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My pulse is beating inside you

by *lovin_torture (le_tortured_fangirl88@hotmail.com)*

New Who and a touch of Torchwood | R - NC-17 | 10/Simm!Master [mentioned Koschei/Theta], Jenny/OMC, Jack/Ianto [Jenny/Jack implied], [implied OMC/OMC] | 34,000 words

The Doctor & The Master bump into Jenny on their travels after LottL while on Zyaulh during the Sheaf Micks War. But while the Master is finding it hard to get used to the fact his lover/enemy has a daughter....especially when she is too like him for comfort, the Doctor had to get used to the fact his daughter is engaged and has a child as well as the fact he's in a slow relationship where anything could happen to tear him and his childhood lover apart. But when the child turns out to have another father connected to the Doctor, it is then that things get complicated.

Betaed by: pylarwoman

Warnings: Technically underage sex

Spoilers: None

Notes: The whole concept of DW belongs to the awesomeness that is the BBC, don't sue because the contents of my bank account is only worth about a third of the amount in European currency. Plot mostly based on fiction.i.e not real..but a girl can wish <3 Title from Marie Digby.

Wow, this fic was started off small not long after I first saw last of the Time lords and I never really expected to get it finished, but I'm kind of glad I did...mostly because it made me see the Master from a different PoV. Major thanks to pylarwoman for listening to my panicking about plots and being my beta, thankies to badly_knitted for being a cheerleader and looking it over and also to the majorly talented Fiendish_thingy for being my artist despite all her travelling.

Concrit appreciated and Comments = <3

Art by Fiendish_Thingy(crystalwebbart@yahoo.com)

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Chapter 1

I still can't believe I let him convince me to come with him. All that time he'd been begging me while on the Valiant while in his freakishly old state and it had given me such joy to tell him no. But once he was back to his ridiculously bouncy state of mind part of me was glad that Lucy had shot me. It had only punctured one of my hearts and he'd taken great pleasure in using his medical encyclopaedias as a guide to fix me since I refused to regenerate. I had grown way too attached to my present body and it was definitely one of my hottest. He'd spent days observing me as I recovered, reading me crappy novels with no real plot and forcing food down my throat. To go from the darkest Time Lord in existence to this was so humiliating.

"Why didn't you just let me die?" I sighed, as he paused to lick his thumb before turning a page, a habit I found quite annoying.

"Because you're just like me, and we're all the other has got. I wasn't going to lose you so easily," he said, keeping his gaze fixed on the book before him, taking to reading it to himself since I obviously wasn't interested.

"You really are a sentimental fool, you know that? We are not the same. You can't hear the drums and I sure as hell didn't destroy Gallifrey."

"Don't start that again or I will sedate you," he sighed, finally giving up on the reading as he folded the corner of the page over before closing it.

"Now now, Doctor, is that any way to treat your patient? By threatening them?" I smirked.

"You seem to be doing just fine to me. Now, if you're quite finished, I should check how that bullet wound is healing," he said quietly, getting up and putting the book on the seat before moving towards my bed.

I rolled my eyes as he undid the buttons of my shirt, his gaze fixed on the task like he couldn't bear to meet my gaze in case I tried to push something into his mind. Spoil sport.

"I did hear that, you know," he murmured, pushing the material away from my chest and gently pulling the bandage off the wound.

"Why doesn't that surprise me? Do you ever get out of my head?"

"It's not deliberate. Now shut up a minute."

I pushed my gaze up to meet the ceiling of what he'd dubbed the medical bay and gritted my teeth as he tugged the last of the bandage off and started to unwrap another almost instantly.

"Don't you need to give it air or something?" I asked, trying to ignore the way the feeling of his fingertips brushing over what was steadily becoming scar tissue made chills move through me and made my still working heart race.

'No, Koschei....you aren't a teenager anymore....not gonna happen.'

I dared to take a glance at him and see if he'd heard; from the look on his face, he had. Fuck.

"Glad to know I still affect you with a touch, Koschei."

I remained silent with my gaze back on the ceiling until he was done and had rebuttoned my shirt.

"Can you leave me alone a while? I think I need some sleep," I murmured, turning on my side so my back was to him.

"Sure....I have a feeling the TARDIS is about to land somewhere anyway," he said, picking up his book. His footsteps soon echoed out of the room. He locked the door behind him like always and I sighed softly as I stared at the wall.

I hadn't really thought much about how he and I used to be on Gallifrey until that touch. To a degree we'd been like the power couple of the Academy in our year, Him the brains and me the looks, or so I was told though I would always maintain that we were both brains and brawn and together no one could stop us. We'd gone through adolescence together, been each other's first everything but as soon as the drums took their hold I'd walked out and left him there. I know it had been heartless but taking him with me would have distracted me, though that's not to say I didn't think about him every minute of every day. Each time I saw him he was different...nothing like the adorable knowledgeable yet sexy Theta who knew how to have me on my knees with my wrists tied to the bottom of his bed begging for release. This tenth regeneration was the closest to the original and maybe that was why I wanted him so much now.

I bit my lip and let the drugs he'd pumped into my system take their hold. Pushing my mind back to when it all began.

The Deca Society had always been just an excuse for them to debate about things that no-one else in their population would understand and build on their own knowledge with other perspectives. Yet even then Theta had been reserved. He'd sat on the sidelines,

staring into space and occasionally glaring at him for bringing him in the first place. It was his fault and he would openly admit it. He got nervous surrounded by peers he had no interest in getting to know and little to no control over as was evident by a few scuffles which had broke out in previous meetings. Theta was his world, best friend and non biological brother since they met on Mount Perdition when they were six. Yet his parents pushed him to try and make more influential friends when really he couldn't care less. If they weren't Theta he wasn't interested, simple as that.

The day it happened Theta had been quieter than normal, sitting on the nearest bench with his face buried in a book while he and the others debated whatever was on their minds. Every so often he'd take a glance at his friend, when someone butted in but never once did Theta glare at him or even look at him. It was perplexing...he only seemed to feel complete when Theta looked at him or he had his attention. He'd never realised before that moment how his friend could make his hearts race when he smiled or laughed, both of which were rare to begin with, but now were becoming next to impossible.

He sighed as Magnus and Jelpax argued a bit more intensely than was necessary and let his gaze rest on Theta, resisting the urge to leave the table they were sitting around to get his attention.

Finally the rest of the crowd left the room to cause philosophical mischief elsewhere, leaving him and Theta alone. Theta was pushing his book into his bag while he pushed the chairs back into their respective places to postpone the need to leave, but finally he couldn't make himself ignore the silence anymore.

"So, you were quiet today."

Theta slid off the bench he'd been perched on and slung the bag over his shoulder with a shrug.

"Not much to say. I've heard you guys debating the origin of the Untempered Schism for weeks. It gets kinda boring."

"You won't even look at me." Jesus, where had that come from? When did he become a clingy bitch who needed reassurance?

Theta frowned like he hadn't even noticed. Well, either that or he was coming up with a smart comeback, before speaking.

"I was reading, Kosch, I don't have two pairs of eyes."

"That's not what I mean. Before the meeting you didn't either. You won't even look at me now. What's the deal?"

Theta finally looked at him with a small smile on his lips like he was relieved he had actually noticed.

"Yes, I was, you just didn't catch me."

"I find that hard to believe somehow," he said sceptically as he pushed his own bag off his shoulder and into the only remaining chair out of place.

"Well, you have been very unobservant recently," Theta said, leaning against the bench as he checked nothing had dropped out his bag during a fight they walked through before the meeting.

"I have not!"

"You have. I've never seen you look so distracted before," Theta said, the frown

returning to his face like it was a puzzle he knew he should know the answer to. It didn't help, if anything the sight of his friend biting his lower lip was even more distracting than normal.

Before he could stop himself, his hands were resting on Theta's cheeks and his lips were brushing his. He felt Theta stiffen with surprise before he tried to coax him to open his lips with his tongue. It took a while before Theta gave in, his friend's fingertips brushing down the side of his neck teasingly, causing a chill down his spine. He didn't even realise they were moving until he heard Theta squeak when his back collided with the closed door. His hearts were practically racing as the kiss deepened and he had never felt so complete before.

Finally he let Theta's lips move away from his to catch his breath and smiled as Theta's finger tips grazed his cheeks like he was seeing him for the first time.

"Whoa..." he finally breathed, his blue eyes locked with Theta's brown.

"You should have said something sooner if that kiss is anything to go by," Theta whispered a smile on his face as he pressed a light kiss to the tip of his nose, his hands resting on his waist to keep him from making a run for it. But there was nowhere he would rather be at that moment.

"I would have...if I had any idea you'd react that way." He grinned, causing Theta to blush and bite his swollen bottom lip.

"So what do we do now? Pretend you were high on something or...?"

"No, this happened and I wanted it to. I refuse to pretend it didn't...I just...I don't know." He sighed, resting his forehead against his friend's.

"If it makes you feel any better, I'm willing to follow your lead on this."

"Wow, there's a first," he teased, causing Theta to roll his eyes and attempt to walk away, a movement he stopped with a kiss.

"I'm sorry...I'm sorry. I'll let you know soon...promise," he said softly, brushing his thumb against Theta's cheek causing his friend to squirm a little with emotion and the mere fact there was going to be waiting involved. Theta had never exactly been the most patient Time Lord in existence.

"I'd better go...my parents expect me home for a big family dinner," Theta sighed, meeting his lips in one last kiss before reluctantly sliding from between the door and his body to pick up his bag from the floor, "I'll see you tomorrow."

"Sure. Good luck with the family."

Theta screwed up his nose in obvious annoyance as he put his bag on his shoulder and left the room, leaving him to smile to himself at the fact he finally knew what he wanted and nothing was ever going to take him away from him.

Once I heard the humming of the TARDIS landing, I opened my eyes and rubbed the bridge of my nose with my thumb and index finger as I heard the sound of the Doctor's sneakers thudding against the floor towards the room I was occupying. Since he had first pulled me on the TARDIS the Doctor had been refusing to let me out for fear of me running away and causing mischief, despite the fact that I was still pretty injured and had next to no

desire to leave him, as weird as that may seem. I thought he was probably running around trying to find his coat or something but as I was rolling carefully onto my back to stare at the ceiling again I heard the lock to the door of the room open and turned my gaze toward it to see the Doctor with a bright smile on his face.

"What are you looking so happy for? I thought you'd be checking out the planet or something. Isn't that what you normally do?" I sighed, rubbing my eyes.

"Pfft, it's no fun looking at a new planet alone. I thought you'd know that by now, Master," he said, offering me some clothes which he'd probably grabbed from the TARDIS wardrobe before helping me up.

"Wait, what? I thought you refused to let me out of the TARDIS," I said in disbelief as he pulled the covers back and helped me to my feet.

"Yeah, about that...as long as you promise you won't run off...or anything...I won't put the handcuffs on. Sound fair?" he asked, picking up my clothes and leading me behind the oriental painted screen in the corner for changing.

"Yeah, I guess so...where are we anyway?" I asked, grabbing the top of the screen for balance once he let go of me and watching him throw the clothes over the top to make it easier for me.

"Merant, the planet with the best sunset in the Beatrix galaxy. It's not the best planet for anything else, really, but I think the TARDIS assumed you could do with some air," the Doctor said from the other side of the screen as I dressed myself as much as possible without needing his help, which was mostly my lower

half and putting my arms through the sleeves of my shirt.

"That's very generous of her...but seriously I've never been a nature lover...and I'm sure, if I remember rightly, that's all Merant is made up of...forests and natural landmarks." I sighed, sliding my feet in the slip on sneakers before edging out from behind the screen so he could help me with the rest.

"Yeah, but come on. A little fresh air and a good sunset with some good company will do wonders for your recovery." He grinned, buttoning my shirt for me before guiding my arms into the blazer over the top.

"If you say so....though you do remember you aren't a real Doctor, right?" I teased, watching him smirk and roll his eyes playfully as he rested his arm around my waist and led the way out my room.

Finally we reached the open TARDIS doors and I had to admit that Merant had a good reputation for its sunsets for a perfectly good reason. The sky was filled with a beautiful array of colour that could easily give Gallifrey's sky a run for its money. So many bright shades of pinks, purples, red and oranges mixed together, taking my breath away in amazement. The Doctor was probably poking around in my mind as he smiled when I put my hand on the small of his back to keep my balance.

"I know, it's beautiful, isn't it? But wait until you see the view," he said softly in my ear before making me inch forward.

It was then I realised the TARDIS had parked on the top of a cliff and he was leading me towards the edge. For a moment I wanted to ask if he was really that crazy but he stopped

us before we were on the very edge and I tore my gaze from the sunset to see the view below. It was a gorge much like the Grand Canyon on Earth, only a waterfall was flowing from the cliff opposite us and a river flowed along the bottom of the canyon, bringing a smile to my lips.

"The TARDIS really does pick them, doesn't she?" I whispered as he rested his head on my shoulder.

"Oh yeah, she's a smart one, alright. You feel like going for a bit of a dip?" he asked with a mischievous smile on his face that reminded me way too much of Theta. My hearts raced at the prospect of us being able to have some kind of physical interaction that didn't depend on my bandage needing to be changed.

"That depends..." I chimed, tearing my gaze from the waterfall to look at him.

"On what?" he asked, raising an eyebrow.

"On if there is some ulterior motive behind you bringing us here?" I asked, tilting my head as I met his gaze though he quickly looked back at the waterfall.

"What do you mean?"

"You know exactly what I mean. You were tuned into my thoughts before, weren't you? Of when we were back at the Academy and when we were together," I asked, though he refused to meet my gaze again which answered my question more than words ever would.

"So is that a no?"

"Doctor.....Theta, you know I would love nothing more than to swim....to kiss and be with you again but...."

"No. No buts," he whispered, pressing his finger against my lips and making me sigh against it as I grabbed his hand by the wrist and pulled it away from my lips.

"Theta...really. If you wanted to be with me again you should have just said something instead of plotting a course here."

"Hey, I didn't!"

"Don't lie. You're really no good at it when I'm here. I know you well enough to know that you would never just come out and say you want to be with me again because I'm a different person to the one you used to be in love with. So I'm going to give you a straight answer. No, I don't want to go for a dip until you have the guts to tell me what you're feeling. It's really that simple. Now...if you don't mind...I'm tired from all the wildlife on this planet I think I'll go back to the TARDIS and get a bit more sleep before we go to wherever we're going next." I sighed, letting go of his back and ignoring his hand on my waist as I started the walk towards the TARDIS alone, his gaze boring into the small of my back.

Yet once I arrived at the TARDIS, its previously opened doors slammed shut in my face and I heard a click as it locked itself from the inside causing a frown to appear on my face. What the hell?

"DOCTOR!" I yelled angrily. If he had something to do with this, I was going to be pissed.

"Yeah?" he asked, his voice not its usual chirpy tone, probably due to what I said before, as he approached me.

"The TARDIS has locked me out!"

He sighed and pulled out his sonic screwdriver, tracing the edge of the doors with it before groaning at the readings.

"Well?"

"She obviously thinks we have issues to sort out because she's sealed herself shut," he said, clicking the screwdriver closed and pushing it back in his pocket before turning to look at me.

"Damnit, why are TARDIS' always so damned emotional? No wonder they're mostly all female!" I spat, though from the way it whirled inside I knew it was insulted.

"Hey, no need to take it out on her. She thinks she's doing me a favour, ok?" he said softly, pushing his hands in the pockets of his trousers.

"Perfect....just damn perfect." I sighed, walking away so that there was a few metres between me and the TARDIS and him before sitting down.

"Look...can't we just try and talk this out so she'll at least unseal herself?" he asked, standing before me.

"Whatever," I grumbled, leaning back on my elbows with my gaze fixed on the sky.

He sat down cross-legged beside me and rested his hand on my thigh, causing me to reluctantly look at him. He was picking at stray pieces of the green moss covering the cliff under us between his fingers. He used to do the same when he was younger on Gallifrey, always picked blades of red grass from the fields when we were talking about things that made him nervous. Some things never changed.

"Look....I do want you, Koschei...really. I've missed you like you wouldn't believe but, seriously, I'm not sure I can have a relationship with you the way I used to. I've seen all the bad in you and back then I honestly thought I would still love you no matter what you did. But after what happened with the Toclafane, all those people you killed....the way you tortured those people I know. It's not so easy to get passed or forget that," he said softly.

I said nothing, just turned my gaze back up to the sky.

"I honestly thought there was nothing that could make me stop loving you, Kosch...and maybe some part of me still does. I guess I just need the time to come to terms with this new side of you before I make my move," he said, the sound of another clump of moss being torn up from the ground following his words before silence fell around us.

Never had I thought his words would hurt so much. I mean, don't get me wrong, I knew he was right and there was nothing I could do to change what I'd done without screwing up my own timeline ten times over but it didn't stop it hurting. The only person I'd never stop loving, no matter the situation, was giving up on me. And there was nothing I could do to stop it without seeming desperate.

It probably showed on my face when I refused to say anything because he bit his lip and swallowed.

"At least you're finally being honest," I said hoarsely before pushing myself to my feet, ignoring the pain I got from my wound, and walking towards the TARDIS, which was now open again.

"Kosch," he said softly after me, making my hearts ache.

"I'm going to bed," I said over my shoulder, biting my lip as I entered the TARDIS and made my way through the corridors towards my room. I slammed and locked the door to the room behind me before undressing and changing into a pair of new pyjamas on the pillow before curling up under the covers on my side. I heard him pacing the corridor outside, probably raking his fingers through his hair as he realised how much he had messed up something which was already imperfect to begin with, and swallowed as I stared at the wall, willing myself to fall sleep.

But that was easier said than done with more memories of us together haunting my subconscious.

Chapter 2

Since they had met on the mountain for the first time it was becoming something of a regular meeting place for them outside of the Academy. Koschei's parents didn't much like Theta being around the house and, while Theta's family, parents included, were welcoming, hanging around with his forty three cousins and Irving always seemed to ruin the mood. It was easy to just meet without all the embarrassing teasing and questions which Koschei really had no idea how to answer.

For once Koschei was late for their nightly meeting, his parents obviously knowing his plans as they tried to keep him at the dinner table longer than usual, not that he cared what they thought about his friendship or relationship with Theta. It was his business and his own decision to decide who he wanted to be with.

If it happened to be a descendant from the house of Lungbarrow then they would just have to deal.

He stepped carefully amongst the red grass towards the large Kaden-Wood tree, where the silver leaves glittered in the light of the two moons, at the base of the mountain. Theta was sitting with his back rested against the tree's trunk, dressed in his usual out of school robes style of red pants, black shirt and a blazer with his house's crest embroidered in the breast pocket. His face was buried in a book and his mind was obviously elsewhere by the way his gaze was clouded over. But, as he got closer, he could see the lines engraved on Theta's forehead as he frowned, his gaze flickering every so often to the watch on a gold chain which was usually rested against his chest but was being used as a temporary bookmark.

"Hey, sorry I'm late."

Theta kept his gaze on the book. His brown eyes slipped back into focus as he nodded to show he'd heard. Koschei sunk into the grass beside him.

"My parents were trying to keep me away from you again." The words slipped out before he could stop himself. Theta deserved an explanation even if he didn't like it.

Again Theta nodded indifferently in acknowledgment as though they were discussing school work instead of Koschei's parents' hatred of him. It caused Koschei to sigh and guide Theta's book out of his eye line so he could at least pretend he was paying attention.

"Hey...you ok? It isn't like you to be so quiet when I mention my parents..." Koschei frowned.

"I thought you were standing me up again...that's all." Theta shrugged, his gaze still fixated on the page, his fingers playing with the chain of the watch.

"I told you I was sorry! My parents waited until the last minute to tell me I needed to take care of Borana while they were at the Citadel."

"...I know. I just...I'm starting to wonder if this is such a good idea, Kosch. Is this thing between us worth fighting for if your family hates you for being with me?" Theta sighed, sliding the watch's chain out the book before closing it and settling it in his lap.

"Hey, we've been over this a million times. I don't care what they think and neither should you. We're together...that's what matters," Koschei said, crawling in front of Theta and

brushing his fingers through Theta's hair soothingly.

"I know...I just can't stand the thought of you leaving me if we've been through all this for nothing," Theta murmured, his eyes locked with the bright blue of his lover's as though begging for reassurance.

"I'm not going anywhere, promise." Koschei smiled, his fingertips tracing down Theta's sideburns and jaw line until his thumb and index finger had his chin trapped between them and directed his lips to his own.

The book thudded out of Theta's lap onto the dirt in front of him as he pushed himself up on to his knees to deepen the kiss longingly, causing Koschei to smile and graze his fingers over skin until it rested on the back of his neck.

The kiss was deep and thorough, praying for the comfort that Koschei's words couldn't seem to give him but it all seemed to melt away forgotten when their tongues brushed together. Finally Theta rested himself in his lover's lap, nose tracing a trail up and down Koschei's neck like he was indulging the natural scent of the Schlenk blossom which stuck to his skin and could never be explained. Koschei rested his arms around him and his chin on the top of Theta's head.

"I was thinking about you today..." Koschei murmured against Theta's hair, his nose indulging in the scent of spring rain which always seemed to emit from his every pore.

"Really?"

"While I was at Ktrin practice, I think my instructor could tell with my lack of concentration. Well, that and the fact I kept pinning my partner harder than necessary."

"What specifically were you thinking about?"

"It's kinda...x-rated."

Theta pulled back and raised an eyebrow.

"X-rated? I thought you didn't want that...that you were happy with the way things are?"

Theta asked, meeting his gaze uncertainly.

"I am...but it doesn't stop a guy from thinking about how much he wishes things would go further. It's been a while since I even considered it but whenever I look at you I just...it's hard to stop my thoughts."

"So you want to?"

"Yeah....I guess I do. But only when you're ready, I'm not going to force you to do anything you don't want to, Theta, and I'm not going to leave you if you don't want to."

Theta bit his lip and slid out of Koschei's lap as he looked at the watch which was now resting back around his neck.

"It's late...I should probably go before Glospin squeals on me to my parents," he said, picking up the book and brushing the dirt from the leather bound cover as he got to his feet.

"Theta...I didn't mean to...don't go."

Koschei watched the other part of his heart give a weak smile as he kissed his forehead.

"I know. I'll see you tomorrow."

Theta walked in the other direction to the one Koschei had approached from and Koschei sighed as he leaned back against the tree's trunk, wanting to sew his lips together for letting his wants be voiced when they hadn't discussed anything of the kind before. Theta obviously hadn't been ready to hear how he

practically ached for him physically when he wasn't around, how his body was restless at night with the need to touch and fill Theta. Why did he have to be so stupid?

For the next two nights Theta didn't appear at the tree. He avoided Koschei at the Academy and even on those occasions when they were in the same class or at Deca meetings. He didn't say a word or even give him a glance. It was a whole new level of hell, filled with unease, and Koschei felt the silence twice as hard since he had never experienced it from Theta before. While the drums made up for it, it wasn't the same. They couldn't kiss him or make him feel better after a bad day of Ktrin practice or a lecture from his parents.

Just as he was getting ready to give up one night while leaning against the tree's trunk and staring at the moons he heard the sound of hesitant footsteps approaching him. He licked his lips as he prayed it wasn't either his parents or any other family member coming to tell him to get back to Oakdown. The feel of a figure sinking into his lap and kissing his lips quickly dispelled that thought from his mind.

He rested his hands on Theta's hips and couldn't believe the amount of relief that surged through him at the physical contact.

"I'm sorry Kosch, I didn't mean to ignore you. I just needed some time to think about what you want," Theta whispered, his long fingers brushing against his cheeks soothingly.

"I told you I didn't mean to..."

"I know but I guess there's a part of me that, while not as dominant as yours, wants to be with you like that. I'm just a little...."

"...scared? Theta, I'm not exactly the most confident of people when it comes to stuff like this. Imagine what I'm feeling," he murmured, brushing kisses against Theta's neck and causing a moan from the back of his throat.

Their lips brushed together again before Theta could respond verbally and it felt like it was something completely new. A new sense of understanding passed between them which they had previously lacked, complete with a synchronised set of movements like they knew what the other was thinking and wishing for, like a spark had been ignited. Before either of them could stop themselves, Koschei had guided Theta onto his back amongst the red strands of grass, their lips still connected as Koschei's fingers slid under the material covering Theta's chest and pushed it over his head. His fingertips grazed up and down his sides once the material barrier was gone, causing Theta's back to arch against the dirt for more contact as their mouths gasped and groaned breathlessly together.

After a few minutes passed with their hearts racing against their rib cages, the realisation hit them and caused Theta's brown eyes to widen as though he wasn't sure if he was ready to continue. A gentle kiss to his collarbone from Koschei seemed to relax his body and mind a little.

"I'm not going to continue if I don't have your agreement, Theta..." Koschei whispered softly, his gaze locked with his lover's as he pressed a kiss to the bare skin of his stomach.

"You're kind of making it hard to say no," Theta murmured, arching his back for more attention, causing a sly but innocent smile to appear on Koschei's lips.

"Well, you know me, I'm usually all for coaxing agreements in my favour, but with you it's different. If you still need time to think, then tell me now. Because I swear, once I get started, I won't be able to stop myself. Even if Gallifrey was on the verge of destruction I would be able to tear myself from your skin," Koschei whispered.

Theta bit his lips, a gesture which screamed to Koschei that he needed more time. But as he was about to slide off his hips, he heard Theta groan one word.

"Wait!"

He stiffened and sunk back into Theta's lap, causing him to moan in appreciation.

"I want this," Theta murmured, certainty filling his voice and making Koschei smile as he leaned over him.

"You're sure?"

"Absolutely positive. Now kiss me," Theta gasped needily, grabbing hold of him by his shirt in a way that said there was no way Koschei could ever turn him down.

He let himself be pulled into the kiss, his hands brushing under his robes as he brushed his body against that of his lover, whose fingers raked through his hair, directing his head so it tilted enough for their tongues to play.

All he wanted was to explore Theta's body like it was his own personal playground, a playground nothing could tear him from. He felt Theta's fingers moving under the bottom of his shirt, pulling it over his head so his hair was a mess, but he barely thought of it as their lips moved back together like magnets. His skin shivered in anticipation as Theta's fingertips

brushed patterns over his shoulder blades and the small of his back. He murmured as his hearts raced against his chest, reluctantly letting Theta's lips move from his until they were following his jaw line and neck.

His fingers moved until they were resting on the catch of his pants, Theta crooning longingly for the pressure of the material to be rid from his skin. With his lips fixated on Theta's skin the whole time, he removed both of their pants and grazed his fingers gently over Theta's hips and thighs, watching his lover begin to pant and gasp for more.

Their lips moved back together while his hands manoeuvred their bodies so Theta's front was resting on the soil, the red grass brushing his sensitive skin as his fingers gently slid into his entrance, his lips brushing soothingly against his back as he sensed each hitch of breath in pain.

"Shhh, Theta, It's ok," he whispered as he inched his third finger inside Theta's body tentatively. Theta's body bucked against the ground needily.

He pulled his fingers out gently one at a time when he was sure of the muscles being relaxed enough and gently edged the head of his cock at the hole. Theta hissed and seemed to seek out his lips for reassurance and he moved his head awkwardly to willingly comply.

He thrust inside in one movement, his lips moving to his neck to distract him from the discomfort with nips and sucks to the delicate skin. The pace gradually became more erratic, Theta's hand fishing behind him to grab hold of his hip to encourage him though he was doing that more than enough with the sounds emitting from his lips, combined with the

breathless sound of him saying his name over and over again.

Their two bodies moulding together seemed to move as if they were one being and that thought in itself mixed with all the lust filled thoughts Theta couldn't seemed to shield him from at that moment seemed to send him over the edge. He came around to find himself panting against Theta's shoulder blade.

"You ok?" he whispered, pressing a kiss to an especially abused patch of skin above his pulse spot.

"Better than ok...aside from the fact I'll need a bath to get rid of all the dirt. You?" Theta asked.

"I've never been better. You ok for me to pull out?" he whispered softly.

"I think so...just...be gentle, it's still a bit sensitive," Theta said, his voice timid with a sense of tiredness, like he'd been in a fight and just wanted to go home.

He slowly eased himself out of his lover, hearing the hitch of pain as he pushed himself off Theta and lay down beside him in the dirt. He rested his hand on the small of Theta's back to pull him closer and press a kiss to his lips before turning his gaze to the sky and staring at the moons. Theta was the one who reluctantly pushed himself up, after capturing his mouth in a kiss he was never going to forget, and began to sort through the pile of clothes beside them.

Neither of them spoke as they dressed, though once all their skin was covered all he wanted to do was strip them from him and do it again and again. Any excuse so he didn't have to hide himself from him again. He met Theta's gaze

when he turned to him and gave a smile in response to the one he saw on his features.

"I should go home before they notice I'm gone. See you at the academy tomorrow?" he asked, pushing himself up on to his knees.

He nodded and pulled him close for another deeper kiss before watching Theta disappear into the darkened landscape. He turned his gaze to Gallifrey's moons and smiled to himself as he leaned back against the tree's trunk.

Chapter 3

I woke what seemed like days later to the sound of echoing throughout the TARDIS. I managed to push myself out of the bed. As I approached the door, I dragged my IV, which I realised had been reapplied to my arm while I slept, with me. I tried it and felt anger building at the fact that it was still locked.

"Come on! What is it with you and locking doors? Open it just this once!"

I waited, though I was sure it would ignore me. The door slid open and I let a small smile of thanks appear on my face.

"Thanks..."

I swear I heard it whirl in response but tried not to think too much about it as I walked the corridors until I reached the 'engine room'. There I saw the Doctor apparently arguing with a young blonde woman dressed in what I could only describe as army fatigues. She had a familiar look of indignation on her face that I couldn't place.

"Of all the things you could have done, Jenny! I left Messaline thinking you were gone and then out of the blue there you were in the middle of a damned Zyaulhian war!"

"I can explain that if you would just listen!"

"I'm sure you can! I'd really like to hear it!"

"Dad, I didn't think..."

"Wait, DAD?"

Both the Doctor and the blonde turned to look at me. The Doctor definitely looked pained at the sight of me, his words from on Merant obviously still haunting him.

"Who's this?" the girl asked, curiously taking a glance at the Doctor out the corner of her eye as she circled me like a cat.

"No-one, stop that!" the Doctor snapped at her before turning his gaze on me. "So, you're finally up then?"

"Yep, there's only so long I can sleep, even with drugs in my system. So, you have a daughter.....since when?" I asked, close to collapsing from laughter and the pain in my chest that seemed to appear from nowhere at the knowledge.

"Long story. Look, Jenny, why don't you go explore or something? I need to talk to Mr. Nobody.....but don't you dare leave the TARDIS, this isn't over!" the Doctor said, alternating between giving me and Jenny menacing glares.

"Sure..." Jenny said giving me a weird look as she pushed past me into the depths of the TARDIS, leaving me clinging to the IV as I leaned against the wall.

"Do I dare ask which species you decided to reproduce with?" I asked with a failed attempt at a grin.

"I haven't reproduced with anyone.....haven't been with anyone but you." He sighed, running his fingers through his hair. The pain was still obvious in his eyes.

"Don't bullshit me, Doctor, I just saw her....."

He rolled his eyes and grabbed me by the arm, steering me toward the TARDIS' seat, like he could sense I was close to falling over. He made me sit down before he even tried to explain.

"I'm not bullshitting. It just happened when I was on Messaline. They just kind of pushed my

hand into a diploid conversion unit and there she was. Trained to fight and as hyper as me."

"And, from the sounds of it, just as stubborn."

He glared at me but I merely kept the fake smirk on my lips.

"So, why didn't you mention her before?"

He ran his long fingers through his hair as he paced back and forth.

"Maybe because I was sure it was none of your business. Besides, when I left Messaline, I was sure that she was dead."

"She looks pretty alive to me. You should have known she would recover. I mean, if she's like you, she'd regenerate."

He sighed and sank into the chair opposite me and buried his face in his hands.

"I had a feeling.....I just didn't know to what extent it would be. If it would be a full regeneration or.....just a case of healing. I know for sure that she has two hearts but I don't know if she has any other Gallifreyan traits, Koschei." He sighed.

"Did you mention anything about the family business?" I asked softly, getting up from my seat and sitting beside him with my hand resting on his back, tracing patterns on the back of his tweed jacket.

"I mentioned the whole time and interplanetary travel but I didn't go into the detail....there is only so much you can tell someone when you're running for your life," he said, looking at me like he was surprised I was being so calm after Merant.

"I know....but, Theta, she is your daughter. Even if it's only really biological instead of paternal. She's like us and maybe we should tell her more....like the stuff we were told at the academy," I said, tilting my head as his gaze continued to move over my face. Out of nowhere the image of me on all fours on his bed while he thrust into me entered my mind and I took a glance at him to see he was biting his lip like he was trying to assure me all was not lost. That was definitely him then.

"Ewww, do you have to be so graphic?!" Jenny's voice echoed and I immediately felt like burying my face in my hands. For years I'd been without even the inkling that he wanted me again; now he did and he had his beloved daughter here eavesdropping on our private thoughts.

"....but first maybe you should teach her how to block thoughts. I'm sure her mind, as well as ours, would appreciate it," I said.

"I'm sorry..." he said, leaning his forehead against mine and letting the sight of the two of us in a deep kiss enter my thoughts. My hearts jumped in my chest and I felt his lips brush mine softly in reality before he got up from beside me to try and find Jenny.

"You should get some more rest, Koschei. I dare say, me and Jenny bitching will get a bit boring," he said.

"Sure....Come get me if you need some back up on the basics or whatever," I told him, pushing myself out of the chair and slowly edging towards the corridor that led towards my room. He stopped me with a hand on my shoulder to press a kiss to my temple before running ahead.

As if the TARDIS hadn't been full enough with just the two of us....Now we had to put up with the Doctor's daughter.

Chapter 4

It was fairly boring being in my room, even if it was a relief to be moved from the medical bay to my own room, without him there incessantly checking on me or trying to strike up conversation with old subjects of debate we hadn't touched in years. Neither of us locked the door, like we were waiting for the other to say something, but he would still come at regular intervals to put a food tray on my table, check my wound and bring me some old Gallifreyan text to occupy my thoughts from anything that could be considered graphic by little Miss Time Lady. I was still getting a little bored so it was fairly surprising while I was reading *The Book of the Old Time* for the six hundredth time to look up and see said little Miss Time Lady hovering in the doorway, rocking back and forth from heels to toes and back again. Yep, she was definitely the Doctor's daughter.

"There something I can help you with? Because I'm not an animal here for your amusement." I sighed, turning the book I was reading upside down carefully and resting it in my lap.

"Sorry. I just...well...." She had a similar look on her face to him when he wanted to talk about something but didn't want to upset me. She reluctantly edged into the room and hesitated before she reached the bed.

"You just, what?"

"I don't get what you are to my Dad.....and he refuses to tell me. But from what I saw in that thought....."

"Which I'm praying you will never bring up again..."

"...there is something more between you, isn't there?"

"We've just known each other a long time, that's all." I sighed, staring at the ceiling and hoping that that answer would satisfy her, since even I didn't know what was between us at the moment. Ever her father's daughter, I heard a chair been pulled up to the bed.

"I know that. I mean, I can read your thoughts, remember?"

"God, you're as bad as he is!" I snapped, rolling onto my side and screwing my eyes closed.

"You were known as Koschei and Theta back then, right?" she asked.

"Yes." I sighed again, my eyes still closed.

"And you really loved him, didn't you? Before he left, I mean."

I screwed my eyes even tighter closed and could practically hear myself crying the night I discovered he was gone without so much as a word. I was only young by Time Lord standards and he had promised to stay with me....we'd only just started admitting our feelings. He came back a year later....I hadn't spoken to him the whole next year...

"...he thought about you that whole year, you know," she said softly, hesitantly.

"He never said anything about why he left...." I said, burying my face in my pillow.

"I could tell you..."

"NO! Don't! If he wants to tell me, he'll tell me."

"Ok.....but you were lovers....weren't you?"

I dared to roll over and face her; there was a look of understanding in her blue eyes as she looked at me. No disgust, no irritation, just understanding and the need to learn more about her father and the man he kept locked up in the TARDIS, not that I can blame her.

"Yeah...we were...in every way on Gallifrey possible. And, believe me, there are a lot of ways," I said, staring up at her as she crossed her booted feet at the ankle.

"And you were together how long?"

"...nine years."

"Really?"

I nodded silently and bit my lip.

"So how did it end?"

"I left."

"Just him or..."

"No...I left Gallifrey around the same time Rasillion was going crazy. We said our goodbyes but then I found out he'd stayed behind to try and save the world. I stupidly left him there alone to watch the destruction of our home planet.....I'm often sure that that's what has traumatised him so much that he couldn't even bare to be with me in any way but....just little pictures in my head. Glimmers of hope which are destined to never become reality."

"I know he still loves you if that's any consolation."

I gave a weak smile and heard footsteps as the Doctor probably came looking for Jenny.

"He'll probably know we've had this conversation.....but regardless....don't say

anything, ok? If anything ever happens between us....I don't want to push him."

"Sure."

I rolled back on to my side so my back was to the door and heard her get up and put the chair away. I then heard murmuring as father and daughter spoke, before one entity left the room. I could sense one still lingering and, from the feel of it, searching my mind for something. But, when they didn't find what they wanted, I heard footsteps approaching my bed and a hand brushing my hair behind my ear. A pair of lips rested against my ear and I soon heard him whisper.

"I do love you...just be patient with me."

His lips brushed my temple and then he was gone. I was left alone in my room to curl up as I stared at the wall and thought of everything we ever had, everything we had thrown away and would probably never get back.

Chapter 5

At the time he had no idea what was happening. His hearts had felt they were exploding into supernovas in his chest. It wasn't until the next day, when he went looking for Theta in all their usual places, that everything seemed to click into place.

He was....gone.

At some point in the middle of the night he had grabbed a TARDIS -- a newly created one, of course -- and left the planet. There was no sign of him leaving a note for him even though that would have been the reasonable thing to do when leaving a lover behind out of the blue. It had felt like a tonne of bricks was dumped over his head when it finally hit home.

He'd barely had the energy to leave, let alone the strength to walk back home at the knowledge he had been left behind like he was nothing but a useless part-time fuck. It was more pain than he had ever experienced before in his life and, while normally he was all for the rush of adrenaline flowing through his nerves, this was different.

Once he reached the house, he avoided his parents' attempts to provoke him and retreated to his room, the fading scent of spring rain filling the atmosphere and reminding him of the last time they were together in the room. Alone.

Angry tears flowed down his cheeks as though Theta had broken an unspoken promise the two had made all those times they were together in each other's beds. How could he do this? Sure, he was erratic sometimes but this was a whole new level. He wasn't sure he would ever be able to forgive him if he came back. No, there was no if.

Theta loved Gallifrey, he'd told him so many times how there was no place in the galaxy like it and that he'd never leave it if he had the choice. He would have been perfectly happy to stay there for his whole thirteen regenerations.

Obviously that was nothing but a load of crap spewed from between his lips in the afterglow of sex. Because, after all, Theta could be so unpredictable, he'd jump into things without thinking about the consequences to himself, his family or his lover.

Rolling across the bed, Koschei pulled the covers over his head as he kicked his shoes off and tried to stop the tears still flowing bitterly down his cheeks, wiping them away with his sleeves and the backs of his hands like a sick man wipes away sweat. The urge to scream was building in his throat, like it wanted to make itself known but what would it accomplish? Theta would still be gone.

How could he do this?

Leave him in this amount of agony alone with no way to ease it? Then again, who really believed in that whole myth of hearts binding together when soul mates were together anyway? Obviously it had happened to them while they weren't paying attention and now one of them was destined to experience this overwhelming pain for the rest of eternity.

In the hopes of stopping the sobs from building, he took a deep, shaky breath against the pillow Theta always used when he was in the bed. The scent of rain flowed through his senses. He attempted to calm his frustration before he threw it off the bed and curled up on the sheets alone, trying to make himself sleep off the exhaustion.

But one thing he knew for sure was that no amount of Theta begging would ever make this right. From this moment on, the other was as good as dead to him...even if his hearts screamed otherwise.

Chapter 6

After a bit more time laying in bed and thinking about the Doctor and me, as well as everything he said to me while we were on Merant, I knew I should probably get up and stretch my legs. It was all well and good keeping away from them while the Doctor was teaching her Gallifreyan things I'd known for several eternities, but I would go even crazier than I naturally was if I had to stare at the same four walls any longer. I made myself get up, grimacing when the IV pinched my arm. I removed it and pulled my blazer over my pyjama shirt before daring to venture out into the corridor. I could hear the sound of thudding boots and the squeak of the Doctor's sneakers against the floor the closer I got towards the engine room. Upon arriving, I saw the two of them practising a method of martial arts we'd been taught as children called ktrin. Jenny's hair was wound up in its ponytail so it resembled a loose bun and didn't get in her face. Her hands were clasped around the wooden post she was using.

The Doctor had removed his long brown coat, which was thrown over one of the two seats near the centre of the TARDIS, as well as his suit jacket. His tie was loose in his shirt's collar and his shirt sleeves were pushed up to reveal his forearms as he moved the que, the wooden post he was holding side to side to keep Jenny from hitting him.

I leaned against the wall as I watched the two, their eyes locking together as though trying to calculate the other's next move before acting. Well, either that or they were communicating telepathically. The Doctor jerked his head at her before acting and I saw her quickly manoeuvre her body to avoid the blow. Definitely a telepathic lesson in progress. From the smoothness of Jenny's moves it was

obvious she was, like the Doctor had described, a born fighter, yet from the way her left index finger kept moving it was obvious she was more used to using a gun than anything else. This would definitely be good for her because the Doctor hated violence...and it was probably time she learned there were many other ways to deal with a situation than by using a primitive metallic weapon.

Finally the two stopped at the same time, approached one another and put their 'weapons' down between their feet. Their gazes remained locked, the Doctor probably giving her his assessment of her performance. From an outsider's perspective -- well, the perspective of someone who had taken the art up professionally anyway -- she had done reasonably well for her first time, although she'd made a few mistakes which would become non-existent with practice.

Jenny's gaze at last broke from the Doctor's as she handed over her que before pulling her hair out to restyle it. She approached the steps towards the higher levels of the TARDIS where a few piles of books were sitting. She picked one of them up, opened it at a page and continued to read quietly.

The Doctor sighed as he let the que rest against the side of the TARDIS, the back of his left hand wiping over his sweaty forehead before tightening up the brown tie in the shirt's collar.

"Bravo," I said as I approached him, watching a smile appear on his face as he looked in the direction of my voice.

"Hey, I thought you were still sleeping or I would have asked you to teach her instead of me," he said teasingly as he brushed his sleeves down his arms.

"I was getting kind of bored being away from all the action so I decided to come and see what you were doing. Though I doubt in my state I'd be much help." I sighed, crossing my arms over my chest and following his lead towards the seats. I could feel Jenny's gaze pinned on us over the book in her hands, like she could read so much about us just by watching us interact.

"Nonsense. As I recall, you were brilliant at ktrin in the academy. Won a few trophies and ribbons. Not to mention that medal you wore while I fucked you." He grinned, sitting down beside me as he buttoned the cuffs of his shirt.

"Ah yes. That was quite a memorable night..." I smiled, leaning against the back of the seat, though the smile faded as I remembered where that medal was now. In my parents' destroyed estate.

He could probably read what I was thinking because his own expression faded and his fingers laced between mine.

"I'm sorry," he whispered, brushing his thumb over my knuckles.

"You know, I hadn't even thought much about that night for a couple of thousand years but back then it was the most important thing in my life. I felt like a winner....I was a winner. I had my lover...and the most prestigious award for ktrin a Time Lord could ever have around my neck. And now I've lost one..."

"...but the other is still right here beside you. Trying to save you," he said, lifting my hand to his lips and brushing the middle reassuringly with them.

I rolled my lips as I gave his hand a squeeze and sighed when he let my hand go to put his

jacket back on. An instance of silence passed between us, probably his attempt to let me remember my glory days a little bit longer before he finally spoke.

"So, what did you think of Jenny's performance? Does she live up to the Master's standard?" he asked, wrapping his coat around my shoulders before sitting back down beside me.

"A few simple mistakes. Nothing that can't be fixed with some practise," I said automatically, hugging the coat close to me as I kept my gaze locked on the floor.

"You think you might want to help her when you're well enough to do so?" he asked, resting his hand on the small of my back which caused me to jerk despite the three layers of clothing keeping his touch from my skin.

"Possibly...after I've practised a bit more myself. It's been centuries since I picked up a que. Never really saw the need to keep up with it after I left Gallifrey," I said, softly.

"It would be something to keep you busy, though...keep your mind focused on other things," he murmured in my ear, causing me to swallow nervously and meet his gaze out of the corner of my eye. A sight of me laid out on my back on the seat with him above me flashed into my vision and my heart ached for it to be a reality.

"I'll give it some thought," I said tenderly, resting my free hand on his cheek and giving a small smile.

He pressed a short but soft kiss to my lips before pulling away, a sadness in his eyes making them glow like his guilt of what happened to Gallifrey had never fully gone

away. I swallowed as I watched him pick up the que and return them to wherever he'd got them from.

As expected, once he was out of the room, Jenny's boots thudded down the steps towards where I was sitting, her book forgotten in her hand as she approached.

"Koschei?" she said softly, as she sat on the seat beside me.

"Hmm?" I asked, not even bothering to correct her pronunciation as I pulled the Doctor's coat closer around me. I felt like Koschei now more than ever, the Master seeming like just a distant memory I wasn't sure I could ever see myself being again.

"You ok?" she asked, letting her hands hang between her knees, her blue gaze fixated on my face like she could see the same thing the Doctor had seen when he mentioned that medal. A sense of sorrow I had never been able to get over at losing my home planet.

"Yeah, fine. Just memories, that's all," I said, burying my nose in the lapel of the Doctor's coat.

"Of being back on Gallifrey or being with him?" she asked gently.

"Both and neither." I said, knowing it didn't make much sense. I honestly couldn't describe which out of the two was worse.

"I have to say, it was sweet seeing the two of you like that. I know you're both your own individual and strong persons but it's obvious you need each other," she said.

"Maybe. We are the last Time Lords in existence. But I don't want that to be the reason he wants to be with me again. If it

is....well, I'll just have to make myself clear, won't I?" I said, meeting her gaze.

"Maybe," she said softly as she looked down at her boots, worrying her lip between her teeth.

"Something wrong? I mean, I know the Doctor's been filling your head with Gallifrey stuff but he's probably used to the same pace we would learn things," I said.

"No, it's not that....it's just...Dad kinda pulled me off the battle field....and I had two companions with me. I'm a bit worried about them, I hope nothing's happened or else Armand will never forgive me." She sighed.

"Armand?" I asked.

"My partner," she said with a soft wistful smile that faded when we both heard a "YOUR WHAT?" from behind us.

Oh god, here comes the overly protective father act.

I flashed Jenny a small smile as I got to my feet, shrugging the Doctor's coat from my form and passing him as he emerged from the corridor.

"Dad...if you hadn't been so damned fixated on telling me all this stuff, I might have told you sooner," Jenny said, her eyes practically glowing with passion and accusation as she met the Doctor's gaze.

"Hey, wait a minute!" the Doctor started, though he stopped when I put my hand on his shoulder, feeling way too much like Jenny's other parent for comfort.

"Theta...just listen and don't go overboard like my parents did for us. She's old enough to make her own choices" I murmured in his ear.

He opened his mouth to object but stopped himself when I narrowed my eyes at him in silent warning, giving him a glimpse of the disaster that we had gone through when my parents found us together in my room.

His lips quickly pressed together as he met my gaze, leaving me to let go of him and return to my room, either to hide from the impending argument or to get some more sleep. At that moment, I just needed some time alone to reflect on that one night when everything between me and Theta had seemed so right. When the weight of the world hadn't been on my shoulders but the weight of that medal on my chest had felt like the best kind in my life.

"Oh god, Kosch, I'm so proud of you." Theta breathed against his neck and a chill flowed over his skin as his lover's fingers brushed over the gold medal that rested on his bare chest.

"Yeah?" he asked, unable to think of anything else to say, let alone to restrain the grin that wanted to make itself known on his lips.

"Of course. I'm always proud of you. Seeing you beating some up-themselves first years is definitely the hottest thing I've ever seen," Theta whispered, his fingers leaving the medal and following the crimson ribbon over his collar bone before brushing the tips against his neck in a soothing massage.

"Really? Are you sure about that?" He grinned, running his fingers through the hair on the back of Theta's neck as he straddled his hips, causing his lover's mellow brown eyes to sparkle with longing for a second.

"I meant, outside the bedroom....obviously." Theta smirked, leaning over him and pressing a messy yet meaningful kiss to his lips.

"Obviously." He grinned, nipping at the skin on his neck.

"That's not to say I couldn't do better than you in that department, since there is evidently no way I could be as good as you at ktrin," Theta said, the eagerness at proving what he learned causing his face to flush.

"Oh, really? Prove it." Still grinning, he raised an eyebrow as Theta's nimble fingers brushed teasingly over the skin of his neck.

"And how do you propose I do that?" Theta asked, though as he began to strip him of his ktrin robes it was obvious he had a pretty good idea of what he was asking for.

The need for talking and teasing had long since been replaced by the aching of their bodies for a much closer proximity, one void of clothes and only the sounds of groans and pleading for each other. Their lips met again. He couldn't stop himself from pulling his lover closer to him, arching his back against the mattress on Theta's bed as he pried the robes from his arms so the fabric brushed against his skin with every movement. Pleasure flowed through him like a gloriously addictive drug.

He pulled back and rested his finger on Theta's lips to stop another inevitably hot kiss from distracting him.

Theta raised an eyebrow and watched him pull the medal over his head before putting it around Theta's neck, making his lover go wide eyed.

"Are you sure? I mean..." He stopped his lover's questioning with a kiss, his fingertips following the ribbon of the medal around his neck.

"Never been surer. Now, fuck me," he murmured, watching Theta's eyes widen, if it were possible, even more and a smirk spread across his face in realisation.

"Whatever you say, Master." He grinned, sliding his body between his legs and following the trail of his skin with kisses.

The world seemed to spin as Theta rolled them over so he was straddling his hips, his fingertips tracing patterns over his back and chest to keep him conscious since the weariness he had felt since he got back from the tournament was making it hard for him to keep his focus. Their lips met over and over to the point where he was sure they were going to be bruised in the morning, as his fingertips glided down his sides and over every bit of Theta's skin he could reach. When he was sure his lover was driving him to the point of madness on purpose he felt Theta slowly lowering himself down over his arousal, his back arching against the mattress at the feeling of being inside him again. It really had been so long since it had felt this good. His fingertips dug tightly into Theta's hips to guide him at the right pace causing him to gasp and moan.

It was like a part of heaven he had never expected to have before, to watch his lover fucking himself on him, while the medal he had won mere hours before was bouncing off his chest with each jerk of their combined bodies. The pressure continued to build in his stomach and he wasn't sure he would be able to hold out for much longer. Their minds were already merging to the point of insanity, which was always the giveaway that they were close to reaching climax. He tightened his grip even more on Theta's hips, watching through half-lidded eyes as Theta merely let himself be used like he knew what it meant to him.

Finally the orgasm crashed over him, his back arching painfully and he heard Theta moaning hoarsely as he came inside of him. Once he saw Theta's lips open but no noise emerging, he rolled them over so Theta didn't collapse on top of him and inched himself out of him before shifting onto his side behind him. He pressed a kiss to Theta's neck soothingly as he brushed his fingertips over the bruises on his hips. This was probably the part he loved the most. The afterglow where Theta would say nothing and just let his fingers wander over the marks he had made on his body. Once he came around, Theta smiled sleepily and moved as though to remove the medal before they slept. Koschei stopped him.

"I think it suits you more than me right now, you definitely deserve it," he murmured, pressing a quick kiss to Theta's swollen lips. Theta nipped his lower lip in response.

"Told you I could do better in the bedroom," Theta whispered, nuzzling his neck as he curled up to him.

"I have to admit, that was impressive, but I'll show you I still have the magic touch tomorrow. You can count on it."

"If you say so, Kosch, but until then I'm kinda tired. We should try and get some sleep," Theta said, pressing a kiss to his neck before resting his head on his chest and closing his eyes.

He hugged his lover close to him, resting his hand on his waist and smiling as he kept his gaze resting on the medal around his neck. Definitely the perfect way to celebrate a victory.

Chapter 7

Normally they completely avoided Oakdown like the plague due to Koschei's parents' glares when they did something as simple as sitting together in the same chair or brushing their fingers together for the physical attention one or the other craved.

After the steamy night at Lungburrow when the medal was awarded to Koschei and they decided to celebrate in the most passionate way possible, Koschei decided it was time he proved to his parents and the other members of his family that he didn't care what they thought.

He managed to persuade Theta to come over and hang around his room while his parents were at the citadel due to deliberations over a proclamation. Theta had seemed nervous as he edged into the house, though it was really no different to his own, only with less occupants and portraits on the walls.

It had taken a lot of coaxing to get him to actually set foot into his room and even then Theta was still babbling about how he wasn't sure this was a good idea and that he didn't want to get even deeper into his parents' bad books.

"Theta, stop stressing, they aren't here, it's ok," he murmured as he kissed his neck in a way that he knew made his lover melt into his touch.

"But what if they....mmmm." Theta immediately stopped talking when Koschei kissed him, his eyes closing as Koschei guided him back toward his bed.

Theta soon lay sprawled on the silk sheets covering the king size bed beneath the owner of

the room with his shirt removed and Koschei's lips bruising his as he pulled his own shirt over his head. The smell of Schlenk blossom in the rainy season of spring practically filled the room and yet the two were so used to the overpowering scent that it merely made the mood hotter and the desperate for affection more intense. Koschei rained kisses over Theta's chest and torso, nipping and sucking sensitive areas where previous bruises were healing, to bring colour back to his flesh.

It was only when Koschei's fingers were unzipping Theta's pants as his lover whimpered below him that he heard the front door slam and knew his parents were back in the building. His common sense screamed to get Theta out before he was seen but his mind was drowning in the spring rain that emitted from Theta's skin. As though he had heard it too, Theta's body stiffened and he tried to get up from the bed.

"Kosch, your parents are back...I should probably go," Theta murmured, even as Koschei's skin grazed against his torso tauntingly.

"No. You're not going anywhere, Theta."

"They'll find out..."

"..and I don't care if they do.. just stay. For me, please?"

It took a lot for Koschei to say please and they both knew it, and it was that, on top of his kisses that followed, which seemed to sooth Theta's worries enough to be guided back onto the bed and to rest his hand on the back of Koschei's neck, to direct his attention to his lips.

When the knocks at the door practically shattered their afterglow into a million pieces,

mere minutes later, Theta slid out of bed and began to frantically try to gather his clothes together while Koschei found a robe from one of his chairs, pulled it on and opened the door.

Both his parents were standing in the doorway, each giving him their own version of a suspicious look.

"Mother, Father, to what do I owe this intrusion?" Koschei asked, raising an eyebrow as he leaned against the door frame, keeping the door open at a minimum so they didn't catch a glimpse of Theta dressing.

"Koschei, we heard strange noises and smelt strange scents from this room, care to explain?" his mother asked, crossing her arms over her chest.

"I don't need to explain myself," Koschei said indignantly.

"Koschei, explain!" his father demanded and Koschei glared at him before turning to look over his shoulder at Theta who was close to fully dressed. Only his shoes and blazer remained off his form. Koschei turned back to look at his elders as he edged the door so it was wide open.

The two immediately stiffened and seemed to be speechless for a few seconds before his mother spoke in a clipped tone she'd used on him when disciplining him as a child.

"Koschei, what have we said about you seeing this individual?"

*"What you may or may not have said is not my concern. Theta Sigma is not just **some** individual, so I suggest you treat him as such."*

"Koschei..." Theta said weakly, as though begging him with that one word not to make the situation worse.

"Koschei, you will escort this individual from the house of Oakdown and see to it he never returns. Once you have done so, come to the library so your father and I may discuss this incident with you."

"No."

"Kosch..."

"No, Theta. They don't seem to understand, so maybe I should just spell it out for them in words they will comprehend," Koschei said, his gaze resting over his shoulder on his lover before turning back to his parents. "Theta is my partner, not just in friendship but the owner of my hearts."

His father glared and practically bellowed, "Get him out of this house! How dare you do something so callous?!"

"I did it because I love him! I have done so for some time and refuse to let you treat him so poorly, as though he were merely a Gallifreyan instead of a Time Lord like myself! The House of Oakdown has a better reputation than that."

"The House of Oakdown is a noble one which refuses to acknowledge such a union of hearts and bodies between someone who is not selected from within this house. Get him off our property NOW!"

Koschei took a glance at Theta, who gave him a weak smile as he pushed his feet into his shoes. Even he knew that he'd pushed his parents too far and to push them any further wasn't a wise move if he wanted to stay in this chapter of the planet. Koschei sighed and offered Theta his

hand which he took hesitantly under the gazes of both parents before leading him out of the room, past his parents.

He could feel their gazes following them like a thousand red hot poker in the skin of his back as he and Theta walked down the corridor towards the main staircase to the front door.

Theta hesitantly let go of his hand when the door was opened and hovered in the doorway, to meet his gaze and giving him a silent 'I knew we were pushing it look.' He kissed his lips quickly before easing out the front door and leaving him to lean against the Maldor frame and watch his lover's retreating silhouette while his parent's shrieks for his presence merely passed through one ear and out the other. He couldn't be happier to be with Theta and whether his parents did or didn't understand their relationship didn't bother him as much as you might assume.

Theta was all he needed and he wasn't going to let anything tear them apart.

I woke to the sound of yelling and tried to remind myself where I was. Once the sense of shock disappeared, I sighed when I remembered the Doctor's reaction to Jenny having someone in her life that he didn't know about. I rubbed my eyes and made myself get up to use the bathroom before appearing back in the engine room. Jenny was pacing back and forth in one of the upper levels of the TARDIS with the Doctor watching her out the corner of his eye as his arms rested over the railing. I sighed and made myself go and take a seat closer to the console, since I had the feeling it was going to take a while. Once there, I spotted two males sitting on the seat opposite to mine. Their hands were interlaced on one's thigh, their guns resting between their shins with

their left hands clasped around the barrel to make sure they didn't fall and their gazes darting around the TARDIS like they were having the usual, 'how the hell?' moment.

The elder of the pair was slightly tanned with gray eyes which were currently wide with wonder. His hair was spiky and mostly dark brown, aside from the unusual platinum blonde stripe down the middle of his head. His face was fairly stubbled like he hadn't had access to a razor for an eternity. Like Jenny, he was dressed in fatigues and military boots but they seemed to hang off him like he'd been deprived of food as well as the razor. He had an unusual tattoo up the side of his left hand. As my gaze moved down to look at the way his right hand was intertwined with the younger, I saw a silver ring around his middle finger with an onyx stone embedded in it, his index finger brushing soothingly up and down the other male's index finger, and, if I didn't know the planets as well as I did, I would assume there was some sexual meaning behind it. But, as I watched their eyes slowly decrease in size, the younger male practically snuggled up to him, his index finger curling over his knuckle so he couldn't get access to the whole length of his finger.

I turned my gaze to the younger, who by contrast to his lover seemed like he was a bit newer to whatever Jenny was pulling him into. His hair was longer and black, his fringe resting over his forehead and obstructing his view a little, though the elder of the pair soon brushed his hair away, revealing intoxicatingly bright sapphire eyes enhanced by the eyeliner. His lips were shaped like a narrow cupid's bow and his skin was completely pale in comparison to his lover. He wasn't dressed in fatigues but as close as possible, with combat trousers

covering his long thin legs and a pair of Doc Martens in place of the military boots. A camouflaged anorak covered his torso, though a t-shirt with some unusual symbol was easy to see from underneath. He was biting his lip uncertainly the more he looked around and yet when he cuddled up to the other it was as though a sense of peace entered his mind which he hadn't had before. His eyes closed as he rested his head on his lover's shoulder while the elder of the two continued the now limited stroking of his index finger.

"Like what you see?" The elder male's gruff voice pulled me out my pondering and caused me to shake my head.

"Sorry...I shouldn't have been staring," I said, taking a glance up at the Doctor and Jenny, hoping they would interject before he tried to attack me for looking at his lover.

"It's better than watching J explode, I get that. I'm Mixas, by the way...and this cute individual beside me is Ezra," Mixas said, shaking his head like he'd never seen Jenny act that way before.

"I'm Koschei...a friend of Jenny's father," I said.

"Ah...J mentioned her father had a lover on board, but not a friend. You know when he'll be along?" Mixas asked, causing me to glare at Jenny, who probably caught my train of thought. She paused in mid rant at the Doctor and looked over the railing at me and Mixas.

"She probably meant me actually. She's pushing her nose in where it doesn't belong..." I said, causing Jenny to wilt a little back from the railing.

"I know what you mean. There somewhere I can get a warm drink for Ez? I think he's still a bit in shock after the day he's had and there's

only so long I can keep him calm," said Mixas, gently manoeuvring Ezra's sleeping form so he was curled up and completely taking up the seats. He traced the whole of Ezra's index finger before slowly pulling his fingers from between Ezra's.

"Yeah...I think there's a kitchen down the corridor somewhere." I sighed, getting up too and crossing my arms over my chest as the Doctor raised an eyebrow at me.

"The kitchen's third door on the right, down that corridor," the Doctor called, pointing in the right direction before turning his attention back to Jenny, who was fuming at his lack of attention.

I led Mixas down the corridor until we reached the door the Doctor had indicated. It looked like a kitchen made for a cottage with only a sink, two cupboards beneath, a fridge and a table and chair set. A kettle appeared in the middle of the table and I exchanged a look with Mixas as I led him inside. He sat down at the table while I filled the kettle with water and rummaged around for cups and tea bags. Once I'd found everything and stopped feeling like a homemaker, I sat beside Mixas at the table.

"How long have you known Ezra then?" I asked, knowing I was probably nosy but Mixas didn't seem to care as his index finger continued to bend every so often like he was still brushing Ezra's finger.

"He's only been with me and J for about a couple of months. We found him in Pratma, an orphan pretty much, working at a tavern even though he's underage," he said, sadly.

"Wait, Pratma? I thought Pratma's civilization died years ago?" I frowned as two mugs of tea appeared in front of us.

"Oh yeah...it did. Ezra was one of the lucky ones who managed to hide from the nuclear war...well, if you can define what they did to him lucky." He sighed, toying with his teabag.

"Abuse?" I guessed.

"Abuse, torture, all of the above and more. He let me and J hide in the basement of the tavern while we came up with a plan. Poor kid...he was terrified at being found out, of course, but J promised him we'd protect him if anyone found out."

I watched him take a sip of his tea before he continued speaking.

"Second night we were there I was looking over blue prints for an embassy we wanted to infiltrate when Ezra appeared down the stairs. He was...a mess. Clothes were torn, bruises and marks on every inch of his skin, deep wound where his head had struck the wall and deep anal injuries. It was really more than I could bear to see him that way, to know that he put up with it every day of his life because he had no one to take care of him. I persuaded him to sleep with me that night...and couldn't stop myself from feeling protective. I talked to J the next day and she agreed we'd bring him with us, let him see more of the galaxy instead of living an existence of pain and worthlessness." He took a sip of tea.

"So how did you two get together? I mean, if he's still traumatised from all he experienced on Pratma, shouldn't he be curled up in a corner crying and refusing touch?" I asked with a frown. I was surprised at the grin that appeared on his face.

"In the beginning he did. J was the one who pushed us together. She'd be the one who did the all nighters, she'd make us eat

together...everything in the hopes it would make him open up and for me to finally have someone. And, in the end, it worked. Don't get me wrong it wasn't a magic cure; he still has moments where he has flashbacks and is convinced someone is looking for him for sex. On those occasions he'd pace around the ship calling out nonsense in his native tongue. It was upsetting beyond belief. Then J got caught while we were on Alsiu and Ezra was stressing because he hates it when the three of us aren't together. I pulled him into a hug and we had our first kiss right there. Never have I felt so many sparks before," he added reflectively.

"Why are you so open about this?"

"Because I know that's exactly what Jenny wants to do to you and her father. She knows you have history...albeit not the best...and the love which you refuse to acknowledge. She's going to push you two together until you won't have much choice. Even if it means you being locked in a cell and left there until she's satisfied. She can be a stubborn one."

"Just like her father." I sighed, looking into the depths of my own cup of tea.

"So don't underestimate her. If you want to do it yourself, she'll back off. Otherwise...prepare for a pretty blonde to cuff you two together to a tree."

I raised an eyebrow and he sighed.

"She did it to me and Ez when we weren't talking. Don't ask."

"Xas!"

A young, timid and scared voice pulled us from our thoughts and Mixas closed his eyes for a

second before picking up the spare cup of tea from the counter.

"Ez's up. I should go and settle him somewhere more comfortable..."

"Ask Jenny's father. I'm sure there's a few rooms spare."

He nodded and gave a small smile of thanks which looked out of place on his face before leaving me alone in the kitchen to think about what he had said. It seemed that Jenny liked to see people happy, that if she could pick up sparks she would push them for the whole nine yards instead of letting them wither and die. Yet I wasn't sure it would work for the Doctor and me; we each had our own issues in our relationship. It was complicated and no matter how good Jenny's intentions were, the likelihood of me and the Doctor sharing a bed again any time in the near future was indefinitely bleak.

I downed the last of my tea before getting up to see what the damage was with the Doctor and Jenny. When I appeared back in the console room both Ezra and Mixas had disappeared, along with their guns, and the Doctor was sprawled on a couple of steps. There was no sign of Jenny. I sighed and sat on the step below his, resting my hand on his thigh to get his attention. He flashed me a miniscule smile, though it was obvious from what I could get out his mind that it hadn't gone well.

"Where is she? I'm hoping you didn't throw her into a volcano somewhere," I teased, causing his smile to brighten a little at the hilarity of my statement but he shook his head.

"Nah, she's gone to show Mixas and Ezra where her room is so they can decide where

theirs should be. She's very protective of those boys and they of her...kinda like they're a family," he said wistfully.

"But she is going to have a family of her own soon, Theta...She's a female, after all. They can't exactly suppress the urge to mate like we can...especially if she's found someone," I said soothingly.

He sighed but nodded reluctantly.

"What have you found out about him, or is she being tight-lipped about him until we meet him?" I asked.

"His name is Armand Rechus. He's a Sharlian of about twenty six years old, a superior officer in Sharlk's grand army stationed in Charmk. He's currently on leave due to poor mental health. She's getting better with her telepathy though because she's blocked my access to mental images of him. She said I'll have to wait until we get to Sharlk in a couple of days." He said all of this tonelessly and I knew he still wasn't impressed about the fact his daughter was with someone while it was wrong or next to impossible for him to be, let alone stay, in a permanent relationship with anyone.

"So I'm guessing we're on our way to Sharlk now?" I asked. I frowned when he shook his head.

"Not yet. I can't make myself set in the coordinates."

"What's wrong, Theta? Something tells me it's more than just the fact Jenny has someone in her life," I said.

"What if I don't think he's good enough for her? How am I supposed to tell her that I don't

want her to be married to someone she obviously cares for with all her hearts?" he asked, tilting his head at me.

I bit my lip in thought and immediately knew what he meant. Even if he told Jenny he didn't like Armand, there was still a obvious chance that when the time came she would marry him regardless. She really had inherited his stubbornness.

"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it," I assured him.

"We?" he asked teasingly, raising an eyebrow that made me blush as I realised my slip of the tongue. Damn it, now was so not the time to get all tongue-tied.

"Yes. We. You may be her biological father but, as the only other Time Lord in existence, I also have a responsibility to Jenny to make sure her life's decisions are for the best. There's no telling if she'll have the power to regenerate like us so she needs to make the most of her life while she has it. If that means marrying a Sharlian then maybe you should consider it," I said.

He bit his lip thoughtfully before nodding as he pushed himself upright. He set the co-ordinates for Sharlk and started the engine.

I flashed him a smile when he looked over his shoulder at me and hoped I was doing the right thing by making him agree to this. If something went wrong I knew I'd be the one he blamed.

Chapter 8

Everything had gone crazy.

It wasn't just the fact that Theta -- or as he was known now, the Doctor -- had long since changed into someone he didn't recognise. It wasn't even that they were nowhere near as close as they used to be. Hell, everyone said regenerations did that to you and there was nothing you could do about it.

No, it was more than that.

The High Council of Time Lords seemed to have gone insane in a way that made his insanity seem like it was next to nothing. It was what made him want to leave more than anything, but he knew before he did so that, unlike Theta's disappearing act when they were younger, he should actually say something to the owner of the hearts he was bound too.

It was hard since he didn't really know what he was going to say, let alone how Theta was going to react but, though he had tried to leave before, something always stopped him. Like an invisible force knew as well as he did that he needed to do this. He needed to separate himself from Theta and maybe the space would make them close again. Yeah, even he knew that logic was flawed.

So, while everyone else had gone to the Citadel to try and keep up to date with the recent Plan, Koschei found himself walking the old path towards the house of Lungbarrow. Part of him wasn't expecting Theta to be there when he knocked or to even answer but as he got closer to the house he saw his friend running back and forth between the house and a TARDIS, like he had had the same notion about leaving, a second time, without saying goodbye to the owner of his hearts.

"Theta."

Just that one word and the figure stopped in mid step as they appeared from the door of the TARDIS. He looked frantic but also regretful, like the first thing he should have done before planning to leave had been the last on his list...after everything they talked about after the year of silence.

"Hey, Master." He had hardly ever called him Koschei anymore...and, while he reacted and answered to being called the old name by him, it was like he was trying to forget it.

"I'm guessing you're leaving too, huh?" he asked, pushing his hands into the pockets of his robes, watching his lover rake his fingers through his hair.

"Don't really have much choice. After what Rasillion has been saying, Gallifrey just...doesn't feel right anymore."

He nodded in acknowledgment but returned his gaze to the grass at his feet, which was now a deep scarlet as though something had caused it to die. Just like it felt like his hearts were dying at them having to be separated all over again.

"Only....you forgot something before you were about to go."

The Doctor frowned and looked over his shoulder, as though assessing all he'd managed to grab to see if he was right.

"What have I forgotten?" he asked, a confused look in his eyes.

"Me."

The Doctor rubbed the bridge of his nose as though he'd only just remembered his promise all those years ago.

"I'm sorry..."

"You said that the last time too. Even after a year of silence on my part all you could come up with was sorry. This time it might be longer before we see each other again, Doctor." He couldn't stop himself from spitting the word and it made his lover flinch.

"Don't be like that, Koschei. I was going to say something, I promise."

"Sure you were. Only so you didn't have to experience the pain like I did...not because you really feel anything."

"I don't want us to end like this, Koschei; I don't want us to end at all. But what can I do? I can't see us travelling around together or anything like that. I'm sorry but it's true. While I love you with all my hearts we're just too different when it comes to following the rules. If it's really meant to be, we'll find each other again and I'll never let you go," the Doctor said softly, approaching him and cupping his cheek like he wanted him to understand how much this was hurting him.

He couldn't stop himself from looking down so he didn't have to see how he was hurting his lover. The Doctor seemed to take this gesture as an indication that he couldn't accept it. His hearts were aching more than anything. He brushed the Doctor's cheek with his thumb and softly brushed his lips against his own, praying that it would be enough for the both of them until they found each other again.

The Doctor deepened it a little before pulling back, his now blue eyes filled with tears as he backed away from him and retreated into his TARDIS, leaving Koschei, now the Master, to watch his lover and his soon to be enemy leave him behind for the second time.

Chapter 9

The journey to Sharlk was a fairly treacherous one as TARDIS trips go and Jenny spent most of her time talking to Ezra about something that happened on Zyaulh before the Doctor spotted them. The Doctor hovered around the console every few hours to make sure we were still on course before disappearing for a while. I would try to pretend that I wasn't keeping an eye on him by reading *The Other Scrolls* that I'd found hidden in the library while looking for something to distract my mind but, by the tenth time he'd done this, I felt Mixas giving me a look as bad as Jenny's, asking what I was doing here when I could be attempting to make up with, the Doctor. Finally I gave up and, after his thirteenth time checking the console, I followed his lead through the maze of corridors to what I could only assume was his room, having never been in it before.

It was different to what I expected, reminding me way too much of Theta's bedroom back at Lungbarrow. Book shelves covered the walls, filled to bursting with novels and leather bound editions of books I'd never heard of before. The bed was pushed in the very corner of the room. An array of pillows covered the part of the bed nearest the wall, a plain bedspread covering it. It looked like it had never been used. He was leaning against the wall with his sneaker clad feet resting off the edge of the bed, his gaze buried in a book and his glasses perched on his nose. I could never get over how hot he looked with his glasses on and it took a lot of control to not come out and say that to him.

The colour of the wallpaper changed shade and pattern every few seconds like the TARDIS or the Doctor himself couldn't make up his mind

which suited the room more. The floor was simple hardwood, reminding me of the floor in my room at Oakdown. The floor where we'd first messed around during Academy holidays. Out of corner of my eye, on the ledge of the one of the shelves, I noticed a small glass vase with a familiar flower sitting in a pool of water. It was only small and yet the smell was definitely recognisable, something we had used to become intoxicated with while walking through a field on the way to the mountain. I could remember something that seemed like a distant memory of Theta picking one of the flowers with his free hand and brushing it against my collar bone while we were walking.

"What are you doing? That tickles!" Koschei grinned, catching Theta's cheek and attempting to pull him into a kiss, only for him to pull back and brush the petals of the blossom against Koschei's lips instead.

"What can I say? I'm just attracted to things that remind me of you." Theta smiled, his brown eyes twinkling.

"I remind you of a Schlenk blossom?" Koschei asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Just your smell....you naturally smell of them...I've taken to keeping a blossom in my room when you aren't around so I can remember you more clearly. Sappy, huh?" he asked, pulling away and brushing the blossom against his own lips tauntingly.

"Sappy is definitely the last word on my list right now." Koschei smiled, pressing a kiss to Theta's neck and murmuring something in Theta's ear.

"Koschei did you follow me for a reason or...?" the Doctor asked, taking a glance at me over the book he was reading and pulling me out of

my thoughts. I pulled my gaze from the vase to look at him.

"I just...wanted to make sure you were ok. I mean, you keep going to the console to check on something which we both know is perfect," I said, watching him turn the book upside down and rest it on his stomach so his gaze was fully on my face.

"I'm just getting a bit edgy, that's all." He shrugged, turning his gaze back to his book.

I nodded. I was turning to leave when I felt his hand on my forearm. Turning back around, I found him standing before me, his book on a simple dresser beside the bed.

"...well, that and I was waiting for you to take notice, come here and talk to me," he said softly. I swallowed as his hand rested on my neck and his thumb brushed a trail over my cheek.

"Well, if you were planning this....what am I going to talk to you about?" I asked teasingly, my stronger heart jumping around in my chest as his gaze locked on my lips, licking his own hungrily.

"Well...you would try and talk to me about Jenny and Armand...but before you could get any further....this would happen," he murmured before his lips brushed against mine. There was hunger in that kiss which had me practically keening for him to get deeper, harder as long as he didn't part his lips from mine.

My hand rested on the back of his neck to keep him as close as possible even when I had to pull back in case my hearts burst with lack of air. He kissed me deeply the second time, spinning me around in some dance I

immediately could recall the steps to, his hands resting on my waist to steady me as he backed me up to the edge of his bed. Rather than what I expected him to do, his lips teased my neck as he let me sit down first. He sat perfectly comfortably in my lap, his legs either side of my thighs as he pressed another kiss to my lips. I groaned, desperate for the friction and craving his taste on my tongue. He tilted his head and pried his tongue into my mouth. He marked the inside with his taste, the taste I'd been aching for ever since we indefinitely left each other.

I couldn't do without this man before me and I knew I was a fool to even consider it but the decision was still sitting in his long pale fingers. I know it should have seemed obvious as he kissed me but, for me and the Doctor, kisses were just testers to make the other break with longing. I couldn't speak for him but I was definitely close to breaking apart at the seams. In the back of my mind, I knew he shouldn't keep teasing me this way. He either wanted me or he didn't; he couldn't have it both ways, no matter how willing my body was at the thought. I tried to pull my senses together but the smell of him in my nostrils, the taste of him on my tongue and the desirable sensation of him sucking at my bottom lip were making it next to impossible.

'Have you decided?' I breathed against his mouth, as his hands brushed down my waist. My back arched until my chest was grazing his. I cursed the man who invented clothes to hell several times; it should be a crime to not have my lover touching my skin.

"I have....can't you tell?" he murmured against my neck as his hands moved to the fastenings on the pants I was wearing, his fingers undoing

them with a desperation that made his face practically glow.

He guided me onto my back on the bed, easing out of my lap as he undid the catch of my pants before pushing them down my legs so my arousal was left to shiver in anticipation against my stomach. He caught my lips in a mouth-watering kiss before kneeling between my spread legs and pressing kisses against my thighs that had my body jerking in eagerness. My fingers clasped tightly into the bedspread as I tried to make myself hold on, though the touch of his fingers against my ass really wasn't helping. It felt like centuries since I'd felt his skin on mine, that finger at my opening and his mouth on my length. It was maddening to have all three at once and yet not being permitted to be able to do anything other than whine at the way he was teasing and denying me relief.

He hushed me gently, like he could understand my agitation but was assuring me it would be worth it. I pushed myself up onto my elbows so I could watch him at work. In a way it was like being a teenager all over again. He was slower than when we first did this, though, and it was captivating to watch the way his lips ghosted over my length, how his tongue traced a pattern up and down before taking me completely inside his talented and eloquent mouth.

I rested my hand under his chin to edge him away from the temptation to tease my arousal more than necessary but all that did was make him slide his index finger inside me. My body jerked against the bed and I met his gaze with a warning look. It made him raise an eyebrow tauntingly like he knew I wouldn't be able to hold on and wanted to see me fall apart under his hands and mouth. The things he does to

me when he's in one of these moods...it's hard for me to explain.

His hands moved from the sensitive places to sit on my thighs as he pushed himself up to meet my lips again, his body slithering between my legs. His hands rested on my shoulders as he pushed me onto my back. My fingers slid through his belt loops to keep the friction between bare skin and the wool of his suit pants. One of us, I couldn't figure out who, gasped and groaned against skin. My fingernails dug into the skin of his back, causing him to curse and suck at the skin of my neck.

"Oh god....just fuck me already!" I pleaded, arching my back off the bed which he reacted to accordingly by sliding his hands under my shirt and grazing the skin tauntingly with his calloused fingertips. It was then we heard the incoming disruption from the person who had been trying to push us together since she learned of our history.

"Dad!"

Jenny's voice cut through the atmosphere in the room that had been building with every touch to my skin. Our gazes met before the Doctor sighed against my thigh and reluctantly pushed himself up from the floor. He was probably talking to her mentally as he hovered in the middle of the room. His back was to me to stop the urge to jump me from taking its hold on him. I redressed with practised ease and tried to look anything but debauched and agitated at the interruption.

He soon moved towards me and rested his forehead against mine reassuringly.

"Looks like we've arrived at Shark." He sighed, my hands resting soothingly against his back.

"Just remember what I said -- one step at a time and try not to worry about things that may not even happen," I murmured, making sure his gaze remained locked with mine by resting one hand on his cheek.

"Ok?" I whispered when he didn't reply to me immediately.

He nodded and pressed a kiss to my lips, leaving the room as Jenny called out to him aloud again.

I bit my lip as I sunk onto the edge of the bed and tried to find a sense of calm. It was seriously hard; I don't even know how Theta had managed to remain calm all that time during the academy when I was acting up. I'll never take that side of him for granted again.

"Koschei, you coming?"

A jolt ran through my body at the feel of his voice in my mind.

"I'll be right there."

His presence disappeared from my mind, leaving an ache in the spot behind my left ear. I already missed it. I checked myself once more before going to the console room where the Doctor was standing, glasses on, staring at the monitor. Jenny stood on her tiptoes behind him, attempting to look over his shoulder, agitation and nervousness on her face.

Ezra and Mixas were still in their room so it seemed like she hadn't told them about her plan, let alone that they were close to Shark. I saw the Doctor twitch like he and Jenny were arguing telepathically. Jesus, did they ever stop?

"HEY!" I snapped, clicking my fingers before their eyes. Jenny looked at me while the

Doctor kept his gaze on the monitor, a silent thank you entering my mind from him.

"Jenny, just leave him to it. It's not like Shark is going anywhere," I said, steering her by the arm to the nearest set of seats.

"I know. I'm just really anxious to see Armand. It's been a while since I last saw him." She sighed and sat down.

"We will get there. I promise, ok? But pushing him will only piss him off to the point where he turns around and leaves you on a random planet," I said, sitting beside her.

"But..."

"He's the most competent to make the TARDIS work. I have the knowhow but not the patience and I doubt he's even begun to teach you the basics yet."

"You'll teach me, right?" she asked, flashing her bright eyes at me.

"Maybe...we'll see after you've perfected ktrin first," I said teasingly, causing her to grin knowingly.

Finally the TARDIS landed. Before Jenny could run out to find her beloved Armand, the Doctor had brushed past her out the doors. She took a glance at me in obvious uncertainty but stayed seated like she knew as well as I did what he was doing.

I leaned back into the chair and hoped he'd come back soon because Jenny would only stay put so long. She had just started pacing when he appeared half an hour later, leaving the doors open for Jenny, who followed him carefully with her gaze.

"Dad, where are we on Shark?"

"Charmk...your building is two streets over," the Doctor said, his gaze pining mine.

"Aren't you and Koschei coming? I've told him so much about you, he'll want to meet you."

"Maybe later. Take Mixas and Ezra along with you, ok?" I asked, understanding his look perfectly.

She narrowed her eyes like she didn't believe us before disappearing down the corridor towards their rooms, cursing in Gallifreyan in our heads. After a minute or two, she left the two of us alone in silence...for now.

"How is it?" I asked as he sat beside me.

"Not a bad society. Some of them worship a goat god. I never knew goats were sacred on a planet."

"Theta."

He swallowed, as though trying to pull himself back on track, before he spoke.

"It's closer to the development of Earth in this century than the twenty first. Mostly looks like a mix between the Russian Soviet movement and New York City with a few improvements."

I nodded and watched him lace his fingers with mine.

"I'm really not sure I can do this, Kosch."

"She's your daughter. It's part of your responsibility, along with keeping her out of trouble and providing her with a place to stay when she needs it," I said, hating that I was the one having to be the one to give the words of wisdom which had always so naturally been his forte.

"I know."

"You can do this, Theta. I know you can," I assured him.

He gave a small smile and pressed a kiss to my lips before three sets of footsteps echoed in the console room.

"We'll be back in half an hour to bring you to mine and Armand's place. Don't disappear," she said, giving us both firm looks.

"Prydonian's honour we won't leave," I promised even as the Doctor glared like he had been hoping we could at least run before they came back to stop him having a panic attack. Some things never change.

She gave me an uncertain look, like she didn't know enough about Prydonian to know whether to trust my word or not, before the three disappeared out of the TARDIS doors which closed behind them.

"What do we do now? I'm not exactly feeling the sightseeing vibe right now," Theta asked, meeting my gaze as though hoping for an answer.

"You could help me practise my ktrin so I can help Jenny a bit. Unless you're afraid of getting hurt?" I asked, raising an eyebrow. A grin appeared over his face.

"I'm never afraid. I'll get the que," he said, getting up and leaving me to do the stretches I had barely done for at least a thousand years or more, though they came back to me as naturally as they had been back in the academy.

I threw my blazer and shoes to one side as he appeared, his gaze moving over my figure like he had forgotten how good I could look in simple civilian clothes.

"HEY!" I yelled and snapped my fingers, "You can grope me later. Right now, ktrin."

He gave a reluctant smile as he threw a que at me while he rested his own on the nearest seat and stripped himself of unnecessary clothing until only his shirt, sleeves pushed up to his elbows, and pants kept him from nudity, his feet as bare as my own.

I spun the que around between my hands as I watched him do a few mediocre stretches of his own. There was nothing more attractive to me; it'd always been this way, ever since we had started the academy together and I'd watched him out the corner of my eye when I was eight.

"You ready?"

His voice pulled me from memory lane and caused me to grin knowingly. I held the que between my hands.

"I'm ready when you are."

The two of us moved as though we were back at the academy, just practicing for the sake of it. I'd move one way and he would immediately move to dodge it. Unlike with him and Jenny, the two of us refused to let the other have a glimpse into his head. It made it a lot more challenging and at the same time unpredictable. We'd been doing it that way for some time and yet this time seemed like there was more riding on it than our pride and honour.

Finally the ques clicked together as I tried to protect myself from him hitting me. His foot swept my feet out from under me so that I was shoved on my back with him on top of me. His shins rested either side of my hips while the

ques remained crossed together above my head.

The two of us took a few deep breaths as our gazes locked. He pushed his que under mine and pulled up until both que were resting on the floor metres away from us.

He leaned over me with his hands rested either side of my neck and our gazes locked, reminding me of those times I attempted to help him perfect his ktrin. He'd always get distracted when his hands were on me or our bodies were too close. His lips grazed my jaw line tauntingly which I quickly redirected to my lips. My hand was on the back of his neck as his hands rested either side of my head to keep his balance, his fingers sliding through the gaps in the grating beneath us to give him a grip. My hips grinded against his for the friction the sparks between us had been building.

"Oh god..." I groaned against his neck when he turned his head to lavish attention to my neck.

"You wouldn't believe how pissed I was when Jenny interrupted us before," he breathed, his tongue brushing a trail from the side of my neck to my collarbone.

"So was I..." I gasped, arching my back against the floor and watching hungrily as his hand slid between us, brushing inside my shirt and tracing my torso with a teasing touch.

"Oh, really?" he asked, raising an eyebrow as he unbuttoned my shirt and began to graze kisses up and down my torso.

I couldn't even make myself verbally agree to his statement as my eyes closed at the feel of his teeth and lips following the contours of my chest. His tongue followed along the scar from the bullet wound and my back arched up for

more attention. He slid my arms out of those of the shirt and let it rest there behind me to cradle my skin from the cold metal beneath me. His fingers worked nimbly to undo the button and zip of my pants, pushing them and my underwear down my thighs until my cock was in the cool air. He flashed me a taunting smile as he pressed a kiss to the tip of my cock before rolling me over so my nose was buried in the material that smelt of sweat from our workout. I heard him undo his pants and position me, his index finger tracing my hole before he thrust inside me so hard that I couldn't stop myself from cursing.

"Oh, for fuck's sake!" I groaned, our bodies both jumping and grinding trying to get the best of the friction between our skin.

His lips continued to move against my back and neck as he thrust into me over and over again, as though he was taking a prize that he believed he deserved from our little match. Which I could claim that I let him win. I would probably do that later anyway. At that moment in time, I was gladly giving it to him. It felt like years since I had felt him inside me or since I'd been inside of him. Being around him all the time with that urge in the back of my mind had seemed to make it harder and harder to not think about it.

I felt his teeth dig possessively into the side of my neck and groaned as I rested my forehead against the material covering the grating. I screwed my eyes closed as I felt him thrust in deeper and deeper until I was sure I would still be feeling him there days later. Probably what he was going for.

Finally his fingers brushed and clung to my hips before I felt him come inside me. I resisted the urge to bang my head against the jacket in

front of my forehead and sighed in relief as I felt his fingertips brushing down from my hips to my arousal which he teased and tortured until I finally came on the metal grating.

He pressed another kiss to the small of my back before rolling onto his side and letting me roll over to meet his gaze.

"You ok?" he murmured as I stared at the ceiling of the TARDIS and let my mind and body remind me of every other time.

"Better than ok. Maybe Jenny should interrupt us more often," I teased, watching his eyes squint as though silently saying, "Don't even joke!"

"Sorry. I get it, really. After getting so close in your room we both needed release...better not take so long for it to happen again, though." I sighed as he guided me towards him, his fingers brushing up and down my back soothingly so I would forget the pain.

"I swear it won't. It's been decades already, I don't think I could handle being without you that long again," he murmured against my neck, causing a smile to appear on my face which didn't even dim when we heard the sound of two sets of footsteps entering the TARDIS.

"Dad? Koschei? You guys he...oh, hi, guys. Arm...Just go explore for a sec...We'll find you," Jenny's voice said softly as I rested my head calmly against Theta's chest, his fingers running through my hair.

"I'm guessing you brought Armand?" the Doctor asked, rolling off me so I could dress. He

stood and stretched the kinks out his back while redoing his pants.

"Yeah...he's probably trying to find my room. Sorry if I was interrupting something," she said timidly, looking between us, though the Doctor blocked her gaze from straying to me as I pulled my jeans back up.

"You didn't...We were just finishing a round of ktrin. I can still pin your dad's ass." I grinned as I buttoned my shirt before standing beside the Doctor, his arm immediately moving around my waist.

"I can so see that." Jenny returned the grin.

"Hey! I'm not that bad!" the Doctor said indignantly.

"Only when I let you win so you can pin me. Otherwise I think you should stick to being the brains." I smirked, sticking my tongue out. He glared at me, though his eyes followed my tongue with interest.

"Er...Jenny, I think I'm kinda lost!" a male's voice called from the corridor. Jenny sighed and rolled her eyes.

"Just a sec, Armand!" she called before turning her gaze on us to ask a question she should have known the answer to.

"We aren't going anywhere. Go save your boyfriend from the TARDIS."

She nodded and left us alone, though I felt the Doctor stiffening beside me.

"Take a breath, Theta. You're making this out to be a lot more than it is," I whispered, brushing my hand up and down his back.

"I'm trying..." he murmured hoarsely.

Soon Jenny reappeared, her hand interlaced with a male beside her. He was a few years older than her, a whole lot taller to the point that he seemed to be towering over the short blonde. His skin was visibly tanned like he had been stationed in a desert or some place with a lot of exposure to Shark's three suns in the past few years of his life and had never been able to get rid of the colouring. His dark brown hair was styled so it appeared like he had just been pulled out of bed but from the odd gleam of light I could see the gel keeping the spikes in place. Around the temples I could see the few gray hairs making themselves known, giving him a few more years to his age than I had originally considered before. His brown eyes were hooked on Jenny's figure beside him like he hadn't seen her for months or years. Though I expected him to be in fatigues like Jenny when I'd first met her, he was instead dressed in faded stone washed jeans with fraying holes at the knees, a black leather belt keeping them from falling around his waist, and the gray singlet covering his upper body was faded to the point where the writing was half flaked away from over washing. From the insignia resting on top of the shoulders, it originated from a military academy. At the low neck of the shirt I spotted a glint of silver, a set of military tags resting against his collarbone with the name 'Rechus' and an ID Number imprinted in the tags.

His gaze moved from Jenny to me and the Doctor like he didn't know what to expect or make of us, despite his military training. The fact that there was no sign of a gun like Ezra or Mixas' on his hip or in his hand was definitely a good sign.

"Dad, Koschei, this is Armand. Arm, meet my dad and his lover. Can we maybe go back to

ours before we start with all the formalities?" Jenny asked, looking between the two of us and her lover, who didn't seem the least bit opposed to the idea.

I flashed her a smile of agreement since the Doctor seemed to have lost every word in his vocabulary and any control of his limbs at the sight of the two of them together. Armand laced his fingers with hers and lead us out the TARDIS. I ended up having to do all the pulling, since the Doctor obviously didn't want to leave the safety of the TARDIS, leaving me to also lock the TARDIS and make sure we kept up with the younger couple.

It seemed for the best that we had agreed to let them explain their whole situation since something really didn't feel right. Like there was a secret Jenny was keeping from us. When I tried to pry into her mind, she seemed to stone wall me in one certain area and that didn't bode well with me at all. Oh dear, I had a bad feeling about this.

There was a lot of reluctance on the Doctor's face at following the young couple to their house. I really couldn't tell if it was because he hated the thought of his daughter living with someone she wasn't married to, because he was so damned old fashioned, or because he was afraid of what he would find when we got there. Jenny let Armand lead her down the street towards what we assumed to be the right house. He murmured softly in her ear words that made her blush and the Doctor scowl.

"Oi! Stop the overbearing father act," I whispered in his ear as my own hand slid from his wrist down into his. His form jolted at the friction and his eyes blinked back to the present.

"I'm not!"

"Yes, you are!"

He shook his head in denial and looked down, the sadness more visible in his eyes this time, making me swallow before speaking again. I'd always hated seeing Theta mad or sad. It cut like a knife through my hearts repeatedly.

"I was just remembering those times after the Academy when I saw you with someone else on Gallifrey, as your parents tried to tear us apart," he said softly. "Your partner would always be murmuring things in your ear, clinging to you, but you would always look so pained, like you only wanted to be with me but couldn't refuse...." He stopped in midsentence, like he would much rather not say, let alone think, about it anymore.

"Hey..." I whispered, steering him down the nearest alley and backing him against the wall, my hand resting under his chin to make him look at me.

"I'm right here in front of you now, Theta. Those times we were apart on Gallifrey, they were hell, I admit, but we're together now and it's better to focus on the now instead of the past, ok?" I murmured softly, brushing my thumb against his jaw line soothingly as our gazes locked.

It seemed to work for the most part as a small smile appeared on his lips. He nodded, like he was glad he hadn't completely lost me. If I had my way, he would never lose me again.

"Besides, once Jenny's here with Armand, it'll be just you and me again in the TARDIS and, while I'm attached to Jenny like she's my own blood, we do need to live our own life," I said,

my voice still in the soothing tone that seemed to assure him.

"Koschei...Dad? Where are you?" Jenny's voice called from the gap of the alley.

"Speaking of our little princess, we'd better get back so we can get this over with." He smiled, pulling me to him by the lapels of my blazer, our lips meeting hungrily. It ended abruptly as he pulled back and led me towards the sound of Jenny's voice.

It didn't take much longer for us to get to their building. Like every other building on the block, it was an apartment building, one of more luxurious build from the looks of the style and the building materials. We followed the couple into the foyer, which was pretty much covered in polished marble on the floor with a similar colour scheme and texture on the walls. Just to the side sat the two methods of going to the various apartments, teleporter or elevator.

Without even a glimpse at the elevator, the couple went into the teleporter, pressing the button for the penthouse, leaving us to follow their lead. We appeared in a fairly well decorated lounge which easily gave the impression that Armand was well paid for being a senior office in the Sharlian royal army.

As we looked around I spotted Jenny's blonde head through a pair of glass sliding doors leading out onto the balcony. She was kneeling beside someone I couldn't see, leaving me to turn my attention back to the inside of the apartment which had a simple but efficient layout.

The lounge, dining room and kitchen were spread along the bottom with an easy flow, while above there seemed to be a collection of doors, each a different style and colour

according to the owner while the one I assumed to be the bathroom had oriental sliding doors. I could hear Armand in the kitchen, which made a change, and made my way up the stairs to check out each room.

One of the doors covered in camouflage paint was closed; probably Ezra and Mixas catching up on their sleep before Jenny dragged them out.

Another room looked like it housed a creative individual by the paintings hung on the walls, the easel in the corner with a chair covered in paints beside it and the book shelf covering the other wall. Beside that was one room I hadn't expected to see and it made me freeze in the doorway in shock.

Why did Jenny need a nursery? From what I could tell, she didn't exactly *look* pregnant, unless she was hiding something more from us than we had assumed.

I heard the Doctor call out to me mentally and looked over the edge of the banister around the top floor to see Jenny appearing from the balcony with a brunette female behind her. She was tall, slender and seemed to have the same kind of body as Jenny, that of a fighter. Her brown eyes seemed to scream that of a mere pretty face but at the same time I could tell she was very observant. A smile lit up her face when she spotted Armand from the kitchen as though the two had become close while Jenny was gone but not to such a degree that there was any sexual tension between them. Her tanned complexion was only really visible on her face and hands, with the rest of her body hidden beneath a pair of bootleg jeans and a plain black turtle neck sweater, her feet bare but not really visible. Her hair was long and wavy, at that moment up in a ponytail

on the back of her head, something which was probably permanent. I couldn't exactly fish for a name where she was concerned but I could tell that she wasn't what seemed to be disturbing the Doctor.

I looked at him out the corner of my eye as I approached the nearest set of steps and saw his gaze fixated on the smaller figure on Jenny's hip. Something about it felt....wrong. Looking at it made my stomach churn and a nauseous taste enter my mouth. I couldn't explain it. Jenny seemed to interpret our looks to mean something else, prompting her to speak, all the while watching us carefully for a reaction.

"Dad...Koschei, this is Jax, My son."

She guided the boy's face from her shoulder and what I saw seemed to make sense and remind me of the last time I'd had this feeling. A pair of bright magnetic blue eyes looked me and the Doctor over, those same eyes that belonged to the Doctor's pet Captain, who I hadn't seen since we were on the Valiant. Wait...that would mean Jenny and Jack...

Seriously? Oh, Theta wasn't going to love this at all.

"Jenny, can I speak to you? Alone," the Doctor asked, his gaze still on Jax and his voice filled with strain at the forced calm.

"Dad, don't be rude! Hey! Wait a minute! What are you doing?" Jenny asked, eyes wide as the Doctor waved his sonic screwdriver up and down the length and width of Jax's body, causing the child to stiffen at the foreign object.

I approached the Doctor as he looked at the readings and heard him murmuring to himself.

"Fifty first century pheromones presently in development, blood type D negative, very rare in this century. Fast capacity to soak in knowledge. Biological parents..."

"Dad, Wait. I'll explain it to you in a moment. At least meet Armand properly first."

The Doctor looked from his daughter and supposed grandson to the male she was holding the hand of as he clicked the sonic screwdriver closed and pushed it back in his blazer pocket.

"Armand?"

"Yes...sir."

"Call me Doctor...everyone else does. How long have you known Jenny?"

"We met on Dermot a couple of years ago."

"Dermot...really?" His eyes flickered to Jenny like he had figured out she had gone to a planet which shouldn't even be touched. The Nineteenth Convention of the Shadow Proclamation when we were teenagers had tried to ensure as much. Of course Jenny didn't know about the rules, another thing we would have to try and teach her in due course.

"I was stationed there as a cadet for my first time on duty. I met her as she was being chatted up by a Ketrn. I saved her the bother and we talked. She then moved with me here to Sharkk."

"Love at first sight, huh? Did she already have Jax?"

"DAD!"

"Er...yeah, she did. He was only about three months old. Her companion at the time, Dido, was looking after him as a part time nanny."

"Which would make him...?"

"Three years old."

"So you know he's not biologically yours?"

"Of course I do...it would make no sense if he was. I really don't see how this is relevant."

"I know who the father is....and honestly, Jenny, I thought you had better taste," the Doctor said shaking his head in disbelief.

Chapter 10

Armand had taken Jax to the nursery for a nap while the Doctor and I tried to make her tell us what had possessed her to meet, let alone fuck, Captain Jack Harkness, the man we assumed to be the father of her child. The nausea in my stomach seemed to be pretty sure so I didn't like where this was going at all and I had a feeling the Doctor didn't either.

"You going to explain like you promised?" the Doctor asked, arms crossed over his chest, feet resting on the edge of the coffee table. I sat beside him and pushed his feet down, my gaze on Jenny. She was pretty quiet as she paced back and forth like the Doctor when he was trying to remember a certain piece of information that was unreachable to him.

"I will...I just...I've been trying not to think about it since I left Amort."

"When did you go to Amort? Why were you there in the first place?"

"Mixas and Dido heard how good it was for a vacation spot. We really needed one after experiencing genocide in Tyron."

The Doctor opened his mouth to interject but stopped when I glared at him.

"We arrived...and the third night there, I was at the Orion's Eye. Dido and Mixas had both checked into a hotel for some sleep. He was just...there. At the bar, looking distracted and like he needed someone to talk to. I approached him and we got talking. He mentioned I reminded him of someone but I never found out whom. It was probably just a crappy pick up line." She sighed.

"What was his name, Jenny?"

She looked conflicted, like she had been sworn not to say it to anyone, before speaking.

"Captain Jack Harkness."

Both the Doctor and I stiffened at the sound of his name from her lips. She licked her lips nervously, though she seemed to pick up on our recognition of the name.

"But you already knew that. How?"

"We know him, Jenny. He's a natural born flirt in time traveller form who won't leave us alone."

"And when he says us he really means him," I said. "I think you're his little weak spot, Theta...right up there with his little coffee boy toy."

The Doctor glared at me threateningly before turning back to Jenny.

"Did you notice if anything felt just unexplainably wrong with him?"

"What?"

"Like your consciousness tried to make you walk away or you found you couldn't look him in the eye for long, let alone share a bed with him after being physical?"

"Well, now you mention it, yeah. It was really weird. What was that?"

"Jack is a fixed point in space and time since the TARDIS brought him back to life a few years ago after a Dalek attack."

"How?"

"It's a long story. So I'm guessing Jack is Jax's father?"

She nodded reluctantly.

"He seemed like the perfect guy. He kept me out of trouble, fought off any of those who started any, brought me drinks and paid the bill for us at the hotels we stayed at. It was just when I got pregnant things changed. I told him the second I knew and he stiffened, couldn't look me in the eye. He walked me back to my room, kissed my cheek and said he was sorry. Next morning he was gone and I was left alone on Grenada to wait until Jax was born. I'm just glad Mixas stuck to me like glue and refused to leave while we were travelling with Jack or I would have gone crazy on that planet alone."

"Hmm. Maybe because he could tell you're my daughter," the Doctor said thoughtfully.

"He does know you pretty well...like me."

"No, you definitely know me better," he assured me, though I could see the smile on Jenny's face at the idea that things between us were better than they had been.

"Let's just put it this way: Jack doesn't need a reason to sleep with anyone, Jenny. If they're pretty or handsome, he will work his charm and get them into the sack. It's just his way. Probably one of the reasons your Dad doesn't like him." I shrugged, resting my hand on the Doctor's, a gesture that seemed to comfort him a little.

"When you've seen him flirt with as many girls as I have, you'd hate him too," the Doctor snipped irritably, causing me to roll my eyes at him.

"Do you guys think we might be able to find Jack?"

"Whoa...no...no. We find him and I'll throttle him," the Doctor threatened, though immediately he back tracked at Jenny's

dejected look. "We might be able to catch him back in twenty first century Earth, where I dropped him off after the Valiant incident."

"You gave him back to his coffee boy? Are you crazy? Do you really want Jenny to see them together? They can be sickening. I only saw them together a bit on the Valiant and it was enough for a lifetime."

"Jack deserves to know he can't ruin my daughter's life so easily. If his previous lover finds out, well, Jack will have twice the begging to do," the Doctor said, leaving me to watch Jenny finally sit down and worry her lip between her teeth.

It was that decision which seemed to direct us back towards the TARDIS with a reluctant Armand in tow. He still didn't understand the concept of what it did. Jax came along for the ride as though Jenny wanted Jack to see the child he was going to miss seeing grow up. Then again, if I was Jack, I would have had more than my fair share of children by now...it just seems a shame that he was heartless enough to leave them with their other parents.

I was just about to assure her everything would be fine, that the Doctor knew Jack better than either of us put together but soon the TARDIS console was whirling away before us as the Doctor made the right calculations to get us to twenty first century earth.

"Whoa, what's going on?" Armand called as he appeared in the doorway to the corridor after settling Jax in another room.

"It's ok, Armand, that's always what happens when the TARDIS is about to leave," the Doctor called absent-mindedly.

"Wait, where are we going? Jenny?"

"I have a visit I need to make...so Dad's taking us to twenty first century earth."

"But Jax..."

"...is three years old and will be protected by four adults...possibly even five. I haven't heard him cry so we'll be fine," Jenny said reassuringly, leaving me to approach the Doctor at the console.

"You sure this is a good idea?" I whispered in his ear as Armand continued to ask Jenny why they were leaving the planet and he hadn't been consulted first. Talk about trouble in paradise.

"From what perspective?" he asked, crossing his arms over his chest and raising his eyebrow as he met my gaze.

"From all perspectives. You're taking your daughter, a Time Lady, to a century, a country, a planet...a galaxy she's never been to so she can visit an ex-boyfriend while her partner is here. The same ex you probably want to beat to a bloody pulp for impregnating your daughter while at the same time letting his own love of that time know all this and more. So let me repeat. Is this a good idea?"

He shrugged. I sighed and grabbed him by the forearm, dragging him away from the console.

"Jenny, watch the console!" I yelled over my shoulder before pulling the Doctor into the nearest of the two libraries.

The TARDIS closed and locked the door behind us before the Doctor or Jenny could protest.

"Thank you," I said, pushing the Doctor into the nearest chair.

"What the hell are you doing, leaving the TARDIS to a damned learner? Are you lacking more sanity than usual?"

"Shhh, I'm talking now." I said, hoisting myself up on the edge of the table.

He rolled his eyes but said nothing.

"Thank you. Now, you're pissed at Jack 'Boy Toy' Harkness, I get it...you're probably even a little pissed at Jenny for lacking in the morals department. But why are you still so willing to go back to Earth?"

"It's not just Jenny and Jack I'm angry at." He sighed.

"Well, who else is there to be angry at? And, before you say a word, I've been pretty good, considering so there's no way I'm on that list."

"You and my TARDIS conspired against me to lock me in my own library," he said, raising an eyebrow.

"Theta, I'm serious."

He murmured something I couldn't hear, causing me to lean in as he repeated it.

"I'm angry at myself for letting this happen."

"What? Why?" I asked.

"I shouldn't have left Jenny on Messaline uneducated. I shouldn't have given Jack the opportunity to do something so stupid."

"None of this is your fault! Jack is a force of nature on his own from what I've heard and Jenny...she is so much like you, nothing could keep her out of trouble in any way, let alone you." I sighed, sliding off the table and arranging myself in his lap, pressing a kiss to his

cheek though the look of self-loathing didn't disappear from his face.

"I just can't help but think it is. I mean...after Gallifrey...even the smallest things seem like they are my fault," he said, burying his face into the juncture where neck meets shoulder and taking a deep breath as my natural scent flowed to him.

"But they aren't. You always were a sensitive one, Theta, but not everything is your fault. Even if you had educated Jenny more before you left or pulled Jack away from his beloved Torchwood long enough to keep him out of trouble; I bet even while they were still in the TARDIS together, Jax would still have been conceived. There is no changing that," I said soothingly, pressing a kiss to his forehead.

He still didn't believe me, I could tell that much from his thoughts, but I didn't push him anymore, just rested my arms around him and let my presence ease the doubt out of his mind.

He rested his hand under my chin and directed my lips to his with a small but not convincing smile as though to assure me what I'd said had helped him a little.

I got off his lap and led him back out the door to the console room where the TARDIS was doing more spinning than normal. This told me Jenny hadn't been able to stop herself from fidgeting with the console. Damn it.

"Jenny, what the hell did I tell you about so much as *touching* the console?!" the Doctor cursed as she and Armand clung to the seats. I clung to the edge of the console as the TARDIS spun around in a complete three sixty. The Doctor managed to work out a kink in her

calculations so he could land the TARDIS somewhere.

All four of us crashed to the ground leaving the Doctor cursing over and over again as he got to his feet and began to check a diagnostic of what had gone wrong. That was what told us we should probably get some air while he cursed us into oblivion. Jenny went to grab Jax from the nursery while Armand and I pried the doors open.

The landscape was filled with that of a jungle, lots of foreign plants I'd never seen before. There was a patch of rocks where we could sit for a while. Jenny and Jax sat on the ground while Armand and I forced conversation about random things.

"So....what is this place?" Armand asked after a while of watching Jenny keep Jax away from a few snakes and stop him eating insects.

"I really don't know. Can't be that far away though," I said, getting up when the Doctor appeared from the TARDIS, wiping his hands on a rag and pushing his glasses up his nose.

"Well?" I asked as he approached us.

"The TARDIS needs a reboot. Just long enough for us to explore a bit and not get into anymore trouble." He sighed.

"So did you managed to find out where we are before you pressed the reboot button?" I asked.

"We're on Triak. About three galaxies from the Milky Way. Not that far...but with the time travelling we'll be doing too, it'll be a while before we get to Earth, providing that a certain *someone* doesn't touch the console again!" the Doctor said, glaring at Jenny who kept her gaze

on Jax, leaving me to usher him back into the recharging TARDIS to keep his hearts from exploding in anger.

Chapter 11

Twenty First Century, Cardiff, Wales, Earth, Milky Way Galaxy

Finally we arrived on earth and I could see that Jenny was practically itching to give Jack a piece of her mind at the same time the Doctor was. This was going to be a long visit, I could see it already. I went to my room to change into something that was in fashion at the time; when I'd been a Prime Minister it had been easy with those suits but now I was just a visitor and I didn't exactly have a trademark suit like the Doctor did. I rummaged through the wardrobe for something when I heard hesitant footsteps and a gaze moving up and down my back as I looked at what I hoped was the right rack - the TARDIS seemed to be directing me to it so I was taking her word for it.

"You going to be long? Jenny is itching to hit Jack square in the jaw....I'm not even sure Armand can keep her in the TARDIS for much longer."

"I think I've found a good outfit for this trip...just...give me a second to change," I called, picking up some jeans, a striped polo shirt with a denim jacket and a pair of sneakers that probably hadn't seen the light of day since the seventies. It was worth a try.

I felt him hover as I moved to one of the darker corners of the wardrobe, hung them on the nearest banister and began to strip the clothes I'd been wearing since Merant from my figure and threw them onto the nearest table before reaching for my clothes of choice.

"Kosch..."

I paused from buttoning my jeans and looked over my shoulder to see him biting his lip like he wanted to say something but the words wouldn't come. I wasn't sure if it was a thank you or an apology but at that moment I needed to get dressed before we had an angry Time Lady on the loose around Cardiff.

"Can't we wait until *after* Jenny has busted your toy captain's nose?" I asked, doing the zip and reaching for the polo shirt. I could feel his gaze still on my bare skin as I pulled the shirt over my head. I ran my fingers through my hair absent-mindedly, then reached for the jacket and pulled it on before throwing the shoes to my feet and slipping inside them.

"Sure...it's nothing important," he said with a soft smile, his hands shoved into the pockets of his coat as he left the room though I knew him well enough to know there were two things the Doctor hated. He had done so since he was Theta: confrontation...and admitting his emotions. Why did I have a feeling I had just given him a shove off the cliff when the latter was concerned?

I sighed and paused at the nearest platform to tie my laces before hurrying out of the wardrobe towards the console room. The Doctor was leaning against the closed TARDIS doors, his selective deafness keeping him from hearing Jenny's threats at him to get out of the way while Armand stood beside her, Jax on his hip and his free arm resting around Jenny's arm in an attempt to make her take a rational deep breath. Good luck with that.

I approached the Doctor and gave a Jenny a look that immediately made her shut up. She wasn't a spoiled brat but sometimes she acted so close to one it was hard to make that distinction. Armand seemed relieved at her

silence, enough anyway to think about letting go of her arm and wrapping his own around her waist as the Doctor moved out the way of the doors. He opened one of the doors and stood back to let Jenny, Jax and Armand disappear first, gesturing with a jerk of his head for me to follow like there was something he needed to do before he followed. I reluctantly followed their lead and managed to help Armand secure Jenny before she did a disappearing act.

We hung around on the porch near the Plass for a while before the Doctor appeared, closing the door behind him and locking it with his sonic screwdriver before pushing the screwdriver into his pocket and turning his attention to the others.

"What was that about?" I asked as I let go of Jenny, leaving Armand to the task of keeping her from wandering off.

"I just had to check we were recharging. Seems pointless to be in Cardiff and not recharge our batteries while on the rift." He shrugged.

I frowned but he ignored it as he began to lead the way down the Plass towards what looked like a large memorial in the middle of the pavement.

"Dad, what are you doing??" Jenny asked as he pulled the screwdriver out again and began to wave it over a line of pavement slabs, a look of concentration on his face. Finally he stopped on one of them with a grin on his face and turned the screwdriver a certain way. The slab began to dip underground.

"You might want to jump on because I'm not sure if I'll be able to control it from inside!" he called and I jumped on it beside him. Jenny

quickly followed, taking Jax from Armand before he followed.

To be honest, I had probably expected much more from Torchwood after all that I had heard about them and read about from the Doctor's diary but having a lair under the Plass in the middle of Cardiff town centre...this was definitely something amateurs did, surely. I dared to look down and see all the technology and a lay out that looked like something out of an old TARDIS.

Finally the platform arrived at the bottom as a young man in a pin-striped suit appeared, a confused look on his face as he yammered to himself. It took me a while to see the communicator in his ear and by then we were being escorted up a set of steps and into an office. It was fairly cramped, probably what the Doctor's office would look like if the TARDIS would let him have one. It wasn't until I heard the click of a gun pointed at my head that it became obvious that Captain Jack was standing behind the desk.

"What are you even doing here?" he practically growled, as though the memory of what happened on the Valiant was a touchy subject that no amount of counselling, not even a good fuck, had made him forget just yet.

"Jack....put the gun down." The Doctor's voice was soothing but firm as he edged around my body to face his former companion.

"After what he did! I still can't believe I even let you persuade me to let him live!" Jack snapped, his grip tight around the butt of his gun. His gaze remained locked on my face.

"Koschei..." Jenny said uncertainly as she handed Jax back to Armand and moved towards me slowly.

"It's a long story for another day, Jenny." I sighed, quickly growing tired of my new pose with my hands resting shoulder level either side of my head.

"Jack. Put the gun down...or you'll have to shoot me to get through him. And you know as well as I do, you don't want to be the cause of another regeneration," said the Doctor, standing in front of me, a look of determination on his face.

"We had this discussion before...he's a bad person, Doctor."

"Be that as it may...I'm not about to let you shoot him. I only just managed to heal his heart the last time."

"Why not?"

"BECAUSE HE'S MY LOVER!"

Jack's eyes widened at the words that emerged from the Doctor's lips while my gaze moved to rest on the ground. I definitely wish he could have found out about this in a better way.

"What have you done to him?" Jack hissed immediately, making me look back at him. Before I could speak, the Doctor had pulled Jack's gun from his loose fingers and put it in the inner pocket of his jacket.

"He's done nothing, Jack....we were together before the Valiant happened...and over time we grew apart. Having some time alone with him in the TARDIS has reminded me of what I feel for him." The Doctor sighed, sinking into a seat, his hand wrapping around my wrist and pulling me into the seat beside him.

Jack sighed. He sank into his own seat and rubbed the bridge of his nose as though he was

getting mental images he could really do without. Good.

Silence filled the office for a moment before Jack seemed to emerge from his thoughts and remember we were here.

"So what are you even doing here anyway? Shouldn't you be exploring some planet somewhere...or, at the very least, keeping your lover on a leash?" he asked, flashing a smile at the young male from before, who I recognised a lot easier the second time around when he appeared with coffee. His eyes were a giveaway as was his accent when he spoke in a whisper to Jack. Ah, yes. Ianto Jones. Captain Jack's Achilles' heel. Oh, this was going to be a good performance, alright...shame I didn't have any jelly babies for this one. The Doctor seemed to be able to tell what I was thinking as he rolled his eyes and sighed, like he couldn't believe I didn't learn from the last time we were on this planet.

"I asked them to bring me here," said Jenny, appearing from the couch in the corner where she had been sitting with Armand and Jax during the silence.

It was amusing to a high degree to see Jack's eyes widen at the sight of Jenny, though the Doctor seemed to think now was a good time for us to make a little detour and leave them to it. Spoil my fun!

"Koschei, let's leave them to it," he hissed when I refused to get up like he did.

"Can't we just watch a little longer?" I pleaded, watching a little grin appear on his face even as he shook his head. He always did love to see me plead in those few moments where his dominating side appeared.

"No, come on, let's go make sure Torchwood Three isn't as bad as One was," he said. His grip on my wrist tightened again as he practically pulled me out the seat.

"We'll be in the Hub if anyone wants us," the Doctor said, though Jack didn't seem to pay attention. His gaze was locked on Jenny as she tried to explain how she knew the Doctor. Why couldn't I at least see this part of their conversation? He dragged me out of the office as I felt Jack trying to look to the Doctor for confirmation of her story and I let him direct me. He seemed to have downloaded the plan of the place to his sonic screwdriver as he led me around like he had been working there for the past few decades.

He hovered around the computers and the medical bay, checking out the equipment and appearing to make an inventory with his sonic screwdriver while I hovered around, my gaze on the office above as I watched Jenny and Jack bickering through the window, Armand standing nearby, helplessly, trying to calm down Jax, who was crying in his arms. Why did he have to pull me away from the fun?

"Maybe because you would have only said something that would make things even worse," he murmured behind me as he hacked into the computer system and checked the files for anything that shouldn't have been there.

"No, I wouldn't. Give me some credit at least," I said, hoisting myself up on the desk beside him and watching him shove his sonic screwdriver between my lips to keep me quiet before turning back to the keyboard.

I rolled my eyes and crossed my arms over my chest. I swung my legs back and forth while he quickly deleted and copied a few files before

logging off. He then removed the screwdriver and pulled me off the desk before leading me towards a dank looking staircase. I dug my heels into the cobbled floor as Mr. Jones hurried down the stairs from Jack's room, a furious look on his face as Jack called his name from the balcony while Jenny practically brandished Jax at him.

Yep, I was definitely missing out on all the fun.

"Come on, they don't need you gawping at their private business. Let's go check the cells," the Doctor said, pulling me harder than necessary, his fingers lacing between mine when I reluctantly gave in. I was probably going to have to be the one talking reason to Jenny later on the TARDIS anyway.

The vaults looked like something the Rotians would use to scare their victims half to death, which might explain why Captain Jack was using them like cells. The Doctor let my hand go once he'd sonicked the door closed behind us before detouring towards the source of an annoying groaning. I leaned against the interlinking wall between two cells and watched him attempt to communicate with the creature there, which seemed to be asking him either for food or a smoke. Trust Torchwood to keep an innocent traveller in a cell for no good reason other than the fact they merely existed.

"Can we go yet? As much as I love exploring places like this and UNIT, it does get kind of boring when I could be watching Jenny and your toy captain ripping each other to shreds." I sighed, quickly moving when I heard a pipe from overhead start to drip before whatever was in them hit me.

"I'm almost done...give me a second," he said, casting me a glance out of the corner of his eye

before turning his attention back towards the cell's occupant.

Finally he turned his attention back to me after sonicking a camera in the corner over the door and pushing the sonic screwdriver into his pocket. His fingertips brushed against my cheek, causing a sly grin on my lips as I met his gaze.

"Are you serious? You pulled me down here just to fuck me in private? I'd say it was sweet if I didn't have a feeling your toy Captain had done the same with his toy boy at least a hundred...mmph." I groaned as his lips crushed against mine, my hands resting on the back of his neck to make him deepen it in a way he knew I loved. His lips detoured down my neck, leaving me to cling to either sides of the wall with numbing hands while his fingers undid the zip of my jeans and slowly began to pump up and down my length. Oh god...why did he always get a voyeurism kink when in the dirtiest of places?

"Ah...oh, god....ok....you've made your point. Can you stop now?" I gasped breathlessly as my back arched against the wall.

"Not until you've come all over my hand," he murmured, his gaze locked with mine as he pulled harder than necessary at my cock.

"You're....not serious," I whispered, though the way he raised an eyebrow challengingly definitely said that he was.

"Watch me," he breathed, licking the corner of his lips as he looked down at what his hand was doing, my grip getting tighter and tighter on the edges of the wall to stop me falling flat on my ass. I watched as he crouched down before me and softly nudged my balls with his

nose, pressing kisses at the base as his tongue drew patterns along the sensitive skin.

I groaned wantonly as I felt the familiar sensation in the base of my spine, pretty much the warning that I wasn't going to hold out much longer. No, oh no. I wasn't going to let him win so easily.

"Come on, Kosch...or do I have to keep you on edge until we get back to the TARDIS? Will you even hold out that long?" he asked, raising an eyebrow with a sly grin that screamed he knew I wouldn't be able to stop myself if he didn't stop.

"You tell me..." I gasped, watching him roll his eyes.

"I don't think you will. You're looking pretty debauched right now...and you know as well as I do what that means. One kiss....in the right place and you're a goner," he whispered as his fingers brushed up and down my length with barely-there strokes.

"Do it," I whispered, meeting his gaze, not even caring how desperate I must seem. All I wanted was his lips on my cock, on my own lips letting me taste how hot he could get me just by kissing and touching me, like I was a teenager all over again.

He smiled slyly and licked a stripe up my length before pressing his lips over the head of my cock, licking the pre-come from the end before



parting his lips and grazing his teeth over the head, causing a whimper from the back of my throat. He pulled his face away from my cock and stroked it softly before I called his name, my eyes screwed closed as my come flowed all over his fingers.

I felt boneless and empty as his fingers tucked my limp cock back inside my pants. He zipped me up with his clean hand before getting to his feet and letting me watch him suck my come from his fingers like it was a delicacy he enjoyed even centuries after our first hand job. He was seriously killing me.

"Theta," I murmured as his eyes opened and a knowing smile appeared on his face. He licked the last bit of come from between his thumb and index finger and pressed a deep prying kiss to my lips, our tongues dancing together as the taste of my come and his essence settled on my taste buds, giving me a high I'd forgotten I even enjoyed.

Finally he pulled back, pressing one chaste kiss to my lips before wrapping his arm around my waist and easing me away from the wall. His free hand pulled the screwdriver from his pocket and pointed it at the door to unlock it and fix whatever he had done to the camera before leading me out of the room.

We appeared back in the hub just in time to see Jenny hit Jack in the face. His toy boy was nowhere to be seen but Armand looked like he was getting sick of having to witness this scene.

"I think it's time we leave, Jenny....unless you want to smack Jack around a bit more which I wouldn't advise. I think he might actually like it," said the Doctor as I nuzzled his neck, causing a grin on his face as he put Jack's gun on the nearest desk.

"Now you tell me," Jenny grumbled as she turned her back on the Captain and took Jax from Armand before her lover stood beside us near the platform.

"Say goodbye to your biological Daddy, Jax. Something tells me you won't be seeing him again anytime soon," she said, holding the child up to Jack, who was still rubbing his bright red cheek. His gaze moved over Jax as though cursing himself for having yet another illegitimate child.

Jenny hugged Jax to her body and followed the three of us up to the platform, the Doctor giving Jack a look that said he might want to activate it if he didn't want any more physical damage from him or his daughter. Jack took the hint and turned his gaze to his vortex manipulator, pressing a few buttons. The slab opened above us and the platform started inching upwards. As we made our way up, I heard Jack calling Ianto's name as he disappeared in the same direction the Doctor and I had witnessed him disappearing to before. He was definitely in the dog house.

Once we arrived at Plass level and the slab was in place, we stepped off and began the walk in the direction of where we had left the TARDIS. The Doctor unlocked it while Armand and Jenny squabbled in Sharlian, which was just as well since I don't think I could have stood it in any other language, and the five of us entered. Jenny, Armand and Jax disappeared down the corridor towards their room while the Doctor closed the door behind us and edged us towards the console, letting me lean against it as he tried to figure out where we were going next.

"Have a plan for our next location?" I asked, as he chewed the corner of his lower lip and

tapped his tongue against the inside of it thoughtfully.

"Well...we could go back to Sharlk and drop the love birds off, or we could take a detour to Octavus and I could have a talk with Armand. I think there are some things he needs to know and other things he wants to ask me. What do you think?" he asked, tilting his head at me.

"Where's Octavus again?" I asked, rubbing the corner of my left eye wearily. After the workout he gave me in the cells of Torchwood, all I wanted to do was sleep.

"Komar galaxy, past Rumarion and Deasrt. It's not far from Sharlk really but just far enough that he would realise he can't avoid speaking to me," the Doctor said, his gaze moving back to the monitor on the console as though he was already calculating co-ordinates.

"Octavus it is, then. Either way I think I'll go catch a nap." I yawned, pushing myself away from the console and moving towards the corridor.

"I'll be with you in a minute," he called, his back to me as I looked over my shoulder in his direction.

Of course he would.

I made it to my room -- after detouring away from the bickering couple's room to check on Jax, who was already sleeping soundly -- and threw my jacket to one side, collapsing on my bed as I kicked my shoes to the floor. I'd pulled the sheets over me after removing my come covered jeans when he appeared in the doorway, a smile on his face.

"I thought you were kidding. Don't you want to go and break up their argument before they kill

each other?" I asked, resting my head on my pillow as he removed his coat and shoes before crawling across the bed towards me.

"They'll stop fighting soon. They have Jax to consider," he said simply, leaning his back against the headboard beside me and meeting my gaze.

"In other words, you've been snooping inside heads again." I sighed.

"Hard not to while in here. That was how I knew he wanted to talk to me to begin with," he said softly, resting his hand under my chin when my eyes began to drift asleep, causing me to open them and meet his gaze.

I nodded sleepily as he pressed a kiss to both my forehead and my lips. He let go of me and watched as I curled up under the covers, his gaze still fixated on my form until I was deeply submerged in my subconscious.

Chapter 12

I was woke what felt like five minutes later. The Doctor was missing from beside me but I could hear a loud knocking at the door. The Doctor had probably lured Armand away while me and Jenny were sleeping so we didn't interrupt his interrogation but that was probably as worse as leaving the TARDIS floating in the middle of a black hole while he was sitting at the console sipping tea. Sooner or later either I or his daughter was going to notice and probably throttle him for it.

I sighed as I wrapped the sheets around my bare torso, my shirt having mysteriously disappeared while I was sleeping, approaching the door. I heard Jenny curse under her breath about slackness.

"Yes?" I said, leaning against the doorframe as she made to hit thin air with her fist due to her impatience.

"Dad and Armand are gone."

The sense of urgency in her voice merely made me roll my eyes.

"I gathered as much. He mentioned it to me before I went to sleep. If you'll stay here with Jax and the TARDIS, I'll go look for them," I said, raking my fingers through my hair.

"How long do you think you'll be?" she called as I turned back into the room to gather my cleaned clothes from the dresser beside my bed before going for a shower.

"Depends on how far away he's lured him....and how stubborn Armand is. I'll go look for about an hour. If I don't find them, I'll come back and we'll come up with a plan B to lure him back. Shouldn't be that hard to find him on a desert planet," I said, rubbing my left eye

with the heel of my hand before picking up my clothes and brushing past her in the direction of the nearest bathroom.

After a quick shower, cursing myself for not having either a sonic or laser screwdriver at hand, I walked out of the TARDIS into the humid atmosphere. The whole planet was pretty much the definition of a desert, made up entirely of sand dunes. With the five suns rotating around it, it was practically inhabitable, to that point that it was a struggle for a Time Lord to even stand it for so long. But it probably wouldn't be much of a problem for Armand to survive alone since the regime of the Sharlian Grand Army was as tough as the French Foreign Legion if the Doctor decided to leave him there....which definitely wasn't reassuring at all.

I hovered for a moment after descending from the top of the dune the TARDIS was parked on and tried to home in on the Doctor and Armand's location. I could tell he was trying to hide the location so I wouldn't find it but I think the drums gave his head a pounding to the point where he couldn't keep his mind shielded for much longer. I finally got an image of where they were and turned in the direction of a set of footprints starting to fade in the sand. I grinned and walked in the direction of the footprints, stopping every so often to check in with him and make sure I was walking in the right direction. Eventually I trudged up a fairly large dune and caught sight of the two sitting cross-legged in the sand. Armand wasn't saying anything, just staring at the view. This seemed to be agitating the Doctor, who was fidgeting with his sonic screwdriver.

I hit him over the head once I was close enough and the Doctor groaned as I sat on the other side of Armand.

"What are you doing here?"

"Jenny woke up...then she woke me up and convinced me to come find you. She'll give you an earful when we get back to the TARDIS." I sighed, rubbing my arms, which were gradually growing pink with inevitable sunburn. The sight caused the Doctor to sigh and remove his coat which he draped over my shoulders before turning back to Armand.

"Are you going to talk to me, Armand? Because I know as well as you do this whole trip has been a strange experience," the Doctor said, his gaze on the young man causing Armand to shift a little.

"It has been a little....unusual," Armand admitted, biting his lip as he pushed himself up from the sand and began to pace back and forth uncertainly.

"...but only unusual compared to what you saw on Sharlk?" I asked as I shifted to close the gap between me and the Doctor. His arm wrapped around my waist.

"Yeah, I mean, when Jenny told me what she did in Dermot, I thought she was kidding. Why would a sane person move from one planet to another instead of staying on just one?" he asked.

"Well, most of us Gallifreyans are actually sane....with the odd exception, of course," the Doctor said eyeing me out the corner of his eye to which I merely rolled my eyes in acknowledgment.

"But why? Of course I support her decision to fly around the galaxies and do what she does. I have no problem looking after Jax for her, let alone housing Dido, Ezra and Mixas when they

want a rest but...why?" He sighed, raking his fingers through his hair.

"On our planet, it's in our blood. For me, Koschei and Jenny it's just a part of continuing our planet's tradition since we're the only ones who remain." The Doctor shrugged.

"But what does that mean for those who you're in a relationship with...or if you want to settle down with someone who wants you to be home at six every evening instead of jetting around the planets looking for and preventing trouble?" he asked, uncertainty on his face screaming that we had just come to the root of the problem.

The Doctor met my gaze and I jerked my head in Armand's direction for him to at least try.

"Is that something you want with Jenny?" the Doctor asked as he pushed himself up to his feet and approached the Sharlian.

"It's what I've always wanted. *She* is what I've always wanted since I first set eyes on her," he said, biting his lip like he wasn't sure how the Doctor would react to such information. I have to be honest; he was taking it better than I would have thought, especially after his previous freak outs before we even got to Sharlk.

"Do you want to marry her, Armand?" the Doctor asked softly.

Armand smiled softly as he approached him.

"More than anything, sir. With your permission...I want to marry Jenny the second we get back to Sharlk, and love and care for her and Jax until the day I die," he said, offering the Doctor his hand.

The Doctor smiled as he shook Armand's hand. "Then what choice do I have but to give you permission to do just that? Love and protect my daughter and grandson when they are in a tailspin."

Armand's face lit up in a brighter smile as he let go of the Doctor's hand and approached me, offering me his hand as though he knew my opinion was just as important as the Doctor's. Damn, that boy's a smart one.

"Go for it, You two deserve each other." I smiled, removing one of my hands from the Doctor's coat and sliding it into Armand's, giving it a squeeze before letting my hand be covered back beneath the anti-sunburn material.

"You don't know what this means to me." Armand beamed as the Doctor moved towards me and began to root around through the pockets of the coat covering me. He soon pulled out a black ring box that caused my eyes to widen. What the hell was that?

"Yes, I do. And, if you don't mind...I have something which might make the whole proposal thing a lot more special." The Doctor smiled, approaching Armand and opening the black box.

Armand's eyes widened and I got to my feet to see what he was staring at. I couldn't believe what I saw.

A white point star merged into a silver band sat amongst the black velvet.

"Where did you get that?" I breathed, watching as Armand took it from his fingers like it was made of glass.

"It's been sitting in the back of a storage cupboard for a few centuries...I thought it could do with some use, finally." He smiled as he met my gaze.

"But that's a..."

"White point star. Yes. I had it made for someone regenerations ago but never got round to it. I think it would mean the worlds to Jenny if Armand gave her that ring," he said, turning his attention back to Armand.

"I...I don't know what to say," Armand whispered.

"Say you'll take it. Please," the Doctor said with a sincere smile on his face. "One of us deserves to put it to good use."

"Thank you so much, sir." Armand grinned, watching as the Doctor closed the box and pushed it into his hands. I could tell there had been a very special person in his life who he'd wanted to ask that question. Only he never got around to it or could never find the words.

"We'd better get back to the TARDIS before Jenny sends out a search party," I said, sliding my hand into the Doctor's and giving it a squeeze.

The two of us followed Armand down the sand dune though I couldn't stop myself from asking him about the original intended owner of the ring.

"So, that's been sitting in your cupboard for a while, huh?" I asked, watching his gaze fall to the sand under our feet.

"Something like that."

"So who did you make the ring for?" I asked, giving his hand a squeeze so he would look at

me, which he did shyly out the corner of his eye.

"You'll laugh," he said, causing me to frown.

"No, I won't. Come on, just tell me."

"I got it made that year I left Gallifrey when we were young and in the academy. I wanted to make my absence up to you and thought maybe that might be a good way to go about it. I mean, our hearts are already bound together. Getting married in the Gallifreyan way just seemed like the next step." He shrugged.

"You wanted to ask me to marry you?" I asked, my voice squeaking. I had never really given much thought to the two of us doing something that formal and final. He knew how much my parents had hated him and yet he still had thought about it. That definitely told me how much he loved me.

His gaze remained resting on the sand as he nodded, like he waiting for me to explode and tell him what a bad idea I thought that was. But I could still remember my thoughts on those nights when he was gone, wishing he would come back and make some big gesture to tell me he hadn't left because of me. Never had I imagined that that gesture would involve marriage.

"So, why didn't you?" I asked, watching him bite his lip in thought.

"Because we began to argue more and more, we spent so many decades, centuries and eternities apart that in the end I knew even if we did get married it would never be as a final as I wanted. We'd get split up, your parents would crow about how right they were and it would only cause more pain. So I threw it in the back of the closet after seeing one of your

particularly bitter regenerations and forgot about it until Armand and Jenny appeared," he said softly.

I wanted to ask him why he hadn't been more persistent if he was so fixated on the idea but knew there had been years where we weren't together and I could see his point. The Master and the Doctor being lovers had been bad enough but being partners in a civil partnership of sorts -- yeah, that wasn't going to happen.

Now that we were back in a kind of relationship, part of me was sure that, sooner or later, maybe it wouldn't be too farfetched and we could see each other together in that kind of context.

The two of us fell into a comfortable silence as we followed Armand back towards the TARDIS, each of us in our own thoughts, probably all about what we could possibly do in our relationship to show there was more commitment between us than we thought. Finally we arrived and the Doctor unlocked it with his sonic screwdriver before the three of us piled inside. Jenny immediately attacked the Doctor since she was obviously under the assumption that he had abducted her lover under the pretence of telling him to dump Jenny. Oh god, if only she knew.

"Hey, enough of that! Let him get a word in edgewise, would you?" I said as Armand managed to pull her away from the Doctor before she broke his glasses.

"Ok, explain yourself. What the hell were you doing pulling Armand out the TARDIS without talking to me first?" she asked with a bitchy tone that made me sigh as I sank on to the chair to witness the spectacle.

"Your dad just wanted to talk, nothing more, Jenny," Armand hushed, kissing the skin of her neck soothingly which seemed to ease her anxiety, but not get rid of it.

She continued to bitch and curse him a bit more before pulling Armand down the corridor by the wrist, leaving the Doctor to set in the coordinates for Sharlk. I was perfectly content to sit there in the console room and listen to him cursing under his breath about the mechanical servicing he'd need to do once they got there but he seemed to have another plan.

"Feel like going for a walk?" he asked, tugging on my hand once he'd locked in the coordinates.

"Can't we just leave them to bitch amongst themselves without getting involved?" I sighed.

"I swear we won't go anywhere near them...well, technically, anyway. So yes to the walk?" he asked.

I rolled my eyes but let him pull me to my feet and lead me down the corridor. Part of me thought he meant just lurking around the corridors until we reached his room but soon enough he'd pulled me through an oak door with rusty hinges that looked like it had never been used. We appeared at the top of a set of stone steps which looked out over a large rose garden surrounded by tall trees with silvery leaves that reminded me of the tree we'd met under at Mount Perdition.

"Wow," I breathed as his hand slid into mine after closing the door behind him. The two of us walked down the stone steps and began to follow the path through the garden, soon pausing to rest under one of the tree. He brushed a Schlenk blossom against my forehead, causing me to grin and roll my eyes

as I tried to pull it from his grip. He finally released it and rested his arms around my waist as he pressed a kiss to my lips. That was when I saw them.

Jenny was dressed in a white sun dress and was being led by Armand through the mass of flowers, a look of wonder on her face as Armand removed an Arkytior and offered it to her. I wanted to tell the Doctor we should leave them to enjoy this alone, without supervision, then I saw them pause and Armand held her hand as he sank down onto his knee before her.

The two of us pushed ourselves upright to watch as he proposed, hearing every word he said through his thoughts. He pulled the ring from his pocket and offered it to her. The shriek that filled the otherwise peaceful night as well as the loud "Of course I will!" told us what we wanted to know and we each leaned back into our reclined positions, exchanging smiles, even though deep inside we wished it was us in that position.

Chapter 13

A few days later we arrived in Sharlk. This was definitely a relief since Jenny had been nagging us about wedding traditions from Gallifrey and neither of us had really been to one as children, which was probably for the best. We still had to endure her making lists of things to sort out with Dido once she was back on the planet. Flowers were sorted since she was incessant in using bunches of Arkytiors for bouquets. Both I and the Doctor had sat with her in the wardrobe, offering our opinions on the wedding dresses she found, while Armand tried on tuxes for him and Jax. She had made the Doctor promise he would be the one to give her away, which he had agreed to without much trouble, and while she had wanted me to give her away with him, I felt it would be best if her biological father had that honour. We'd already sorted our wedding present out for her -- lessons on how to operate the TARDIS the next time we were there and the offer that we would take her anyway she wanted to go. Well, anywhere that didn't involve her and the Doctor's toy captain. The Doctor had also found a ring with his old house crest on it to give to her to keep it in the family so both ways we were done.

When we arrived at the planet we stayed at their house and watched all the madness unfold around us, letting Mixas, who was surprisingly good at altering clothes, deal with adjusting the tuxes Jenny had picked out for the two of us as well as for Armand and Jax. Dido distracted Jenny with all the girly details, so that pretty much left us free to meet Armand's family, which had been quite a treat aside from his mother, Pandora, hitting on the Doctor which I wasn't happy about any more than her husband Louis was.

"Looking forward to tomorrow?" I asked as the two of us laid in his bed after having a little ktrin tournament with Jenny Dido, Mixas and Ezra, which had left all of us exhausted. It was pretty much the only bachelorette party Jenny was going to get while Armand was out partying with his military buddies.

"I suppose...I might be a little nervous," he murmured against my shoulder as he stared at our tuxedos hanging up on the screen at the end of the bed.

"Nothing wrong with that," I said soothingly.

"I just....is it so wrong of me to wish that it was us instead of her and Armand?" he asked.

"Depends on if it's because you don't want Armand to marry her, plain and simple, or if you're being sincere." I said, raising an eyebrow.

"Sincere, I promise."

I nodded and pressed a kiss to his neck.

"Then no...it's not wrong. I kind of wished the same when I saw how happy she was when he proposed. We might never have that. And then what are we supposed to do? I mean, being together with bound hearts is all well and good but it isn't the same, really," I said, resting my head on his chest as his arm wrapped around me.

He nodded thoughtfully and the two of us fell into a comfortable silence, his gentle breathing against my skin signalling he was asleep, leaving me to stare at the black ceiling and hope that the next day was going to go smoothly, not just for Jenny but for us as well.

We were awoken mere hours later to the sound of Jenny shrieking that she was late,

though from the clock on the wall she was just overreacting. Regardless, I woke the Doctor so we could dress before she launched at his door to wake us up. We dressed and went to the console room to do the other's tie while Dido helped Jenny with last minute adjustments of hair and make up. Soon we were following her and the others out of the TARDIS towards the field on Armand's parents' land in the suburbs, which had been set up for the occasion.

There was still a lot of rushing around and calming down of anxious members as they waited for Armand to appear with Jax.

Eventually everything was perfect and I sat amongst the crowd of other guests watching Jenny walk down the aisle with the Doctor beside her. Yammering warnings in her ear and making sure she was ready had been exactly how I had expected him to behave and he didn't disappoint. But, with Jax staying with Dido while they went on their honeymoon to Neuro, and Ezra and Mixas house-sitting, it meant that there was nothing else to really keep us here. Which was a shame since I'd become strangely attached to Shark but, as was the life of a Time Lord, there was no hanging around if you weren't needed. Jenny had practically tried to strangle us with thanks for her gifts but she also made me swear we would at least consider visiting them the next time they were in the galaxy. It would take a lot to make sure the Doctor kept that promise, but she was his daughter and he had become attached to her more than he would admit so maybe it wouldn't be that hard.

Now I was sitting on the seats back in the TARDIS, covered in glitter and streamers, waiting for him to return. The TARDIS was getting restless about staying in one place too long and had already tried to leave him behind.

Finally he appeared, a guarded look on his features that told me he didn't want to talk and that it was best to just leave him alone for awhile. He entered the co-ordinates and left in the direction of his room. The whining of the TARDIS disappearing began.

I went to the wardrobe to grab some more clothes and took a shower to get the glitter out my hair before trying to find something to keep my mind distracted from the drums. I ended up in a room I'd never seen before with a que in my hand, sleeves pushed up and doing a tame version of ktrin to my shadow. It wasn't really the same. As I did so, all I could think of was the last time I'd been doing ktrin with the Doctor, how we ended up making out on the floor like the teenagers we used to be. Yet now the Doctor seemed to have become someone different to the person who would willingly make out with me in a heart's beat. In the end I gave up and let the que rest against the wall. I sank to the floor and tried to figure out what to do. I'd become used to having the Doctor's voice in my ear, his touch against my skin, to being the one to reassure him that everything would be fine even if I was just as much in the dark as he was. If he didn't want me anymore, what was I even doing here?

Sure, in the beginning it had been a noble gesture on his part to keep me in the TARDIS, even though he was the only person who could do so. While I'd put up a fight, just knowing he wanted me had made the idea more tolerable. Now I was back to feeling like a prisoner trapped in the TARDIS, after I was sure we had at least made some progress in our relationship to change that; although if what we had could be even considered a relationship I still had had no idea about, myself. I sighed as I lay on my

back in the middle of the ballroom and tried to figure out my options.

I could stay out of his way for the next however long it took for us to get to the next planet, pack up and disappear before he came looking for me; that definitely seemed like the best option. Something screamed he wasn't going to let me go so easily, and even if he didn't come looking for me, the TARDIS would immediately let him know I was missing and refuse to leave until he found me. Or there was option number two -- I would lock myself in my room and go down the memory lane of the heartache and bitterness I experienced because of him, which would remind me of the old persona I'd been trying to scrap, to the point where I'd come up with some way to take over the TARDIS and then have a shouting match with him until he would listen and take me hard up against the console.

Or I could do the sane approach and maybe consider number one if it didn't work out. Go to his room and make him talk to me. I bit my lip as I tried to foresee how that option would work out. With his current untalkative self, I wasn't exactly sure that would be a good idea. Regardless, I pushed myself upright and bit my lip. I pushed my sleeves down and left the que in the room as I made my way towards his room. Just as I was getting unsure as to whether I was going in the right direction, the scent from the Schlenk blossom on his shelf caught my attention and practically dragged me to the right door, or so I thought.

I swallowed uncertainly as I waited a second, trying to probe his mind for any inclination of his current mood but he was obviously blocking my attempts. I sighed, knocking at the door. I leaned against the doorframe as I heard him

push himself off the bed and approach it like he wasn't sure if he wanted to let me in or not.

"Doctor, I know you're in there in a grumpy mood. But instead of being antisocial why don't you just tell me about it, hmm?" I called, feeling like I was majorly out of my depth, something I often felt like when he was in one of his moods.

For a few minutes nothing happened but, just as I was getting ready to snap at him, the door edged open, revealing him holding a picture in his hand. The changeable wallpaper was now a dark purple colour with the patterns still changing but the colour the same.

"Interesting colour scheme," I said, taking a glance around as he bit his lip before letting the door open completely so I could enter.

He pushed himself back up onto the bed and stared at the picture in his hands like it held the answer to all his problems. This left me to sigh as I followed him inside. I sat on the edge of the bed and looked over his shoulder at the picture.

It was of the two of us, together on Gallifrey; our graduation from the academy, a formal party, I can't even remember the occasion. But we looked so...happy. We were both dressed in formal attire, my arm rested around his shoulder with his head rested on my shoulder, our eyes practically sparkling at being in the other presence. It was a beautiful picture, I had to admit, but at the same time I had to wonder how he even had a copy of it. The only two copies of it had been on Gallifrey before it got destroyed.

"Where did you find that?" I asked as I slid further back on the bed so I was resting my head on his shoulder.

"My closet of memories. I'd been thinking about it since I brought you on to the TARDIS," he said softly, taking a glance at me out of the corner of his eye.

I frowned. "You seriously have one of those? I thought it was a myth."

"Of course I do. How else would I be able to remember the most important relationships in my life through my regenerations?" he said, handing the photo to me before hugging his legs to his chest.

"But I still don't get it..." I said, still frowning, letting my gaze move over the picture.

"Where did we go wrong, Kosch?" he asked as I put the photo to one side.

"Which time?" I asked. There had been many times where our relationship had gone to shit, to the point where it was hard to keep track.

"The last time...and this time." He sighed.

"The last time...we had regenerated so much we couldn't see even a little bit of the other in either one of us anymore, not to mention we both wanted different things. It's to be expected...even if our hearts are bound to the each other's...doesn't mean there won't be challenges during our relationship," I said softly, pressing a kiss to the side of his neck.

"And this time?"

I looked down and sighed as I remembered his words on Merant. How he couldn't look at me the same way after what I had done as the Prime Minister. I couldn't blame him.

"We're different people...we've changed. I've lost more of my sanity as is obvious by what I tried to do to Earth and you've changed for the

better. I mean ,you didn't hit your toy captain like some of your other regenerations would have, so that's good, right?" I said, watching him roll his eyes.

"But what about us? As a couple, Master? Is there any hope for us?" he asked, meeting my gaze again and causing my hearts to ache as the '*please say yes*' in my mind caused me to swallow.

"From my end, there always is, Doctor," I whispered soothingly, resting my hand on his cheek and pressing a soft kiss to his lips.

He smiled as his hand rested on the back of my neck, pulling my lips back to his in a way that seemed to say he was just as much relieved as I was at what I had just said. And though I would never admit it myself, that relief was just as much felt in the depths of my hearts.

Fin.