

## VOYAGE – Reading Sample #4

Passio and Crav were on their own in the changing rooms. Crav had just finished dressing when two young soldiers entered the room. They whispered and speculated about Daria, who they had just seen outside.

“Did you see the human?”

“Yeah, looks weird, no fur, just hair on its head.”

“It’s a female.”

“Really? How do you know?”

“Tits. Big ones.”

Crav took a deep breath. That’s not the way to talk about the young Queen. He wanted to teach them a lesson, but managed to hold himself back at the last moment. The two soldiers did not know anything. And it had to stay that way.

“You have your eyes everywhere.”

Passio had just left the cleaning facility.

“Looked damn hot to me. I wonder how skin feels without fur.”

Passio slipped into his Skirtra.

“I have no idea. But why are you so curious about her skin? If she’s a female, there are definitely different body parts I would be interested in. Especially to see if there is any fur down there.” He giggled. “I would just love to dig in between her legs and....”

The conversation didn’t get any further.

Crav could not believe his eyes. Passio had stormed towards them with a wild roar and grabbed both by the throat, pushing them against the door. The door slid open and the whole bunch landed on the floor. A wild row broke out between the changing rooms and the training grounds and Passio was soon on top of the game. He kept one of the soldiers in a scissor hold, the other one in a head-lock. His eyes were glowing, his fangs extracted long out of his mouth, only inches away from the soldier’s throat.

Daria had jumped up, standing glued to the spot only a few yards away from the scene. Just a few minutes ago, she had seen how he lost a fight and how worried she was about his well-being. Now she was worried about what he would do to these two Katee’Lhi. She never thought that he could be so brutal. What happened right in front of her eyes was no showcase, no training. It was real. She noticed that immediately, looking at the raw brutality and wildness they were fighting with. What did just happen? Then she saw Crav, how he stormed, cursing, towards the scene to help his men. Passio was a step away from killing both of them.

“What the fuck are you doing? Are you out of your fucking mind?” Crav was the stronger warrior, but in this case he did not stand a chance to loosen the grip Passio had on the soldiers. “Damn it let them go!”

No reaction.

“Passio! Let go, you idiot! You are going to kill them!”

He shook him. Nothing. Almost. A roar, a growl, a kick and Crav flew back against the wall with so much force, he left a dent in it. Slightly dazed, he shook himself, wanting to re-join the fight.

“That’s it!” She had to take care of it and ran towards the entangled bunch of fighting and growling Katee’Lhi, grabbed him by his hair and looked into his eyes. They were dark as the night with a hint of red shimmering in them like a smouldering fire. She had never seen him like that. She stroked his head, so it would look like she was pulling streaks of hair out of his face.

“Daria! No! Go away!” she heard Crav shouting.

Unnoticed by the others, she sent Passio a mental image to release the two and underlined it with a sharp command: “Enough! Stop it now! This is an order from your Queen!” Slowly, he loosened his grip and looked at both of the soldiers, one by one. They yelped in panic.

Crav was still shouting from the back: “Daria! Get away from him! He is unpredictable and dangerous!”

Passio grunted to the two of them: “You so much as even think about her ever again, I will challenge you into the ring! With swords!” He still had a hold of them.

This was unacceptable! Daria reached out for his hands and removed them from the soldiers’ throats. “Run!” The two ran off as fast as they could.

In the meantime, Crav had tumbled towards them and swung his arm around Daria. “Get away from him, Daria! Before he does something to you. I have no idea why he is reacting the way he does.”

Passio roared loudly, trying to throw himself on Crav. “MINE!”

Damn, it was about her. Was he jealous? Daria got in between them, one hand over Passio’s heart, the other one moving Crav’s arm away from her waist. “Passio! Listen to me! No matter what happened back in there, it’s over. Nothing happened, nobody has done anything to me, nobody wants anything from me.” She wrapped her arms around him, “Look at me! Look into my eyes!”

...*Calm, trust, security... I am yours...* She let her emotions glide into his mind. Slowly, he calmed down.

Crav still looked at him, dumbfounded. *‘Mine....MINE!’* He tried to understand what he meant by that. It made no sense.

“I...I...” Passio shook his head trying to clear his mind. He did not know what came over him. Or did he? He did surely! He pulled Daria towards him, pushing his face into her hair. “By the Lhigs”, he whispered. “I didn’t think it would turn out to be like that. I didn’t think it would be so intense.”

“What are you talking about?” Daria did not understand what he meant. “What was going on with you? I have never seen you like that. I was really afraid of you. You looked like you were going to kill those two. What was wrong with them?”

Crav finally knew what Passio meant by ‘mine’. “Oh shit!” he cursed loudly. “That cannot be true. Please tell me that this is not true!”

Passio only seemed to realize now that Crav was standing right beside them, looking at him still in a daze and immediately letting go of Daria.

“Endla’s daughter? Of all of them?! A Lhig! Are you out of your fucking mind? You can’t do that!”

Passio moaned loudly, tortured. The big secret he had built was his house of cards and it had just tumbled down completely after this incident.