

ABDUCTION



MAVERICKS
OF
SPACE

Sasha White



Mavericks of Space

ABDUCTION

By Sasha White

Copyright © 2004 Sasha White

All Rights Reserved

Tyla Natori prowled through downtown Seattle. Full of restless energy, she ignored everything but the sea of humans that parted and flowed around her. Males, females, tall, short, round or thin. They came in all shapes and sizes – even in different colors in some cases. Yet, they all had one thing in common.

They had no idea an alien walked among them.

She envied them their ignorance. If she only knew about her own world, if she believed that her people were truly the only intelligent beings in their universe, then she maybe she'd be content to live there quietly. But she wasn't that ignorant. There was a vast universe beyond her home planet, and she lived to explore it. And that meant she really didn't want to go home right then.

Tyla loved her home planet of Triton. It was where she was born and raised, and it was where her people thrived. She wanted them to keep thriving too, that was made her problem such a big one. Tyla knew that her life, as she knew it and liked it, was going to end as soon as she got back there. Her mother had made *that* very clear during their last conversation.

Suddenly, a tall male exited from the curio shop at her right and stepped directly into her path. Tyla shifted to continue around him but he moved at the same time and his shoulder bumped hers as he went against the flow of human traffic.

“Oh, I'm sorry, Miss,” he said, reaching out as if to steady her.

Tyla glanced up at him with a small smile. “It's fine.”

She saw the gleam of desire in his dark eyes and knew instantly he'd bumped her deliberately. Even dressed as humans do her looks attracted attention. She was used to it, and often took the time to enjoy it.

“No, it’s not fine,” he said smoothly, a smile forming easily on his handsome face. “Let me buy you a cup of coffee to makeup for my clumsiness.”

She was about to say yes when a sign across the street caught her attention. Her gut clenched and her vision sharpened, bringing the faded printing on the window of the place into sharp focus. THE GHOST ZONE.

Shifting away from the male in front of her, Tyla ignored his sputtering as she made her way toward the building. In less than thirty seconds she’d crossed the busy street and stood in front of a small building.

The picture window was made of a smoked glass so dark that even with her enhanced vision she couldn’t see inside the place. It didn’t matter though, there was something in there that was calling to her. It was more than the name that was so close to the ship she thought of as her true home. It was some invisible sense that the solution to her dilemma was inside there.

It should be easy to defy her mother, after all Tyla was almost thirty years old, and she’d done as she pleased pretty much her whole life, but it wasn’t that simple.

Nothing was that simple when one had royal blood and planetary politics were involved.

Max Cooper was hearing voices. It didn’t matter that they were male voices, or that they were waking him from a deep sleep- the only half-decent sleep he’d had in almost a year. What mattered was that *he heard them*. Because eleven months ago, his eardrums had been shattered in a diving accident, and he hadn’t heard a thing since.

Despite the grogginess and disorientation he felt when he sat up in bed too quick, he became instantly aware of two other things.

One, he was naked.

Two, he had no idea where he was.

Adrenaline pumped through his system as he scanned his surroundings. The room looked like something out of Star Trek. All smooth shiny surfaces and curved walls similar to what a NASA space shuttle looked like in the movies - only bigger and more luxurious. Where the hell was he? There was no denying that wherever he was, it was a far cry from the spartan bachelor pad he called home.

He cocked his head to the side, straining to hear the voices that he’d thought he’d heard. He must’ve been dreaming again. Dreaming that he’d never lost his hearing, or his job with the

Coast guard. Sucking in a deep breath, Max purposely calmed his heart rate and took stock of things.

He remembered sitting in the Ghost Zone sucking on some scotch and trying not to think too much when a super-sexy brunette sat down next to him. Her full lips had moved as she'd said something, but he'd just stared at her, she hadn't spoken again. She hadn't left either.

She'd sat next to him, staring at him as he drank for a time before reaching under the table and running her hand up his thigh. All the way up to his dick, which had jumped eagerly and rapidly filled his jeans to the point of pain as she tested his size. And when she'd tilted her head and slid from the booth with an openly seductive look, he'd followed without hesitation.

What an idiot.

Filled with lust, and mellowed by scotch, he'd followed her into the alley behind The Ghost Zone, where she'd pinned him to the wall with surprising strength. Her tiny body pressed full length against his, her lips on his and her tongue in his mouth were the last things he remembered. Swiping his tongue across his lips, he swore he could still taste her flavor, so dark and erotic that his cock swelled just thinking about it.

Give your head a shake, man! Now is not the time to think about a little lost pussy.

He glanced around the spacious room.

One corner of the room housed a sleek lounge next to a window, out of which Max saw only inky blackness. He swung his legs over the edge of the bed, intent on looking outside and searching the room for a weapon – and maybe some clothes too. As he searched, the wall on the opposite side of the room slid open revealing a doorway and stopping him cold.

A shirtless man casually strolled in. “Hey, Max. I was wondering when you'd wake up,” he said before taking a big bite of the apple in his hand.

The shock of hearing him made Max's heart stutter. His throat tightened and he tasted tears when he swallowed convulsively. He'd heard the words, clear as a bell, and - the surfer dude had called him by name!

Reigning in his emotions he glared at the guy. “Where am I, and who the hell are you?”

Max's voice was rusty from disuse, but it felt so damn good to talk again, and hear himself. He hadn't lost his ability to talk in the accident, but when he'd gone deaf, he hadn't wanted to talk, for a number of reasons. He hadn't had much to say to anyone, and when he did

have something to say, he couldn't hear himself, which made him feel like an idiot. So he'd write things on a notepad instead of trying to talk.

The guy's eyebrows had shot up, and he swallowed quickly. "I'm Jason. You don't know where you are? Didn't you go through the tests like the rest of us?"

Max didn't think this man posed a threat, but a tingle of unease went through him at the mention of any sort of testing. He hated tests; he never did well on tests.

Uncaring of his nudity, he rose from the bed and met Jason's curious gaze. "What testing?"

"The stamina and sensitivity tests?" When Max didn't answer, Jason's expression grew animated. "The girls? You didn't meet the girls yet?"

Hands planted on his hips, Max shook his head once. What was the guy talking about?

"The aliens?" Jason started to chuckle. "You haven't met any of the aliens yet?"

Aliens?

He stared at the younger man and tried to come to grips with what he was hearing. Max shook his head and started to brush past the loser.

"No wait!" Jason reached for Max's arm.

Max didn't wait for the hand to land on his arm. He sidestepped, grabbed Jason's wrist, and spun around behind him. In the blink of an eye, he had Jason's arm twisted up between his shoulder blades, and firm fingers pinching off his larynx.

"I want straight answers, and I want them now! Do you understand?"

"If you want straight answers, please ask me." The dulcet tones of a female voice filled Max's ears.

He spun around, keeping Jason between him and the woman that was suddenly behind him.

She was gorgeous. It was his first thought when he'd seen her in The Ghost Zone, and it was his first thought once again. Only now, she didn't look as small and delicate as he remembered. She looked lethal, actually, with her leanly muscled body covered by scraps of chainmail and leather held together with belts containing full weapon sheaths. Her brown hair appeared darker, her green eyes brighter, and her fair skin almost glowed silver. She looked less human than he remembered, and yet, even more beautiful.

Ignoring the lust stirring in his groin, Max smirked at her. "Well hello again, stranger."

“Hello, Max. My name is Tyla, although most around here refer to me as Captain Natori.” Her lips tilted slightly, her voice soft and pleasant, contradicting the readiness of her stance. “Please let Jason go. No harm will come to you while you’re in my care.”

“In your care? Exactly who and what are you, and why should I believe anything you say?”

“You haven’t been hurt yet. In fact, you’ve been healed, haven’t you?” There was a moment of silence as she studied him before warning softly, “I only ask once, Max.”

There was no way in hell he would release his prisoner, his shield, until he got some answers. He wasn’t the most trusting guy in the best of circumstances. Being kidnapped didn’t exactly make him more inclined to trust, no matter that they hadn’t harmed him...yet. The fact that he wasn’t deaf anymore meant only that they had done something to him without his knowledge or permission, and that was all that mattered right now.

A grimace marred Tyla’s pretty face before she spoke firmly. “Ghost, please transfer Jason to the Leisure Room.”

Without a whisper of sound, Max’s hostage vanished, and he gripped empty air. His heart stalled, then began pounding like a hyperactive jackhammer. Sweat popped out on his brow, and he fought to stay calm. The guy had just disappeared into thin air!

“What the fuck?”

“You’re on my ship, Max,” the Captain said calmly. “Ghost is on a course to my home planet of Triton. Don’t worry, though, you’re not alone. Besides you and Jason, there are seven other human males and four Durians. You, however, are the only one who has not gone through testing, as you are not to go on the open market. You’re to be mine, and I do my own testing.”

Max struggled to hear her over the roaring in his ears. Home planet? Testing? **HERS!**

As she talked, Tyla walked to a panel of buttons on the wall and pressed one. The wall shifted and a rack of clothing came out of it. She selected a pair of pants similar to those Jason had been wearing earlier and held them out.

Unsure, but unwilling to appear anything but confident, Max took her offering.

“I’m yours?” A spaceship named Ghost? Humans, Durians, and home *planets*? His brain was starting to hurt.

Without taking his eyes from hers, he stepped into the pants and pulled them up. They were like sweatpants, sort of. Dark green in color with a drawstring waist, they reminded him of

the martial arts Gei he wore when he trained. Which was good. It meant he could move in them, fight in them when the time came.

“Yes, mine.” She met his gaze, and despite his anger and distrust, his cock stirred at the thought of being hers. Alien or not, she was *hot*.

“Let me get this straight. You’re an alien from another planet, and you came on to me in the bar last night in order to abduct me?” He paused and waited for her nod of confirmation.

“And you have a dozen other men of various...species that are also on board this spaceship of yours, and you’re taking us to your home planet where they’ll be put ‘on the market,’ but me, I’m to become yours?”

“Yes!” Tyla beamed at him, relaxing her stance.

He stared at her, unable to form any more words when he realized she was serious. This wasn’t a dream, and it wasn’t a joke. The shiny room, the inky blackness outside, the kid that had disappeared from right in front of him...it was all real. The super-sexy woman in front of him has sought him out, and, and, kidnapped him!

All the anger that had built up in him since he’d lost his hearing rushed to the surface and exploded out of him.

“Screw that!” he ranted as he strode toward her. He stopped only when he was right in her face. “I’m nobody’s slave! I’m a man, a human being. You can’t own a human being. Slavery was abolished during the Civil War.”

“On Earth, yes it was.”

He opened his mouth to speak.

She put up a hand to silence him. “But not on all planets. As it is, Triton does not hold with slavery either. We do, however, have transplants. Males, like yourself, that we...invite to join us and live among us.”

“Oh? So this is an invitation? I can say ‘no’ and you’ll let me go home?”

Tyla’s cheeks glowed brighter and her eyes answered him.

“Yeah,” he snarled. “That’s what I thought.”

He turned his back on her and took two steps before he realized he had nowhere to go. He could leave the room, but he couldn’t get off the ship. What was the point in leaving the room when he had the captain right there to answer any and all of his questions?

He spun toward her, scrubbing his hands over his face. It was time to get serious. Knowledge was the key to survival, in all situations, which meant Max needed information. Dropping his hands to his thighs, he eyed the woman standing patiently in front of him.

There was no denying she wasn't human. She looked sort of human, except for the glowing skin and piercing gaze that seemed to see right through him. She stood about five feet tall with a small, tight, hard body. The body of an athlete barely covered by the skimpiest armor he'd ever seen.

She had two eyes, two arms, two legs, two breasts. Two very nice, small but firm and perky breasts...

Max gave himself a mental head slap. Pay attention! She's an alien! She's glowing! *She kidnapped you, damnit!*

This was no dream; his imagination wasn't that good.

"Okay," he sighed, pushing his dread aside he focused on moving forward. "What are the 'tests' you guys were talking about?"

Tyla's nipples hardened when Max's gaze settled on her breasts. With a small smile, she hid her relief at his seeming acceptance of the situation. He'd taken everything quite well, considering he was in deep space with no way to get back to Earth on his own. She was sure it helped that the air was beginning to vibrate with repressed sexual need.

"The tests are our way of determining if a male can withstand the lifestyle that awaits him on Triton." She turned to the middle of the room, gesturing him to do the same. "Ghost, testing will begin again now. Start recording."

His eyebrows jumped at her command, but he didn't comment. That pleased Tyla; yes, he was adjusting quickly.

The lack of a male population has made casual sex a way of life on Triton, and that had suited her fine. She'd never wanted to be tied down, preferring the ability to come and go as she wanted with no responsibilities other than that of her crew. She'd never taken a Transplant of her own before, which is one of the things that had led to her current situation with her mother.

Pushing that issue to the back of her mind Tyla smiled at Max Cooper.

She'd been drawn to The Ghost Zone, the bar's name being too similar to that of her ship to ignore. She'd stepped into the bar and scanned its occupants, her heart rate instantly picking up and her body temperature spiking when her gaze landed on him.

She'd known then that he was meant to be hers.

Before Tyla could properly test him, however, Seera, her second in command, had commed her to report they were ready to depart. But Tyla wasn't worried; the fact that her skin had started to glow the minute she'd transported into his room told her Max was a good enough fit for her sexually. And that was really all she needed for her plan to work.

"You make it sound like I'm in for a hard life on your planet," he said.

“Not a difficult life.” She paused. “But a hard one to be sure. Ghost, show us what’s happening in Mating Room Three.”

A hologram began in the center of the room and she was pleased to see that the mating room currently held one of her crew, with both a human and a Durian. It was a good scene for Max’s next test.

He strode closer to the hologram, as if he couldn’t believe his eyes. “What the...?”

Neca was kneeling on the bed with Jason in front of her, gleefully thrusting his cock into her mouth, his hands wrapped in her long, inky hair, while Ryden, the Durian, fucked her fiercely from behind.

“What is he?” Max asked.

Tyla knew he was asking about Ryden. Earth bound humans had no idea what other species were like, most of them didn’t even know of the existence of other species. She didn’t bother to watch the threesome; instead, she focused on Max’s reaction to it, and fought back her own revulsion at the sight of the Durian. She stood beside him, carefully studying his facial expressions.

“Ryden is one of the Durian males I told you about. His kind are raiders, and as you can see, they’re built to conquer. The spikes along his spine extend like that only when excited or aroused, and while his thick hide protects him well in battle, it also leaves him little room to feel sensations. Therefore, Durians are often dominant and rough in all activities.”

“Rough is one way to put it. Does he actually have two cocks or am I seeing things? He looks like he’s gonna rip her in half!”

“Some females enjoy the double penetration a Durian male offers. You can tell by the brightness of Neca that she is such a female.”

“So Neca, the female, she’s from Triton, the same as you?” He turned from the hologram to face her.

“Yes.”

Max’s eye’s narrowed and his lips tilted when he gazed at her. “And you all glow when you get excited?”

“Yes.”

He stepped closer. His body heat brushed against hers and Tyla’s desire surged. Her nipples ached to be touched, and her core moistened in anticipation of mating.

“You’ve been glowing ever since you came into the room.”

His breath feathered over Tyla’s skin, making her want to place her lips against his. Stars she wanted to kiss him! Arousal flooded her being, more intense than anything she’d ever felt. But she didn’t move. She couldn’t. No matter how much she wanted to throw Max down on the bed and ride him until he forgot earth even existed, she couldn’t do it. Not yet.

More important than immediate pleasure was the need to ensure he was comfortable with her, and discover if she aroused him now that he knew who, and what, she was.

He trailed a fingertip between the break in her breastplate. “Are you excited?”

With her gaze locked with his, she covered his hand with hers and nodded. “I’m very excited about you. As I said, if you agree, you are to be mine.”

Despite the lust in his eyes and the arousal she scented on him, his nostrils flared. “And if I don’t agree? Do I get to go home?”

Fear trickled down her spine. He had to agree. “You’ll never see Earth again.”

He jerked his hand from hers and stalked across the room, away from her. She didn’t bother to tell him that he could choose another for a sponsor. Many Triton women would welcome this beautiful man into their homes, but she needed him

She forced herself to calm down. Now was not the time to panic, but to show him what he could have, to make him want it, to want her.

She reached for the snap behind her neck. With a quick tug, she removed her cover. “Don’t be too upset. We’ve never had a human male that didn’t want to live on Triton when he was offered the choice. It seems a planet run by females, where men are strictly for pleasure and procreation purposes, is an ideal lifestyle choice for most.”

Max turned back to her, his hand raised and his mouth open, as if to argue, only to freeze when he saw her stripping.

Satisfied that she had his full attention, Tyla ran her hands over her sensitive breasts. Gauging his reaction, she circled her nipples with her fingertips before trailing her hand over her flat belly to the snap at her waist. “You’ll lack for nothing on my planet, and I’ll treat you well. I’ve never taken a transplant for my own, so you won’t have any competition for my attentions.”

With another tug, her bottom cover dropped to the floor.

All thoughts of Earth fled from Max's brain when the alien dropped her pants. She stood before him, completely naked, a bright glow making her silver skin seem almost translucent.

Her body was perfection itself. Small and tight, strength clearly defined in her muscles, her breasts and the curve of her hips softening and rounding her in the way only a woman can be. Aside from the dark curls tumbling down her back, she had no body hair. She was completely sleek and smooth.

And he wanted to run his hands—and his tongue—all over her body.

He remembered her distinct taste with an anticipation to which he didn't want to admit. He wanted to hate her, to despise her for stealing him away from his life and leaving him with no choices. But as she stepped toward him, his cock hardened and his fingers itched to explore her body.

She placed a hand on his chest; he felt it heat against his skin. "Do you not find me attractive, Max?"

He didn't answer, didn't move.

"You found me attractive at the bar." She stepped around him, trailing her hand over his shoulder, across his back. "You enjoyed my touch and were willing to mate with me then. Are you still?" She stopped in front of him, her fingertips stroking the thin hair on his chest, her eyes staring straight into his.

"I won't belong to anyone, Tyla. No matter how much I want to fuck them."

If he thought she would flinch at his harsh words, he was wrong. Her eyes softened and her lips parted, her pink tongue darting out and wetting them. "We'll belong to each other. And you do want to fuck me...and that's all that matters right now."

With a slight push, he flew through the air and landed flat on his back, on the bed at least twenty feet behind him.

Holy shit!

Before he could recover and jump off the mattress, she pounced on him. Her thighs straddled his hips and her mouth met his. He planted his hands on her hips to lift her off, but the feel of her soft skin against his rough palms and her tongue parting his lips made him hesitate.

Stop her, his mind cried. But his body wouldn't listen. He'd been without a woman for too long, and she felt too damn good wiggling on top of him.

With a groan of surrender, he slid his hands around her, cupping her firm ass and pulling her tighter to him. He felt her heat through his thin pants as she wiggled and rubbed against him, her tongue dancing against his, her unique flavor filling his head.

When she pulled away her mouth and started to lick and nibble his neck, he slid his hands up her back and around to wedge between them. He had wanted to hold those firm little tits since he'd first set eyes on her.

Tilting back his head, he gave her better access to his throat, and groaned when she zeroed in on the spot behind his ear. A tremor racked his body when she licked it and nipped at his earlobe. After cupping her breasts in his hands, he gently pinched her nipples, then pinched again when she ground her heat against him in response.

“God, you’re an animal aren’t you?” he gasped.

His whole body felt on fire, and only getting inside her could put it out. He reached for the drawstring on his pants, but the feel of her smooth skin distracted him. He skimmed his hands over her belly and between her legs. His fingers delved into her wet heat. Relief went through him. *Thank God there was no alien surprise there!* He thrust another finger inside her.

Her insides tightened in response. “Yes, Max,” she sighed, her accent becoming thicker.

She sat up and undid his pants, her new position shoving his fingers deeper inside her and the heel of his hand against her clit. She rocked against him for a minute before pulling back, pushing down his pants, and releasing his cock.

When Tyla got her first real look at Max's hardness, her breath caught in her throat. She wrapped her hand around him and sighed. He was perfect - long and thick, with veins that throbbed against the palm of her hand.

Unable to slow down, she guided him to her entrance and impaled herself on him.

His hands stilled on her body and she sat astride him, not moving as their eyes met. They fit together perfectly, like a lock and key. Max felt it too, she could see the knowledge in his turbulent eyes. Unexpected emotions - *unwanted* emotions bloomed in her soul. Her aura burned brighter than ever before as she started to rock against him.

Tyla braced her hands on his chest and leaned down, kissing him with a tenderness she prayed would tell him that everything would be okay. He'd accepted her, and she would make sure he was happy on her planet.

Their breath mingled as she placed her forehead against his and picked up speed. She tightened her legs against his hips and rocked faster. The intense friction of sliding up and down his rigid shaft brought her rapidly to the edge of orgasm.

She gasped and bounced faster, harder, but she couldn't get over the edge. As if he sensed her problem, Max groaned and slid a hand behind her and between her buttocks. His finger tickled her anus, and she cried out in surprise at the sensation. She'd never been one for double penetration, her hatred of Durians keeping her from ever entertaining the idea, but the urge to sit back on that finger was surprisingly strong.

"Please," she whispered, stilling on him. "Do it. Fill me..."

His eyes locked with hers, his other hand stroking her from shoulder to hip, calming the trembling of her body. "Whatever you want, baby." He gave her a wide smile and gently pressed against her rear hole.

“Ahhh,” she cried, the urge to move, to press against him and hurry him, taking over.

Then his finger entered her. His cock twitched deep inside her and his finger answered it, making her feel full and completely taken. She held still, her eye’s sliding shut as he began to move beneath her. He slowly withdrew, then filled her again, his finger stroking her, and him from the inside.

“Yes, Max.” Sweat popped out on her skin. Her insides started to contract and milk him. “Yes, that’s it. You’re doing it. You’ve got me...”

She sat back, relaxing her thighs and letting her weight sink into him, his cock and finger nestled deep inside her. With her back arched and her head thrown back, she welcomed the waves of ecstasy that rolled over her.

When the last wave eased away, she looked down to see Max grinning at her. “The sound of you coming is almost as good as the feel.”

Tyla laughed delightedly and kissed him again.

He wrapped his arms around her and quirked an eyebrow. “My turn now?”

She nodded and began to rock her hips again, but he heaved his body and flipped them over, pinning her hands beside her head.

“On your planet, men might belong to women, but with me...we have to be equals.” His gaze turned serious as he took complete control of their mating, thrusting deep and true into her body.

“You are my equal, Max. I am yours, just as you are mine.” The truth of her words hit her. Max was more than she’d anticipated, and exactly what she needed. Heart pounding, she wrapped her thighs around his hips and caught his rhythm.

He dipped his head and kissed her, his hips picking up speed, pumping hard and fast into her. When Max tore his mouth from hers, Tyla gasped for breath, another orgasm building. He tucked his head into the curve of her neck and sucked at her skin, making her cry out sharply as a second orgasm crested inside her.

He grunted into her neck and pushed deeper. Taking his hands from her wrists, he gripped her hips, held her still, and thrust home, his guttural groan echoing through the room.

They lay tangled together for a long time, each with their own thoughts, until Max could stand it no more.

“Did I pass?” He hated that he cared about some stupid tests- sex tests no less!

Tyla sat up in bed, completely at ease with her nudity. She brushed a gentle hand across his cheek. “You passed the minute you admitted you wanted to fuck me. Didn’t you notice the hologram disappear? Ghost stopped recording and left us as soon as you accepted that you wanted me.”

He hadn’t noticed. He’d been too wrapped up in her and what she’d made him feel. Why wouldn’t he accept her? She was perfect! It was him who was flawed.

Why would a woman like her pick him out of everyone? She literally had the whole world—shit, the whole universe—to choose from, yet she’d taken him. A damaged and deaf ex-Coast Guard officer, whose only option was to sit behind a desk and push paper instead of doing what he’d been trained to do—arrest drug-runners, save stranded people, and protect his country’s shores. He had nothing to offer anyone. It was time for her to tell him everything.

“Why me?” he asked.

With a soft sigh she turned to face him. He sat up, leaned back against the wall, and waited for her to answer.

“It’s time for me to take a husband.” She straightened her spine and met his gaze, her chin thrust out and her eyes guarded. “A planet of females is a constant target for hostile takeover, especially one where the women are extremely sexual, as we are. Tritons are a strong race, most of us adept at fighting and battle tactics, although we are mostly a peaceful race. We’ve managed to remain a free colony, but it was obvious to us that we’re on the losing side of our last conflict with the Durians. It ended only when our Queen agreed to accept male transplants of their species, along with the Humans with whom we’ve been integrating for the last century. Including marrying one of her daughter’s to one of the Durian king’s sons.”

It all sounded so “old-England yet still war-of-the-world-ish” to Max. But until today, he’d never even believed in life on other planets, so what did he know? “Marriages have always been a way for warring countries to unite in history.”

“I agree it is a smart way to end a war we weren’t sure we can win. Our queen, however, happens to be my mother, and I was told to find my own husband on this recruiting journey, or be prepared to marry her choice when I landed.”

Tyla was one of the queen’s daughters? Shit, how was he supposed to deal with this?

“I need you to do more than want me, Max.” She took a deep breath and studied him. “I need you to accept me, as your sponsor, and your wife. On our planet, the women are the rulers in everything, but even we cannot force a male to accept one of us that he doesn’t want. You can accept me, and I promise to treat you as an equal because I don’t want a man that is submissive to me. I want a man who will speak his mind, and can hold his own, someone with his own beliefs and thoughts. I want a Human male that will work with me, not a Durian who knows only how to conquer and dominate with brute strength.”

“If the women are in charge on your planet, how can a Durian possible dominate one? Why would they want to become part of your world?”

She smiled. “Triton is a beautiful planet. We’re not rich by any means, but we also don’t lack for much. The ground is fertile, and the air clean. Durious is a moon and the terrain can not be harvested, which means the Durians must purchase or trade for their essentials. They’re tired of it, and have been searching for a new planet to make their own for almost a decade. They tire of their search, and seem to think taking ours will be easier than continuing their search, with the added benefit of keeping us on as their lower class.”

“Lower class?”

“They don’t believe females should be leaders. They’d keep us on as concubines, laborers, cooks...lower class.”

Max shook his head. “If they feel women are so much lower than them, how do they pass the tests? How successful can they be as Transplants?”

“There are some who enjoy giving up their responsibility in the sexual arena of things. Because of this *some* Durian males are welcome in *some* of the Triton homes. But not in mine.”

He nodded. It took all kinds to make the world go round. Obviously that held true for the whole universe. Except it didn’t go ‘round, not like the earth circles on it’s axis. Or did it? At this point, Max wasn’t too sure of anything anymore.

“There’s something else you should know before you make a choice.” Tyla’s voice wavered for the first time. Her chin jutted out and she met his gaze head on. “You can still choose to go home.”

Color flooded Max’s face. He jumped from the bed and glared down at her. “I can still go home? You told me I would never see Earth again!”

Tyla's heart cracked. She shouldn't have told him. She hadn't planned to give him the choice. She wanted him, but more than that, she *needed* him, and giving him the chance to leave her was a stupid thing to do. She'd lose him now, and she'd have to marry the detested Durian Prince, but she couldn't bring herself to keep him against his will.

He was so dark and angry when she'd met him in the bar, so unhappy. He'd been proud and fierce when he'd awakened in a strange environment with nothing familiar around him. And he'd been sensitive and lustful when they'd made love. He was perfect for her.

Her heart breaking, she watched him pace the room, his body tight with anger. Not only did she desire her captive, but she respected him. He was a man of strength and honor, and she couldn't—*she wouldn't*—keep him unless he was willing.

“The testing is a series of tests. All possible transplants go through it. If they pass the physical tests, we interview them, explain our planet, our way of life, what we expect from them, and what they can expect from us. And they have a choice to come with us or be returned to where we found them, with their memories wiped clean.”

“Why wasn't I given that choice from the start?”

“There wasn't time to test you before we had to start the course for home. When I went into that bar on Earth, I thought I was already out of time. But there you were, almost as if you were waiting for me. I did some preliminary tests with you while we were sharing a drink. Enough to know you were what I wanted.”

“And that was all that mattered, so you took me.”

She glanced away, then faced him, her spine straight. “Yes. I need a husband, and I wanted you, so I took you.”

He marched at her, stopping only when he was close enough that his hot breath flowed over her cheeks with his angry words. “You wanted me? Why me? How can you know I'm the one you need? You didn't give me any tests in the bar...you sat down next to me, smiled, and put your hand between my legs!”

“And you reacted favorably to my touch. Within minutes, you made it clear that not only did you find me sexually attractive, but also you were not a submissive man. You were perfect!”

“Any man would react favorably to having you put your hand on their dick! I don't get it. I was crippled—why would you want me?”

“Crippled?”

“Crippled, flawed...I was deaf. I couldn't even hear you. We didn't talk, for all you knew I could've been mute too.”

“That is not a flaw.”

“If it's not a flaw why did you fix it? Why not leave me deaf?”

Tyla could see the anger deserting Max, leaving him perplexed and looking a little lost. “We did not ‘fix it’ because it was a flaw,” she assured him, leaving the bed to go to him. “It's actually the atmosphere in the decontamination chamber. It cleanses beings when they transfer onto the ship, healing them at the same time. It was an automatic procedure for it to rebuild your eardrums.” She smiled.

“Your loss of hearing was never a concern of mine. Even if it were irreparable, your deafness wouldn't have mattered. Whether you can hear or not is not what makes you a perfect fit for me. It's this...” She pressed a hand against the center of his chest. “It's your strength, your courage, and your heart. I've never taken a male as my own because I've not met one who I felt could be an equal and not just a responsibility. We can be husband and wife.”

Max's lips twisted and Tyla's pulse jumped. She had to convince him that he could be happy with her. Deep down she knew she wanted him as more than a way out of a sticky political situation, but she wasn't ready to dig deeper. Not yet.

A strange calm washed over Tyla as she watched the struggle in his eyes, the emotions flickering across his face. Once again, her future was out of her hands. If he chose to go back to Earth, she would marry the Durian and keep peace for her planet. If Max chose her, another of her sisters—Sepera, most likely, since she already enjoyed a Durian lover—would take her place, and Tyla and Max could stay together.

Wife and husband. Partners.

“You must choose now though, Max, before we leave your solar system or we'll be too far away to send a shuttle back.”

He turned his back and walked away from her, and her heart pounded. He was going to leave.

She gazed into his eyes and let him see her need for him. She opened her mouth, her lips forming her good-bye.

He started shaking his head. “This is nuts. I can't fucking believe it,” he said gruffly. “But I've got no one and nothing left at home. I don't want to go home to a crappy bachelor pad

and a desk job that makes me feel useless. I'll stay, and make sure you never have to worry about fighting a war without me at your back again. ”

She waited, hope rising within her as she watched the emotions flicker over his face. Finally he met her gaze and his lips tilted up at the corner. “Hell,” he said, lifting his hands palm up and shrugging. “It’ll be an adventure, right?”

Tyla jumped across the five feet separating them, raining kisses over his face and hugging him.

She’d been right. He was perfect...

Sasha White is a national best selling author of erotic fiction. Gifted with a salacious imagination, her brand of *Romance with Heat, and Erotica with Heart* has earned her a very loyal following. With a voice that is called “*distinctive and delicious*” by The Romance Studio, Sasha White has published over a thirty erotic stories in multiple sub-genres’, and various story lengths.

Short Booklist:

From Berkley Heat:

Novels

MY PREROGATIVE (September 2008)

WICKED (January 2008)

TROUBLE (August 2007)

BOUND (July 2006)

Novellas

WATCH ME; in the KINK anthology (February 2007)

From Kensington Aphrodisia:

Novels

MOST WANTED (June 2009)

PRIMAL MALE (December 2008)

SEXY DEVIL (December 2007)

LUSH (April 2007)

Novellas

SEX AS A WEAPON in THE COP anthology (October 2006)

THE CRIB in the PURE SEX anthology (July 2006)

Raves

"With her newest erotic romance, White proves again that she's a force to be reckoned with." ~ *RomanticTimes BookClub*

"The gifted story telling this author has is what most other authors dream to be."

~*Paranormal Romance Reviews*

“Ms. White has a voice that is distinctive and delicious! It is filled with a keen imagination and strong alpha-type characters. Ms. White never fails to come up with something different and wicked! The sinful word play and inventive storyline create a carnal haze that envelope the readers - caress their senses. Always powerful - absolutely entertaining!” ~

The Romance Studio

please visit www.sashawhite.net for more information and a complete Booklist