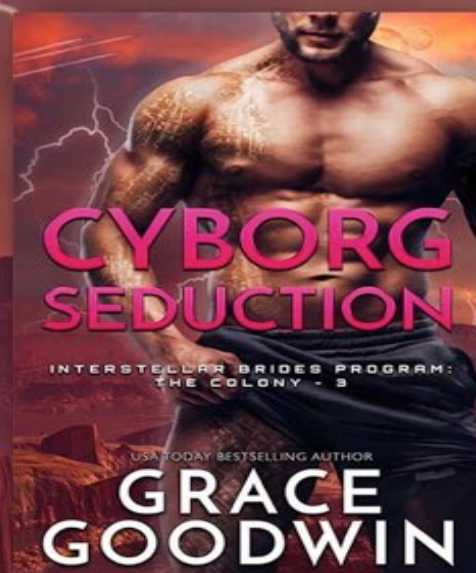
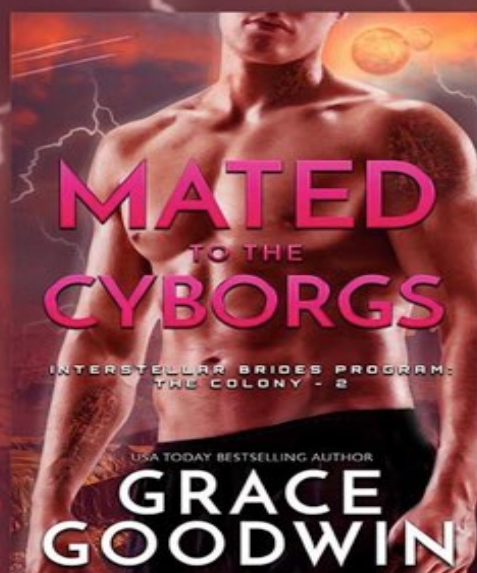
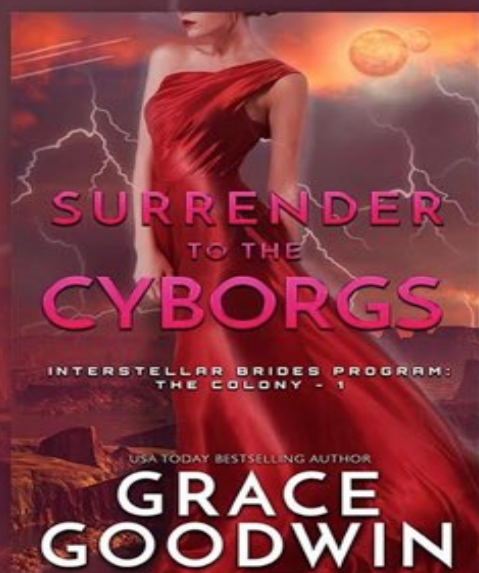


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# CONTENTS

[Get A Free Book!](#)

[Find YOUR Interstellar Match!](#)

[Surrender to the Cyborgs](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Mated to the Cyborgs](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Cyborg Seduction](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Epilogue](#)

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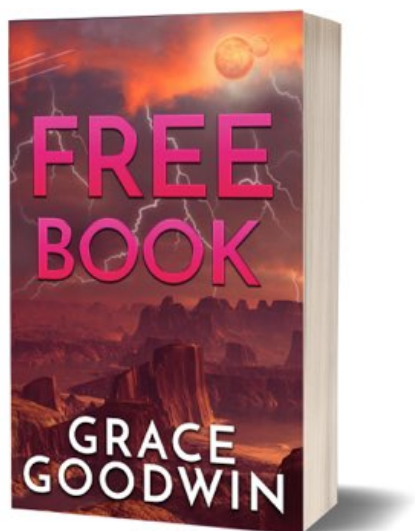
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# SURRENDER TO THE CYBORGS

INTERSTELLAR BRIDES PROGRAM:  
THE COLONY - 1

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GRACE  
GOODWIN



*R*achel Pierce, *Interstellar Brides Program*  
*Processing Center*

“YOU CAN’T ESCAPE US.” A rough male voice whispered in my ear. The room was dark, nearly black, and I could not see his face, but his tone excited me. I should have been afraid, terrified, and yet my body arched off the bed at his words, eager. Wet. Throbbing with need.

I tugged at the bonds about my wrists, the unbreakable cuffs secured over my head. The fit was snug, but not painful. They ensured that I was well and truly captured, yet unharmed. There was no give in the restraints, but the soft yield of the bed under my back was soothing. So were the calloused hands that ran over my heated skin, that cupped my upturned breasts, the insides of my spread thighs, my bare mound.

“Our little prisoner.”



I stilled at the voice. The *second* voice. There wasn't just one man in bed with me, but two. Two sets of hands.

"Ah!" I cried, when little erotic bites elicited a fiery burst of pain at the tips of my nipples. Two mouths.

I couldn't see their faces, but I could feel their hands, hear their ragged breathing, feel their heat, smell their dark, spicy scents.

"I want to touch you," I replied, licking my dry lips. I tugged once again on the binds, but they were unforgiving. I didn't need to see them to know they were big, so much bigger than me. Their hands were large, spanning the breadth of my belly, dwarfing my breasts, which were far from small, gripping my knees and holding them apart so that my naked body was open to their every urge, every desire.

I *should* feel panicked, for while I didn't seem to know these men, I *knew* them, felt safe with them. Safe enough to be tied up and at their sweet mercy.

I'd never been into bondage play or any kind of BDSM before. Not even a little kink tossed into a wild night. My sexual experiences ranged between high school fumbling and wham-bam-thank-you-ma'am kinds of encounters.

This, this was something else entirely...and I liked it.

I liked the heavy weight of the cuffs about my wrists. I liked the way there was no give in the rope. I liked the way the men were touching me, arousing me to a fervor I'd never known before. And they were only touching.

When a hand dipped between my thighs, I arched my back, pushing my hips into the touch. "She's dripping. You like to give over control."

I didn't know that to be the case before, but with these two, now, I did. Hell, yeah.

I moaned at the feel of his fingers stroking over my folds, circling my clit, pulling back its protective hood for... oh fuck. His hot breath.

When his mouth closed over my clit, I cried out, tugged involuntarily. Hands on my thighs held me open, exposed, available.

I couldn't do a thing but take whatever they wanted to do to me. To give to me.

"You'll come first, then we'll fuck you."

I had no problem with that whatsoever. "Yes," I replied on a breathy moan to the man who was licking my pussy.

The other was working my nipples with his mouth, alternating between them. I felt the rasp of a trimmed beard, the soft hairs tickling my tender skin and awakening every one of my nerve endings. "You can feel it, can't you? Our need, your need, building and building. The collars join us, link and share our pleasure."

I felt the weight of something about my neck, felt the eager intensity of the men's desires, their domination, my submission, swirling around us like a vibrant, red aura. I was hotter, wetter, more eager than ever in my life.

I was going to come. There was no way I could stop it, for while I was bound by rope and cuffs, I was ensnared by their attentions. My pussy ached, swelled, pulsed. My clit throbbed. My nipples stung.

"Yes, I'm going to... I need, right there...just a little—no!"

The men knew I was going to come and not just from my mindless rambling or the way my body shook. It was the damn collars. They knew one more flick of a tongue against my engorged clit, one more decadent bite on my nipple and I would have succumbed to the most powerful orgasm.

Instead, I was sweaty and needy, tears slipping from my eyes, desperate for them. My body was almost electrified with need. Just a touch in the right place and I'd go off.

The man by my head moved to lie down beside me, his hot length pressing against my side. Hands gripped my waist and flipped me over on top of him, my arms still up over my head, over his as well. If I leaned down a few inches, surely I would kiss him. Shifting my legs into a comfortable position, I straddled him. My breasts chafed against the soft hairs on his chest. My slick skin slid easily over him. My pussy coated his cock, which I rested upon, the girth of it parting my folds. Our breaths mingled and yet I still couldn't see him.

"Please," I begged, wiggling my hips to get his cock at my entrance, so I could get him deep inside me. I *needed* him deep inside me. I had never thought it before, and if that made me a total slut, I didn't care, but I needed cock.

A hand came down on my upturned bottom, the sting of it a surprise. While it hurt, it morphed into even more pleasure and I gasped, then groaned.

"We say how," the man behind me said.

"We say when," the one beneath me finished.

A palm cupped my stinging bottom, pulled my cheeks apart. A hard finger, slick and coated with something cool

slid over me there, finding my back entrance, circling, then pushing in.

The sharp bite of the stretch had me panting, stilling. The finger worked the lube into me, more, then more still.

"Are you ready for our cocks, mate? To be ours forever?" The man behind me spoke as he gently yet thoroughly prepared my ass for...oh god. *Our cocks. Forever.*

Yes. I was ready. More than ready. Time didn't exist, only the feel of his finger as he worked me, stretched me open, the feel of the hard, muscled body beneath me. Hands stroked my back, my sides, my hair.

"She's ready."

I'd been ready for a while but didn't mention it, afraid I'd get spanked again. They were in control, so I bit my lip.

I felt them move, heard the rustling of their actions as I was lifted up so that the cock beneath me nudged my pussy. *Yes!* I wiggled, trying to lower, but he would have none of it. I realized when I felt the other's cock at my prepared back passage that they were going to take me together.

*Really* together. Not one after the other. Not one in my pussy, the other cock in my mouth. Together, as in double penetration.

As I panicked, a sense of eagerness, of extreme arousal washed over me. I felt the men's desires mingle with my own through the collar and it tempered my panic and soothed it with mindless need.

"Please," I begged, feeling their cocks pressing. The one at my pussy slid in easily, the wet sound of my arousal as loud as our breaths. In a smooth stroke, he sank deep,

filling me. He groaned. I groaned. God, he was big. Thick. Hard. So fucking deep.

“I’m going to come.”

I was. They’d primed me so well that I was shaking with it.

“Not yet. As soon as you are ours, when you take both our cocks we will be truly joined. Only then will you be collared, mated, claimed.” The man behind me spoke in my ear as he pressed inward, the broad head of his cock slowly opening me. My body held barely any resistance to his efforts. Perhaps it was the lube or his intent, but I truly believed it was the collars that connected us, that made me relax, to breathe out, to give over. They’d wanted me to submit and this act was the ultimate submission.

I could do nothing but take whatever they wanted. When they wanted. How.

It was that knowledge more than the second cock sinking into me that had me coming on a blissful scream. I was so full, so open. Exposed. Vulnerable and yet powerful all at once.

It was too much, the pleasure. I was truly imprisoned, caught not only by the bonds over my head, but the cocks that joined us. We were one.

When I felt their hot seed spurt from them, I screamed again, then again.

“Miss Pierce!” The voice repeated itself and a hand shook my shoulder. “Stop screaming, please.”

I was thrashing, felt the way my hands were bound, knew it was real.

“Rachel!”



No, it wasn't real. The voice shouting at me was a woman, not the deep rumble of either man.

I blinked, once, then again. Bright light filtered through the seams of my closed eyelids, turning my vision a deep, dark red until, unable to deny the annoying woman's voice, or the too small hand on my shoulder. I opened my eyes.

Fuck. There were no men. No hands, mouths, cocks. There had *definitely* been an orgasm though. I was sweaty and I could feel the heat of it, the pleasure still coursing through my body. My pussy rippled and pulsed around... nothing. My bottom clenched. Empty. The wet result of my arousal made my bottom slip and slide on a strange exam chair. It was like I'd been tied down, naked, at the dentist's office.

My hands were bound, but not by the men's cuffs and I wasn't in a soft bed. No. I was restrained to the testing chair in the Interstellar Brides Processing Center. The men were nothing more than a dream, a figment of my sex-starved imagination. I hadn't been with a man in a long damn time. Over a year.

Apparently, my body had gone from zero to orgasm in about five seconds flat. But it had been so good, so hot and hard and...

"Miss Pierce. I need you to look at me." There was that annoying female voice practically barking orders at me. I didn't care for her tone. Not one bit.

I focused on the face swimming before me and waited for my vision to clear. When it did, I found a somewhat unpleasant young woman's face looming over me. I

remembered her now. Unfortunately, I remembered everything. "Warden Egara."

"Good. You're awake."

"You wanted me tested and now you're taking the dream away from me?" It had been a dream. Since when had reality included two hot, virile lovers who fucked me at the same time? When had I ever had an orgasm that strong? That intense? When had I ever been so desperate to be touched that just thinking about it had nearly made me scream?

Never. Smoking-hot, dominant lovers were not part of my reality.

My reality included prison. Harsh lighting. Bad food. Stale air. Several hundred women who looked at me like I was fresh meat. Loneliness. Betrayal.

"Yes, Miss Pierce. I'm terribly sorry. I don't normally stop the testing so abruptly, but I have to admit, I was a little nervous about your screaming."

I couldn't help but flush. "Let's just say the dream was very... vivid."

She looked down at her tablet, apparently having decided that I was not dying in her testing chair. She went around the generic table and sat down. The room was clinical, stark. I'd think I was in an office conference room if not for the fancy testing chair I sat in. No, that I was tied to like a mental patient. The restraints around my wrists were at least four inches wide and an inch thick. I wasn't sure what kind of superhuman women they normally strapped down, but the only way any normal girl would get out of these was with a hacksaw.

I looked down at myself, oddly pleased to see that I wore the bland, gray testing gown instead of the orange prison pants and white t-shirt that had made up my wardrobe for the last few months. I was naked beneath, and bare from the knees down. Medical gowns, it seemed, were standard-level ugly no matter what planet they were from. And I wasn't a fan of my bare ass sticking to the chair. Where was the standard-issue granny panties and sports bra?

"The testing was successful, a match was made at a ninety-nine percent." Her smile transformed her face, and I realized that she wasn't that old, probably even a few years younger than me. Her brown hair was pulled back in a severe bun, a style that reminded me of Wild West school marms in the old movies. Her gray eyes held a keen intelligence I could respect, but her words alarmed me. I was here at my attorney's insistence. But I'd never really believed in this whole matching process. I mean, really? How the hell could some alien computer select a man who would be perfect for me? I didn't believe it. But that didn't stop the little kernel of hope from bursting to life with a painful buzz in my chest.

I frowned to hide the reaction. This was not how things were supposed to go. "I've been matched?"

"Yes, to a Prillon warrior."

"A Prillon?" I knew nothing about the other planets in the Coalition. I'd had my nose in a petri dish and my eyes on the lens of a microscope for the last decade. "I told you I didn't want it. A match. This. I don't want to go off to some...some planet." I spit out the last as if it were foul on my tongue. "I *told* you. I shouldn't be here, shouldn't be in

jail. I've done nothing wrong, except expose the truth. I'm not going to leave Earth because someone else broke the law."

The warden looked at me with sympathetic gray eyes. "Yes, I've heard of your case, heard your claims of innocence. From a process standpoint, the testing doesn't change that you've been convicted of a crime. It doesn't change that you are going to be in jail for the next twenty-five years."

"I filed an appeal."

"Yes, your attorney informed me and I wish you the best of luck." Her gray eyes softened and I found my anger fading beneath the onslaught of pity I saw there. "I'm sorry, Rachel. But your innocence or guilt is irrelevant to me. And believe me, your new mate won't care. You're here. You were convicted. They must have had evidence."

"It was planted," I countered.

All hints of the orgasm had faded, replaced by the same anger, frustration and bitterness that had followed me for the past five months. When the Whistleblower law went into effect, it hadn't included me. No. I'd been quickly taken away, falsely pinned with crimes I didn't commit by people who committed far worse just to hide their own.

Yes, I'd been the lead researcher at GloboPharma. The trials had been under my supervision. But I'd pulled the plug when things went wrong. I'd followed the FDA guidelines to the letter. The data in my reports was truthful and accurate. Yes, I'd known that the company had hundreds of millions of dollars on the line, looking for a

cancer cure. And the treatment worked, it just killed too many healthy cells in the process.

I'd filed my reports and expected my superiors to do the right thing.

The day I heard that the FDA approved the drug, I'd nearly puked up my hot mustard and salami sandwich at my desk. I'd called the president of the company personally, and when she wouldn't listen, I called the CEO.

They all ignored me, and sent some goons to wreck my house and shut me up. They'd fired me, discredited me, and, little did I know, kept my data and lined me up to take the fall if things went bad.

And things went really, really bad. At least four hundred people died before the FDA figured out it was the new drug doing the damage. When they came looking for someone to blame, GloboPharma handed them my head on a silver platter.

Fuckers. I refused to go down without a fight. I was not going to run like a scared puppy and live the rest of my life on another freaking planet. I had to do the right thing. I had to fight. If I didn't, the bastards who did this to people would just do it again. And again. And again. I went to graduate school and completed my PhD just last year in biochemistry. I studied physiology as an undergrad so I could make a difference in the world, so I could help people. I never wanted to be in a fight like this. But now that I was here, I couldn't walk away. I didn't have a choice. It was either fight or rot in jail. And if I let them beat me, they'd just do it again, make another mistake. Kill people. Lie about it.



"I can't leave. I have to go to court. Please, I want you to understand."

"Your appeal is two months away," she replied, not commenting on my rant. She knew what had happened, the charges, the trial, my conviction. It was all in my file on that tablet of hers. Everything about me was on there, including what I ate for lunch three months ago and my bra size. "Your lawyer recommended that you be tested for the Interstellar Brides Program, just in case."

My lawyer was a nice man, accomplished at his job, but he had highly skilled, very well-placed people at the FDA and GloboPharma's army of attorneys fighting against him. He'd told me it was going to be a hard fight, but I didn't care. I'd done *nothing* wrong. I'd found out what others had done, were doing, to tens of thousands of frightened people desperate for a cure. They'd taken advantage of people who were sick and scared. They'd forged documents, lied, conspired and put my name on everything. The company paid a stupid fine and walked away. *I* was the one in jail for forgery, fraud, conspiracy. And that was the short list. I didn't care what they said about me. I wasn't giving up.

"Yes, two months, then the truth will come out and I'll be free."

She didn't look hopeful. "Mating a Prillon is not the end of the world, Rachel."

"Yes, it is. Literally. I wouldn't be on Earth any longer."

"I've been there. To Prillon Prime." She angled her head toward me. "I was mated to a Prillon warrior six years ago. It was the best thing that ever happened to me."

“Yet you’re here,” I countered. Her lips compressed into a thin line and a shadow passed through her gray eyes. I’d said something to hurt her. “I’m sorry. I don’t know your story, your life. I’m just—” I tugged at the restraints “—trapped.”

When she did not respond, I studied her carefully stoic expression. Yes. She was young, probably younger than my thirty-two by at least four years. But the pain in her eyes was old pain. Old and hardened into armor around her heart.

“How could you have gone to Prillon Prime six years ago? The Brides Program only started two years ago.” Two years since the aliens landed. Two years since everything on Earth went into a tailspin and we learned we weren’t alone.

Two years, and our governments were still struggling with each other like bullies on the playground fighting for territory. Nothing changed. Nothing would ever change. Human nature was...well...all too human.

Her smile was controlled, and didn’t reach her eyes. “Well, I was not in your position. I was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. My mates found me before Earth was officially brought into the Coalition. I didn’t have a choice, Rachel. Not like you. I was only with them a short time before they were killed by the Hive, but I loved them and I don’t regret a moment I spent as their mate. I understand your fear of going to another planet. But you’ve been matched to a decorated Prillon commander. I have no doubt you will grow to love him. His second will, I’m sure, be just as impressive.”

“Second?”

She nodded. “Yes, all Prillon warriors share their mate with another. It is their way. If one of your mates should be killed in battle, you, and any children, would have the second to protect and care for you.”

“Two men? A threesome?” Was she crazy? I didn’t want a ménage. I didn’t want one space alien, let alone two.

My body recalled the two men filling me with their cocks just moments ago, in that damn dream, and heated instantly. No.

No. No. No. I was not walking away from my appeal just to go have hot alien sex. Just, no.

“No way,” I said. If I could have sliced my hand through the air, I would have. As things stood, I had to settle for rattling the chair beneath the cuffs attached to my wrists. Looking up into her eyes, I shook my head again to make sure she understood exactly what I was saying. “No, thank you. I know John said I should come down here, but no. I can’t leave. I refuse the match.”

“Then you will go back to the maximum security prison until your appeal.”

The idea of going back to solitary confinement was miserable. A jail cell or space. The choices were grim. The knowledge that I was innocent set my resolve.

“I appreciate your concern, Warden. But I’m innocent. I have to believe I can win this. I can’t let them get away with lying to the FDA and all those poor patients and their families. I won’t go off-planet and ruin my career. If I run, everyone will believe what they said about me, that I lied about the risks, that I lied to protect the company. I didn’t. I

gave them the real data and I can prove it. I don't want to go to another world. I like this one. I had a good life. I want it back!"

Tears filled my eyes, but I willed them away. I missed my house, my sports car, my freaking cat. I had never wanted to sleep in my own queen-size bed so badly in my life. But I'd cried enough. Hell, that was pretty much all I'd done the first couple months in prison. No more. I was innocent and I would prove it. Go free. Go back to my life in the lab. I would continue my research and save lives. That was the only thing I'd ever wanted. I refused to give it up.

My dad would roll over in his grave if I walked away from this fight. He'd watched my mom die when I was just five. I barely remembered her, but I remembered the way her bald head had felt when I hugged her. I remembered the smell of sickness in my house.

After she died, my dad had tried to hang on. He'd made it until I left for college. And then he'd drunk himself to death.

Guilt. What a weak word for the emotions that roared through me when I thought of my father. I never should have left him alone. I knew he still missed her. I knew he fought his own demons. But I'd been eighteen, and eager to go out into the world and start a new life. I'd moved a thousand miles away for college, only returning home a couple times a year. I'd walked away, and he'd faded right under my nose. Big mistake. Huge.

No. I was not walking away from this.

Warden Egara sighed and I did *not* welcome the disappointment or resignation I saw in her eyes, as if I was

making the wrong choice.

“Very well. Please know the match has been made, recorded and filed in your record. If you change your mind, it is your legal right to contact me. Should you choose to become a bride, all charges will be dropped, your record will be cleared and you will be sent to your mates immediately.”

As she spoke, she lifted a strange, hand-held device to the side of my neck and I yelped as a sharp, biting pain struck just behind my ear.

“Oww!” I twisted away from her, tugging on the restraints with renewed determination. “What was that?”

“I’m sorry, Rachel, but it was necessary.” She walked away and placed the odd, cylinder-shaped object down on the table before turning back to me with her data pad firmly in hand and a frown on her face. “And I’m sorry for the headache you’ll have for the next few hours. Normally, you would be in transport while your brain adapted to the NPU, but you won’t have that luxury.”

“NPU? What is that?” I wanted to lift my hand to the side of my neck and rub the aching spot there. What the hell had she just done? “What did you do to me?”

The restraints about my wrists came undone with a single swipe of the warden’s finger on her tablet. She lifted her gaze from the tablet to meet mine, and I saw no sympathy there, more like pity. “The NPU is a neural processing unit required for transport off the planet. Its neural technology will merge with your brain’s language centers, allowing you to understand and speak all known



languages of the Coalition Fleet. You can't be processed as a bride without one."

"I don't want to be a bride." As I rose to stand, a guard walked in with the all too familiar shackles, a long chain rattling between the wrist cuffs. I knew where he would take me, back to prison, back to solitary confinement where the guards would treat me like I was invisible, a rat in a cage that needed food and water, and nothing else. Still, that was better than the alternative. I didn't want to be more to them than another inmate, another mouth to feed. I didn't want them to notice me.

But I was innocent. Surely my attorney and my friends on the outside would figure out the truth. I had to believe the judge sitting my case would see through the prosecution's lies.

"If you didn't want to be a bride, then why did you follow your attorney's recommendation for processing?" Her question struck a nerve, but I refused to back down. I refused to believe the justice system would fail me so completely.

"Just in case."

Her nod was quick and precise. "Exactly. And now you have an NPU, just in case."

She threw my own words back at me, but the underlying tone made it clear she believed I would be back, sooner rather than later. And if the system failed me and I was convicted, maybe I would come back. That dream. My body still ached with lust. I wanted those big hands on my body. I felt like I was a touch starved idiot, but I wouldn't stop thinking about the way their hands had stroked my skin,

their huge cocks had stretched me open. The intense pleasure as I'd ridden them to the strongest orgasm of my pathetic life.

A fake orgasm, from some stupid computerized hijack of my brain. If I understood the process correctly, I'd been living another woman's actual memories, experiencing what she experienced.

The whole thing freaked me out. And I didn't want to leave Earth. I wanted my damn life back, and I was going to get it.

I could survive another two months in solitary. I refused to break. But a nagging voice had begun to haunt me in the quiet silence of my existence in the prison. Even if I beat the charges and won my appeal, what would become of me? Even if I were allowed to go home, would I ever be truly free? If the charges were dropped, if my name was cleared, there would always be those who doubted, who would consider me and any data I found to be tainted. No lab would touch me. At least not in the US. I'd have to relocate, start a new life.

And if I didn't win, if the system failed? I'd either be shackled and jailed for decades or be sent to a new planet where I would be at the mercy of not one huge alien, but two.

Sounded like, one way or the other, I was already doomed to serving a life sentence.



*M*axim, Governor of Base 3, Prillon Colony  
Planet, Sector 901

THE CRUSH of heavy combat boots filled the narrow hallway with a loud, clomping sound. My steps were eager, too eager, and yet I could not force myself to slow my pace as I hurried to the communications center. Warden Egara, the female in charge of The Colony's new Interstellar Brides Processing center on Earth, waited to speak to me. I had to assume she had news, news of a matched mate for one of the soul-weary soldiers under my command. News those of us condemned to live out our lives on The Colony very much needed to hear.

"Ryston." I nodded, my expression grim as my chosen Second, Captain Ryston Rayall, my friend and brother-in-arms for many years, fell into step beside me. Covered head to toe in the mottled black-and brown-armor of a

Prillon warrior, I was both relieved and worried by his presence.

"I hear there is news from Earth." His expression was grim. Despite the pale golden color of his hair and eyes, his gaze was dark. Rejected by his family after his rescue, he'd become a shadow of his former self. Mean. Bitter. Reckless and unpredictable. Bad news would not improve his temperament nor his current mood.

"I am on my way, brother. Patience. I do not yet know what Warden Egara will say." I thumped him on the shoulder in affection. He was my most trusted friend and closest ally on this base. I would trust no other with a mate, despite his recent sullenness. He was a fierce fighter, honorable to the core. I had no doubt a female's sweet touch could banish the darkness from his heart and bring my friend back to life.

"She is probably going to tell you that none of you fuckers have a match and we're all fools for hoping." His growl was full of pain, but he could not hide his hope from me. If he did not hope, he would not have rushed to be at my side to hear the news from Earth.

"That would imply that I am not perfect, Ryston. We both know that is not the case."

Ryston's soft chuckle was his only response, but some of the tension drained from my shoulders and neck. It was good to face whatever might come with Ryston at my back. As Governor of Base 3, it was my duty to set an example for the other contaminated warriors here. All good men, the warriors on The Colony had served their planets well, fought the Hive menace and suffered at the enemies'

hands. Everyone on The Colony carried the scars of that fight, for what the Hive captured, they tried to make their own. Hive Integration Units tortured Coalition fighters, converting them into new machines for the Hive to deploy, new Hive-controlled soldiers, walking weapons. Those of us lucky enough to survive and return to our units with our minds intact were sentenced to a fate that, for some, was worse than death—banishment. For as advanced as the Interstellar Coalition's technology had become, there were still things that could not be undone.

Microscopic cybernetic implants, living cyborg flesh, optical implants, brain stem filaments, enhanced muscle fibers, artificial intelligence that merged with our bodies on a cellular level, with our very DNA. For centuries, Coalition fighters rescued from Hive Integration Units were simply executed. But nearly sixty years ago, Prime Nial's father had established The Colony, where contaminated warriors could live out their lives safely and away from potential Hive interference or control. Away from those untainted.

Safety was highly overrated. The Colony became more a prison than a mercy, warriors doomed to live out their lives without hope of a home or a mate, fighting a never-ending battle to live a life filled with purpose, with honor. Few women fought in the Fleet. Fewer still were captured by the hive. For those females who were captured and survived, they ended up here as well. But they were so few, so very rare, that a man could go months or years without ever setting eyes on female flesh. We were feared by our own people, and forgotten by the other planets, by those



we sacrificed so much to protect. Forgotten until the other worlds began sending their warriors here as well.

Now the contaminated fighters banished to The Colony world included Atlan Warlords, Trion and Viken fighters, as well as Prillon warriors, and, recently a handful of human fighters from Earth. Divided into eight bases, The Colony was ruled by eight Governors and one Prime. Governors were chosen by election. If no clear winner emerged the selection process followed the traditions of Prillon Prime, where leaders were selected by battle and blood. The strongest ruled. The strongest led by example.

As I must now. As Governor of Base 3, it was my mate testing that everyone was eagerly, and warily, watching. If there were no mates for the strongest of us, then there was no hope for the others.

And so, when Prince Nial became Prime, The Colony buzzed with renewed life, with hope. For the new Prime of our home world was contaminated himself. Despite his imperfections, he'd found a beautiful and submissive mate, a mate strong enough to accept his claim in the battle arena on Prillon Prime, witnessed by millions. Like the others, I'd watched on a live vid broadcast as Prime Nial and his second, Ander, claimed her body on the bloodied battlefield like warriors of old.

My cock stirred at the memory. For Prince Nial and his bride, Lady Jessica Deston, had visited The Colony shortly before that final battle. Lady Deston was a warrior herself, and had spoken harshly of Prillon's policies. She'd vowed to help the contaminated find mates. She'd given us a new name—veterans—and claimed we deserved honor and

respect. She'd given all of us courage. And she'd followed through on her vows, accepting her contaminated mate in front of millions.

Warden Egara from Earth contacted The Colony just days later about beginning the Interstellar Brides Program protocols for our warriors. I'd been the third warrior processed, an experience I remembered little of other than waking with a sense of loss and a cock so hard it felt like iron in my hands.

Like the other governors and a handful of highly respected warriors here, I had submitted to the program's testing several weeks ago. Though I could not believe any female would accept a damaged warrior such as myself for a mate, I could not stop my heart from racing in my chest at the summons I answered now.

If any Colony warrior had been matched, then there would be hope for matches for all of us. The battle-scarred warriors banished to live out their lives here desperately needed a bit of hope.

We rounded the corner to find everyone in the comm station waiting with a suffocating silence. The warden's words could either save us, or doom everyone on the planet.

On the large screen at the front of the room Warden Egara's lovely face filled the entire space. But there were deep creases beneath her eyes and a darkness in the gray depths I'd not seen before. "Warden Egara. Greetings. It is our pleasure to see you again." The Warden had recently traveled to The Colony to complete the initial rounds of testing and we'd had to keep her under lock and key,