

Excerpt

Ambushing Ariel

Dragon Lords of Valdier book 4

By S. E. Smith

Mandra had walked into the transporter room listening as one of the men explained Zoran and his mate had already departed for their living quarters. Mandra nodded distractedly. He wanted to meet Zoran's mate in person but could understand Zoran's concern for his mate's health so he wasn't necessarily surprised he missed them. He was delayed by some new, disturbing information he received from one of his informants about the attack on Zoran. He would have to share the information later with his other brothers. He preferred not to tell them over the *V'ager's* communication system for fear of it being intercepted as it appeared they had a traitor among them.

He glanced over to where Creon was talking to several other warriors. His brother was very good at getting information and was probably trying to gauge how much trouble the new females would be. He saw his brother's look of astonishment followed by a look of doubt. Whatever he was being told it must not be very good.

Mandra walked toward the transporter console. He stopped when he saw his brother Trelon and the three females he had asked him to come meet materialize. One of the females was so small she

wasn't much larger than some of their youth. Mandra was shaking his head in disappointment when Trelon suddenly erupted into motion startling him. Mandra reacted without thinking when his brother yelled for him to grab the other two females.

Mandra moved to intercept the female with the long golden sheath of hair hanging down her back while his brother moved to catch the other one. The moment his dragon caught sight of her, it erupted into a wild frenzy inside of him, pushing at him to get out. Mandra stumbled for a moment not expecting his dragon's sudden demand to be set free. He reached out an arm to grab the female as she came toward him, but she swung around at the last moment in a sudden move that left him stunned.

Mandra felt his head snap back as her booted foot connected with his chin sending him flying into several other men. He fell backwards looking up in stunned disbelief as she dashed past him and through the door after Trelon.

"My Lord, are you hurt?" One of the men asked startled.

Mandra jerked loose of the arms holding him with a dark snarl. He glanced at his brother who was circling the short haired female. His eyes widened as she suddenly attacked his younger brother using lightning fast moves he had never seen before. Mandra rubbed his aching chin and pushed off after the other female with a grunt to the men looking around him in confusion.

Mandra burst through the door looking both ways. His eyes lit up with fire as he caught sight of the female's slight figure turning a corner further down the corridor following his brother. Mandra's dragon was bouncing around inside him, pushing and snarling to get out.

Mine! Go. Chase. Mine! I catch. I keep, it was panting in agitation. *Mine! Go. Let me out. Hurry, my mate get away.*

Mate?! Mandra replied, astonished as he bolted after the delicate female. *Galactic balls! Maybe she isn't so delicate from the feel of my chin,* he thought distractedly as he raced after her.

What in the hell was going on? Mandra wondered. He skidded around the corner and saw the female running as fast as she could. Two guards came toward her. Mandra growled out. He did not want any other males touching her. She was his and he would tear any male who touched her apart. The males reached out for her, but at the last minute, she suddenly dropped down sliding across the slippery floor between their spread legs. She flipped at the last minute and was back on her feet, leaving them standing looking over their shoulders at her retreating back in shock.

Mandra rushed forward, pushing through the men. He growled out as he knocked both of the men to the side as he followed after the slender figure of the female. He grinned and thought about calling for his symbiot. He wanted to know if what he and his dragon were feeling meant the elusive female was his

true mate. Only if she was accepted by all three parts of him could she be. So far, he and his dragon were in complete agreement. They wanted her – desperately. He would also need to speak with his brothers. If these were the delicate females they were talking about then he wanted to know what was so delicate about them! So far, she didn't seem to be the crying and whining type.

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Ariel lost sight of Cara and the huge male carrying her and slid to a stop looking around. She glanced over her shoulder and let loose a long string of curses. The stupid idiot who tried to grab her in the transporter room was still following her. Ariel glanced around and spotted an alcove to the side. She bolted into it frantically looking around. There was a small ledge up above the arched doorway that she might be able to squeeze into. Her eyes lit up as she saw the small planter on a table near the window. Time for a slam dunk!

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Mandra turned the corner and looked down the long empty corridor. He frowned in confusion looking around. Where in the name of all the Gods did the female go? There were numerous rooms on either side of the corridor but they were at the far end and he hadn't been that far away from her. Surely, she wasn't that fast? Mandra shifted partially letting his dragon come to the surface enough to sniff the air.

There! The faint smell of ... Maratts and Grombots?
Mandra shook his head, puzzled.

Mmmm! Want to eat her up! Want to lick her, taste her, fuck her! Mandra's dragon drooled.

What is wrong with you?! We need to catch her first. See if you can sniff her out. She can't have gone too far, Mandra snapped impatiently.

This way! Go this way. Smell so good. Want to taste, his dragon groaned.

Mandra felt his own body harden at the smell of the female. Damn, but she did smell good enough to eat. Mandra sniffed as he moved slowly back and forth across the corridor, trying to pinpoint where the female might have gone. The scent became stronger as he came near a small alcove on the side of the corridor. There was a long window with a seat in it. Mandra moved forward slowly until he was standing just inside of the arched opening. He stopped. Frowning, he raised his head a little to sniff the air again. He heard his dragon's warning a moment too late. His eyes widened just as the small, glass planter struck him across the side of his head. As if from a distance, he heard the soft echo of words as darkness descended on him.

"Sniff this, asshole," the feminine words, whispered in a husky voice, caressed his mind just before it went blank.