## **Chapter 823**

"He is so wrecked he can barely stand," one woman joked to another. In a flash, Desiree shot the speaker in the thigh, causing her to scream out and tumble to the ground.

"By all means, jump up and attack me," Desiree mocked her. "It took the male seven seconds to

The woman did stand back up, shrugging off assistance as she did. I doubt she was faster than me though.

"That's nice," Desiree continued. "You are a pure-blood. You look to be fit and excellently built. You

and Cáel both have a wounded left leg. He has had the ever-living crap beaten out of him, so feel free to attack him when you are ready."

The woman looked to me then back to Desiree.

"What? I need medical attention," the woman protested.

regain his feet. I am sure we all await your superior effort."

"Fine. Cáel, attack Blythe (the wounded woman)," Desiree directed.

"Why?" I grunted.

"Because I told you to," Desiree chuckled. We'd been down this road before.

"Ah - she's wounded and not attacking either of us," I reason, "so I'll have to decline."

he would have apologized and left." "Had you told him to sit down and wait for a superior to show up, he would have," Desiree

"There you have it, Morons," Desiree shouted. "Had you told Cáel he was doing something wrong,

continued. "But no, you had to attack him. When he had the temerity to defend himself, you closed in like a pack of jackals and let him get battered into unconsciousness. You were so eager to stomp on a male outside the public view none of you took a moment to think."

"This isn't over between you and me," Elsa glared at Desiree. A whispered ripple moved through the

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crowd. Amazons moved aside, opening a large lane from the door to us. Two bodyguards led the way. Desiree quickly pulled out her gun's clip, chambered out the last round and placed her pistol on the mat. All around weapons were put down, not dropped.

Hayden came forward flanked by another bodyguard and a female attendant.

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"Cáel, to my side," she commanded evenly. I weaved to her right side. "Kneel." I nearly face-planted I was so overwhelmed by pain.

"Tegan, please tell me what is going on," Hayden addressed the most senior member present.

The woman stepped forward and gave her own, skewed, version of events.

"I have already misused too much time on this male's behalf," Hayden mused. "My only conclusion drawn from all these issues is that I am the Spiritual Leader of a bunch of prejudiced, arrogant, conceited cunts," she finished angrily.

"Please explain to me how one male barely a month out of a rural, tiny college in the middle of nowhere has bewildered so many of my women?" Hayden scanned the room.

"He attacked me," Sabia complained.

"Maybe that will teach you to not attack an opponent who has eighteen centimeters and thirty kilograms on you," Hayden sighed.

"Especially, by your own admission, you knew he and another woman were practicing an intricate martial art you were unfamiliar with," Hayden appeared strict and maternal. "Don't give me 'he was a male' either. All complaints concerning the 'New Directive' are to be directed to Katrina, Tessa, or myself."

"We are not a pack of hyenas who lash out wildly, without consideration for our laws," she declared.

"We must defend ourselves," Tegan insisted.

"Yes," Hayden nodded. "I agree. Your point would be?"

"He attacked Sabia," Tegan pointed out.

refused to explain herself and didn't take the presence of a guest into account. What would you have done in the same situation?"

"I am well aware of that," Hayden related patiently. "Sabia launched an unprovoked attacked,

"He is a man," Tegan stated. "He is a man. He is also a Havenstone employee, a servant of Katrina and a part of a program I

have initiated," Hayden kept at it. "What do you suggest? I instruct the males to stand patiently while you slit their throats? We would rapidly run out of men to recruit."

"In case you have forgotten the discussion that leads to our extinction," Hayden grew chilly. "By all

means throw yourself off the top of the building. Do not expect me to do the same, or welcome your attempt to murder my offspring with your intransigent. Cáel, how many days is it now?" she teased me. "76 Hayden," I responded, "though I still plan to spend that first night with Buffy."

"Still more afraid of her than me?" Hayden openly joked with me. Cold-ass woman.

"I'm starting to think she's gene-spliced with a lady-jaguar," I confessed. "Not only does she make

these spooky growling noises, she perches over doors I frequently use.'

There was a hush over the room.

"Oh Goddess, Sisters," Hayden groaned. "Its levity. He is not being serious - you know, being playful and amusing to lessen the stress of a situation. Cáel, stop trying to get yourself killed. Many of these

women could greatly benefit some time with you."wWŴ.Ň(∘)veLw@rM.com "With, or without weapons?" I looked up. Hayden swatted my hair.

"Bad!" Hayden waggled a finger in my face. "Bad Male! Bad!" She look to the stunned/amused assembly. "This is really all it takes."

"He called us unworthy," another Amazon spoke up.

"You really are a problem," Hayden looked at me with frightening compassion.

"If you want Cáel to kneel, call Katrina and convince her to make you Cáel's boss. Then he will

kneel, follow, leap in front of bullets, punch your enemies, play with your children, or get your lunch.

"He said he would only bow before the Worthy," another woman persisted. Hayden groaned.

"I apologize," I said obsequiously.

"And his opinion of you would matter - why?" Hayden looked at the woman.

It is what he does and he's done all that before and more. If you want to make him jump, take ten minutes out of your busy lives and use a phone," Hayden scanned the room. "Can I return to my dinner, or is there another bout of insanity that I need to deal with?" Hayden pleasantly menaced the room.

"Ummm, Hayden," I asked softly, "are medical people coming for the three women who were shot." I

got a pat on the head. "Yes they are. It was very much 'you' to ask. Now stop stressing your wounded leg," she smiled.

"From what I understand you have slept with three different women in the past 48 hours, plus

roughhousing with three children for half a day. For a man who has been wounded as much as you have, I would think you would have more common sense where recovery was concerned." "I'll endeavor to be less of a problem...for what's that worth," I grinned. Another swat on the head.

Hayden made a brief goodbye to the group then left the room. The looks I was getting told volumes.

They hadn't forgiven me for deciding to fight back. That was too much to ask. What I was getting

was embarrassment. They had acted stupidly and knew it.

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