

ELLORA'S CAVE AEON



TALSON'S  
WAIT  
Marie Harte

## **Talson's Wait**

Marie Harte

*Book one in the Talson Temptations series.*

Domineering, dangerous and downright huge, Roarke Talson owns Jamie for the next three years. It's 2109, and the government has found a way to deal with the national debt. Indentured service. She might have been duped into debt, but she's not stupid. Jamie made sure to put a no-sex clause in her contract. There's just one problem. She can't stop thinking about her boss. Sexy and commanding, he's the face of her ultimate fantasy, and a nightmare employer. She's met every challenge he's thrown at her and refuses to drop, no matter how hard he works her.

When Jamie does the wrong thing for the right reason, she assumes Talson will throw her in jail and not think twice. In an effort to escape, she ambushes him and flees, but not before taking a kiss and a bit more from the man.

She hadn't counted on him getting free so quickly, that he might be half alien, or that he'd hunt her down with more than vengeance on his mind.

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Talson's Wait

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# *TALSON'S WAIT*

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## **Chapter One**

### *Port Watch, Earth 2109*

A swell of summer wind breathed life into Jamison Kendrik. She plucked at the thin cotton of her sweat-soaked shirt, aware she wasn't the only one wishing for cooler weather. The men on the docks moving boxes and operating the heavy lift equipment around her fared the same. Like her, they looked exhausted, beyond hot, and annoyed with the black-haired dictator issuing orders left and right in the middle of the dock.

Protected from the noon sun under the overhang of the warehouse roof, she continued to go through the manifest, making sure she hadn't overlooked anything going offworld on today's schedule.

Talson Shipping had earned the reputation as being the best of the best. They stuck to Department of Transportation shipping regulations and always delivered on time. Employees worked their asses off for better-than-average wages, which was saying something in this economic crisis. And Talson Shipping rewarded hard work with benefits and bonuses other companies couldn't touch. Despite the fact their owner wasn't human.

Here on the West Coast, prejudice against the alien Otra wasn't as rife as it was in other parts of the country. Business ruled out here, where the population had dwindled in the last few centuries after the last great war before the Otra had arrived. It probably helped that Roarke Talson had never shown himself as anything other than a chauvinistic *human* asshole. And from what she'd learned about him since he'd bought her contract, he was worth too much alive to care about his background. She grudgingly admitted that he treated everyone fairly. Everyone but her.

She often wondered if the rumors about him being part Otra were true. Something about him seemed so much...*more*. Not sure if it was his massive build, the sharp,

unforgiving planes of his face, or the unswerving command he held over himself and all those who worked for him, he seemed larger than life. Those dark brown eyes of his could turn fathomless black in an instant, sucking the breath out of Jamie without even trying. Which was why she spent much of her time avoiding the big guy.

"Kendrik, get your ass over here, now."

Dammit, when had he doubled back around the pallets? She thought she'd been safe working out of sight. A glance over her shoulder showed her boss glaring at her from just beyond the warehouse.

Resisting the urge to snap back at him, she reluctantly joined him by the last shipping crate of the day. "Yes?"

"That's 'Yes sir,'" he corrected, then straightened to his imposing six and a half foot frame, looming like a dark cloud.

Her basic reaction to the man was equal parts rebellious and disturbing. One part of her wanted to tell him to go to hell, while the other begged for his approval, his attention, his touch... Used to ignoring the feeling, she shoved her unease behind intense dislike and did her best not to show the autocratic jackass how much she longed to put him in his place.

"Pay attention, Kendrik," he practically snarled. She wished she could call his voice grating, but the gravelly pitch always put her in mind of hot sex. He pointed to a laminated sheet attached to the outside of the metal box. "This manifest doesn't match the box's actual weight according to DOT's scale." He stabbed the paper he held in his hand with his finger. "What the hell else is in here besides the bundles of cotton and barrels of dye?"

As if she didn't have enough to worry about just finishing her indentured contract. She should have her head examined for pulling this stunt. Icy cold shivered down her spine, and Jamie fought the urge to confess and get it over with. Only the image of her sister's tearstained face hardened her resolve. No, she'd made Susanna a promise, and she never reneged on a promise. Besides, she'd come too far to back down now. If she

opened the crate, both hers *and* Gregory's lives were forfeit. With any luck, he'd heard them through the metal and was keeping as quiet as inhumanly possible.

She shrugged. "Sir, I'm not sure I understand. I went over these manifests as we packed, piece by piece. There's nothing more in that crate than what our men loaded. Unless the box has been tampered with?"

They both looked to the undisturbed locks on both ends of the cargo box.

He swore and stared at the box, then her, weighing what to do. He could only be sure she lied if he was Otrá. It had been said they could sense each other, their psychic mojo stronger when in groups. But Roarke had never admitted to being Otrá, only human. He couldn't know about Geoffrey, could he? She could only pray that leaving this particular box to be shipped last pressed them for time they didn't have to fool around with it.

"Shit. Fine. Load the thing. But don't think we're not going to discuss this later." He checked his phone and muttered under his breath as he stormed off, missing her best impression of wounded innocence.

Jamie finished overseeing the transfer and watched the doors of the starship close behind her flirtation with disaster. She stood there with a relieved sigh as the ship disappeared into the deep blue sky through a blanket of clouds. Within minutes it would be safely out of the Earth's atmosphere and on its way to Werfal 7, one of the Otrá's many planets.

She sighed, wishing she could have accompanied the cargo. Unfortunately, she had neither the funds nor the authority to leave the planet, not when Talson still held her travel papers.

Being an indentured servant sucked, but it could have been worse. At least here she had protection and the means to support her younger sisters. No one could screw with her without severe repercussions. Talson had made that clear to everyone from day one.

"Hey, Kendrik. Can you help me out with this?" asked one of the new guys as he stared in confusion at the crane controls.

Glad to be needed for something useful, she nodded and did her best to answer his questions.

Hours later, after the sun had already set, she rolled her shoulders and cracked her neck. God, but the new guy was as dense as a brick wall. How hard was it to operate that crane? She'd mastered it in a few hours with some practice. The new guy had nearly bashed the foreman's head in, then came a hairsbreadth from knocking Talson's truck into the water. What a shit storm that would have been. She had no doubt she'd have taken the blame for it. She'd swear the man had a hard-on for her, and not the good kind.

Since she'd started working for him, he'd given her tasks that looked difficult if downright impossible. Never one to ignore a challenge, she'd met him problem for problem, more than pleased when she succeeded. He'd relented after her third success and offered her a bigger apartment than the slum she'd been living in. It wasn't huge by any means, but it satisfied her needs. And per her contract, she didn't have to pay the rent. He did.

Satisfied she'd put in a full day and had earned her rest, she decided to take a shortcut home. She didn't live in the slums, nor did her apartment match those across the Divide, where Talson and his rich cronies lived, but her place felt like home. Middle-class, all the way. Talson could have shoved her with the other degenerates working the docks down on Swanson Alley, but he'd given her a pretty nice place, especially for an indentured servant. The guys never mentioned her low status, and they treated her with surprising respect. All things considered, life could have been much, much worse.

"Well, well, look at you." As if she'd conjured it, worse appeared.

"What do you want, Darren?" She didn't stop walking, but wished she'd been smarter about going home. Sure the shortcut was faster, but in the areas outside dock security, anything could happen. She'd stupidly assumed the local thugs feared Talson enough to leave her alone.



The brute stepped in her way, forcing her to stop. "I just wanted to say hi. Thought you might need someone to walk you home." Not as tall as Talson but still a head bigger than her, Darren Woreski had been after her since he'd joined the dockworkers three months ago. He had a mouth that would make a sailor blush and fists as large as dinner plates. He'd made a few rude comments before the guys at work had put a stop to it. Then he took to watching her all the time. She wondered if Talson knew about Darren's sick obsession.

He trailed a hand over her hair before she pulled back. "Now that's not friendly, Jamie. I just want to keep you safe. How can I if you won't let me touch you?" His thick brows drew together in a scowl. "You think you're too good for me, is that it?"

She needed to move. Fast. "Uh, it's just that—"

He yanked her to him and planted a slobbery kiss that made her want to vomit. He smelled like stale onions, and just the feel of him made her skin crawl. When his large hands palmed her ass and lifted her off her feet to grind her against his arousal, she freaked.

"Oh yeah. You're gonna be a hot one. I can tell." He kissed her neck and started sucking hard.

Bastard. Not willing to be a victim to this prick, she scratched his face with nails she purposefully kept longer than Talson liked, just to annoy him. When Darren howled, she reached down and pinched his belly, hard. He let her go and she added a kick to the side of his knee, gratified when he swore again and went down. If she'd had a better angle, she'd have gone for his balls.

"You *bitch*. You're gonna pay for that." Bad enough he had murder in his eyes. He started to recuperate faster than she'd thought he might.

Jamie ran as hard as she could back the way she'd come, yelling for help all the way. Just a few yards shy of Talson Shipping's property line, she put on a burst of speed and ran into something that would have knocked her on her ass if strong arms hadn't held her up.

"Kendrik?"

She'd take him over the asshole chasing her any day. "Tal...son?" she wheezed.

Darren panted behind her. "You okay, Jamie? I was trying to walk her home when something spooked her. Isn't that right, Kendrik?"

She knew she'd pay for this later. Talson couldn't be around to protect her forever. But no way in hell would she just roll over and take Darren's abuse without fighting back. She glanced up at Talson, alarmed at the fury on his face. She blinked hard and started shivering.

Then he did the oddest thing. He stroked her bruised lip before pulling her into a comforting, nonsexual hug. "Shh. It's okay. Just tell me what happened. You're safe now, Jamie. I promise."

She took a long breath and disengaged from his arms, uncomfortable at being so exposed. For some reason she liked annoying him. She didn't want him—or anyone—to see her as vulnerable. "Thanks." She turned to face Darren, pleased to see the pissant squirm. "I was taking a shortcut home. Stupid, I know, but I thought I'd be okay. Everyone knows not to mess with the Talsons around here. Everyone but Darren."

Darren scowled, and she continued through her fear. "He tried to kiss me, if you could call it that. Then he started touching me. I think he meant to, ah, he probably would have—"

Talson stepped between her and Darren. "Go wait for me at my office, Kendrik. You can make me a new pot of coffee when I come back to catch up on work."

"Coffee?" She frowned. "But, sir, I said—"

"Now." His tone brooked no refusal. "Woreski, you and I need to talk."

Tired and more shaken than she wanted to admit, she did as ordered, knowing no one would accost her between this point and his office. Talson Shipping ran tight security. And on Talson's turf, everyone obeyed. Apparently even her.

She left him behind. But once in his office, she allowed herself a few tears. She didn't make him coffee right away. Instead, she settled on his couch and let her eyes drift shut. Just for a little bit.

\* \* \* \* \*

When a beam of sunlight hit her between the eyes, she blinked into confusion. A glance around her showed the cracked ceiling above her bed, the familiar scarred dresser across from it and a side table next to her with a precious book and the *yjor* plant sitting on it. The plant made the whole apartment smell like lilacs and lavender, and she still had no idea who'd left it for her a few weeks ago.

A glance at herself told her she still wore the same clothing she'd gone to work in minus her shoes. She remembered falling asleep on Talson's couch. A few odd noises and then that dream...

Flushing, she tried to remember how she'd gotten home. But for the life of her she had no idea. Turning to her side table, she saw a note taped to her book. *Take the day off. That's an order. If you need anything, call. Roarke.* And under that, what looked like a phone number.

Stunned, Jamie didn't know what to think. She stumbled into the bathroom, took off her clothes, and hopped in the shower. Letting the soap and water clean her from top to bottom, she watched as the droplets raced one another down the glass wall and pooled on the floor before circling the drain. Common sense told her she should be more upset about yesterday, but she felt a surprising numbness.

And that wasn't all. She had the oddest sensation of reassurance that Roarke Talson would take care of everything. That dream had been a doozy, filled with Talson in nothing but his jeans. He had little to no body hair that she'd ever seen, and his bronze flesh glowed under the sunlight, particularly when he worked with the other guys moving crap around the docks. In her dream, she'd been drowning in his gaze, hypnotized by the lust on his face. And then he'd touched her, trailing his mouth over

her naked body. Sucking her nipples into hard peaks, licking down her belly to her pussy... He'd feasted, spurring two orgasms out of her before he came up behind her and took her with a ferocity akin to ownership.

Just thinking about it turned her on, and she groaned as she once again sought fulfillment. Talson might have been an ass, but he was the stuff of every one of her sexual fantasies. In no time she came hard, whispering his name in a plea for more. After she finished her shower and dried off, she snuck back into bed, hoping to dream of nothing but freedom for herself and her family.

Instead she dreamt of Roarke Talson. And her lust built all over again.

## Chapter Two

Two days after her assault, Jamie headed into work on time. She'd covered up the few bruises on her neck and used a little gloss to smooth over the bruise on her lips. Other than that, she felt better than fine. Catching up on her sleep—and ignoring her dreams—had given her a renewed energy and sense of purpose.

Just three more years and she'd repay all the family debt. It didn't seem like so much anymore, not when she rationalized her time spent with Talson as necessary.

"Kendrik, my office." The star of her naughty fantasies brought her back to reality in a heartbeat.

"Yes, master," she snapped.

"And don't you forget it." His growl seemed especially harsh this morning, but she didn't let it bother her. She'd learned a long time ago that for all Talson sounded like an ogre, he'd never physically hurt her. Oh, he piled on the work, but she could handle that. For all his faults, and there were many, Talson had a core of honor. He protected what he considered his, and until her debt had been repaid, she belonged to Talson Shipping.

"Today, while I'm young." He exhaled a long breath and stood before the open door to his office.

She grinned but hurriedly masked her smile when he scowled.

Once past him, she settled into the chair across from his desk. But instead of crossing to the other side and sitting down, Talson crouched next to her and took her chin in his hand. He turned her face from side to side, looking her over. Then he ran his fingers over her neck.

The feel of his hands on her skin froze her to her seat. The energy sparking between them could have lit up the room, for all that it made her body ripe and willing to be fucked. Holy crap, but this man had an effect on her libido like nobody's business.

Unfortunately, Talson looked no more moved than if he'd been checking out a sick puppy.

"Good. You look okay."

She opened her mouth to respond but had no clue what to say. He glanced at her lips and away, darting behind his desk and sitting in the blink of an eye. The man could move when he wanted to.

He cleared his throat. "Darren Woreski no longer works for Talson Shipping. He left Port Watch yesterday in a full-body cast and won't be back. If you ever see him around here, you come tell me right away. We clear?"

Body cast? She liked the way he worked. "Sure thing."

He raised a brow.

"Yes."

When he just looked at her, she sighed and said, "Yes *sir*." She popped a salute he didn't seem to find amusing. "So, ah, how did I get home the other night?"

"I took you."

"O-kay. Thanks?"

He grunted. "You're under my protection. What? Should I have left you here to sleep? Trust me, that couch is not as comfortable as it looks."

She glanced over her shoulder at the couch against the far wall, where Talson spent many a night. She bit her lip, knowing she'd slept in the same place he had. Turning back to him, she pasted a bright grin on her face, determined not to jump him in gratitude. "So, Mr. Talson, what do you need me to do this morning?" *Polish your desk, sweep the floor, suck your cock?*

The thought struck without warning, and she stared at him in wide-eyed horror. Where were these thoughts coming from? She normally managed to control her lust around the boss until she got home at night. But after his rescue the other day, she feared she was now harboring a bad case of hero worship. *So not good.*

"The list is by the door. Kendrik?" His eyes narrowed. "Did you eat today?"

The man constantly nagged her about nutrition.

"I had an apple."

He shook his head and pressed a button. In seconds, a tray full of food appeared on the transporter table by his desk. Two plates full of heaping meat, eggs, fruit and vegetables. And a cluster of alien berries she recognized as Otra. Rare, delicious fruit she'd seen once or twice on gourmet cooking shows. She'd never known anyone who could afford them, or anyone Otra. Which one was Talson—rich or alien?

Her mouth watered, but she refused to be a charity case. Talson could afford to eat like a king. She was the king's peon, and as such, could only afford table scraps. An apple? Please. She'd had her last piece of stale bread that morning. What little currency Talson gave her for a meal allowance she mailed home to her sisters.

"Eat. That's your first job today." He smiled at her, and she had to concentrate to breathe evenly.

How ironic that this rude, brash, arrogant man should be so incredibly appealing.

"Fine, but only because you're ordering me to." She took the plate he offered and tried not to let his intense scrutiny bother her. *Oh man, the eggs are perfection.* Deliberately eating with patience, she matched him bite-for-bite. Then the blasted man handed her a cup of coffee, fixed with the right amount of cream and sugar.

He took his black. That he'd taken the time to order hers fixed the right way made her feel funny inside.

"Kendrik, how long have you worked for me?" He took a sip and sighed. "Can't start the morning without this. Try the fruit after you take a sip. Gives it a punch."

She eyed the berries with enthusiasm. She'd heard stories about their addicting flavor, but she'd never eaten one before. Talson popped one into his mouth and looked orgasmic.

Realizing she hadn't answered his question, she took a quick sip of her coffee and said, "A little more than a year now."

"And in all that time, have I ever violated our agreement?"

She wondered where he was going with this. "No."

"Ever tried to hurt you or cheat you out of your due?"

"No sir." He might be an asshole, but he was an honest asshole. *One that carried you home and put you to bed. One you want to wrap your body around and kiss until you can't breathe.*

He nudged her plate closer to her. "Try the berries."

She took another swallow of coffee then ate a berry. The explosion of delight on her tongue shocked and thrilled her. "Oh my God." Heat spread throughout her body and centered in the tips of her breasts and her clit. The throbbing sensation stunned her.

"Good, hmm? I love these things." He ate a few more. "Have another."

She didn't think she should. The urge to leap over the desk and kiss her way down Talson's body grew by the second. "I don't know..."

"Go on. This is a special treat, a reward for doing such a good job for me. Besides, the fruit actually builds immunity and restores energy. You've been working too hard. And after the other day, I worry about you."

She took another berry and let the juice fill her mouth before she swallowed it down. *Jesus, it feels like heaven.* She blinked and the cup of coffee met her lips. Talson had rounded his desk and held the cup to her mouth. When had he moved?

"You okay?" He seemed concerned. "Weird. The fruit's supposed to boost your energy, not suck the life out of you. That's it. Drink some more. Maybe the caffeine will help." He sat on the desk in front of her, his groin at eye level.



*Bad, bad place for him to sit right now.* Her hands shook with the need to peel his jeans down and take that cock between her lips.

"...think you need to slow down a little. You're doing a fine job. Best office manager I've ever had and you run the schedule as well as our foreman, but don't tell Bud that."

What was he saying?

He held the cup to her mouth and she drank it down, thirsty for something else.

"Jamie?" He frowned and neared her, staring into her pupils. "Oh hell. What are you feeling, honey?"

"Honey?" She grinned. "Why, Mr. Talson, how nice. For a major pain in the ass, you're awfully cute."

He stared at her. "What?"

"Man, you have no idea what I want to do to you right now."

"Shit." He sounded strangled and quickly leaned back. "I thought the fruit would help. I mean, it makes me feel better. But Romy did tell me — *Kendrik*."

She stood between his legs and propped her hands on his thighs for balance. She inhaled, and the scent of sweet, sexual need hit her hard. A glance at his crotch showed his arousal.

"Why, Mr. Talson, are you happy to see me?"

"You have no idea," he muttered. When her hands drifted up his thighs, he gripped her wrists to stop her. "Now, Jamie. Stop this. It's got to be an effect of the fruit and the caffeine. It's never hit me hard at all, but maybe you... I'm an idiot."

"No, you're a sexy dictator who needs to get laid. Everyone talks about you." She nuzzled his cheek, taken with the smooth, masculine feel of him. "How you could have any woman you wanted, but you've only been seen with one or two in all the time I've been here. Why is that?"

Jamie nipped his earlobe, and to her delight, the big man shuddered.

"K-Kendrik. Step back. I take full responsibility for this. I won't negate the contract."

"Which part? The section that talks about taking care of your employees? But you are. You saved me from Darren. You gave me a decent place to live." She wiggled her wrists and he loosened his grip. She took advantage and scooted her hands up his rock-hard thighs again. "You fed me a delicious breakfast."

He groaned. His breathing grew shallower, and she leaned back to see his expression. To her astonishment, his dark brown eyes looked black, and she swore she could see bands of silver pulsing in the pupils. Otra eyes. Yet Talson had never claimed to be anything but human, his relation to the alien Talsons one of an unfortunate courtship between his human mother and an alien stepfather.

She kissed his chin. "So pretty. Just like in my dreams."

"Your dreams?" Had his voice always been that low?

Remembering just this morning, she told him about it. "I was in my shower, and you were there. Touching me, stroking me. You kissed me all over."

He looked as if he wanted to devour her, but he held back. "Fuck. Kendrik—Jamie—*please*. Just go sit over there on the couch. I'll get you some water and let this wear off. I'm not going to fuck you."

She wasn't sure, but it sounded as though he added *not yet* under his breath.

"Don't want to void my contract, hmm?" Per the legal terms of their agreement, if he violated the terms and had sex with her, she'd be free and her debt would be paid. She'd thought about trying to seduce him, but Talson was like a rock, unshakeable in doing the right thing. Even now, the poor guy looked as if he'd explode if she so much as whispered over his lips, but he refused to violate his agreement.

She had to respect that.

"You need it bad, don't you, sexy?"

"Jamie, let me go and move to the couch."

"You can't initiate contact, but I can."

His entire body locked up tighter than a drum.

She unsnapped his jeans and unzipped him.

"Shit. Jamie, honey, you don't know what you're doing. You should —"

His cock sprang free, the huge, hot length of him bound by nothing. His balls were still gripped by the denim of his pants, but the rest of him was there for her pleasure.

She ran a finger over him, sliding over the moist tip of his cock. "You're a big boy, aren't you? Just like you were when I dreamed about you last night. When I fantasized this morning and made myself come."

His gaze shot to hers, and he stared into her eyes with such need and hunger that she couldn't resist.

Jamie bent over and took his thick cock between her lips. She licked the salty essence of him, and combined with the berries, he tasted sweeter than cream.

"Oh, yes. *Oh fuck.*"

She sucked and felt his hand in her hair. Not holding her down, not pressuring her, but petting her.

She wanted his cum, wanted him to give her something of himself. She controlled this, and she wanted him unglued. Jamie licked and nibbled, more than pleased when he jumped under her tongue and bunched his hands in her hair.

He felt as if he grew in her mouth, and she still hadn't gone down on all of him. Roarke Talson was a *big* man.

"Jamie, oh shit. Wait a minute," he rasped as she rubbed her tongue up, down and under his cockhead. "I'm close, honey. You need to stop. Now, before I—" He moaned the rest as she sucked him hard.

Warm cum spilled into her mouth, the sweetness filling her entire body with throbbing pleasure. Oddly enough, as he came, so did she. A feeling of masculine

contentment drifted through her, and she wondered if the berries she'd eaten could produce this kind of hallucination.

Because damned if she didn't feel his orgasm spurring hers.

"Yes, oh yeah." Talson ran his fingers over her cheeks and down her hair. He throbbed, his size not diminished at all in her mouth. She sucked harder, wanting all of him, and earned another burst of seed with his moan. His surrender.

More than pleased at the outcome, she finally pulled away and straightened. The sleepy satisfaction on his face overjoyed her, because *she'd* put it there. Feeling much more clearheaded and full of energy, she stepped back, gave him a jaunty wave, and started for the door.

Over her shoulder, she added, "Thanks for the breakfast, sir. I'll get started on the manifests going out today." She took the electronic clipboard hanging beside the door. "Time to get to work."

Roarke watched her leave in a daze. He stared around him, noting the familiar sounds of the busy docks, the scent of coffee and breakfast in the room, the neat office that had been his for the last four years. A glance at his cock hanging out from his jeans told him all was not as it should be.

He stood and tucked himself back into his pants then fastened them closed. Holy shit, but he'd never felt that before in his life. Jamison Kendrik, the woman he lusted after with every breath in his body, had just blown him to heaven. It didn't seem real.

He'd only meant to make sure she ate well. He couldn't stop a grin at the irony of the thought. He'd meant the berries and coffee to be a gift, a reward for her hard work. He'd never heard of the fruit acting like an aphrodisiac before. Then again, how many humans could get their hands on the fruit, and of those, how many would think to eat them with coffee? Still, someone might have tried it and spread the word by now.

But for her to... She'd taken him in her hands, had put her lips around him... Like something out of his deepest, dearest fantasies. The woman had finally touched him of her own accord.

He sent the trays back via the transporter and sat in his chair, staring at nothing.

When he'd hired her over a year ago, he'd been intrigued and disappointed to see someone so vibrant and beautiful with such little character. He'd found her in debtors' hell—a place for those who refused to pay their debts, the lowest of the low. The government found and forced them to contribute to society, indentured until they'd earned back their freedom.

Jamie had appeared out of place on the Block. Lush, dark red hair framed a siren's face. Her brown eyes had seemed so innocent and so sad as she stood there awaiting sentence. A young woman with a body that wouldn't quit could have had a shorter stretch. Yet she'd turned down a two-year stint with the Lowren brothers, apparently having no desire to work off her service on her back.

He'd bartered with several other agencies to get her, but when he'd read her contract, he'd known why there weren't more interested. She'd added a no-sex addendum. Indentured contracts were fairly standard, but her no-sex requirement had been a smart one, and fully backed by the government's new Debtor Protection Bill. If Roarke tried to have sex with Jamie in any shape or form, the contract became null and void. So what had just happened in the office?

She'd been correct in that there were no rules about her initiating intimacy, but it was a slippery slope. Far too easy for the indentured to claim rape and get out of serving her term. From the get-go, Jamie had told him there would be nothing but a professional relationship between them. Even when every atom in his body told him she meant something more to him than an indentured dockworker, he'd agreed. There were other ways an honorable man might break a legal bond. She could give up, quit and take the offer of becoming his lover.

Yet Jamie met every challenge he issued. She didn't balk at hard work. She didn't lag behind. A fast learner, she often did the jobs he assigned her better than those who'd been working here longer. She'd won the admiration and loyalty of his men, and his as well.

Problem was, he wanted her. Bad. Today had proven how little control he had. He should have pushed her away, forced her to move back. But when she'd touched him, he'd been helpless to do more than feel. Fuck, but coming in her mouth had been a dream long in coming. Literally. He grimaced, wishing he'd given her more than that echo of orgasm. The Otra side of him functioned the way it should. Though he didn't possess any psychic abilities, his climaxes always spurred his partners to theirs.

But she'd been empty. She should have had him buried balls-deep inside her, riding her while he commanded her body and soul. Just the thought had him getting hard again. A definite problem he'd been dealing with since he'd hired her. But now that he knew what she could do with that mouth, his desire would be even more painful.

Hell. At least he'd worked off his frustrations with Woreski. He allowed himself a grin then buckled down to try to work. To no avail. Putting her in her bed and leaving her clothes on the other night had nearly killed him. Hell, she had the little *yjor* flower he'd secretly given her on her nightstand, and the alien bloom gave the room a positive energy that felt seductively like home. Like Jamie. The woman got to him on every level. He had to have her. Though he tried, he couldn't banish Jamie from his mind, or his heart.

And then he received a phone call that changed everything.

## Chapter Three

Jamie finished the last item on her list, conscious that she hadn't seen Roarke—*Talson*— since early morning. She'd been thinking about him all day, mortified at what she'd done yet relieved as well. She'd wanted him for the longest time. It gratified her to know he wanted her too. A more dishonest person might charge him with coercion. Those damn berries had been partly responsible for her actions. But in hindsight, she knew he'd done his best to push her away.

Good to know he wasn't as immune to her as he pretended.

Working without him hovering over her shoulder also gave her an added sense of relief, easing her stress of discovery. Gregory, the alien she'd smuggled aboard the shipping crate, must have made it to Werfal 7 by now. His contact would have hidden him away from the docks on the Oтра planet. Freedom for Gregory. No arranged marriage for the poor scholar, but no more contact with Susanna either. Her sister's lover might be safe, but she'd truly sacrificed all for love. And at least this way Jamie had kept Susanna from trying to free Gregory and getting herself arrested in the process.

If Gregory had stayed on the planet, she and he would never have continued anyway. He'd have married the woman of his parents' choosing and lost that bit that made him so special to her sister.

Jamie understood about wanting freedom, about being punished for what others had done, about sacrifice. If she ever saw her scum-sucking parents again, she'd—

"Where the fuck is Kendrik?" Talson's shout froze everyone in their tracks.

*Shit. He knows.* When Larry turned to her she put her finger to her mouth, pleading for silence. He nodded and motioned to the back door of the warehouse. It was near quitting time anyway. Talson wouldn't necessarily be alarmed she'd left without

checking with him. Maybe he'd think she felt too embarrassed to face him after what had happened this morning.

As she raced home going the long way, she dreaded having to put her escape into action. But she'd known what the outcome might be if she were caught. Better her than Susanna. Her idiot sister would have been in lockdown by now. Jamie still had a fighting chance of not getting caught. With anyone other than Talson, there would have been no question she'd have gotten away with it.

She made the half-hour commute in half the time and grabbed her pathetic excuse for a suitcase and the backpack containing her most prized possessions, to include a flower from her *yjor* plant. For some odd reason, it made her think of Talson. After double-checking that she hadn't left anything vital behind, she took a deep breath and slowly let it out. The minute she left Port Watch her life would forever be at risk. A fugitive, and a female one at that, once caught, she'd be lucky if they killed her right away. A lifetime of sexual slavery would await her.

*Negative thinking, negative thinking.* She shook off the bad feeling and focused on the here and now. Gregory was headed to freedom and a new life, one he certainly deserved. Susanna would have peace of mind knowing she'd helped her lover avoid a bad end, giving her no reason to put herself in jeopardy to aid him. And Jamie could live with herself knowing she'd done the right thing.

"And no more Roarke Talson breathing down my neck." The thought should have put a wide smile on her face. Instead, she felt a worrisome sadness that she might never see him again.

Reaching for the doorknob, she watched in horror as it began to turn. Swiftly locking the deadbolt, she took a step back and almost tripped over her unwieldy luggage.

"Dammit, Kendrik, open the door." The familiar growl made her knees weak. "We have to talk."



Jamie found herself unable to process. What to do? She had no back door, no other means of escape. She hadn't thought he'd come after her this soon.

"Jamie, open the door," he said in an uncharacteristically soft voice.

She eyed the door as if it were the gateway to hell. The doorknob jiggled again, this time violently. Spying salvation in the most unlikely of places, she shoved her bags to the side and lunged for an ancient faux-log doorstep. While holding it above her head, she quickly unlocked the deadbolt and hid next to the doorframe in the space that would be concealed by the door when it opened.

"Finally." Talson walked through her door, sounding gruff and much more like the ogre she knew. "Kendrik?"

Sensing this might be her best shot, she crept from behind the door and whacked him in the back of the head. Instead of going down, he cursed and wavered, turning around to stare at her accusingly.

Before she could react, he crumpled to the floor, dazed, but not out.

"For God's sake." She scrambled to adapt. Running to her hole-in-the-wall of a kitchen, she yanked a loose cord from the blinds in her lone window and raced back to Talson.

She rolled him over, surprised at how guilty she felt having felled the giant. For the past year he'd been a thorn in her side, not an evil man, but one that made her life a living hell nonetheless. But this morning, after how nice he'd been, what they shared, doing this felt wrong.

Yet what choice did she have? Sure, she'd given him a helluva blowjob. But Mr. Rules would never overlook a smuggling infraction. He'd probably feel it his personal duty to escort her to prison himself.

Tying his hands behind his back with an effective knot, one she'd learned courtesy of working the docks, she stood and planned how best to reach the train yard.

Donning her backpack and grabbing her suitcase, she headed for the door when his words stopped her.

"You're making the mother of all mistakes." His voice was raspy with pain, but his eyes were clear and direct when she turned to stare at him. "In fact, your best bet would be to finish me off. Because once I'm free, there's not a place on Earth or offworld that I won't look to hunt you down."

The satisfaction on his face alarmed her, and his words brought forth an ugly reality.

She stared at him, then at the doorstep, then back at him, weighing her options. As if she had a choice. Knocking him in the head had been impulsive. Dwelling on the matter made the decision simple. There was no way she could strike him again, not when he lay helpless on the floor. Much as she wished he'd bother someone else, she knew harming him further was out of the question. She couldn't murder in cold blood. Not Talson.

"You're a real pain in the ass, you know that?" She sighed and closed her eyes, wishing she'd let the easygoing Lowrens purchase her servitude instead of Roarke Talson. But living in New Hattan, across the country, and working her time off as a love slave had less appeal than working her ass off for Talson.

Opening her eyes, she stared down at the glowering man, wondering why fate had let him purchase her debtor's ticket. For that matter, she still wondered why he'd bothered to buy it in the first place.

He shifted on his back and brought her attention to the present in a flash. When she narrowed her eyes, he stilled. She wanted to slap herself for being so stupid. While she'd been reminiscing, he'd been trying to work his hands free.

Dropping her bags, *again*, she found the reinforcing structural tape she normally used to block the slow leaks in her barred window and approached him. He tried to resist her pull, but the blow he'd taken to the head made him weaker than she'd suspected. She rolled him onto his belly and reinforced the cord around his wrists with

a layer of tape. Rolling him over onto his back, she straddled him, in a position of authority once more. Remembrances of this morning refused to leave her as she took charge.

He glared up at her, his lips a thin line and his eyes...she couldn't quite figure out what she saw in his eyes. Anger, annoyance, but no real hatred. And something else, something that made her look away in a hurry.

She really didn't need this. Not now. Not after a year of dealing with her insane attraction and the impossible man who'd instilled it. But what if she never saw him again? Much as Talson annoyed her to no end, she'd be a fool to deny his physical appeal. Blue-black hair, dark brown eyes, a firm chin and a straight nose. Not a pretty man, but a thoroughly sexy leader in his prime. Jamie was a sucker for muscles and drive, both of which he had in spades.

What the hell? She'd already hidden an Otrabaja aboard neutrally declared cargo and brained her boss with a doorstop. What was one more sin on top of a life sentence?

Ignoring the caution that flashed in his eyes, she lowered her face until she could feel his sweet breath on her lips. A wave of heat feathered through her, and without giving it another thought, she pressed her mouth to his. Finally, her first real kiss with Roarke Talson.

Instantaneous fire shot through her, and the moan that escaped startled a sharp intake of breath from both of them. His lips felt like silk, smooth yet with the male firmness she associated with him. All too easily she could imagine his taste, and before she could help herself, she penetrated his lips with her tongue.

Like warm chocolate with a hint of brandy, he packed an addictive wallop. She wanted more. Her hands settled on his muscular chest of their own volition, and she absorbed his heat through his thin shirt. He might as well have been naked. *Delicious* was all she could think as she practically devoured the man. Lost in her desire, she didn't immediately pick up on the fact he offered little resistance.

Then again, she could barely think at all through the haze of sensation coursing through her blood. Just this morning she'd felt like this, so needy, so unbelievably sexual. It was as if her entire body centered on the ache in her womb. She couldn't blame the berries this time. Only Roarke had this effect on her.

She squirmed atop him, unable to stop herself, and his groan and the resulting hardness rubbing between her thighs made her press closer. Rocking over him, she drew closer and closer to the ecstasy she'd felt hours ago. His scent, his touch, the strength abundant in his confidence and sensuality drugged her into taking more.

Roarke whispered against her lips, encouraging her to ride him. He plunged his tongue back into her mouth and took charge, even as he lay helpless under her.

Jamie couldn't understand her desperation, but she couldn't stop. She had to reach that pinnacle he promised with every caress of his lips.

"Yeah. Fucking come," he said on a breath when she leaned up, rocking against him.

Staring down into eyes now as black as sin, she twitched over the hard length of him and let the fiery blaze overtake her. "*Roarke, Roarke.*" She blew apart, her climax explosive. Sensation obliterated all thought and she floated in a sea of pleasure.

"Come on, baby. A little more. Yeah." Roarke arched his pelvis against her, his erection like an iron bar beneath her.

Reality splashed over her like a cold dose of water. She couldn't believe how much she still wanted to continue this exploration. To take him into her bedroom and let him push inside her, that massive length of him crammed deep. She shivered, trembling because her clit still throbbed over his thick cock.

Talson said nothing, lying still while he watched her with guarded eyes and flushed cheeks.

"Th-that was a mistake."

"Not from where I'm lying." He had the nerve to grin at her, his expression almost evil. "Oh, yeah. Run as fast and far as you want. But I'm getting inside that pussy. And you're going to finally know your place. It's time you paid your dues."

She wanted to hate him, to rail at him for being such an arrogant jerk. But the truth was, his dominance only turned her on that much more. Striving to shake free from his sensual web, she rose to her feet, unable to look away from his heavy-lidded eyes. *I shouldn't want him. Not at all. He's bossy and annoying and mean and...oh God, so fucking sexy. This is so not normal, so very, very not okay to want Talson like this.*

Gathering speed as desperation and shock fought for control of her thoughts, she picked up her bags and flew out the door, wanting nothing more than to escape her path to ruination...and her insane desire.

Roarke stared at the door, trying to catch his breath. His dick was rock hard, his need for the fiery redhead all-consuming. Watching her come had been as good as watching her blow him. Such passion, such life in a woman who'd worked hard to overcome adversity.

He concentrated on willing away his erection, knowing he wouldn't find the ease he wanted. Not until he ran her down and finally laid claim to the woman he had no intention of letting go again.

Like him, Jamie was a fighter. Sure, he knew what people said about him. They called him the bastard son of a whore who didn't know better than to spread her legs for an alien. Though most thought Roarke human, enough rumor circulated to call his humanity into question. He'd grown up having to fight for respect, to have a place on this Earth when aliens weren't welcome in many parts of the country.

Enduring, pushing through, striving to be better, he'd busted his ass to make it on the docks before he took the name Talson and everything that went with it. He knew the backbreaking labor of the docks, because he'd grown up with it. And he'd seen what happened to those who were weak.

Roarke had thrived, but he'd been lonely too. Always feeling different, never at peace with his Otra brothers because of his human genetics, he'd kept himself apart. His father tried to understand, but he didn't know what it meant to deal with others without a psychic connection. Roarke was human in all ways but one. And sharing orgasms made him more a freak than a catch in society.

Jamie hadn't seemed to care. Nor would she. He knew in the very fabric of his being she belonged with him. Not to him, but with him. He couldn't handle a shy or weak-willed woman, even one as beautiful as Jamie. But a woman with that much fire, one who'd risk everything to help an Otra, who saved up every bit of currency to support her sisters?

That woman held his heart. And he had every intention of collecting her before she slipped through his fingers.

He had a hard time knowing she'd almost bested him. If not for his brother's discovery on Werfal 7, he might have missed it. Yes, he'd wondered about the cargo manifest the other day, since it didn't match the initial weight of the box. But knowing Jamie didn't make mistakes had led him to believe there must have been a glitch.

Yeah, a glitch with his reasoning. He smiled despite himself, caught with his hands behind his back and his dick still aching to slide inside her warm, wet pussy. She'd bested him, but he'd won as well. He'd counted on her integrity. When she could have, and probably should have, taken him out when she'd had the opportunity, his truehearted Jamie had resisted the impulse. She'd kissed him and sealed her fate.

At the thought, he felt warm all over. To his surprise, the tape around his wrists melted away and he broke through the frail cord holding them together. He apparently had more Otra in him than he'd known. Now to share that with a feisty redhead currently on the run.

He left her apartment and opened all his senses, aware that by accepting Jamie, he'd unlocked a door inside himself. Within moments he caught her scent, a light hint of *yjor* and woman. He'd picked up the plant on Werfal 6 while thinking of her. She'd never

known where the strange plant had come from, just that it appeared one day on her doorstep. Nor had she realized the slow courtship he'd begun the day he'd bought it to her.

"No matter," he murmured and left the apartment, his blood humming at thoughts of the hunt, of finally capturing his prey. "Oh, Jamie, you can't run far or fast enough. I'm coming, sweet. And soon, you'll be mine."

## Chapter Four

She'd been aware of a prickling at the back of her neck a little after she'd left Roarke tied up on her floor. As much as she wanted to, she couldn't keep thinking of him as Talson, not after what they'd shared. Just thinking about how he felt and tasted aroused her, and a part of her wanted to run *to* him as fast as she was running *from* him.

Passing another marker directing her toward Port Watch's transit station, she tried once again to push the stubborn man from her thoughts and concentrate on her own well-being. Kissing and grinding over Roarke Talson was all well and good, but if she planned on having any kind of a life out from under the man's cock, she needed to get a move on.

"Last boarding for Ellis Bay Gatehouse," an electronic voice chimed.

She hurried forward and managed to board the hover rail as the doors closed. She had just enough credit to buy a one-way passage out of Port Watch, but to what town she had no idea.

When the ticket master arrived, she handed him her credit chip and waited. When he handed it back, her heart resumed its beat. Roarke must have been too ashamed at being defeated by a woman to report her absence to the authorities. It didn't mean he wouldn't find a way to find her, but she could rest easy, at least for now. She imagined that once enough time had passed and he still hadn't found her, he'd call in the authorities. And God help her then.

The ticket master pointed her in the direction of the sleeping berths. "Cabin 105," he said with a pleasant nod and checked the room off on his digital register.

Relief settled when she entered the small cabin. It wasn't much, but for the next few hours at least, before they reached the next stop, she'd be able to rest while she figured out what to do and where to go. She glanced at the fold-down bed, curious that it



seemed larger than she would have expected for such a cheap price. But not one to question good favor, for once, she set her bags down, pulled out the bed and sighed into a plush comforter.

The rail began its rhythmic descent into steady movement, and she'd almost drifted into sleep when her door suddenly banged open.

"Sorry, wrong room." She smiled to take the sting out of her sharp words and froze when Roarke Talson shut and locked the door behind him.

He stood in her room looking extremely pleased with himself.

"You're good, I'll grant you that." His deep voice still had the ability to simultaneously irritate and arouse her. "But I'm better." He stared from the top of her unbound hair to her socks, lingering at points in between. His scrutiny discomfited her. The way he stared, she might as well have worn nothing more than a frown.

He leaned back against the door and crossed his arms over his chest, drawing her attention to his obvious power. She swallowed around a dry throat and he grinned.

"Well now, Jamison. Seems to me, you've violated your contract. I've been waiting for this day for a very long time."

The satisfaction oozing from his every pore made her blink. He stood still, unmoving, but she noticed the unsteady rise and fall of his chest, the preternatural gleam of his eyes and the sexual magnetism he exuded like a heady cologne.

"You're Otrá." Hadn't she suspected before?

He nodded and began removing his clothing, throwing her speculation into complete chaos. Fascinated with his satiny skin, she watched him bare his chest before snapping her mouth shut. "What are you doing?" *Yes, that was the correct response, and what I should have said the minute he reached for the hem of his shirt.* Unfortunately, the breathless quality of her voice and her inability to look away from the sculpted bronze muscle of a man built to dominate made her sound less than unenthusiastic.

Shadows played off the ridges of his abdomen. His pecs and biceps bulged each time he moved. The man was ripped, and he had the strength to crush her easily.

Though he didn't seem angry, she *had* bashed him in the head. Her arousal faded beneath a wave of fear. What would he do if she said no? Could she refuse him? Should she try, when she didn't really want to?

She licked her lips and his eyes fixed on her mouth.

"I'm going to strip naked." His hands went to the snap of his jeans. "When I'm done, I'm going to lie down on that bed and watch you take off your clothes, piece by fucking piece." His eyes glowed, the dark black pulsing with silver threads. After he toed off his shoes, the rest of his clothes followed in a rush. His thick erection told her what words didn't need to. He wanted her, and he intended to have her.

She shivered as a ghostly finger of need drifted over her breasts and between her legs. His excitement or hers, she couldn't tell. That weird psychic thing again, but it didn't scare her. Instead, she felt closer to him because of it. And *that* scared her.

"You're finally mine, Jamie. After a year of waiting, you're going to be mine in every way that counts," he said softly, his very evident erection growing larger as he spoke. He gripped it in one hand and pumped it a few times, bringing her gaze to the slick head wet with arousal. "Now before I come all over the bed, take off your clothes. Slowly. You owe me one hell of an orgasm."

With little room to maneuver, she brushed against him when she exchanged places with him on the bed. His thick shaft bobbed as he settled down, and she had the crazy urge to taste him again. She didn't think he'd object to another blowjob, but something in her told her not to push him right now.

He seemed too on edge, too angry, yet hungry, all at the same time.

She faced him on unsteady legs, her own need too strong to ignore. How she'd transitioned from fugitive to sex addict she didn't know, but the unadulterated carnality around Roarke was impossible to resist. She'd desired him the moment she'd seen him, but she'd suppressed those longings knowing they'd bring her nothing but

trouble. Considering she'd fallen as far as she was likely to go, she had nothing left to lose.

"Take them off. I want you naked now. And I'm warning you, you don't want to push me. You have enough punishment coming to you as it is."

Shrugging and trying hard not to show how much she wanted him—God, that mean voice made her so wet— she slowly peeled off her shirt and tossed it to the floor.

"Oh yeah. I love those tits. You're big, aren't you?" he crooned. "Cup them. Hold yourself out to me. Offer me those pretty nipples."

They throbbed under her bra, the stiff points an obvious indicator she wanted him.

"Do they ache? They're hard, aren't they? Tell me." His voice lowered and he stroked himself.

She shifted on her feet, her pussy wet and empty. She needed to feel him inside her, to fill that void that was so much more than physical. It made no sense, but she couldn't help it. She didn't just want him, Jamie loved the stubborn ass. She groaned, wishing she could have kept it simple.

He'd likely fuck her then throw her back to the authorities. And she loved him. How screwed up was she?

"Take off your bra and touch yourself for me. I won't say it again."

She obeyed, feeling meek and very unlike herself. Yet she could see he liked her instant obedience.

"Good girl. That's right. Let me see those breasts."

Her cheeks felt hot. She wasn't used to anyone seeing her without clothes. The few lovers she'd had before she'd indentured herself had been pleasant if not satisfying partners. Though they meant well, neither man had made her feel even a tenth of what Roarke did. So imposing, so male, so dominant.

"Now rub them. Tell me what you want me to do to you." He hypnotized with his voice. Seducing with the sound of his words.

"Roarke..."

"No. *Sir*. Call me Sir." He rubbed the tip of his cock, making it shiny with pre-cum.

"Sir."

"That's a girl. Tell me how sorry you are for leaving me while you touch yourself. Pinch your nipples and beg to suck me off." The gruffness of his order was magnified by the immense girth of his erection.

He looked huge, thick and flushed, his balls taut with lust.

She pinched her nipples and moaned at the heady sensation, as if he touched her through her fingers. "Roarke, please. Let me taste you. Let me suck you until you come down my throat."

He growled. "Take off the rest of your clothes first. Are you wet, Jamie? Do you want me?"

"Please." She hurried to take off her clothes, ready to do whatever it would take to ease the ache between her legs. Knowing he wanted her just as much only made the longing that much worse.

"No hair? Oh yeah, that's sexy as hell." He eyed her smooth mound, mesmerized by her nudity. "Spread your legs. That's it." He knelt on the bed and leaned closer to her. "Wider."

She spread her thighs, embarrassed at her state of arousal. She'd never been so wet before.

"I'm going to taste you, but you can't come."

She shivered. "No, I—"

In a heartbeat, he turned from sensual to demanding. "You'll fucking do what I tell you. I own you, honey. And we both know it."

She wanted to melt at his tone and managed a nod.

His large hand threaded in her hair, forcing her to keep her gaze locked to his. The tiny bit of pain made her feel lightheaded, dizzy from the wealth of pleasure stealing through her body. "You can't come yet, do you understand?"

"Yes Sir."

He eased up on her hair and soothed her scalp. "That's right. Do what I tell you. Don't question it."

"No Sir."

"Now spread your legs. Let me see that shiny cunt."

He'd never talked to her like that before. So raw, so fierce. Trembling with excitement, she gave him what he wanted.

"So pretty," he murmured and bent lower, so close she could feel his breath over her folds.

Then he spread her lips and sucked hard on her clit.

The sensation jolted her, and she would have buckled if he hadn't gripped her hips.

"No, don't move."

"Y-Yes Sir."

He licked her clit, pushing his tongue along the slick length of her pussy. He dipped inside her and made a low noise in the back of his throat. He kneaded her ass, pulling her cheeks apart and stroking the crease between. Then he pulled away and sat back. With his thighs spread, she could focus on nothing but his cock stabbing into the air.

"Make me come," he commanded. "Give me what you should have a few hours ago. I want your mouth over me again."

Disappointed she wouldn't feel him inside her, she crawled onto the bed and knelt between his legs. She glanced up at him and set her lips on the crown of his penis, her desire doubling as she watched him watching her. She slowly eased her lips around

him, sliding over his tip and down, as far as she could comfortably go. He was so big, and so close to exploding.

She tasted the liquid pooling at his tip, felt the hard veins of his cock, and knew he wouldn't last much longer. Heady that she could make him so excited so quickly, she ran her hands up his thighs, watching as his eyes grew lighter and lighter, his chest rising and falling with greater speed.

Then she closed her eyes and gave herself up to the bliss of the moment. Lightly stroking him with her tongue, she continued to suck him, increasing the pressure of her mouth until he was moaning her name like a prayer. Her hands stroked his thighs, creeping closer and closer to his firm sac.

Her fingers grazed the hard globes and a small jet of cream filled her mouth. He was so close, she thought, completely lost to the pleasure. She glanced up and saw the rapture racking him, saw his face tight, frozen with desire, and knew she'd never seen anything more erotic.

The thought stirred her, and she increased the tempo on his shaft. Cupping his scrotum, she sucked harder and scraped him gently with her teeth.

His hands tangled in her hair. With a surrendering moan, she bore down. Not used to his size, she gagged a few times when he urged her for more.

"Take me to the back of your throat," he rasped. "Breathe through your nose. That's it," he encouraged as she gradually took him deeper, pushing past reflex to take him all the way inside.

"Fuck, that's sweet. Seeing my cock between those lips. Yeah, here it comes. Swallow me, Jamie." He thrust one last time and emptied himself down her throat.

The orgasm shook him, washing through her as well, but Roarke wasn't content to finish in her mouth once and be done. Still semi-hard, he lifted her off him and pushed her onto her back.

Lying there in the sudden silence broken only by their heavy breathing, she squirmed, conscious of the weight of his stare. Her full breasts became heavy, her

nipples tight with arousal. He took one globe in his callused palm, bringing a tingling heat to her flesh that electrified her.

"Soft," he murmured, then rubbed her nipple until she wanted to climb all over him. "Just like your sweet mouth. You feel good, all these curves, that fire. But I wonder how you'll feel surrounding me with that pussy. And let's not forget that ass." He rubbed his erection against her belly. "I'm not even close to being through with you."

Oh boy. Had she messed with the wrong man.

"You kept me at a distance for an entire year. You had the audacity to try to smuggle an Otra offworld using a Talson freighter." He lowered his voice and his eyes glittered. With passion or anger, she couldn't tell. She didn't think he could either. "And then you hit me." He sounded incredulous. "You hit me and tied me up. But that's wasn't all you did, was it?"

She flushed and glanced away.

"Was it?" He turned her face back to look into her eyes.

Tired of being silent, she frowned. "Fine. I took some pleasure for myself. What are you going to do about it? Beat me?"

Strangely, she had no fear he might. Roarke had caught her red-handed. He could do anything and everything to her, and she had no recourse but to endure. She wasn't prepared for the sudden warmth of his smile. That bright flash of silver in his eyes that took over the darkness before fading back to black.

"You don't even know you're doing it, do you?"

He settled closer to her and shoved her thighs apart. The insistent part of him touched the entrance to her sex, and he pushed inside, so thick he stuffed her full. He didn't stop until he seated the entire length of himself inside her.

"Oh God." She arched when he pumped his hips, lost to the feel of him joined to her.

"That's it. Accept me."

A burst of energy passed through her, lighting up her senses, both physical and mental. Doorways in her mind suddenly opened, allowing Roarke entry into her private thoughts and feelings.

"Fuck, you're even sexier up close," he whispered and thrust in and out of her, his tempo growing faster as he fucked her with a hunger he couldn't hide. "So warm for me. So wet." He kissed her before she could blink, and she slid into the seductive taste of a man used to being obeyed.

"Open your eyes and keep them open."

She wasn't aware she'd closed them and blinked, staring up at Roarke as he pounded inside her with an animalistic intensity.

"That's right. Watch me fuck you. Watch me *own* you."

Helpless to resist, she saw, heard, and felt every thrust, every push and pull of his heavy cock as he penetrated her pussy, her mind, her heart. She felt him inside her in places he couldn't possibly have been. She should have denied him, should have fought to be free, but after this, she could never be with another man without thinking of Roarke.

"I'm the only man for you, Jamie. Just me." He ground into her, touching what felt like her womb. She needed to come, to let go of the coil of need and love and want binding her so tight she couldn't breathe.

He moaned, as caught up in their joining as Jamie. "Now come with me. All over me. Milk my cock, honey. Take what's yours. Accept it." He surged particularly hard, rubbing against her engorged clit as he moved.

The tension gripping her finally broke and he covered her mouth as she screamed. Pleasure invaded every cell in her body. He ended the kiss and gave her several more. And then he found his release. He stilled and shuddered, his hips moving as he ground into her impossibly deep.

He swore, shaking from the aftermath she could feel pulsing within her. "Yes, oh yes. Fuck me. So good," he moaned and continued to pump.



She couldn't be sure, but Jamie thought he might still be coming. The longest orgasm she'd ever heard of, but then, she knew little about the Otra except what the tabloids said.

Nearly a minute passed before Roarke relaxed, his body still joined to hers. He leaned down and pressed his forehead to hers.

Never had she felt so close to another, and she couldn't explain why sex with him felt more like loving than a physical act.

Roarke kissed her, soothing the frayed nerve endings still sparking her slowly recovering body. "Shh. That's it. Easy, honey. We're good, yeah?"

"Yes Sir," she responded, one minute awake, the next drifting in a haze of exhausted pleasure. She closed her eyes and felt his arm curl around her when he withdrew.

She smiled and fell asleep, convinced that nothing he could do to her would ever take away this feeling of contentment.

She was wrong.

## Chapter Five

They slept, finally. Between Roarke's blow to the head and the adrenaline rush that had hit him when she'd run, he'd needed it. He felt almost well rested when the porter's announcement of breakfast came through a speaker. They'd slept the night through.

He glanced down at his arm around Jamie, his body tucked around hers. The bed was much too small to accommodate someone of his size, but it made touching her that much more necessary.

He groaned and leaned up on one elbow, questions about his mysterious *servant* nagging now more than ever. She'd given herself so freely, despite his orders. He would have sensed it if she'd come to him out of duty. But Jamie felt anything but dutiful about him. Christ, he'd come inside her with no thought to birth control or disease. He knew he was immune to anything she might have had. But she had no idea about him. What did it say about her she hadn't demanded he use protection? He wished he knew how she felt about him; it was high time he found out.

He nudged her awake.

"Hmm?" she asked groggily, blinking cloudy eyes that reminded him of fine, aged whiskey. She licked her lips.

"Oh, love, you don't know what you invite," he murmured, aware he wanted her again. He'd come in her mouth, and finally in the heaven of her pussy. But he still craved her ass. To own and worship every part of her until she no longer thought of them as separate beings, but as one.

Forcing himself to take his time, he used the lavatory and returned to bed. Then he prodded her to move. "Wake up, Jamie. I need some answers, sweetheart."

She wakened and stumbled out of bed for the lav. He heard the water running, as well as the sound of a shower. But the woman hadn't uttered one word. He grinned. His Jamie wasn't a morning person.

She returned sparkling clean, her hair and body slightly damp. He opened the covers and waited for her to join him again.

With a sigh, she snuggled up to him in bed before turning to face him. In doing so she gave him a perfect view of her profile. The strong, slender nose, the high cheekbones, the elegantly arched brows set over wide eyes. A face he could look at forever and never get bored, and all framed by masses of wine-red hair that looked like a sea of silk.

Under his regard, she blushed and bit her lower lip, but did nothing to cover herself. Her nipples hardened and her belly quivered, and Roarke knew she sensed both the physical and psychic attraction that bound them together. He felt her nervousness and the arousal she tried to ignore, even as her gaze caressed his face and chest with loving attention.

She coughed and cleared her throat. "What do you want to know?"

*Everything.* "Let's start with you. I don't care about Gregory." Her eyes widened. "I want to know why you had to indenture yourself in the first place. How did someone as competent as you find yourself in debtor's hell? And don't lie to me. Not now." *Not after I've given you so much of myself. More than I ever thought I had to give.* The Otragenetics inside him, the part he'd never known existed, must have lain dormant all this time. But now he sensed a world around him he could feel with that other part of him he couldn't describe but knew. A sixth sense; a gift from a woman in love who had no idea what she'd done.

Jamie sighed. "I don't really want to share this, but I have a feeling if I don't, you'll know."

"You're right." He didn't smile or tease. This was too important to him.

"You might as well know I come from bad stock." She paused as if to gauge his reaction. When he gave her none, she continued. "My mother used to whore herself for money, and my father would gamble it away as fast as she earned it. What she failed to hide, he found and used on booze, drugs, the next game, you name it. How the two of them managed to produce three children between them is beyond me, considering how much they hate each other. But they did, and we – my sisters and I – can't stand them."

"Can't blame you." He thought of his own family – his three full-blooded brothers and himself, the half-human – all of whom had known love all their lives.

She shrugged, but he could tell the discussion embarrassed her. "My sisters are good people. One is a doctor, if you can believe that. She's really smart."

"So are you," he said wryly. "I've never seen anyone adapt to different jobs as quickly and efficiently as you do."

"Thanks." She smiled and the warmth in her gaze stirred him once more. He didn't know what it was about her, but he couldn't not think of sex around the woman. It didn't help he knew how she tasted, or how well she gloved him when he sank inside her. Hell, he wanted to fuck her all over again. He tried to focus. "So how did you arrive on the Block?"

"Well, with Tara in med school and my other sister Susanna in transport –"

"Space trade?"

"No, Earthbound. Water. She runs a small ocean freighter that moves commercially."

"So...?"

"So, someone had to put Tara through school and stake Susanna for her boat. Between the three of us, I find money where there's little to be found. I mean, my sisters worked hard, but I was the one who managed our funds and brought in the extra income we needed to not just survive, but plan for the future."

He could only imagine the expenses she'd had to pay. Medical school tuition had become astronomically high. And an ocean freighter could cost upward of a quarter million in currency. "How did you do it?"

"I found odd jobs, nothing illegal. It's a knack, really. I just know what will give me the best payout. Had a few investments that paid big. I was good at day trading after I'd earned enough to buy in." She snorted. "Nothing you assigned me for Talson Shipping was anything I hadn't done before." Her smile faded. "I was almost out of debt—Susanna's ship paid, Tara's schooling through, when my parents found us again."

"What did they do?" He didn't like the worry and stress coursing through her. Uncomfortable sensing emotions not his own, he was even more disturbed that she'd been hurt. He had the insane urge to find her parents and —

She put a hand on his chest. "It's okay, Roarke. That part of my life is over."

Strangely calmed, he blinked and clasped her hand over his heart. "Tell me the rest."

"My sisters and I had moved away from home years ago. I hadn't seen my mother or father since I turned sixteen. Then, on the day of Tara's graduation, they appeared. Smiling, hugging, ranting about what big girls we'd grown to be." She huffed. "Like I'd fall for that. But Tara and Susanna were younger when Mom and Dad left. They never knew them for the bad things they'd done."

"Why didn't you tell them?" But he knew. Jamie wouldn't want to hurt her sisters with the truth. Protective, loving, responsible. Was it any wonder he'd wanted her from the very beginning?

"How do you tell your sisters your parents are terrible people? It was hard enough I knew."

"But didn't they ask questions growing up?"

"I told them Mom and Dad had gotten sick and had to move away. They never asked much after that, and I never offered any information. I was all they needed. Then

my parents burst into their lives and insinuated themselves into our 'family'." She frowned. "It was only a matter of time before they leeches away Tara's success and spent all Susanna's money."

He could see where this was going. "So you decided to intervene. Why not send your parents away empty-handed?"

She smiled through her teeth. "I did. But they knew just what strings to pull to land me in debtor's hell while they took off with over fifty thousand in credits."

He stroked her soft skin, wanting to provide comfort. "It wasn't about the money though, was it?" he asked in a gentle voice, understanding so much more. "You loved them, and they didn't deserve it."

"I seem to have that problem." The look she gave him threw him for a loop. Was she saying what he thought she was? Could she love *him*, after all he'd done to her? Hell, he'd worked her ass off for a solid year, treating her like a lowdown slave. At first because he'd thought her a lazy, shiftless scavenger, like most of the rotters in debtor's hell. Later, he'd done it to break the contract, to finally get between those luscious thighs.

No way she could feel anything for him but reluctance, or worse, scorn. How the hell could he convince her to take a chance on him after he'd treated her no better than a slave? He looked into her eyes, seeing the courageous woman beneath the beauty in bed, and the answer came to him. Simple. He wouldn't let her leave. He'd keep her any way, anyhow, until he could convince her he loved her.

"Roarke?" She scooted back. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

"How am I looking at you?"

"Like you want to beat me."

He laughed out loud, more than amused at the image she'd painted. He did want to beat her, but not the way she imagined. Some spanking, pounding into her with his dick...

"What's so funny about that?" she grumbled.

"Have I ever laid a hand on you? Honestly. Were you ever scared I might hurt you, even from that first day?"

She opened her mouth to respond and closed it. "Um, no. Not really."

"Why?"

"Well, I'm not sure." She looked at him, searching for what her heart already knew. He was a man she could always trust. A part of her must have sensed it when they'd met. That same part that drew his alien nature out from its shell. Jamie didn't realize it, but she had some sort of psychic ability. He wondered about it for half a second, until she shifted and plumped her breasts. He licked his lips, his attention diverted.

"I know why you weren't afraid. It's because you recognized me."

She scoffed. "I'd never seen you before in my life. Trust me, I'd remember you."

"Oh?" He pushed her hair back behind her ear, moving it so he could better see her rose-colored nipples.

"Come on, Roarke. You know the effect you have on people."

He smiled. "So you wanted me then too, eh?"

"Please. You're a bully. A domineering assho—"

"Careful, Jamie. Or I'll think you don't like me." He leaned forward and took her nipple between his lips. He sucked, licking and teasing. He pinched the other one, wanting her hard and aroused, needing him.

"And a tease," she added, breathless. "Admit it. You like playing with me."

"I do. Oh I do." He gave attention to her other breast until she was gripping his head to her. He'd never had a woman respond to him like Jamie did. Just further evidence she belonged to him.

"Roarke, *please*."

"You're mine now, aren't you?" Her tits fascinated him. So soft and full. He could spend a lifetime sucking her breasts, enthralled with her sensitivity there. He wondered if she might orgasm from the stimulation alone.

"Yours... How...?" she asked on a moan when he thrust his leg between her knees, pressing up into her pussy.

She was wet against him. The feel of her arousal made him ache.

"I need to fuck you again. To spill inside that wet cunt. My cunt." He nipped her breast, leaving love bites along her milky flesh. "You're all mine. Even that tight little ass, hmm?"

She moaned and ground against him.

"Lay back and push your breasts together." He shoved himself inside her and thrust a few times, getting himself nice and slick. "I need to fuck your tits. I want to come all over you." Just the thought had him ready to spew. Something about Jamie pushed him to possess her. He wanted to mark her, his scent in her and on her.

She looked at him through shuttered eyes. "Do it. Come on me. Show me what you need."

*I need you.* "That's it." He ground against her clit, relishing her moans for more. Then he pulled out and straddled her. He positioned his cock between her tits and slid between them. Watching himself push between those fleshy mounds was too much. "Fuck, that's good. I love your breasts. So soft, so full." He groaned as he moved faster, his balls dragging over her warm skin. He needed to come, to let go all over her.

"Do it. Come," she whispered, her voice husky, her eyes glazed with lust. "I want to feel you all over me."

He pulled back and took himself in hand. "Fuck. Here it comes. All over those pretty tits." He gripped his cock hard, feeling the blaze of orgasm pushing past his flesh. His balls hardened and he swore as he came in streams over her nipples and chest. The relief was overpowering, and just as good as seeing himself mark her like a primitive beast.



She rubbed it in, her eyes glued to his as he continued to pull the last bits of cum from his cock.

"You're warm," she purred and cupped his balls.

"And you're still frustrated." He smiled, feeling hungry again. "Time for seconds."

"What—"

He slid down her body and clamped his mouth around her clit, holding her thighs wide as he ate her out.

Such a sultry lover, she met him jolt for jolt, so wet and willing for anything he wanted.

Dragging his fingers closer, he speared her pussy and fucked her with first one finger then two. Her entire body quivered, and he knew she neared her release. He slid his pinkie into her ass and pushed, satisfied at the tight fit.

She cried out and came hard.

He stroked her down, easing the pressure of his tongue and fingers. He gradually withdrew his hand and kissed his way back up her body.

"You taste good, honey." He kissed her lips and slid his tongue inside her mouth, comforted that though he wanted to, he finally didn't have it in him to fuck her again without a good break and some food. "Now it's time to clean up and get something to eat. We can't have sex the entire way to Glasser Bay, can we?"

"Glasser Bay?"

"I have a house there. Don't worry, it's all set up for us. Just you and me, and nothing but time to talk about the future."

\* \* \* \* \*

Jamie sat across from the Roarke she thought she knew. The moment they'd left her small stateroom, he'd changed. The intimate lover had once again become a distant stranger. Her boss, now her captor, she supposed. But none of that detracted from thoughts about what he'd done with his body...and tongue.

"I'd just love to know what you're thinking," he murmured as they ate their morning meal.

"I thought you preferred a mindless slave. One who doesn't argue with you all the time."

He gave her an odd look. "You'd think I would, wouldn't you? But in all the time you've been with me, you've never once been easy or convenient. A pain in the ass from day one."

"Me?" She stared at him. "You're the arrogant, overbearing boss with a god complex."

His eyes glinted with mischief. "Now, Jamie. Just because you called me a god in bed doesn't make me one. Though 'Oh God, Oh God' has a nice ring to it." The jerk's voice rose, attracting attention she didn't want.

"Shut up." To her annoyance, several female passengers eyed her boss—her *lover*—like bitches in heat. She glared at them, even more aggravated when Roarke caught her doing it.

To her relief, he didn't remark on it. Instead, he devoured another forkful of steak and eggs and sighed. "I really worked up an appetite. You too. Eat."

She wanted to abstain just to irritate him, but he was right. She felt as if she could eat a whole cow by herself.

"You're going to need your strength later." He winked.

"Why? You going to have me flogged and brought back to the Block?" The flip rejoinder slipped out before she could stop it.

His smile faded. "I'd never do that to you. Regardless of what you think of me, I value our time together."

She didn't know how to respond to that, so she changed the subject. "Is Gregory all right then?"

He nodded. "My brother picked him up on Werfal 7 and escorted him to his friend standing by. Don't worry about Gregory. He'll be just fine now that he's away from Earth." He paused. "So was it worth it, helping him out of an arranged marriage?"

The tense expression on his face surprised her. "What? You're telling me you wouldn't do anything you could to save your family?"

"Gregory's a part of your family?"

"No. But my idiot sister Susanna is. If I hadn't helped Gregory, she would have tried. And trust me, she would have been busted long before I was."

He looked relieved. "Well, don't beat yourself up too badly. I knew something was up with that crate, but only because I'm not your typical manager."

"Yeah, I get that." She was dying to know more about him.

"Go ahead and ask."

She looked around them, conscious that though many didn't care about alien status, there were too many prejudices alive and well when it came to the Oтра. She leaned closer to him. "So you're *special*, then."

"Special?"

"Oтра," she mouthed.

"Ah, right. Special. Only half." His lips quirked and he glanced down at his crotch. "The best half, hmm?"

"Roarke, really."

He chuckled. "Yeah, I'm special. My father is, and my three older brothers are as well. If it were up to me, I'd have been up-front with the truth from the beginning, but my father didn't want to worry about me down here by myself. He put out the word a long time ago that I'm no one but a burden, a leftover from his human wife's past."

She frowned. "That's terrible. I'd heard your mother married Rhenec Talson after her first husband died, but there's been a lot of speculation you might be Rhenec's son. Now I know."

"Now you know."

"But why the lies?"

"To protect me. I grew up shunned on Earth because I might be Otra, but trust me, the Otra aren't all goodness and light either. They don't like my human half. To them I'm a dilution of their superior race." He took a long sip of water. "My family loves me, and I love them. We're all loyal. If my father wants to keep my parentage a secret to save myself and Talson Shipping a lot of hassle, I'm fine with that. The people who need to know the truth already do."

The knowing smile he gave her confused her. "What?"

"You know one of my deepest secrets. Now I really need to keep a close eye on you." He glanced down at her half-eaten plate of food and frowned. "Finish your breakfast."

"Yes, Dad."

"I'm not your father, but if you want to call me *daddy*, I'm game." He grinned, and a bolt of heat blazed between her legs. "Hell. I have a hard time thinking when you look like that."

"Like what?"

"Like you need to be fucked hard." He groaned and closed his eyes. "I spent a good portion of this past year taking cold showers—which don't work—and beating off."

She blinked. "Really?"

"Yes, really. Why do you think I was sitting in most of our meetings? I didn't want you to see the effect you have on me."

The smile on his face made her suspicious. He hadn't called the law on her. He'd given her multiple orgasms and he was being nice after all she'd done.

"What's going on?"

"About what?"

"Why are you being so nice? Is this so I won't try to think about what's coming to me?" She groaned at the thought of all she'd sacrificed. Sure, sex with Roarke was amazing, but it had to end sometime. He'd get tired of her, and her lovesick ass would end up back on the Block or worse, trapped in a slaver camp, stuck servicing men.

"You have no idea what's coming to you." His voice turned very quiet, and very cold. "Now finish up your meal. We have things to do today before we pull into port."

## Chapter Six

"Things to do today" equated to two more sessions of intense fucking. Roarke took her once from behind and the next time spent in her mouth before letting her dress again. He shouldn't have had so much stamina. For that matter, neither should she.

Jamie didn't know why, but each time they had sex, even as brutal and wild as he could be, she felt them making love instead. Masculine satisfaction, pride and affection threaded through her thoughts and feelings, yet she knew the alien emotions for what they were. Those belonging to *him*.

She glanced at him as they sat in the back of a piloted hovercraft speeding toward his home in Glasser Bay. Off Whidbey Island, Glasser Bay was the predominant play area for the rich and famous wanting privacy on the coast. That Roarke had a home out here illustrated once again how far apart they were on every spectrum.

"What's wrong?" He held her hand and rubbed her palm with his thumb, making her stomach do somersaults the entire drive to his house.

"I don't like not knowing what's going to happen to me. You were angry when I questioned you before, but Roarke, it's my life we're talking about."

"And what would you do if you had your freedom? If your three years of service ended tomorrow, where would you go? What would you do?"

She hadn't thought that far ahead. "Do? I'd visit my sisters."

"And then?"

"And then..." What would she do? She'd worked so hard for so long to be free, she'd never thought about what she might do once she had her freedom.

"Then what, Jamie?" His low voice caught her and she looked up into eyes full of compassion. Understanding. Love?

A wash of desire and affection flowed through her, taking her breath away.

"I—I—" She took a deep breath, not sure what she felt. Dammit, was that Roarke again, or had she been imagining all of it? Did loving him make her weak or strong? How could a man like him, a man with so much, ever feel the same about her?

"Hold that thought. We're here." He eased down the window.

She looked out at a glass palace overlooking the water. A modern structure made of what looked like mirrors crossed with amalgam steel and wooden beams, a house crafted in the new Oтра-style, that had recently become popular in the States.

"Oh, wow."

"It's actually the family beach house. Not really mine. My mother designed it." He helped her out of the vehicle and walked her to the front door. She heard the crashing waves against the cliff behind the house. Talk about a view to die for.

He took her through the front hallway into the living areas, past teak furnishings and platinum viewers, past greenery and feminine touches that showed a woman had indeed had a hand in decorating. The colorful pillows, throws and artwork softened the practical angles and modern furniture.

"And the view. What my father paid handsomely for twenty years ago." Roarke nodded to the floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the ocean. "You can see out, but no one can see in unless I press that." He pointed to a switch on the wall. "We have a few nosey neighbors who like to comb the beach. If the sun hits the house just right, you can see right inside unless the refractor setting is on."

"Great views, unless you're not into having an audience."

"No. We value privacy."

She hadn't heard him talk about his family much, and this new side to him—*us*, *we*—sounded surprisingly nice. "Do you see them much?"

He nodded. "I try to make trips offworld every few weeks. Or my brothers visit down here. I haven't seen Mom or Dad in a few months though." He narrowed his

gaze, which slipped from her eyes to her mouth. "I had a special trainee taking a lot of my attention. My brothers are dying to meet the woman who has me in knots."

"In knots?" *I have him in knots?*

He cupped her head, threading his fingers through her hair. "Mmm-hmm. Hard, hot and frustrated all the time. I've been dying to find a way to get you to break the contract so I could work you out of my system."

That hurt, but he was honest. "And have you?"

The smile he gave her worried her. A lot of mean was in that grin. "Not even close. It's going to be years, decades, before I'm tired of you."

She sucked in a breath, trying to imagine the next twenty years stuck with Roarke Talson. To her immense displeasure, she couldn't summon a single protest.

"But maybe it's just that I haven't been truly satisfied yet. Maybe I need to see if everything I've fantasized about is as good as my imagination." He kissed her, his lips lingering over hers with a sweetness he hadn't yet shown her. Then he slipped his tongue in her mouth, tasting and teasing. Making her yearn for so much more.

Male contentment and desire twisted and turned until she felt him pulling at her own lusts. He cupped her ass and dragged her against his ceaseless erection. "That's good. See, look. There's one of my neighbors now. Tom Ranson, a shipping competitor." He kissed his way down her neck. "He's a friend of mine. And we've dated a few of the same women. He'd like you a lot. My sexy, fuckable little slave."

He turned her in his arms, pressing her against the glass with his front against her back. "Don't move." He stepped away and she concentrated on trying to lower her body temperature.

She felt on fire, her nipples through her shirt so hard against the cold window, while her loins throbbed, on fire and needing the cool touch of Roarke's mouth to ease her. God, he'd turned her into a raging nympho. That he had a family he loved, brothers he respected, and a work ethic she adored didn't help matters. He hadn't



called the police or reported her to the authorities yet either. If he thought making her his sex slave would be a just punishment, she'd happily let him believe the worst.

Because if he knew how much she wanted him, the arrogant bastard might withhold sex just to torture her – and make her want him even more.

"What did you do?" she asked when he came back to her.

He slipped his hands around her shirt and unbuttoned it. But he didn't take it off her. He unfastened her bra at the front clasp and pushed the garment to either side of her chest, baring her breasts.

"Press against the glass," he ordered in a whisper. He nipped her earlobe. "I turned off the protective feature before I took off my clothes. Now Tom can see you with me."

He placed her hands on the glass above her head. "I want him to see you, to know how my beautiful slave reacts when I fuck her, and how she looks when I'm inside her."

She'd never thought voyeurism might turn her on, but it seemed anything Roarke Talson did excited her. She couldn't drum up a suitable sense of embarrassment, even when Tom stopped dead in his tracks on the beach and gaped up at them. She didn't know how much he could see from that distance, but apparently he could see enough. And then he had the nerve to give Roarke a thumbs-up while he watched.

"Roarke. He's looking right at me."

He shoved his hand into her pants and cupped her pussy. "I thought you might like it. You have so much fire buried inside you. Just like me. Hard on the surface, hot inside." He rocked against her and she wished she could see him, naked and aroused.

Roarke had a body men envied. And best of all, he knew how to use it. He bent down to remove her shoes, socks, pants and panties. Leaving her in nothing but her dangling bra and parted shirt, he stepped behind her once more.

"Now bend forward, that's it. Press those pretty nipples against the glass. Yeah, that's good. Tom's watching, isn't he?"

He was, and he made no qualms about it. Roarke shifted behind her and her nipples brushed the cold glass.

“Oh. That’s... *Roarke*.”

He spread her ass cheeks and pushed the tip of his cock against her tight hole. “I want to fuck you here. Right now. With Tom watching.”

She didn’t know what to say, and then she didn’t have to. Roarke stepped back, leaving her for a moment. Then his finger was there, at her anus. He felt cold and slick as he rimmed a lubricated digit around her opening.

“Oh, that’s...weird.”

He chuckled. “Weird now. But wait until I’m stretching you, Jamie.” His voice thickened. “Wait until my dick is stretching you. Your ass, your mouth, your cunt. I’ll fill you with cum, on you and in you. You’ll finally belong to me.”

A tremble of masculine lust shook her and she realized she felt Roarke’s desire. She’d never survive his feelings *and* hers. “Roarke, there’s something happening.”

“I know. Just let it go. Feel it.” He inched his finger inside her ass while he reached around to tug her clit. “Fuck, I want you. I need you, Jamie. You don’t know how much.”

Yet a part of her did. She sensed the full intensity of his desire and it shocked her to know he meant more than the physical, but that emotionally he needed her as well.

His finger inched deeper into her, making her burn while amping her arousal. Up to his knuckle, then deeper. Before he finished, he added another finger, the pain of her body stretching mixed with pleasure as he plucked and massaged her clit.

“I feel full but empty. I need you inside me.” She stared out at their admirer, watching as he watched them. She felt so naughty, doubly so because she’d never had anal sex before, and their voyeur who didn’t show any signs of turning away.

"You're going to be full pretty soon, honey. Just you wait." Roarke toyed with her, but she knew it was too soon for him to put that fat cock inside her. "It might sting, but you'll feel good, I promise. Just cling to me, with your mind."

Before she could ask what exactly that meant, he removed his fingers and replaced them with something thicker.

"Damn. I'm going to try real hard not to come until I'm buried inside you, but Jamie, I don't know if I can make it." He sounded tortured, and she loved knowing he had little control when it came to her.

Roarke pushed slowly, allowing her to adjust as he stretched her virgin flesh. Like his fingers, he'd lubed his cock, and he grunted and groaned while he slid inside her, whispering words of praise and desire. Just when she thought he'd reached his breaking point and would come, he'd stop and start again.

She reacted better than she'd thought she would to the pressure inside her. She didn't know how she was doing it, but she'd suppressed the pain under a rush of arousal. Heat surrounded her and blazed through her clit, yet she knew the heat she felt was her own around Roarke's cock.

"We're tied. You and me, honey. Together. Finally," he rasped and sank the last inch inside her ass. "Oh fuck. Tom's jerking off. Never seen him do that before."

She'd almost forgotten their admirer as Roarke claimed her ass, but as she stared down at the handsome blond masturbating, she felt Roarke move inside her.

She bit her lip. "*Oh yes.* That feels good." When he pinched her clit, she jerked, and he rammed back inside her. "Please. Give it to me. Fuck me. Take me, yes."

Losing herself to sensation, she shoved back against him and he groaned. He let go of her clit and gripped her waist as he slammed in and out of her. Her pussy tried to grip something, but she was empty. Her ass clenched around him, clinging to the tool bringing her such painful pleasure.

"Take it, Jamie. Take me. All of me." He surged one final time and stilled, coming with great gasps as he jetted into her ass.

She jerked and climaxed, prolonging his orgasm.

When she could again think, she noticed Tom conspicuously absent on the beach.

"I think he's gone." She sounded hoarse.

And so did Roarke when he finally withdrew. The burn she hadn't anticipated, but then he swung her into her arms. "I love you."

Jamie wasn't sure she'd heard him right. "What?"

He carried her away from the window after turning the switch back on. "I was going to wait, to let you stew for a few months. I'd let you work off your disregard for the rules, and for bashing me in the head. Then I'd confess how I felt. You'd be too happy and in love with me by then to reject me." He walked them into a luxurious bathroom with a spa tub built for four.

It filled in a few minutes, warm and scented with whatever he threw in the water. While they waited, he watched her.

She said nothing, hoping to believe but afraid none of this was real.

"Dammit, I'm putting myself on the line here. Aren't you going to say anything?" He glared at her.

Ah, the Talson she knew and...*loved*. "What should I say?"

He swore. "Shit. I knew it was a mistake to show my hand early. But hell, when the woman you've been drooling over for a fucking year lets you make love to her seven ways to Sunday, then lets you ass-fuck her with an audience, a guy can get a little crazy."

She walked to him, aware of the soreness in her ass. "Oh?"

He hugged her to him, fitting her curves to the hard planes of his body, and stroked her back. "You're as mean as I am. You work harder than I do. And you know what it is to be loyal." He tipped her head back. "I've never felt so much for anyone before." Roarke swallowed hard. "Jamie. I know this is sudden. Hell, I'm not even human."

"Half-human," she corrected, no longer surprised at the growing love she felt pouring from him.

"But I love you. You might not believe it, but I have nothing but time to prove it."

"Fine way of showing it. Working me nearly to death." She tried to frown, but could only manage a grin.

His answering smile made her feel ten feet tall.

"I've wanted to be inside you from the moment I saw you. At first it was lust. I thought if I had you, I'd stop thinking about you all the time. But your contract stipulated no sexual interaction. Our company always adheres to the law, that's why we have such a good reputation."

"That was part of what drew me to taking your offer."

"Then it's a good thing you didn't know why I took yours. I wanted to fuck you from day one." He eyed her hunger, and love. "I still do. The only way around the no-sex clause, as I could see it, was to make you break the contract."

"By getting me to quit." She nodded, amused and reluctantly impressed by his trickery. "You couldn't proposition me or harass me without breaking the contract yourself. But if I quit or tried to escape..."

"Exactly. You'll never know how fucking happy I was when you knocked me over the head with that cheap hunk of wood." He frowned. "And speaking of which, I don't think you've paid for that crime yet, let alone atoned for trying to smuggle an Otra home."

"So I'm still your servant until I pay my indentured fee?" she teased, unable to disregard the truth. Roarke Talson loved her.

"For the record," he said and kissed her, "your debt was paid a long time ago. The contract was just a means of keeping you near." He tensed against her. "Jamie, seriously, I love you. If you really don't want to be here with me, I won't make you. But I don't want you to go."

She searched his expression. "You'll just let me walk out of here without looking back? You won't try to stop me?"

"I... I..." He clenched his jaw and swore. "Hell no. I want to let you go, but I can't. Baby, you're mine and I'm keeping you. Jamie, we're one. Can't you feel it?" He held her hands over his heart. "You need space, fine. But don't leave. Jamie, please don't."

To her shock, her tough shipping magnate looked on the verge of tears.

"Oh, Roarke. Don't be such a baby. I love you too."

He hugged her so tight she yelped. "Sorry. You won't regret it. I swear." He tugged her forward and eased them into the hot bath water.

She let it soothe away her aches. "You know, I never hated you. You annoyed me, aggravated me, and made life hard. But you always looked out for me."

"Being tough let me keep my distance. How else was I going to hide how much I wanted you? And it wasn't—isn't—just lust. We fit, Jamie. We're the same in so many ways."

Which made her wonder. "You weren't really on the verge of crying before, were you?"

He blinked innocently. "What do you think?"

"I think you're more devious than I am."

"I prefer the term ruthless. But that crying-on-command thing, my brother Romy taught me that. It got him out of more scrapes with my mother than you'd think possible."

She sighed and smoothed her hands over his chest. "Will I get to meet them?"

"As soon as I can get us all together." He took a deep breath. "Jamie, I love you...and I want to marry you."

She pulled back to look at him. As much as she wanted to shout "Yes, yes, yes," she couldn't make it too easy on the man. He'd worked her like a dog for a solid year. "Gee,

Roarke. I don't know. My boss is kind of an asshole. I don't think he'll go for his indentured servant being married."

He groaned. "It's not all my fault. At first I thought you were some skank on the Block."

"Hey."

"I don't like people who don't pay their debts. Who don't even try. But then I came to know the real you."

"So you worked me to death every damn day."

He fought a grin; she could see it. "Jamie." He kissed her on the lips. "Fine. You're fired."

"I'm sorry, what?" She cupped her ear.

He muttered something under his breath. "I said I can't have my future wife working for me. I'll be the laughing stock of my entire family."

She felt lightheaded. "You really want me to be your wife?"

"There's nothing I want more."

"Even knowing I have criminals for parents? That I have debts?"

"Debts you more than paid off in the first few months you worked for me. Even my father admitted I was being a little too hard on the new assistant manager."

When she said nothing, he squirmed under her. "Come on, woman. Yes or no?"

Relieved to hear his familiar impatience, everything finally clicked. This was the man she'd fallen in love with. The rough, autocratic giant with a tender heart and loving soul. "Yes, I'll marry you," she said in a rush. When his eyes flashed with silver before turning black again, she asked, "Besides the silver eyes and this psychic link between us, do you Otra have any other quirks I need to know about?"

He cradled her on his lap, over an erection growing steadily bigger. "Well, my brothers' mating habits are slightly different than mine."

"Mating habits?"

"I'm half Otra, so I'm fine with a traditional marriage, the ring, kids, everything." He palmed her belly and she flushed with pleasure. "My brothers, on the other hand, are full Otra."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning it takes two to proliferate the species. Two male, one female."

She blinked. "*Really?*"

"Really." His eyes narrowed. "Don't even think about it."

"Two men, one woman? Now why would I want that?" She crossed her eyes and he laughed. "I can do kink, anal, some voyeurism, but one of you is enough to drive me crazy. I don't need another man in my life, not if I've got you."

"Good, because you do. Just remember, I was your boss first, your husband and partner second. I technically still outrank you."

"Fine. But don't think because you finally fired me you're off the hook. For all that you've put me through, you have a year's worth of groveling to do."

He lifted her hips and brought her over his cock. She slid down him, impaling herself on his thick flesh.

"Give me a few kids and we'll call it even." He kissed her nipple, sucking until she nearly lost her mind.

"Oh, I have a feeling you're going to be very good at making up." He worked her clit and turned to her other breast. Male satisfaction entwined with the love filling her deep inside. "*Very good.*"



## About the Author

Marie Harte is a professed bibliophile with an addiction to romance. She's fond of things that go bump in the night, especially if they happen to be tall, dark and handsome. Life has given her some interesting insights into the male mind. After majoring in English, she spent several years in the Marine Corps, followed by stints in information technology, logistics and the transportation fields. And yes, herding cats is easier then trying to manage truck drivers.

Now a wife, writer and crazy woman with children, she spends most of her time bugging her kids to do their homework while typing with a mad zeal to make deadlines. She's a multi-published and bestselling author of erotic romance who's obsessed with email, so feel free to drop her a line.

Marie welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her [author bio page](#) at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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