if she did not hasten to obey him, she would be in even more trouble! She turned around and removed her breasty, baring the upper half of her well-endowed body, and then she slid the skimpy panties down her slender legs, leaving her body completely nude. She wanted to cry. This was the worst punishment he had given her to date.

“Face me, Dulcie, and do not put your hands over your body.” She slowly turned, her eyes to the floor. “Look at me,” he ordered. When she raised her tear-filled eyes to his, he asked quietly,

“Do you now tell me you feel more naked in the dress the women of my country wear, or do you understand the true meaning of naked?”

“I understand the true meaning, sir. May I please put on my clothing now?” she asked hopefully.

“No, you may not. You are being punished, and you will not be permitted clothing in these rooms for the rest of our journey. When you are permitted to go to the dining hall or anywhere else on this ship, you may dress. I am sure you will not feel so naked in your new clothing by the time we are home.”

Dulcie had to bite her lip to keep from bursting into loud sobs. Standing in front of him without any clothing at all while he was fully dressed was simply terrible.

“Now we will deal with the issue of food. Namely, your finding fault with the way our meals are served. I told you it was important to be on time to dine, did I not?”

Dulcie nodded but he waited for her to speak. She finally said, “Yes, sir.”

“You decided that it would be fun to make an entrance and prove that as a Princess you did not have to be on time. You expected everyone to wait for you. They had to stand there, at attention, while you enjoyed making them wait... and while the meal grew cold. My crew works hard, Dulcie. They deserve respect, and they deserve edible meals. You were seven minutes late, so I am going to impress upon you just how long seven minutes can be when you are in distress and waiting.”

Dulcie had no idea what he was going to make her do for seven minutes, but she knew she would not like whatever it was.

“Go into our bathing chamber.”

She had no choice but precede him, and she was conscious that his eyes were staring at her bare butt. She hoped he noticed how sore it was from all the spankings he had given her! Once they reached the bathroom, he pointed to the counter. “Put water in the glass, Dulcie.” She immediately guessed what was coming and she wanted to shake her head ‘no’, but Dulcie made herself obey, hoping she was wrong.

Canton took out the vial and placed two drops in the glass, swishing it around. She had put a bit more water in the glass than he would normally allow, but he knew the lesson would still be thorough. “You will thoroughly rinse your mouth, Dulcie, and you will think of the words you used to make the waiting sound like it was my crew’s fault.” He handed her the glass, and when she hesitated, he said, “You just added another one hundred to your extra punishment, wife. Do as you were told.”

Dulcie knew the liquid was going to burn horribly, but she simply had no choice but obey. She put a tiny bit of the liquid in her mouth and felt the immediate burn to her lips and the tip of her tongue. Canton’s hand smacked against her sore fanny. “Put a large amount in your mouth and

do not spit it out until I tell you that you may do so!” The Princess felt his hand once more as she hesitated, and she finally did as he said. The burning sensation was immediate and there was not one part of her mouth that did not burn! She wanted to scream, but with the liquid in her mouth, she could not!

“You may spit it out now.” Dulcie immediately did so, dancing in place.” “Stand still, put your hands flat on the counter, and look in the mirror.” You will remain in this position for seven minutes, Dulcie. Do not move one muscle. You are not a member of this crew, but you will know that they stood at attention for you. You will do the same now while you regret your words.”

Dulcie felt the tears running down her cheeks, but she was crying too hard to see through the blur. It was terrible to stand there and concentrate on nothing but the burning in her mouth. The punishment was so much worse than the last time when he put a single drop on her tongue. She never ever wanted to suffer this again! She stood there with her hands flat, wanting to move to try and relieve the sting. Slowly, the fire in her mouth ebbed, but the horror remained with her as she stood there, waiting for the seven minutes to pass.

Canton finally spoke. “Is seven minutes a long time when you are waiting, Dulcie?” he asked.

“Yes, sir. I am sorry I made the crew wait for dinner.”

“Good. You will prove that now with another very unpleasant punishment. Go into the bedroom, open the drawer beside the bed, and take out the wooden paddle.” Again he could see reluctance in her lavender eyes. She did not wish to obey him, but to her credit, she walked over to the drawer, opened it, and removed a thin paddle. When she looked at him, he said, “You are going to hand me the paddle and ask me to spank you for seven minutes, little Princess.”

“With this?” she asked, her tone of voice reflecting her surprise.

“With that, little girl,” he responded, knowing full well what she was thinking. He sat down on the side of the bed and waited to see if she would obey him. “Do you wish to make it three hundred?” he asked.

“No, sir!” she hastened to reply and took a step toward him. She had no idea what the extra punishment was, but she feared it was a spanking with the cane. She knew that her butt was going to be very sore by then, and she did not want to earn extras. She hoped that if she cooperated now, he would forgive her the extra punishment. Dulcie handed him the thin wooden paddle and then said, “Leader Canton, would you please spank me for seven minutes to remind me not to keep others waiting?” He patted his left thigh, and she stepped forward to put her backside on his leg, and her upper body over the bed. She was shocked when he put his right leg over her calves, and he pulled her close to his body and took her right arm and held it to her side as he effectively pinned her down.

“I know you think this paddle will break after one or two whacks, little Princess, but I assure you, it will outlast your butt and you will learn to hate it very much before seven minutes are over.” With those words he glanced at the clock on the wall and started spanking.

The sting was awful! Dulcie gasped as the sting spread all over her cheeks and her thighs. “Owwww! It hurts too much, Canton! Stop! Please stop!”

“You were told not to beg, Dulcie. We will start the seven minutes over now, and each time you ask for mercy in any way, I will add another one hundred to the three hundred you have now earned. Is that clear?” he demanded.

“Yes, sir,” she sobbed. The paddling started again and it was even worse than before. The sting built until she was positive she couldn’t stand it any longer, and by the time the seven minutes was over, she brought her total to six hundred for the extra punishment.

There was a metal bar attached to the wall and Canton led her across the room. “Reach up and place your hands on the bar and do not let go.” When she tried to obey, he quickly learned the bar needed adjusting. He moved it down several inches, and then secured it. “Leave your hands on this bar, Dulcie. You are not permitted to touch your bottom in any way. I want you to feel the sting for a long while as you regret allowing the crew’s dinners to become cold.”

“Canton, I am already sorry!” she said, crying, her eyes pleading with him to call it ‘enough’.

“One who is sorry accepts punishment without trying to beg off. You are now at seven hundred, and we have not taken out the strap yet.” He was displeased at her lack of self-discipline. She was going to need a lot of lessons in controlling the urges that landed her in trouble. He was only doing his best to protect her, but at this time, she did not seem to comprehend the fine line she was walking. Her behavior had to be above reproach or the people of Anopy would think him weak and seek another to lead them. Already Dulcie was wriggling around. He picked up the paddle and approached her. “You are to practice self-discipline, Dulcie. That means you are to stand still, keeping your hands on the bar. I am going to give you twenty-five more to ignite the sting, and you will count each one and thank me.” He brought the paddle down forcefully on her rump.

“Ow! One. Thank you.”

“I prefer you to say ‘One, thank you, sir’. We will start over.” He gave her another stroke right over the first.

“One, thank you, sir,” Dulcie repeated. The second came as soon as she finished speaking, but when she tried to pause a moment to give herself some time between each one, he scolded her and said they would begin again. Dulcie realized she was not in control of the situation and this time she did her best to get it right.

Canton could tell that she was having more and more trouble speaking and counting. Dulcie made it all the way to twenty-one before she was crying too hard to speak. He gave her a

moment to get control of herself and then he finished. He knew her bottom was blazing. It was red and when he touched it she cried out in pain. The strapping she earned was going to be extremely painful. "Your butt burns now; is it not better to be punctual and allow everyone to have hot food rather than to bear a hot bottom for your childish behavior?"

"Yes, sir. I do regret my behavior. I did not realize that your customs were different than ours; I would not have people eat cold food unless it is supposed to be cold."

"Princess Dulcie, did you ever stop to consider the position you were putting the cooks in? Do you know how hard it is to keep some foods warm without them being ruined? The cooks and servers were probably tense at every meal, worrying they would serve a bad meal and be reprimanded or punished." He saw her eyes widen with the realization that he was right. "Your father should have spanked you soundly for being so inconsiderate and selfish. I will not permit my wife to behave so rudely."

"I promise it will not happen again, Canton. I am truly ashamed."

"Very well. Stand there quietly, without moving. I want you to recall this punishment and why you received it."

He left the bedroom and went into the relaxation room. He was going to have to make a decision about the strapping he promised. It needed to be harsh enough she did not want it repeated, but her butt was already on fire and he did not want her to fear him and think him a brute. Princess Dulcie was not used to being punished, and she still had two other punishments to face besides the strapping. He considered the number he originally planned to give if she behaved through dinner. He felt she would be amply punished for making his crew wait to eat. He spanked her and stood her in the corner in the dining hall for wearing the pants. He would scold again, and give her five with the strap for that. He also had to deal with her disrespect to him, and for the snide comments about Anopy. It was now her country, and she needed her attitude adjusted. He grimly settled on a number of strokes.

Dulcie was in pain. Her bottom hurt so much she could not stop crying. She wished the punishment was over, but Canton said she had one more punishment of self-control to endure. He also kept referring to the strapping he promised her earlier in the day, and then she had an extra punishment. She honestly did not know how she was going to bear all of that. She was not permitted to beg him for mercy. She could only endure whatever he decided was appropriate and then do nothing to earn more. She closed her eyes and leaned her head against her arm. She hated standing with her arms above her head. They were starting to ache.

Canton quietly entered the room. Dulcie was trying hard to obey him, but she was still moving slightly, shifting her weight from one foot to the other. He decided to ignore that. She would never keep an entire crew waiting for a meal again now that she knew what she could expect for doing so. It was time to give her the strapping, and then the last of the punishment, which was another lesson in self control. It was a punishment reserved for a wife, and he did not intend to resort to it often, only when he needed to make a point that was for her own good.

Dulcie heard a drawer slide open and her eyes flew open in time to see Canton take out a strap. It would cover both of her cheeks at one time, and she was positive she would have no skin left if he used it on her! She already hurt so much and the strap looked evil. He ignored her while he stacked pillows on the bottom of the bed, and she was at least thankful he would not make her stand as she was for the strapping. He finally turned and looked at her.

“We will take care of the strapping, and once that is done you will receive a lesson in self-control from your husband. Come and place your backside over the top of these pillows. I want your butt as high as it can go, and your legs stretched out behind you so that I can strap your thighs, too. You will keep your hands in front of you at all times, and you will not attempt to rise. You are going to receive fifty, and believe me when I tell you that if this were not your very first strapping you would be getting over one hundred. This is for the disrespect you showed me as your husband and as Leader. Any time you step over that line in public, you will be strapped in private... even if I am forced to punish you publicly.”

He motioned for her to get in place and this time Dulcie did not attempt to talk him out of what he planned. She was too afraid he would increase the fifty to one hundred, and she feared she would die if he did that to her. “I am sorry, Canton.”

Chapter Four

“I am sure you are very sorry right now,” he said softly. “You will be much sorrier fifty strokes from now.” He raised the strap and brought it down over the fullest part of her rump.

Dulcie cried out at the shock of the pain. It was even worse than she feared it would be. The second was worse than the first and it was all she could do to lie there and not try to protect her vulnerable backside. The evil strap moved lower and lower and the uppermost part of her thighs felt its bite. Dulcie was sure Canton was peeling the skin from her body and she jerked each time he put the strap across her sensitive skin. The strapping seemed to go on and on, and she silently begged for it to be done!

Canton knew Dulcie was struggling with the pain. He gave her another, bringing the total to forty. “You have ten more left, Dulcie. Since you have done well and stayed in place, I am going to help you through the last ten.” He knelt on one knee beside her and put his hand on her lower back to hold her down. “These will be quick and hard and over quickly.”

Dulcie felt the first one land on her sit spots and before she could cry out the second was given to the same spot. Eight hard strokes later the strapping was over and she collapsed on the bed, sobbing. Canton gave her time to compose herself, but he did not offer comfort yet. She had more punishment coming, and she could not imagine anything worse than those she had already endured. She was also certain she was going to do nothing to earn another punishment such as this.

Canton waited until Dulcie was once again in control before saying, “I truly regret the need for this next punishment, wife, even if it is for your own good. You are lacking in self-discipline. Once your temper is engaged, you act without thought of the consequences. This lesson is given to help you learn it is best to control yourself. If I have to help you with control, you will find the lessons arduous. There are many ways to teach this lesson to a grown woman, but the one I pick now will have the most impact since you are newly wed.”

Dulcie felt her fear and dread grow by the moment. He went to another cubicle in the room and returned with a tube of ointment. “Come and stand in front of me and place your hands on the bar. I am going to apply this cream to your nipples and to your sex. It will make you want release, but that release will be denied you. You are going to stand here until you are in control of yourself. You will writhe, moan, dance, beg, and you will cry out of sheer desperation for your release. It will be up to you to use self control to keep your hands on the bar. Each time you take one of your hands down and attempt to touch yourself, you will add one hundred to your final punishment of the day. Your total now is seven hundred. You will not be happy with the number you have already earned for your extra punishment, so do not add extras.” He looked at her terrified expression and asked, “Do you have questions, Dulcie?”

“You have told me I must not beg, but you plan to put something on me that will make me beg? How am I to control that?”

“You will not be begging me not to spank you, wife. You will be begging me to bring you to climax as I did last night, and you will wish to touch yourself. That is strictly forbidden. You will endure the ache until it fades away, which will take some time. The punishment is the self control you will exercise to keep your hands on the bar. You will not be punished for begging for relief; you will not be able to help yourself. For such an inexperienced young woman, the punishment will be extremely difficult to bear. I will also tell you that you will have to wait until we reach Anopy and are in our own bed before I will pleasure you. You will recall this ache the next time you think to defy me. You will exercise self discipline, or you will be disciplined.” He paused. “Are you ready now?”

“No!” she whispered.

His answer was to say, “Eight hundred. Are you ready now?”

“Yes, sir,” she replied, wondering how painful the ointment would be. To her surprise there was no pain at all. It was embarrassing to stand there with her arms holding to the metal bar above her head while Canton opened the tube of ointment and squeezed a generous amount of the cream on his fingers and massaged it onto her left nipple and the area surrounding it. He repeated the motion on her right nipple and then he squeezed more onto his fingers.

“Spread your legs apart, Dulcie. I am going to apply this liberally.”

Dulcie felt her face turn a bright red. His touch was gentle and she felt her body start to respond as he generally coated her clitoris. He then pushed his fingers inside her and massaged her vagina, making her tingle. All too soon he stepped away and all Dulcie could think about was how he had made love to her the night before. Her nipples were rigid and swollen and she was shocked by how much she wanted her husband to touch her. She felt the moisture growing between her legs and her eyes closed as she ached.

Canton could see that the ointment was already working. He had never used it to punish a woman, and had only heard that it was most effective. It was a way to make a point without bruising, and he was sure that she would soon regret giving in to the urge to defy him earlier. Dulcie needed to learn self control, and obviously he did, too! Canton was embarrassed at the erection her quiet moans and movements were responsible for. No one told him how much it would turn him on to hear her moans and cries of need. It would not be much of a punishment if he put her on the bed and brought both of them to soul shattering climaxes, but that is exactly what he wanted to do. She was the one who was supposed to be suffering the arousal and know that it would not be relieved, but his hard cock was throbbing and telling him the punishment belonged to him as well.

Dulcie tried hard not to make any noise, but her soft, barely audible moans were growing larger as her need grew. Her nipples were so swollen and heavy she felt they would burst if she was not given release. To her embarrassment she felt the moisture between her legs running down her

leg. It was mortifying. "I cannot bear this any longer, Canton! The need was not so strong last night, and this feels like pain. Please help me!" she begged of him. When there was no answer, she tried again. "I will do anything, Canton! Please! I need your touch!"

"You need to practice self control, Dulcie."

"I will do so from now on. Please, do not make me suffer this. I would rather have another spanking than ache between my legs! I need release, and I will not be able to keep my hands on the bar much longer! I am desperate!" she moaned. Her right hand came free and she touched her own breast, gasping.

"You are at nine hundred, Dulcie. Put your hand back on the bar now." She did so, bursting into tears. He wanted to cry, too. He needed release as much as she did, but he understood the importance of self control. He remained firm in his resolve to see the lesson fully taught.

Dulcie thought she was going to go out of her mind before she finally felt the unbearable pangs finally going away. Her breasts were still tender and her sex was throbbing, but the pain was fading somewhat. "I will get even with you for doing this to me, Leader Canton," she promised, her temper returning in full force.

"Do you want another layer of cream, Princess Dulcie?" he asked, his face set in hard lines. He was as miserable as she... without the damn cream!

"No, sir!" She quickly reined in her temper.

"Very well. Do you feel you can go to the bathing room and relieve your bladder without touching yourself in a sexual manner?" he demanded.

"Yes, sir."

"Then you will do so and come right back here. If you are gone more than a minute, I promise I will put you through the whole ordeal again."

"I will return as quickly as possible," she promised and headed for the bathing room, anxious to relieve her bladder, which suddenly was painfully full. Dulcie was still throbbing, and a glance in the mirror told her that her nipples were still engorged and in need of release, too. The punishment was worse than the strapping, and she meant what she said, too. She would find a way to make Canton regret punishing her sexually.

When she walked into the bedroom Canton was not there. She did not know what she was supposed to do. He entered the room. "Come out here, Dulcie. The last part of your punishment will happen now."

She was so tired and she only wanted to go to bed and sleep. Her body had suffered more than she could bear for one night. Still, she followed Canton into the main room, embarrassed to be

without her clothing in this part of their chamber. Dulcie immediately saw that he had pulled out a writing desk and put a chair in front of it. There was also a tablet of paper and a writing tool.

“You are going to sit here on your very sore butt and write lines, Dulcie. I have written what I want you to write, and you will number each line and not stop until you have finished all nine hundred lines.”

“It will take me all night to write that many lines!” she said, looking at him in disbelief.

“I warned you that you would not be happy with yourself for earning an extra punishment. Sit down and start writing.”

“May I get dressed and at least put a cushion on the chair?” Dulcie asked of him.

His reply was to say, “One thousand, wife. Sit down, read the line, and start writing. This is one lesson you need to learn and very quickly.”

Dulcie gingerly sat on the hard surface of the chair and promptly moaned in pain. She was not going to be able to sit here while she wrote the lines. It was just too much to ask of her. She read the line she was to write and felt her cheeks burn in embarrassment. It said: *I will accept the punishments I earn without argument and complaint.* Her eyes blurred with tears as she picked up the writing tool and put a number one on the first line. She quickly wrote the line, but found the pain of sitting to be nearly unbearable. She glanced at Canton, and the look in his dark eyes gave her to know that complaining was going to get her in more trouble with him. She practiced some self control and kept writing. The last thing she needed was to increase her lines, or even worse, to earn another spanking.

Canton could see that Dulcie was struggling to remain on the chair. He could understand that. Her backside was still a flaming red and she had welts and bruises from the strap. He would not wish to sit down and write lines either if he was her. It was a punishment she earned by not accepting the punishments he gave her. She had been warned what to expect. He tried to concentrate on his own work, but an hour later he could hear Dulcie crying. She was not writing and had her face buried in her arms on the table. He got up and walked over to where she sat. She had just over one hundred completed.

“You still have nearly nine hundred to write, wife. You will not get the task done if you sit here and cry.”

“I am not trying to be stubborn or defiant, Canton. I am in so much pain, and I still need release in the worst way.” She turned to him and sobbed. “I am truly beyond endurance for this night, husband. I so badly need your forgiveness now.”

Canton drew her up and out of the chair and he held her close. “You were forgiven the moment you apologized to my crew, little Princess. What you seek now is comfort. I will hold you and reassure you, but I will not ease the ache you feel. You will carry that the rest of the way home to remind you that you need to use self control.”

“Will you forgive me the rest of the lines...? At least for this night?” she asked hopefully.

“Yes, I will because you are still new to this and it will take some time for this to become easier, little one. Come now and I will tuck you in bed and you will sleep. We will see if tomorrow brings a clearer understanding of what is expected of you. If it does not, then you will sit and finish the lines before you are permitted to do anything else, and you will receive other appropriate reminders to behave. Let us see you in bed.”

Canton gave her time to relieve her bladder once more, and when she came out of the bathing room, he already had the bed turned down. She did not ask for her nightgown, positive the answer would be ‘no’. She wanted to prove to him that she could accept the punishment of nudity for the rest of the trip to Anopy. She lie on her stomach and gasped when her nipples touched the cool bedding. She longed for release and had to close her eyes against the urge to beg Canton once again to join her. “Remember, little one, no touching yourself. You would not like the penalty.”

“I will practice self-control,” she said with dignity.

“Good little Princess,” he said in approval, leaning down to kiss her good night. He left the room before he embarrassed himself by crawling in bed and losing himself in her charms. But, it was hard, and he wanted her... badly wanted her.

Dulcie woke to find Canton still asleep. He had wrapped himself around her during the night and she was suddenly reminded of just how badly her body craved his touch and the release he could give her. His manhood was hard against her very sore bottom, but her sexual need was strong enough that she moaned and wiggled against him, hoping he would wake and make love to her.

Canton woke slowly and gradually became aware of the soft body next to him. His cock throbbed mercilessly, and his hand sought a breast. Dulcie moaned in pleasure and he came wide awake immediately, pulling away from her. “That is not going to happen, little Princess. Get up and start getting ready to go to the dining hall for the morning meal. We have less than an hour.”

Dulcie wanted to scream in frustration, but she wisely got out of bed and rushed to the bathing room. A quick rain seemed the best answer to her problem, but when the water fell over her body, it only increased her need. She moaned and then started to cry. Would the arousal ever stop? She was determined to see Canton suffer for putting her through such torture. She quickly stepped from the rain, carefully dried off, and made her hair presentable. When she walked into their bed chamber Canton was already dressed. He saw her puzzled look and said, “I bathe before retiring, wife. I never know when I will have to rise and deal with a situation, so I prepare for the next day before retiring.”

She nodded, noticing he already had the bed made up as neatly as a servant would do. Her clothing was laid out. She picked up the panties and put them on, thankful for their covering.

Her breast was next, but it felt very snug over her swollen breasts. Once glance at Canton told her that he knew of her problem. She did not offer complaint. She learned her lesson the day before, and she was going to be on her very best behavior for a very long time. The short dress was next, but after being without clothing for so long, she felt much relief to have her body covered. She slid her feet into her shoes.

“You are ready?” he asked cordially.

“Yes, sir.”

“I will expect you to sit still and refrain from calling attention to the fact you were punished. A punishment is considered a private matter between a husband and wife and no one will comment on your behavior of last evening. What they will notice is a changed attitude. Do you think you can smile and behave as the wife of a Leader?” he wanted to know.

“I will do my best, Canton. If I make a mistake, it will truly be an accident, and not out of defiance.”

“My fear is that I will not be able to protect you from a public punishment if you show disrespect even once more on this journey, little Princess. Do your best to smile and be sweet and remember to ask permission before you rise to leave the table. Is that understood?”

Chapter Five

Dulcie was only too aware of all the eyes regarding her as people filed into the dining hall and took their place. Not a sound was made, and she realized how it must have felt to stand there without speaking while waiting for her to appear at dinner the evening before. She felt this custom was ridiculous, but she would speak to her husband about it in the privacy of their rooms. People should be allowed to sit and eat if the food was already on the table, or the food should not be served until all were present. She would see if she could make Canton see reason on this matter. Finally the last person arrived and Canton bid everyone a good morning and told them to enjoy their meal. It did not take long for people to finish, and one by one they asked for permission to rise and leave. Canton gave it, of course. Dulcie decided to wait for him to finish, and when he stood, she rose with him. He looked at her and she smiled. "May I leave with you, Leader Canton?" she asked quietly. He returned her smile and nodded.

"Everyone is dismissed at will," he said to those who remained. He walked Dulcie back to their chamber and unlocked the door for her. "Do you recall what you are to do?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. I am to undress."

"Yes." He turned to leave but she put out a hand to stop him.

"What am I to do with my time? I am not used to idleness."

"If you require something to do, you may watch the files on life on Anopy. You have much to learn."

He saw a faint trace of temper in her eyes but she quickly quelled it.

"What if I am chilly? May I don a robe to keep warm?"

"You may turn up the temperature if you are cold." His eyes turned hard. "Do not make the mistake of testing me, little Princess. You could still find yourself sitting on a freshly spanked butt to write the rest of your lines. Behave, watch the files, do not touch your body inappropriately."

Dulcie felt her cheeks flame with color but she bit back the retort she wanted to make. They would arrive home sometime late tomorrow, and then she would be the one who said 'no' to making love. She wanted her husband to know how badly it felt to be so aroused it was painful, and then told 'no'. She was going to let him suffer the same torment, after ensuring that he would ache unbearably!

When it was nearly time for luncheon Canton called to her over the communicator and reminded her it was time to prepare for lunch. From the way he was speaking she could tell he was not alone. She responded politely, and when he came to get her, she was dressed and ready to go. He asked her about the tapes and she was able to tell him what she had learned.

Midway through the luncheon an argument broke out between two men. It quickly escalated to the point where the two were on their feet, fists clenched, and each daring the other to take the first swing. Dulcie watched as Canton jumped to his feet and stepped between the two.

“What is the meaning of this?” he asked, keeping his voice neutral.

“It is personal, sir,” one of the men replied, his jaw clenched tightly.

“Admok?” Canton turned to the other man.

“It is personal, sir. We do not get along.”

“I see. In that case I suggest you both report to me in the Captain’s Overlook after luncheon and we will decide the matter there.”

“Yes, sir,” both men replied in unison, and everyone went back to eating. Once the meal was over, Canton again returned Dulcie to their rooms, reminding her to remove her clothing as ordered, and then he went about his business, although he could not keep his thoughts from wondering to the problematic Princess.

Canton knew that his wife was planning something just from the way she was acting. Of course, it might be that she was fearful of more punishment, but more than likely she was plotting a seduction for later that night. Canton made up his mind that he would permit her to succeed provided she behaved through dinner. Her behavior that day was beyond reproach, and the members of his crew who spoke with her were delighted with her personality. She had done as he asked and sat without squirming on her sore bottom, and she had not complained to the other women aboard. With a bit more schooling, he was sure Princess Dulcie would make a wonderful wife, just as he suspected all along.

He once again asked her to meet him at the dining hall at a certain time. This time Dulcie was already waiting behind her seat when he walked into the room. She looked very pretty standing there and the smile she gave him made him proud. He had been alone for so long. Everyone was early on this night, and the cooks scrambled to put the food on the table once they were all seated.

Dulcie was so bruised and sore that sitting to eat was difficult. At one point she was having trouble concentrating on her meal and she saw Canton looking at her in concern. She put on a smile and forced herself to ignore her posterior. She finished her meal and looked at him, hoping he would understand her need to make a hasty exit. “Leader Canton, may I please be excused?” she asked quietly, but loud enough that those sitting by could hear her observing protocol.

“Are you not feeling well?” he asked with a frown of concern. Asking to leave the table early because sitting was painful was not acceptable.

“I am afraid I watched too many files today, husband. My head aches unbearably.”

“Then I shall see you to our rooms and fix you a medication,” he offered.

“Thank you,” she said gratefully, accepting his hand.

“Everyone is dismissed at their discretion,” he said, making sure to release everyone.

Once they were out of hearing she asked, “Would they continue to sit there if you did not give them permission to leave the table?”

“Yes. Are you truly suffering a headache, or a bottom ache that needs rekindled?”

“My head does not hurt, husband. I have another ailment; it is my time of the moon,” she admitted. “I suffer from extreme cramps and nausea. I started feeling worse, and I need to take a remedy and lie down with a warmer. It also explains why I was so awful yesterday evening. I go a bit crazy right before my time. You will need to expect this of me every few weeks, husband, although I promise I will do my best not to shame either of us in public.”

He opened the door for her and entered behind her. “What is it you need, wife?” He was not familiar with a woman’s monthly needs.

“I need hot tea with honey, and I need a mild remedy to ease the cramps, and a warmer. She headed for the bathing room and then stopped to turn and look at him, her face very pale and her eyes large. “I do not wish to anger you, Canton, but I need to wear protection. At home I wear my old drawers and a nightgown...”

“Oh,” Canton felt his face turn red, and finally he realized she was asking if she could wear clothing while menstruating. He was not comfortable telling her ‘no’. She was behaving him, and making a real effort to please him. He needed to see to her needs now. “You do not have any of your old clothing with you, little one, but you may wear your new panties and a new nightgown if it will make you more comfortable. Her entire face smile gratefully.

“Thank you, Canton. Thank you. I am thankful for your understanding and care.” She shocked them both when she threw her arms around his neck and then kissed him. Unfortunately, the reaction was swift and immediate, and the sudden arousal was painful to bear along with the cramps. She moaned in dismay. “Oh, you must never use that cream again, Canton. I truly cannot bear it,” she told him, tears of frustration in her eyes.

“I cannot bear it either, little Princess,” he whispered to himself after she hurried to go to the bathing room and remove her clothing before it was stained. He tried to ignore the bulge in his pants as he fixed her tea and sent to the clinic aboard for a tablet that would ease her cramps, and a warmer for her tummy. He had asked one of the female officers on board the ship to make sure

that every possible product Dulcie could need be provided, and he was hopeful the woman put in the protection the Princess would need.

There was a knock at the door a couple of minutes later and Canton thanked the nurse for bringing the items he requested. He carried the items, along with Dulcie's tea, into the bed chamber. Dulcie was just coming out of the bathroom and she had been crying. "I am sorry," she said. "I get very emotional. I will be better by the time we reach Anopy."

"Do you wish me to stay with you now?" he offered, unsure of what he should do.

"No. I just need to be alone and rest. Thank you for helping me, Canton." She took the tablet, sipped her tea, and then she turned on the warmer and held it against her abdomen as she curled up on her side in bed.

Canton turned down the lights to low and then went into the relaxing room. He knew how to handle all sorts of problems, and did, each and every day. But this was all new to him. Was he wrong to punish her last night? He did not know. He would have reason to talk to his sisters when they landed.

When he went back to check on Dulcie, she was sleeping. He checked to make sure the warmer was still warm, and it was nice. The communicator buzzed and he went into the relaxing room to answer. He was needed in the Captain's Lookout. He made sure to lock the door after him and hurried to deal with the problem, anxious to get back to his bride. It was late when he returned, but Dulcie was still sleeping. He hoped she felt better in the morning.

Dulcie was miserable in the morning, and she let Canton know it in no uncertain terms. She asked for another remedy, tea and toast, and another warmer. He hastened to help her, and when she asked to be left alone, he took her at her word. When he returned before luncheon, she was up and dressed.

"Are you feeling better then?" he asked in surprise.

"I am somewhat better. I am very hungry," she admitted.

"Would you like for me to bring you a tray?" Canton immediately offered.

"Yes, but I do not want the crew to get the wrong idea," she stated. "I will join you and if asked, claim a terrible migraine. What time do we land on Anopy?"

"In time for dinner," he answered.

"Good. Hopefully I will be much better if I eat luncheon."

"What did you do when you went through this at home?" Canton asked curiously.

“I was terrible to everyone and stayed hidden in my rooms. I am too sore to risk misbehaving this time,” she said with a wan smile.

Canton seated them almost immediately and once again the cooks had to scramble to serve the meal. Dulcie was asked about her health almost immediately and she claimed a bad headache, but said she was starting to feel better and did not wish to miss luncheon. The atmosphere was almost festive and Canton had to remind all of them to remain diligent until they were safely home.

When the meal was done Canton dismissed them to their duties. He looked at Dulcie and asked, “What can I get for you? Another remedy? A warmer?” he offered. She was not nearly as pale now that she had eaten most of her luncheon.

“I would truly like to walk on deck with you...?” She looked up at him. “I am tired of our rooms.”

“Very well, but your time will not excuse any bad behavior,” he said firmly.

“I will behave fitting my position,” she promised.

If Canton had any concerns he hid them well. His wife was polite to one and all, and asked intelligent questions of several crew members. She was friendly with his brother and Canton could see that Kardoe was impressed. He only hoped the rest of his family was as easily won over.

Canton saw to it that Dulcie was seated and strapped into a safety chair before landing. He could see by the expression on her pretty face that sitting, even on a soft safety chair, was not the least bit pleasant. He smiled at her in understanding but pulled on the safe belt, making sure it held her firmly and securely. He then turned on the screen to make certain that every person on board was seated and strapped in place before he took his seat in the Captain’s chair and secured his own belt. Canton safely brought them to the ground, and then gave orders to his crew and to the crew on the ground. When Dulcie’s hands went to her safe belt, he raised one eyebrow. She immediately removed her hands. “May I have permission to rise, sir?” she asked.

“Not until the ship is secured in place, Princess,” he replied. “Only essential crew members are released at this point.”

“Will you please hurry then?” she asked, giggling at his expression when he looked at her in disbelief. He frowned, and she made haste to defend herself. “Surely it is not disrespectful to tease my husband a bit, is it?” she asked lightly.

“No, as long as it is only teasing.”

“I am teasing, sir,” she assured him with another smile. “Even my father can handle a bit of teasing...”

“Then I will strive to learn when you are merely teasing and not testing,” he returned, his eyes full of mischief.

“That would be best for both of us,” she agreed. She really did hope he would hurry. The bruises on her bottom, especially on her sit spots were hurting like mad today. She was sure it was due to her monthly time, but she was not positive. She closed her eyes and tried to breathe slowly.

It was only a short time before she felt hands tugging on her safe belt, releasing it. “You are pale, little Princess. Are you feeling worse?” Canton asked quietly, doing his best not to be overheard.

“My skin is extra sensitive, husband. I am regretting my bad behavior even more this day than yesterday. Is it against protocol to ask for a hug before we leave this ship and I must deal with the rest of your family and all of Anopy in general?”

“If it is against protocol then I will have to change the protocol. I would love to hold my wife and tell her how much I enjoyed having her at my side this afternoon.” His strong arms wrapped around her and he held her close for a few minutes before kissing her cheek. “We should leave the ship now, wife, before rumor starts to circulate.”

“What rumor?” she asked.

“Anything my detractors can think of to say to ridicule me or make you unacceptable to the people of Anopy.”

“We will dispel those rumors quickly. If something is asked and you sense I am going to give an inappropriate answer, please give me a clue as to how I should answer. I learned a lot yesterday in my studies, but I am far from educated on protocol, and I truly do not wish to embarrass you or myself, Leader Canton,” she said quietly, putting her small hand in his large one. When he looked at her in obvious surprise, she said, “Oh, do not worry! I have not lost my spirit and my pride demands that I get even with you for one of the punishments you gave me.” She uttered the last words just before they stepped through the opening of the ship and all eyes were on them. People were cheering, and Canton could say nothing to her in the moment, just as she planned it. With a man like Leader Canton she would need to keep him on his toes in order to keep him from being bored. No, he was not going to let her control him, but neither was she going to let him think he could boss her every move without paying a penalty every now and then. She looked at him and smiled, but she could see he was on his guard.

Only years of experience enabled Canton to mask his feelings and smile as if he were the happiest man alive. His little Princess was planning to get even with her, was she? And how did she plan to do that? His curiosity was peaked, but a glance at his little Princess revealed nothing. She was smiling and actually looked happy to be at his side. He took her hand and led her down the long ramp to where a caravan was waiting to escort them to the State Building. They paused once more for pictures and one reporter stepped through the line of protectors to ask, “Leader Canton, are we permitted to assume your travel was satisfactory and beneficial to Anopy?”

Canton smiled and said, “Yes, you may assume that. I will issue a full accounting later this day. My bride, Princess Dulcie, has had a long journey to travel here and I am anxious to make her feel welcome in her new home.”

“Princess Dulcie, what do you think of Anopy?” the persistent reporter continued.

Please watch for Part Three of *The Problematic Princess, Anopy...*