

Excerpt

Abducting Abby

Dragon Lords of the Valdier book 1

By S. E. Smith

Zoran Reykill pushed the body of the dead guard off him. He paused to draw in a sharp breath as pain sliced through his battered body. He had been in captivity for the past month, and there wasn't a place on his body that didn't hurt from the numerous cuts and bruises from the beatings and torture he had lived through.

He forced himself to roll the guard over and pulled the guard's clothes off his body. His own clothes had been taken not long after he was brought down to the hell they called a cell. This was the first opportunity he had to escape. He had been watching and waiting for his captors to make a mistake, and they finally had, thinking he was too beaten down to fight.

The guard Zoran had killed had come in to *play*, thinking he would relieve the boredom of standing guard over a chained prisoner by beating him some more. Instead, the guard found him hanging lifeless from the wall by his wrists and ankles.

When the guard unlocked his wrists, Zoran had grabbed him, breaking his neck immediately, so he couldn't fight or call out. Zoran knew he would not have survived long in a fight. He was too weak. It

took everything in him to push the guard off and find the release on the locking mechanism to release his ankles.

Struggling into the guard's clothes, he pulled the laser pistol and blade from the guard, checking to make sure both were fully charged. He reached down and yanked the security badge from the guard's neck. He knew it was late, and there wouldn't be many guards about at this time of the night. Closing the solid door behind him, he moved down the darkened corridor. The dark did not bother him as he shifted to allow his night vision to take over.

His people were renowned for their ability to adapt to the dark. As a dragon shifter, he felt the beast inside him straining to get out. He hadn't dared shift while in captivity. Without his symbiot to help shield him, he would have been too vulnerable.

He fought to control his inner self as he moved through the prison maze. Even though he had only been half conscious when he was brought to the prison, he knew the way out, having played it over and over in his mind during the last month. Even if he hadn't been conscious, he would have smelled the night air as it called to him.

He was Zoran Reykill, leader of the Valdier. He was the most powerful of his kind, matched only by his brothers.

He had been enjoying time on a remote planet on the outer rim of his own solar system, hunting and enjoying the favors of some of the women brought there for such things. Ordinarily, he would have

bypassed pleasure, but he had been gone from his own world for two months on a diplomatic mission.

He spent two days hunting in the thick forests of the planet before heading into the city complex. He did not suspect anything until after the meal, when he started to feel very lethargic. He only had time to send a message to his symbiot that he was in danger.

He woke, chained in a Curizan spaceship. That was a month ago. The Curizans hoped to ransom him back after they obtained information about the symbiotic relationship his people enjoyed with a living metal organism capable of changing shape and harnessing enormous power. The relationship allowed his people to enjoy many attributes, including longevity, the ability to heal at a faster rate, and unbelievable space travel.

Zoran was worried his symbiot would be captured and made sure it remained hidden until he could escape. He knew he would need it when the time came.

The Valdier lived on the outer rim of the Zion cluster of planets. Only in the past three hundred years had they developed a relationship with neighboring star systems. At first, the Valdier were very careful about who was allowed to visit.

They were very protective of the interaction of their species with the symbiot. It was not until other species tried to capture and use the golden metal organism, only to have the symbiot attack and kill whatever species tried to touch it, that the Valdier felt more comfortable interacting with other species.

This presented a problem, since there was not an abundance of females on Valdier, and the symbiot was not very tolerant of females from other species. It forced many males to limit their time with females who were not from their own planet.

Zoran had yet to find a mate, although he had many females who could pleasure him should he desire a companion at the palace. The symbiot could live separate from the host for brief periods. His own symbiot divided so a small part of it could find him in the prison cell, healing his body and giving him enough strength to survive the beatings and torture. The symbiot then returned to the main body to replenish it with his essence. If not for that, both would have perished.

Now, he felt the strength of it calling to him. He rounded a corner near the entrance. Two guards stood talking quietly back and forth in the tongue of the Curizan. Zoran pulled the laser pistol and quickly disposed of both of them. He could only hope there were no other guards outside the entrance.

Holding his ribs against the burning he felt, he swiped the guard's badge over the scanner and stood back as the door slid open. Peering outside, he moved into the shadows heading for the landing area.

His symbiot was waiting for him there in the form of a space fighter. It took on the reflective surface, making it invisible to all around it. It was only their connection that guided Zoran to it. Within moments, he was climbing into the cockpit of the Valdier fighter. With a wave of his hand, gold bands formed

up his arms, sliding under his skin until he was one with the golden creature.

“Get us out of here,” Zoran murmured softly, trying to hold onto consciousness. He was hurt much worse than he originally thought. He could feel the bones in his ribs rubbing against each other.

The symbiot glowed gold as it began rising out of the compound. Shouts and hisses erupted as the symbiot lost its cloak of invisibility. Moving smoothly, the golden fighter rose and moved out of the compound moving with blinding speed.

Zoran knew he needed to stay conscious until he could find a safe place to land and let his body heal. Warnings sounded in his mind as Curizan fighters scrambled to pursue him. Zoran was not concerned, knowing that as soon as they reached the outer orbit of the planet, his symbiot could move faster than the speed of light.

Focusing on using defensive moves to get away from the pursuing fighters, he commanded the symbiot to plot a course to a quadrant of the galaxy unknown to the Curizan. He would never make it back to his own world in the shape he was in.

He sent a message out to his brothers, hoping they would receive it before he lost consciousness. Zoran gave the final command to leap as soon as they cleared the planet’s atmosphere. It was the last thing he remembered.