

Chapter One, Zosimos

Story told in the present moment by King Zosimos.

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“From the first time she fed me from her breast, I can recall her telling me how I was her beautiful baby boy and how precious and loved I am. I remember the first time she bathed me in warm, silky water and examined my entire body. All the while, giving me an audible inventory as she went along. First, she counts the toes on each foot and from there she worked her way up. Her warm, powerful hands stroked my leg bones and knees. Making sure my newborn joints functioned, and then she counted my fingers, elbows, and shoulders. She made sure my wounded cock was healing from the circumcision, and then she made sure I was equipped with two testicles.

“I remember our last conversation, too. It was three months ago. The day before I got my neurolink implant . . .

“Mom. Are you home?” I yelled out as I entered the plantation-style house.

“I’m back here, in the bedroom,” she says.

The sun shades are drawn across the huge front room window, but there is still abundant light streaming into the room from the kitchen. I made my way to the bedroom where Visákhá’s voice came. The flavors of fresh-baked bread and fried zucchini from the early meal are still prominent, and the smell permeates the entire house.

They decorate their living room with few chairs but with many white, over-stuffed meditation pillows that look exactly like those I have here in the palace.

As I walk through the living room and make my way down the long hallway towards the master bedroom, the sound of my hard-sole, heavy boots clap with each step against the hard stone tiled floor. The light from the kitchen windows fades, and the rooms on either side of the corridor grow darker the further down the hall I go. It’s a typical home design on a planet where the two stars never set and there is no darkness. No nighttime, as they called it, on ancient Earth.

Her room is at the end of the hall, where it is darkest, and as I entered, she had four butter lamps burning on the table beside her bed. The room is otherwise, like my thoughts, too dark to see anything else besides her face lit by the steady flames.

“Hi, my King, my handsome son, my life. What brings you out at this dangerous time of the day?”

As my eyes adjust to the low light, I see her standing in the ensuite bath, putting on a royal blue, comfortable full-length nightgown. Her unblemished skin is smooth and as dark as fresh brewed wild erandit tea. For a woman her age, she’s incredibly fit with well-toned thighs, arms, and abdomen. Large, very dark nipples slightly upturned on her generous breasts. Perhaps the only part of her beauty that isn’t amazing is her height. She’s very short and pixie like and that makes her breasts seem even larger. To me, she’s stunning.

‘What would a man need with anyone else if he had her as his wife?’

“You’ll have to stay over until it’s safe to go back outside. Don’t worry. Your room is all made up and clean, and you can rest there.” She says as she climbs into her bed and then under the brilliant white covers. “Or you can lay here with me like we used to do when you were . . .

“When was the last time you slept with me? When you were five, I think.”

“That sounds good, mom. I’ll lay here with you,” I say while lifting my body onto the high bed frame, and thick foam mattress.” Before I rest my body beside her, I toss the royal white colored, thermal cooling, ultra-soft cover aside.

“Are you tired, mom?”

“Wouldn’t that be nice?” she smirked. “After the lab work and the science briefings, followed by a day in the fields, I’m always too wound up and excited to sleep. You know this. I don’t have to tell you.

“They have delivered the new light filters you designed for the grain fields. The sharecroppers are now three weeks into it and struggling to remove the old ones and replace them.

“Today, while your top scientist, Danhip, was testing the filter positioning to the angle of the neutron star, he found a few errors in the installation. That sets us back several weeks now. We

will have to go back and fix all the filters they have already installed. With his help, Danhip, I've scheduled several meetings with workers to teach them how to install the panels correctly. The timing is always an issue. The longer we take to install the panels, the later into the growing season it becomes.

“Nobody deals with stress properly. Especially not me.”

“More to the problem, adding to her stress, is the lack of technology on this planet. The cyborgs didn't give us any sort of manufacturing facilities. My anger is causing me to sense feelings of rage and what I suppose is the emotion called hate.

“History tells me, and I'm sure I would declare war if the cyborgs were within my reach. But how would I produce weapons without mining, materials, development, and manufacturing facilities? The issues we face are many, and cyborg nearsighted optimism has caused our food shortages, increased radiation poisoning, and limited pharmaceutical production.

“My mind wanders, and the sheer mental dullness of our population exacerbates the entirety of the issues. Following twelve generations of people incapable of anger, aggression, and hate. Yes, hate. Without these dark feelings and their associated emotions causing determined actions to fight back, our people know only too well how to accept these consequences. I grow weary of acceptance and their ideals for -- Live in the moment and try not to cause a ripple in the fabric of things just the way they are.

‘Stop with the rant and the rage. Solving the cyborg-caused suffering of the people isn't what I have come here to think about. A bigger problem in my immediate future needs to be addressed. Now is the time to end the momentum for putting family one's neurolink in my brain. Once and for all, mother will have to accept my decision. I will not be family one's future.’

“She turned onto her left side, facing away from me, and cuddled her backside up against me as I sat, propped up in the middle of her gigantic bed. With her on my left side. My head and shoulders against the well-padded royal blue headboard hold me in a slumber position. I fluff a pillow and place it between my mid-back and the mattress. With my right hand, I grasp the dark gray, well-grooved and bulb-shaped handle of the duel-edge dagger. Testing my grip and the feel, then reminding myself why I brought it with me for this visit with mom.