

# Dangerously Hers

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## Chapter One

*Taken: Year Five*

Jess stepped off the transporter and right into the bustle of alien activity around her. *What kind of fresh holy hell did I come to?*

Alien races, some of which she recognized, others she didn't, streamed up and down the walkways, coming and going. Transporters of various sizes occupied every available space of the four long rows of docking stations. She and JB had waited half the day just to get a spot in line for landing. From what she could see, the Sonis palace had a slew of visitors.

She could have easily retreated back into the confines of secured safety. But to do so would be an open admission of fear and weakness. She was neither. The days of being scared of every alien who came her way were long over.

Jess took a long breath, filling her lungs with so much air that her chest puffed out. It burned as she held it there while a group of Zarcarians, blue aliens with small, seemingly vacant slits for eyes, meandered by her, deep in conversation. Their white hair was cropped just above where their ears should have been. Silver robes covered their tall, lanky frames and brushed the ground as they walked.

Although she couldn't make out the hushed whispers that came from mouths that were devoid of lips, she still stood ridged, prepared to fight if needed. She didn't relax even after they finally moved past her and away.

*Stay calm. Deep breaths. In, out, in, out.*

JB rustled from behind her at the transporter's door. She didn't startle as he held onto her waist and pushed her gently to the right, out of his way. He exited and stood by her side. Unlike her, concern and apprehension didn't show on his face as he raised his arms in the air and stretched. Standing six-foot-two, he was only two inches taller than her.

"Whew, sweet Jesus. Look at all these people."

"They're not people." She scanned the transport bay. "They're aliens and...things." She cringed as she caught a pair of Rasdons emerging from a transporter.

Their species resembled a snarling dog. They were taller than her and JB with black, coarse hair covering most of their body. Long snouts sat just above yellow fangs that hung out of their mouths. Their beastly black eyes darted from side to side, taking in everything around them.

Their sexual tastes...ran to the obscene. She'd been the subject of their affection at the brothel more times than she could remember. To her, next to the Loconuist, Rasdons were what nightmares were made of.

One of the Rasdons turned her way and ran a tongue over the tips of his fangs. At her hiss, JB followed her gaze. He straightened, prepared for a confrontation. "You know them?"

She shook her head. "No." She didn't need to know them. She knew *of* them and it was all the same.

"Don't pay them any mind then," JB said, relaxing.

*Right. Ignore the dogs.*

"What about them?" Jess nodded in the direction of two males golden in appearance and with more muscles that should be allowed on aliens. Each towered above eight-feet tall. "They'll be too hard to ignore."

The tribal tattoos covering one side of their faces, necks and exposed torsos indicated they were members of the Sonis Royal Guards. The *jangos* strapped to their backs and blasters clipped to their black indicated they were dangerous. Their pants were so tight that every muscle was visible in their legs as they walked.

She grabbed a hold of her own blaster that she kept strapped tightly to her thigh. Her heart sped up. The erratic beat sent blood rushing through her veins, drowning out the other sounds of the room. Against her will, she took a step back, almost falling into the transporter.

JB gripped her arm firmly, stabilizing her. "Whoa, take it easy. They're not coming this way. You're safe."

She closed her eyes and took the breath that had begun to burn in her chest.

*Safe.*

She shook off his arm. Nothing against JB, but everyone would have seen her stumble back. They didn't need to see her requiring help as well. "Give me a sec."

She stood in place and listened as the commotion continued around her. Nearby, there was an argument regarding decorations and a conversation about the royal transporter. There wasn't talk about slaves, brothels or whores.

Sonis was supposed to be her new home. She couldn't panic out every time she came near aliens, especially royal guards. Hell, Sonis was littered with them. While Laconia was mainly a native inhabited planet, there were ten royal guards, including Sa'Mya's head guard, Jor'Dan who lived there. Jess stayed away from the Neanderthals at all costs.

Her main goal had been to avoid as many aliens as possible. Even while working on *The Vengeance II*, she chose not to leave the vessel when they docked on alien worlds. Here, it looked as though it was a freakin' alien United Nations. She had to get herself together and quickly. Otherwise she wouldn't last out the week and going back to Laconia was not an option right now.

She opened her eyes on the next breath. "Okay, I'm ready."

JB slapped her hard on the back, knocking her off balance. She found her footing and cut her eyes at him as he bit back a laugh.

He shrugged nonchalantly. "See? Nothing to worry about. They probably thought you were a guy anyway." He ran a playful hand across her short, spiky hair as she tried to duck out of his way. "But I guess you're still going for that look, huh?"

He of course was referring to her days as a runaway slave. The Loconuist had sold her to a brothel. In order to escape, she had cut off her curly locks and donned male clothing. Her height, chopped hair and the dirt she smeared across her face had gotten her waved through security. Once free, she hid on the first vessel she could break into, *The Vengeance*.

That vessel happened to belong to a crew of wanted human pirates—JB, Ryan, Kyle, Eli and their captain Kane. She thanked God every night for guiding her to the five men who would become her only family. But right now, her closest friend was getting on her nerves and was one breath away from getting gut-punched.

She snarled and pushed JB's hand out of the way. He chuckled. His boyish dimples were set deep in his cheeks. "I'll take that as a yes."

It didn't matter that he teased her about her appearance. Hell, everyone did. She wasn't dainty like other women, nor did she want to be. The only reason she had survived what she'd been through was because she was unbreakable. She had to be. There was no other choice.

She straightened her shoulders. "When aliens look at me, I want them to see someone strong."

"Well if you ask me, the look you're projecting is..." He scanned her from top to bottom. "Penis repellent."

She narrowed her eyes and took a step closer to him so only he could hear her words. "Don't make me fuck you up right here in the transport bay," she threatened.

JB feigned surprise by opening his eyes wide and inhaling sharply. Exaggerating his efforts, he placed a hand on his chest. "Really, Jess? You're going to pick a fight with me and on your first day on Sonis? Tsk, you'll never keep a job at this rate."

"Whatever," she mumbled. "Stop fucking with me." She scanned the area again. "I want to make a good impression."

JB quirked a brow. "Let me get this straight. You are worried about a good first impression?"

Jess frowned. "Of course."

"Since when?" he asked in disbelief.

She cocked her head in thought. She was stealing from Kane when she first met him. She had threatened to kill the guys when she first met them. She tried to strangle Sa'Mya when she met her... Oh yeah, she hadn't been worried about making a good first impression in a while.

JB laughed. "C'mon, let's get going."

She shook her head. "No, Eva said she would meet us here."

Jess adjusted the knapsack on her back and held the other tight in her hand. All her belongs could fit into two small bags. A far cry from the condo filled with high-end clothes and shoes she had back on Earth.

JB looked around the large docking area again. "I don't see her here."

She shifted from one booted foot to the other. "Yeah, but —"

JB swung his medium-sized duffle bag over his shoulder. "I'm going exploring. She'll find us when she's ready for us." Without waiting for her response, he set out.

She had two choices. She could stay in the transport bay by herself or she could leave with JB.

He took two more long strides away from her before she rushed to his side.

She grunted under her breath as she stepped in time with him, just as he expected her to.

*Asshole.*

She followed as he led the way through the exit. She made certain not to brush against any of the aliens they passed. "What if we get lost?"

He turned, only to give her a wink. His blue eyes were alive with mischief. She figured that was the reason many females swooned around him, human and alien. "Then Eva will send someone to find us."

She couldn't help but grunt. JB didn't give a damn about anything. She would've thought being abducted from Earth, sold as a slave to a mining colony and then spending a year on the run would have been enough to sober anyone's attitude, but not his. If she didn't know any better, she would think he didn't have a care in the world. That's if she didn't know better. But as with the rest of their small band of misfits, JB had lost family and loved ones as well.

"What's the plan now?" she asked when they reached a large communal area.

JB scanned the room of females and whistled low. "Trouble. The plan is to get into as much trouble as humanly possible."