



MATING FEVER

INTERSTELLAR BRIDES® PROGRAM:
BOOK 10

USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

GRACE GOODWIN

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*M*egan Simmons, Medical Station, Battleship
Karter, Sector 437

I WAS BEING KISSED. And carried. Literally lifted off my feet and a hot, very insistent mouth was on mine. We were moving but I didn't know to where. I didn't care. I just wanted to be kissed.

Hot. Deep. Lush. My body responded instantly. My pussy became wet, my nipples hardened when a growl rumbled deep in his chest. I felt it as much as heard the carnal sound.

All at once, I was pushed against a wall and I felt every hard inch of him pressing into me. He was big. So big that I felt the thick outline of his cock pressing high against my belly.

"Mine," he said, his voice a harsh rasp. His lips only lifted enough for him to breathe that one word, but I felt it all the way to my toes.

Yes. I had no problem agreeing with that. I had no idea who this guy was or why he was kissing me, but I didn't care. I wanted him with a desperation I'd never known.

Through our clothes I felt his heat. It was as if he had a fever, his body raging with a need for me that all but consumed him, turned him into something dark and primitive.

"Yes, yours," I whispered.

His hands slid down my body, down my *bare* body. Wait. I was naked. *He* was dressed. I should stop him, but why? It felt too damn good.

I didn't need my clothes. I needed him to remove his.

He stepped back and I was able to see he wore the uniform of a Coalition fighter, and he filled it out so beautifully. I couldn't, though, see his face. Why? Why couldn't I see who was making me so needy?

His hands went to his pants, opened them and pulled out his cock. Whoa, now that was a monster cock. Long and thick with a broad head, I licked my lips with an eagerness to taste him.

What the hell was wrong with me? I didn't salivate after a stranger's cock.

Until now.

"Mine." There was that one word, witty dialogue again, but my body responded as if he'd just whispered a hundred and one erotic, naughty deeds he was going to do to me. He reached for my wrists, lifted my hands to his lips where he kissed the metal I now noticed circled my wrists.

Atlan mating cuffs.

Holy shit.

Fascinated, I stared as he traced the intricate design chiseled into the metal with his tongue. I couldn't look away from the way the metal about my wrists glinted in the light. Gold and silver tones combined to make beautiful, wide bracelets. I'd seen Atlan mating cuffs before, knew that if I turned my attention to his wrists, he would be wearing a matching pair. They felt far heavier than I'd ever imagined, significant. He acted as if they were. His body curled over mine, so possessive, as if I truly belonged to him. He kissed the palms of my hands and I felt an amazing sense of power rush through me as this giant beast of a man worshipped my skin, kissed me with a featherlight touch as if I were fragile china.

As a woman, I should be offended by his blatant claim. I was a battle-hardened warrior and could take care of myself. But this...this...gentle giant was unmaking me.

My body quivered like a plucked guitar string and I closed my eyes as he raised my hands above my head. Somehow I knew what was coming, knew there was a hook in the wall above my head, knew that if I let him raise my hands, I'd be bound, trapped.

Instead of running, screaming, kicking, demanding to be freed, I lifted my arms and thrust out my chest, eager for the roughness of his tongue on my nipples. This body was his. He could have me as long as he put that perfect cock inside me.

With my hands locked above me, he stepped back and stripped out of his pants. Naked and glorious, he was huge, his eyes peering at me through the darkness with a strange animal heat. His large hand gripped the base of his cock

and he began to stroke up and down the length, bringing about a shiny pearl of fluid from the slit at the tip. I couldn't miss the matching cuffs about his own wrists below the cut of his uniform jacket. "Mine. Mate."

I watched as he continued to stroke himself. "That cock is mine, beast. Give it to me."

Whoa! Where had that sassy wench come from? I seemed to have no control over this body, or this sharp tongue, but the beast before me didn't seem to mind. He chuckled before dropping to his knees. Before I could blink, he'd lifted my thighs to rest on his shoulders and his tongue was inside me.

"Yes!" I locked my ankles behind his head and held him to me. The shudder that moved through his powerful frame made me groan. His mouth was hot, so hot. But I wanted more. I needed him inside me, stretching me open, filling me up.

He was mine. He had to be mine.

The beast worked me with his tongue until I couldn't think, my pussy so wet and swollen that I actually ached there, my pulse moving through me like a blowtorch. He was big and powerful, definitely one dominant male, but I had the power here. Only I could tame his beast. He would be mine forever. Forever. And he needed me, needed me to soothe his beast. My body, my acceptance, was crucial to his very survival.

He stood, cupped my breasts, played with them. I reveled in the feel of his calloused touch. He wasn't gentle. No, his thumbs and forefingers tweaked my already tight

tips, bringing about a delicious moan and the arching of my back.

Gripping behind my knee, he lifted me up so our bodies were aligned. I no longer felt the floor beneath my bare feet; I was supported between his heated body and the cool wall.

"Mate," he growled, running his tongue along my collarbone, tasting me. Marking me.

"You're mine. All mine," I replied.

When he slid the head of his cock through my slick folds, perhaps to test my readiness, I whimpered. "Yes. Do it."

"Mine."

Oh yes. I needed him to fill me up. God, was he trying to kill me with lust? "Mine. Mine. Mine. You're mine."

"Beg," his growl was nothing less than an order.

My eyes flew open to find him watching me intently, even lost in the throes of mating fever, his beast wanted to dominate me, force me to surrender. And fuck me, if that didn't make me hotter. I couldn't catch my breath. My heart was going to burst from behind my rib cage and explode like a firework.

"Please," I breathed when his cock settled at my eager entrance.

"Mine 'til death."

Those were heavy words. Like marriage vows, but insanely more serious. There was no annulment between mates, no divorce. This was a bond on an elemental level. I knew that by fucking him I was more than just satiating the man. As he said, I was soothing his beast. He would be bound to me forever, a possessive, arrogant, protective,

dominant alpha male. I could recite dozens of reasons I should turn him away, refuse his claim, choose someone else.

But I wanted him. Only him. I loved the demanding, dominant lover. I wanted him fucking me so hard I wouldn't remember my own name. I didn't want to think, I wanted to feel. I didn't want to worry about taking care of myself. For once in my life, I was going to give up control. I was going to let him take care of me. I was going to *submit*.

My body melted at the thought. Yes. I needed him to take control, to force my mind to stop whirring and churning, just to let me feel.

"Fill me up. Please." I shifted my hips and had him slide into me about an inch. Just that little bit opened me, stretched me. I knew having that entire cock inside me would almost split me open. I should be running away, not settling myself on him further.

"Now," I said, my hands in fists above the cuffs. I was spread before him like a feast. "Now," I repeated and cried out when he slid all the way in one long, smooth, hard stroke.

"Mine," he growled.

I threw my head back as he stretched me open. The pleasure-pain triggered my first orgasm as he stared down into my eyes like a hunter, watching me, holding my gaze as my pussy clamped down on him like a fist, pulsing and gripping him as my entire body shook.

God. More. I needed more... Pulling out, he slammed deep in one hard thrust and my back hit the wall.

“Miss Simmons.” I heard a woman’s voice coming from far away, but ignored it as my beast filled me up with a harsh growl.

Yes, it was so good. I loved his cock. Needed it. He pulled back, filled me again...yes!

“Miss Simmons!” That voice again. Insistent. Exasperated. Whoever she was, couldn’t she see I was a bit busy here?

I shook my head, focused on feeling the wall at my back, huge Atlan hands on my hips, his cock between my thighs. The sharp pinch of the cuffs forcing my body to take what he gave me, to take the pleasure, the thrill of danger that I felt placing my body under his command. Of being his. Totally. Completely. His.

His giant cock withdrew. Thrust deep. God. So big. So hard. An edge of pain that I loved.

“Megan?” That woman’s voice again, sounding irritated this time. I ignored her. I didn’t want her. I wanted him. His cock. His huge hands. His heat.

“Megan! Soldier, snap out of it!”

Oh, the voice was getting bitchy now, but I didn’t care. I shook my head and bit my lip as my mate fucked me hard. I was going to come again. God, I was so close—

“Prepare the neural stimulant. She’s not coming out of the testing.”

Testing?

That one word triggered a memory. The doctor. The ship. Once my mind started down that slippery slope, the rest faded. *He* faded. I tried to hold on to him, onto the pleasure, but the feelings drifted from my mind like sand

being carried away by a windstorm. I opened my eyes, blinked. There was no sexy alpha male fucking me up against a wall like I was his favorite treat. There was no male at all.

Which pretty much summed up my life lately. At least in the sex department. I was surrounded by men on the battleship, thousands of them. But I hadn't had sex in over a year, and my body was not satisfied with the small taste I'd just been given. I wanted more. Which was just my luck, because I wasn't going to be getting any action. Not for a few more days at least.

"Oh, good." The woman's voice belonged to Doctor Moor. I recognized her dark brown hair and kind face hovering over me. She was an Atlan female, which meant she looked human, mostly, except she was well over six feet tall with shoulders broader than most football players. The Atlan Warlords were big men, so I wasn't surprised that the women were sized to match. She was dressed in the usual green doctor's uniform, her hair cut short in a pixie style that made her big brown eyes practically jump out of her face. She was gorgeous. But more importantly, she was kind. Which was why I'd come to her for the Interstellar Brides Program testing. I was not about to let one of the Prillon doctors loom over me while I was having an intense sexual experience dream, possibly involving one of their kin.

No way. Not happening. Doctor Moor suited me just fine. *And so had that dream.*

Looking around, I recognized the dark green stripes lining the walls, the exam chairs that looked like the ones I

used to sit in at the dentist's office when I was a kid. Lying here, I felt small. These things were built to hold huge alien warriors, Atlans and Prillons being the biggest, most close to seven feet tall. And in beast mode? The Atlans topped out at eight or nine feet, like the *Incredible Hulk* minus the green skin. They were huge, brutally efficient killers, and sexy as hell. At least to me. Nothing made me happier than seeing a battalion of Atlan Warlords swarm the battlefield around me and literally rip enemy Hive soldiers in half with their bare hands.

So I had a wee bit of a violent nature. I'd made peace with that side of myself a long time ago when I joined the Army. Not everyone was cut out for flower garlands and peace protests. No one in my family, at least. But I was more than willing to fight and die to protect those who were. Put a gun, or an ion blaster, in my hand and turn me loose on anything evil. Terrorists on Earth. Hive drones in space. They were all the same to me. Evil was evil. Fighting them made me feel powerful. Made me feel like part of the family. My dad and both my brothers went into the military. Therefore, I went into the military, even though I was a *girl*. *A half-black, half-Irish mutt from Boston.*

I could pull the trigger on my rifle just fine.

I was also the only one who'd transferred from the Earth army to join the Coalition Fleet. Not that it made a difference to my mother. I'd fought the Hive for almost two years now—my term was almost up—and seen some seriously insane shit. I wasn't a weak girl. I was a powerful woman who not only stood up to the Hive, but baited them, trapped them. Killed them. Killed their leaders. Sneaked

behind enemy lines and lured the Integration Units away from their protective Hive Soldiers and Scouting units. We'd been targeting the Integration Units, the Hive responsible for torturing and assimilating their captives into the Hive collective mind, for months. But now I had bigger fish to fry. Top Secret fish.

We were hunting their Core communication units, the Nexus Units. A few days ago, we'd almost had one. But our intel was bad. They were guarded by a full dozen Hive Soldier class warriors, big, strong bastards that were hard to kill. The last op had almost killed me, and the Soldier unit had taken out the rest of the warriors assigned to the Op before I could do anything to stop them. We'd managed to get to one of the smaller Nexus creatures. Killed him. But his communications unit had been fried. Worthless. Three dead Coalition warriors...and all for nothing.

I couldn't live with that, which was why I was going back down there. Tomorrow. The I.C., or Intelligence Core, the elite Coalition minds that ran the intelligence arm of this war, were assigning me a team of five highly trained killers to take into that canyon tomorrow. This time, I wouldn't fail. My last mission would not be a failure. I'd hear my mother's disapproving voice in my head forever if I walked away now. *"Why can't you be tough, like your brothers?"* and *"Stop your crying, little bitch. You sound like a girl."* And my personal favorite, *"Jesus, Mary and Joseph, you never shoulda been born into this family."*

The doctor circled me as the memories flooded my mind. Not of rough hands and desire, but of slaps across the face

when my mother was drunk, and words that cut so deep I didn't think my heart would ever stop bleeding.

My dad was a big, powerful black man, fierce and protective. He'd loved us all, when he was home, and I'd loved him with a fierceness that still filled my spine with steel. My mother had been better then, happy. But he died when I was nine and she never recovered, started drinking whiskey like it was water, and the more she drank, the meaner she got. My dad was dead. Had been for a long time. My brothers were tough assholes, still on Earth, still serving their country. I had no idea where they were now. Afghanistan? Syria? Africa? Hell, they could be shitting ice in Antarctica for all I knew. I got a message from my youngest brother about twice a year, letting me know they were all still alive. Even *Shirley*. Shirley Simmons. "Mother" was not a word I liked to use these days and he knew that.

I surrounded myself with strength. Tough men. Thick armor. Powerful weapons. I trained to keep both my mind and my body strong. I was almost six-foot tall. I wasn't used to feeling small or vulnerable, but sitting in this damn chair made me feel like a child-sized doll. I was several inches taller than the average woman on Earth, but here? Here I was like a toddler sitting at the grownup table swinging two feet that didn't reach the floor.

Fortunately, the commanders in the Coalition Fleet knew how to take advantage of my size and stealth. And my team's mission tomorrow was proof of that. Sometimes, it was better to be the scorpion than the lion. Small but deadly. That was my motto. Hell, that was pretty much the

motto of all humans out here in deep space. We weren't as big as some of the alien races, but we were mean as fuck when we had to be. It was a matter of pride. To me, it was my personal mission.

"Are you with me, Megan?" The doctor leaned over, shining one of those stupid bright lights right into my eyes and I winced. Too bright.

"Unfortunately." I wanted that big man, his huge cock. I wanted to feel beautiful and feminine and desired. Instead, I had one more mission, one more op wearing that heavy armor and helmet, coated in grime, killing things. One. More.

Embrace the suck.

That was practically my family motto, and I'd learned it well. Those three words got me through grueling hours of training, pain, and being stranded in hostile territory more than once in the last two years. I'd been cold, hot, starving, coated in sweat, blood, and every other body fluid I could imagine, and some I never dreamed of until I came out here into space. Outer fucking space. When I stopped to think about the fact that I was floating in a tin can in a galaxy far, far away, I still freaked. So, I tried not to think about it.

The doctor clicked off the penlight and I could see again. I looked up into her face in time to see her nod with a smile. "Good. I didn't want to have to inject you with neural stimulants."

She held up a small green cylinder I knew from previous experience could sting worse than any needle back home. Sure, there was no needle. But that just meant they forced the substance through your skin with something else. I

didn't know how they worked. Didn't want to know. "No thanks. Keep that thing away from me."

The doctor chuckled and handed off the cylinder to an assistant who took the dosing unit and hurried away like he was intruding on a highly personal conversation. Which he was. And that thought brought me back to reality faster than anything else. I was very much awake now. No dream guy. No dream cock. No taunting or teasing or edging. No incredible orgasm.

I was in the brides testing room in the medical wing of the Battleship Karter. Damn. I very much preferred to be back in fantasyland with a very dominant male who knew what to do with his hands, and his cock. It had been far, far too long since I had anything besides my fingers between my legs.

"Did I scream?" I could feel my cheeks heat. "Please, tell me I didn't scream." I'd kill myself with my own ion blaster if the males in the medical floor heard me screaming with an orgasm based on a dream.

"You didn't scream." She grinned then and gave me a conspiratorial wink. "I've never been tested, but every bride who has always has a very arousing experience."

She was a few years older than me. She might not have been tested through the Brides Program like I just had, but with the gold cuffs about her wrists, she was obviously mated to an Atlan, so she knew quite a bit about bossy Atlan males. And big cocks. And, based on my dream, on the cuffs I'd worn, and the giant-sized man fucking my brains out, I was going to be matched to both.

The thought of an Atlan mate made me shiver and my pussy clenched as heat flooded me. I should be surprised that my deepest self would want one of those huge, brutal warriors, but somehow I wasn't. Over the past two years of fighting alongside the Coalition forces, I'd encountered many Atlans and they were all over the top. Dominant. Controlling. Annoying. They had nothing against females, weren't disrespectful or chauvinistic. The opposite, in fact. They just took *alpha male* to the extreme. Protective. Demanding. Merciless.

I shivered, tingles running over my skin at that one word. Merciless. They showed no mercy to their enemies. And I was shocked to discover, I wanted none in bed.