

# An Arion Ascends – Final

by Dru



*Arios smiled.*

“

*I like watching you play with your toys, Sister, but you always wus out. I thought you said you were really going to punish them this time ...”*

“

*Don't worry. You'll like this next bit.”*

When she stirred, uncertain how much time had passed, Eilera found herself the centre of much activity. Lying right where she had fallen, she was surrounded by angry Arion Elite-Guard. Through her drunken haze she could feel them kick and stomp on her prone body. She could hear the anger, see the frustration in their eyes, and judging from the dropped rifles scattered on the polished firestone floor she knew they already spent a considerable amount of time using weapons.

“She's coming around!” someone warned.

The general tapped his communicator. “Where are you?”

“Coming up the last flight now, just seconds away,” a voice replied, the signal very strong.

Eilera turned her head to look at the general, discovering that they had crudely clamped her to the floor with oversized improvised restraints.

“Karak told me you liked it when he came to your room with gold,” the general told her, allowing his men to continue beating her.

“I'm not dead yet,” Eilera told him, trying to clear her head.

Managing to hide just how much her unnaturally loud words concerned him, the general smiled pleasantly.

“No. But with that gold weakening you, those nanobots are working their way deeper into your system as we speak. But I'm not going to wait for them to kill you.”

The main door to the chamber opened, and a team of Arion soldiers carrying three large black boxes came charging into the room. Eilera knew what they were carrying.

“Two next to her head,” the general ordered. “And sit the last one on top of her.”

Even though she was drunk, and her power level had been severely reduced, Eilera discovered she was still strong. Obscenely so. Her hands came free simultaneously from their chunky bonds as she rose to a sitting position. The general managed to jump clear as she blasted the team and the potentially dangerous weapons they carried back out the door with a stream of high-velocity breath before they had halfway crossed the room.

“Nice try,” she told her tricky adversary, her senses almost completely recovered from the shock of being covered in gold.

The general looked on in horror as Eilera cleared the room of everyone but him.

“But ... that’s impossible ...”

“You mean improbable,” Eilera retorted, rising smoothly to her feet despite the high-density alloy band around her upper and lower legs protesting vehemently.

“Those Betan dogs never mentioned immunity to gold in their genetic cocktail.”

Eilera grinned. “Hardly immune. I feel like I’ve had thirty rounds of Octorian Ale.” She sighed contently, having long used small amounts of gold for recreation she was actually loving the feeling now she had been able to adjust.

“Take me then,” he declared, standing straight and proud, looking the tall gold statue before him in the eye. “I’m ready to die.”

“I don’t think so.”

“What?”

“You’re smart. I like that in a man. And you’re a better general than the old Supreme Commander ever was ... he knew that by the way ... so I think I’ll put you in charge of the Eileran Imperial Army. How would you like that?”

“But ...”

“I know ... I should kill you. You did have a very good try at killing me. Do you have any idea how much you’ve reduced my power? Why, I couldn’t be more than three-million times stronger than you right now.” She had also learned that she couldn’t fly, but saw no need to highlight the fact.

“Impossible ...”

“I need a shuttle. Just a little one ... yours will do. Now let’s go.”

Silent, a thousand thoughts churning in his head, the general led the way to his perpetually prepped personal shuttle. When they arrived the crew saluted sharply, their amazement of seeing a living gold statue at their general’s side broke through their discipline.

“Thank you gentlemen, ladies,” Eilera told them. “But your services will not be required for this journey.” She stepped in front of the general and stopped him. “Which is the best pilot?”

“That one.”

Leaving only the indicated officer unharmed, Eilera absorbed the rest of the crew.

“Gather all members of High Command, and prepare all the units that arrived for battle. Be quick ... I won’t be gone long.”

Gesturing the pilot on ahead, Eilera left the general and boarded his black and gold transport.

“To the sun,” she ordered, carefully sitting beside the pilot at the controls.

He was sweating, confused and bewildered by what he had seen her do, and by her polished-gold appearance. They were halfway to their fiery destination before he gathered courage to speak.

“Shall I enter orbit?”

“No. Fly us directly into it.”

He let go the controls, and stared at her in fear. “But ... we won’t survive that.”

“I will. But you’re right ... the shuttle isn’t built for this. And either are these silly nanobots.”

Realising she was going to kill both of them, he began to change course. Eilera claimed his life before he did so. She had been wondering how far he would take her before she had to take over the controls herself.

It was surprisingly difficult. The star at the heart of the Arion system was still a relatively small target against the backdrop of space. In her inebriated state Eilera had to concentrate in order to keep the shuttle flying straight, but the closer she got the less her lack of judgement mattered.

“Warning ...” the computer droned, “Course adjustment required.”

Keeping the red star in her sights, Eilera watched it grow until it filled the entire screen. The console started flashing warning lights as the heat grew beyond the shuttle’s safety threshold. Her view became distorted as the special glass began to melt and several alarms sounded urgently. Still several thousand miles from the blistering surface, the shuttle lost the fight and exploded.

Eilera watched her transportation disintegrate around her with great interest. The exploding reactor core was not nearly as destructive as the warheads used against her early in her take-over of Aria, but the small core easily tore the shuttle apart. Comfortable in the thick radiation that had destroyed the shuttle, Eilera was fascinated as the small pieces of debris she found herself travelling with melted like snowballs in a furnace and vaporised within moments. Looking down at her arm, even as she was helplessly drawn by the stars gravity ever close to the seething surface, she saw that while the nanobots appeared traumatised they still clung on tight to her skin.

“Let’s see how you little bastards like this,” she thought, bellyflopping fearlessly into the raging inferno. She thought she could hear screaming, and realised it was in fact the nanobots moving more and more rapidly, vibrating as they started churning over her as though they’d been dosed with caffeine. Then they started to vanish one by one, blinking out of existence in the heat. Then suddenly they were gone.

The entire star-system was bathed in a different hue for a few seconds as Eilera felt her full might of her powers return to her. Her orgasm was so powerful it changed the colour of the sun until it subsided. Feeling her mind cleared of the haze, Eilera admired the suns interior for a moment, realising no-one had ever seen the inside of a star quite like this before, and then returned swiftly to Aria.

Getting to the sun had taken nearly thirty minutes. Getting back was almost instantaneous. As pleasant as the gold had felt, the feeling of so much strength teeming in her muscles felt infinitely better. Wonderful as the power she wielded made her feel, Eilera knew she could make herself feel much, much better. It was time to complete her conquest.

Streaking into the atmosphere at a safe pace she made her way back to the tower to find all of the High Command gathered as she had requested.

“Good,” she told them, ending their conversations as she passed over their heads to hover above her assigned seat. “I see you received my summons.” Crossing her arms, she marvelled at the fear in their eyes. None were disrespectful enough to cover their ears even though she could tell most wanted to. “Due to recent developments, I have decided to disband the Arion Imperial Army.”

Despite their fear, there was outrage among those below her.

“You can’t disband the Army!”

“How will we maintain control?”

“The universe will return to chaos!”

Eilera raised her hand in a gesture for silence.

“In its place we shall build a new army. The Eileran Imperial Army. In the meantime, I, your Supreme

Commander, shall personally protect Aria from attack.”

No-one spoke.

“Don’t look so worried. I have decided to spare you, and the rest of this world. After all, if I kill everyone ... who would be left to do my bidding? As for the de-commissioning of the old army, I’m going to take care of it myself.”

Eilera turned to the man who not long ago tried to kill her.

“Are they prepared for combat?”

“Of course, Supreme Commander. All they need is a target.”

“Wait for my signal, and then order all fleets to attack me.”

As she moved to leave, the general had to ask, “What will this signal be?”

“You will know.”

Eilera didn’t really pour on the speed until she cleared the atmosphere, carefully picking her way toward the largest cluster of battle-fleets. Confident she had chosen the biggest flotilla; she hovered at its core and lit several hundred of their number with brilliant light.

The order to attack came swiftly as Eilera’s favourite general recognised the signal. Not remotely bored at anytime during the repetitive process, Eilera made sure to allow every ship to land at least one nuclear device on her before claiming the occupants’ powers. Keeping her speed low enough to be an easy target, she wanted them to get as many successful strikes as possible. Not only did she thoroughly enjoy her invulnerability to their assault, she felt it allowed them to die with some sense of honour.

Having seen a very similar display of Eilera’s unstoppable power on their monitors not so long ago, the High Command knew they had no hope as they watched eighty-percent of their entire war-machine in this galaxy being slowly consumed before their eyes. Though they had a thousand times more ships in the field, the generals knew it would make no difference to the outcome.

There was such an abundance of troop ships in each fleet that Eilera had trebled her strength before she started on the tenth fleet. It dawned on her that if she kept to the rules of her game it was going to take a long time to consolidate the armadas into her flesh, but Eilera didn’t care. Having fought countless campaigns for General Karak, the greatest of which decorated her cape, she had never really enjoyed battle until now. They could not hurt her, let alone kill her. And yet she was able to deprive them of their ships, and lives, with nothing but a glance. And all-throughout the prolonged engagement, Eilera’s strength grew and grew ...

Sirren found she was able to finish harvesting what she wanted from both worlds before needing to protect her wormhole generator. Leaving the chaos she had created in the Velorian system behind for the moment, she tore away toward the furthest fleeing warriors.

Flying around in front of them she started her way back, leaving nothing behind her as she swept into the conquered system. Not in any real hurry, Sirren started cleaning up the rest of the confused Velorian army.

She had almost finished, nearly a full day later, when a hundred wormholes opened up all around her, and a steady stream of Velorians from staging grounds throughout the universe came pouring in. Bored with them, Sirren got herself in a position where she could see all the wormholes at once, and simply lit the entire scene in gold. She could see her skin glowing gently, intense arousal taking hold as they continued to fly unwittingly into her power reservoir by the million. It was quite a remarkably long time before they stopped coming. But the wormholes remained opened as those still within struggled to come up with a plan.

With speed not seen before by any who witnessed it, Sirren started flying from wormhole to wormhole. She

entered each one, cleared it and the other side of any supremis in the immediate area, and made her way to the next as the occupants of all those remaining tried desperately to make the short journey back up tunnels. They did not have time.

Aware that there were still enough Arms of the Enlightenment in the many galaxies to provide many more such attempts to overwhelm her, Sirren was thrilled to see they were still determined enough to try. This time a thousand wormholes opened up. Sirren had to get further away, but was easily able to repeat her trick. None who came out of the wormholes survived for more than a few seconds.

With seventy percent of the entire Velorian race now wiped out, Sirren stopped and basked in the power their demise had given her. As her new strength settled into her muscles she was pleased to feel them bulging like never before, at the same time ready to condense and bulge with even more homo-supremis power. Watching the wormholes slowly disappear one by one, she made her way toward Velor and allowed herself to fall once more into the power-dampening atmosphere.

Expecting to fall helplessly onto the surface as she had done before, Sirren got a pleasant surprise when she was able to reduce her descent rate. Though it required much effort, Sirren was able to hover in the sky above the city. She couldn't think of it as flying, but she was powerful enough now to levitate even under the effects of the magnetic field.

A large mass of people had gathered outside the Hall of Light, where they and members of the media had gathered to learn more about the situation.

“Perfect.”

Much more slowly than she would have liked, Sirren floated toward the massive crowd. No-one noticed her until she had neared the podium where a spokesperson was addressing the large gathering.

“... encourage everyone, once again, to return to your homes and wait for more information to become available. I have to remind you that ...”

The speaker trailed off when he saw her.

“Impossible,” he murmured. No homo-supremis had ever flown under their own power on Velor. The shock and awe in his voice undid much of his work as his frightened face was broadcast throughout the Federation of Enlightened Worlds.

Thoroughly enjoying the sight of every eye going wide, Sirren came in low over the crowd and gifted them with a warm smile. Their fear pleased her. Deciding to land before they saw how much trouble she was having to stabilise herself in her drunken state, Sirren's feet cracked the concrete and shuddered the large stone podium from which the officials observed the crowd.

With no guards left after Sirren's earlier efforts, several of the deceased Enlightenment's representatives moved toward her. Unsure what they would achieve, it was more a reflex than anything else. They died as Sirren told them “No.” Her cautiously uttered word rammed into them and sent them tumbling toward the glorious Tower of Light in the distance.

At the lectern, the spokesman eyed her nervously. His eyes spent a lot of time aimed below her neckline. He fell over when Sirren took a step toward him, more from fear than the violent shuddering of the solid granite podium. She ignored him and took his place before the gathered media and worried civilians.

“I have tested the strength of your armies,” she began, certain that she was being heard throughout her new dominion. “And I found them lacking. The Enlightenment can no longer protect you. Only I have the power to keep you safe. Only I have the knowledge to guide this cosmos to peace. For I am a god. But for my protection you will worship me. For my guidance, you will beg. And for my mercy, you will pray. Now ... who will kneel before their goddess? Who will accept my protection?”

There was silence. Sirren grew impatient.

“Let me put it another way,” she told them, her tone measured. “KNEEL BEFORE YOUR GOD!” It was the last thing anyone present on the day would hear until their eardrums could be repaired. Those who weren’t scattered or killed by the thumping of her fists into her sides were tossed about by the raw power she put into her demand. She had to wait a while for the crowd to recover. One by one, and then almost as a whole, the bedraggled survivors dropped to their knees in a way they had not done for Skietra in millennia.

“That’s right,” she intoned warmly. “On your knees. All of you.” Seeing them bow down in supplication gave Sirren a very satisfying feeling, and she beamed at them. Once more she was amazed at the effects just her tone of voice could produce. Sirren could see her subjects quiver in sudden rapture. “Kneel and worship me,” she instructed firmly yet imploringly at the still focused yet struggling media. “For am I now your god. I am your salvation ... and your doom.”

Turning her eyes skyward, Sirren focused on the distant world nearest the sun. Even weakened her eyes could still see the confused mobs on the distant planet succumbing to the powerful impact of her irresistible request, which was conveyed through screens and speakers not just to the three populated worlds in this system, but to every Enlightened World in the many galaxies Velorian’s had a presence in. The crowd suddenly moaned as Sirren allowed her mild arousal to waft through them.

Deciding to reward her freshly enslaved populations, Sirren stretched and let her arousal run free. The moans from those present grew more demanding as her influence intensified rapidly. And then Sirren found herself moaning, drowning out the noisy mob effortlessly, as the thought of so many knees bending at her whim pushed her nearer to the edge. Few were spared the painful pleasure her vocalisations induced. Even the deafened orgy at her feet could feel the vibrations shake the very earth as they played havoc with their libidos. No-one who heard the transmission from Velor could fight off the euphoric sexual pleasure that mercilessly racked their bodies.

Knowing what would happen if she continued where she was, Sirren left the ground with a careful hop and made her way clear of Velor’s atmosphere. Those who watched her leave were blinded by the flash released by the sudden return of Sirren’s full power.

Unaware that it should have been impossible, Sirren arced away from her new conquest and made her way deep into the void at well beyond the speed of light. She was relieved that she’d travelled so far from Velor when her orgasm tore through her body. A nearby nebula was swept away, and Sirren watched its remnants driven billions of miles. She would have likely vaporised the whole solar system if she’d done that on Velor.

Returning swiftly, allowing herself a few smaller detonations of orgone along the way, Sirren was thrilled to see everyone on all three planets lost to their urgent desires. A few more public broadcasts like that and they would be willing slaves forever. Realising their need would not ease for several hours, in some cases days or even never; Sirren decided it was time to take her new religion back to Aria. The thought of absorbing another ten billion or so Arion Prime Elite ... on top of her already obscene power ... caused her quite a thrill.

The wormhole generator was right where Sirren had left it, its occupants for the most part still trying to appease their passion. When their goddess reappeared their orgy became urgent and energised once again.

Calming herself, Sirren whispered soothingly to the sweaty pile of officers in the control room. “Enough. Your goddess needs you to work now.”

With perfect judgement Sirren began to inhale. Making sure not to do it too quickly, so that the pressure stabilising system could keep up, Sirren breathed in the entire artificial atmosphere of the station. It took a few minutes, but once she had cleared the air of her potent pheromones the station’s personnel were able to function enough to do their jobs.

“Open a wormhole to the Arion system,” she ordered, watching them carefully. “Your goddess needs more power ...”

Two days into her game, and many, many times more powerful than when it had begun, Eilera was still enjoying herself just as much as when she started. With constant orders from the High Command, the Arion armada never wavered in its fight for survival. But, of course, no matter what they did their numbers continued to dwindle at a steady pace.

Absorbing as her game was, Eilera did not fail to notice a Velorian wormhole spin into existence at the outer-edge of the system. She stopped playing her game instantly, not even noticing the missiles, torpedoes and energy blasts that the battleships around her continued to deliver.

“Sooner than I had expected,” Eilera mused, realising straight away what the wormhole meant. But she wasn’t at all surprised that Sirren had already conquered Velor. She herself had defeated the High Command within hours of gaining her powers, and Sirren had at that point a healthy head-start.

Eilera’s mind raced. She had only seconds to come up with a plan. Fortunately, with her super-enhanced intellect. She came up with one instantly.

Not willing to leave anything behind for Sirren, Eilera finished off the armada with a few quick turns on the spot. A heartbeat later, even as Sirren came out of the wormhole, Eilera descended into the atmosphere of Aria.

To make sure her servants would not simply close the wormhole after she went through; Sirren watched those in the room with her closely as she let her arousal, always bubbling under the surface, to once again intoxicate the air. Long before she had begun to really feel it herself, the Velorian’s all around her went to their knees. Pushing them a little further, she listened as they cried with agonising ecstasy.

“Good,” she told them approvingly. It would take the air purifiers weeks to remove her thick scent from the air. They wouldn’t be able to think clearly for days after that, so Sirren had plenty of time. Unconcerned by the fact they could possibly starve to death if she left them like this for too long, her main worry now was making sure the power supply was sufficient to maintain her route back once her conquest of Aria was complete. With the comprehensive knowledge of the operating system she had obtained earlier, Sirren stepped to a console and ran a diagnostic of the reactor and wormhole stabilizers. Only her unnaturally acute instincts allowed her to use the interface without her fingertips destroying the entire station.

Leaving her slaves to their hopeless attempts at satisfying their lust, Sirren made her way deep into the wormhole. Her only interest this time was getting to the other side.

Sweeping out the end, ready and willing to crush the might of the Arion Imperial Army, Sirren was very shocked by what she found. This was a star system she knew well. But even though she’d never seen it from her current perspective, she should have found it more recognisable than this. It felt to her as though she had been sent to the wrong star-system.

A planet was missing. But that wasn’t the first thing to garner her attention. The home fleet had always been as ever-present as the red sun. Now however, there was only a glaring absence to remind her of them. Having been deposited near the thirteenth planet, which was now the twelfth, Sirren made a further discomfiting discovery. The entire planet, once a staging ground for expeditionary forces, was completely devoid of life. She scanned the next planet, and the next. Sirren’s fast mind quickly gave her a possible reason for this absence of life.

“Karak ...”

Though she had felt like an unopposable god just a moment ago, a huge swell of doubt overcame Sirren as she pictured General Karak imbued with the same ... if not more ... power as her own. For a few minutes she wondered what to do. Was she powerful enough to face him? Was he even here ... or on his way to

Velor? Most importantly, was he stronger than her?

The possibility that Karak might forgive her betrayal never entered her mind ... such was not the Arion way. Her features hardened as she galvanised herself for the coming confrontation. Relieved to see the people on Aria were untouched, Sirren found the High-Command in their tower, and got another game-changing surprise.

“Major Eilera.”

Though the older Prime was far more beautiful and certainly more youthful, Sirren instantly recognised Karak’s favoured right-hand. Karak was dead. There was no other way Eilera would have obtained her master’s cape.

Relieved that she would not have to face her general, Sirren approached the tower with less apprehension. Their eyes met through the polished alloy wall, both women now aware of the presence of the other. There was a gaping hole in one side of the structure, but Sirren decided to make a fresh one, placing her hands on her hips and drifting through the thick wall easily.

“Welcome back, Sirren.” Eilera showed no fear, hovering calmly above the Supreme Commander’s empty seat. “We’ve been waiting for you.”

“No wonder the Velorians knelt down,” Sirren thought to herself. “If my voice sounds anything like that ...”

“How was your trip to Velor?”

“Satisfying,” Sirren informed her, watching the High Command swiftly vacating the space between the two over-powered women. The deafening whisper from Sirren had confirmed their worst fears. “What happened to Karak?”

Eilera was stunned by Sirren’s size. The young arrogant Prime had gained at least a foot in height, and had considerably bigger muscles now than when Eilera had last seen her.

“Our General is dead.”

“Did you kill him?”

“No,” Eilera retorted, offended by the accusation. “I would never have betrayed him.”

“If you didn’t kill him, why are you wearing his uniform?”

“These campaigns were as much mine as his. Each and every one of them.”

“And where’d you get the other bar?”

“Look around you, Sirren. This was my most recent campaign victory. I conquered Aria. And yes ... I took them all.”

“So you’re the Supreme Commander. Looks like you beat me to the punch. I was looking forward to taking them myself.”

“Before we start this ... assuming you want to keep anyone alive ... shouldn’t we go somewhere else?”

The younger warrior scowled, but nodded in agreement. Neither one of them wanted to destroy Aria. Aria was their prize.

“Any suggestions?”

Eilera thought about that a moment. “How about we take this fight to the Outer Rim. I assume your Velorian wormhole can get us there ...”



“Of course.”

Unsure if she should trust Eilera, Sirren could see the sense in her request. The Outer Rim was largely devoid of life, and there they could fight without risking any important star-systems.

“Wait here.”

As she turned to leave, Sirren learned why her martial arts instructors had always torn strips off her in the past for taking her eyes off her opponent. She heard Eilera move but didn't have time to react as the experienced Prime crossed the chamber and produced a strange gun from under her cape. Before Sirren could stop her, Eilera shot a gold ball from the gun at almost point-blank range.

As the nanobots surged over her skin Sirren felt the drunken haze wash over mind. She staggered, and Eilera pushed her to the floor, careful not touch the rapidly spreading nanobots just in case. The effects were stronger, more sudden than her experience on Velor, and blackness encroached on the edges of Sirren's eyes as she struggled to keep from passing out.

“Pathetic,” she heard Eilera gloat. “I don't know what Karak ever saw in you.”

Sirren rolled onto her back and tried to shake off the cobwebs.

“Bitch ...”

“Is that all you've got?” Eilera asked, raising an eyebrow. She knew that Sirren was still dangerous, and once she adjusted to the inebriation she might make trouble. So she kept her gloating to a minimum. “I've got a feeling I can get much more out of you than that.”

Anticipating a massive influx of energy, Eilera bathed Sirren's metallic form in a slightly different shade of gold. But something was wrong. Instead of being frozen in place and drawn into Eilera's eyes, Sirren continued to fight for consciousness on the floor.

Forcing open her eyes Sirren saw what Eilera was trying to do and felt fear grip her through the murk. But when she didn't feel any pain, and Eilera's expression revealed confusion, her stolen memories from Betan scientists told her why Eilera was failing. She started to giggle, feeling more confident and adjusting to her intoxication.

“What's wrong? Is this what you're trying to do?” Not bothering to get up, Sirren unleashed the dampened power of her own eyes.

If she had been able to, Eilera would have screamed. But as she was hit by Sirren's radiation she was frozen in place. Because she had acquired such a vast amount of power the process was much slower for her than it had been for any of her victims. Her densely packed molecules vibrated intensely and began to release vast sums of raw power. Sirren moaned, and the tower around them was blasted out by her unsympathetic vocalisation.

“Mmmm ... such power ... more ...”

Sirren could feel the effects of the gold lessening as her power level quickly rose to new heights. Nothing she had felt so far compared to this. And yet as Eilera gave up more and more unto her, the older Prime remained intact. She was shrinking, her muscles losing much of their bulk, but she did not fade away as others had done. Fascinated, Sirren waited until Eilera retained no more the several-hundred thousand times her natural strength and released her to fall gasping to the floor.

“I don't ... understand.”

Still drunk, but thinking much more clearly, it was Sirren's turn to gloat.

“Silly girl. The gold weakens me, yes. But it also protects me. You could have won, if you burnt the nanobots

off me first. But you didn't know ... did you?"

Eilera was silent.

"And now, thanks to you," Sirren amazed Eilera further by floating up from the floor to hover within her gold cocoon. "I really am a god."

And with that Sirren took everything else that Eilera had to offer, sweeping her eyes about to claim the High-Command as well. As she did so, she learned an interesting fact about her new nanobot friends. Picking up the gun that had spun across the floor as Eilera fell, Sirren took it and flew away from Aria at the best speed she could manage. Once she was safely clear of the planet she pushed a small green button on the gun's crude stock. The nanobots instantly self-destructed.

With a blinding flash and terrific release of force Sirren's full power came flooding back. For the first time she experienced her new level of strength. The rush was like nothing she had known before, and she was thankful she'd had the foresight to put a safe distance between herself and Aria. Much closer, and the planet would surely have been destroyed.

Returning to Aria with no doubt about her own divinity any longer, Sirren drifted into the sky over the largest ocean to address her latest conquest.

"People of Aria, rejoice!" With perfect judgement, Sirren's voice carried across the surface of Aria to be heard on all corners of the over-developed planet. "Kneel and give thanks, for you have been chosen. Kneel ... and know that your god will protect you. Pray, and know that your god will be merciful. Swear your souls to me, for I am now your god, and you will love me."

Having announced her presence, Sirren began touring the world of Aria to see how many had dropped to their knees. Her powers of persuasion now as great as the strength of her arm, none had been able to resist. Sirren felt a warmth within her as she realised she just enslaved her home-world nothing but a few sentences. Nodding in approval, she surveyed city after city. Spreading the smell of wildflowers and honey across the globe as she went, aware that the multitudes below were ravaged in her wake, Sirren spent the whole day travelling from city to city until she visited them all and confirmed that everyone had been placed in thrall.

Confident in her self-control, Sirren went back to the broken tower. Nearby lay the vast low buildings of the senate. Slowing down to pass through the opened main door. While the Supreme Commander had complete control of everything, the day-to-day running of the civilian infrastructure had always remained the responsibility of the senators.

The people inside were just regaining their senses and rising to their feet when they saw her. Mouths popped open, but none could speak as they were assaulted by a sudden urge to make love to the flying woman. Such was their confusion and awe that none of them could do anything but stare as she passed overhead into the main chamber.

"Get up," Sirren commanded, and the entire population of the Arion Senate House ... over five thousand of them ... rose blankly to their feet. Waiting until all their attention was on her Sirren began to address the dumbstruck senator. As she spoke she poured her will into words, and knew from their expressions that they could no more defy her than turn a tide.

"Your goddess needs you. Much work must be done ... and you shall not rest until it is complete. Too long have the churches of Skietra stood in ruin ... you will rebuild them, and dedicate them to me. Too long have the priests been gone. We will train new ones ... men and women to spread the word and will of your god."

They all nodded their agreement, as if her words had been their plan along. Sirren smiled warmly, and many of them smiled back.

"I will need prayers written. All academic institutions will be assigned to this task. I will personally inspire

them in coming days. Nothing is more important, understood?”

Again there was mute nodding, and a few small “Yes”s could be heard.

“Let the long neglected statues of Skietra be cleaned and renewed ... for they are to bear my likeness from now on. All other public works shall cease until my churches and public altars are worthy of your love for me. You do love your god, don't you?”

The nods became urgent, the smell of wildflowers intensifying the atmosphere.

“Then I shall trust you to do as I have commanded. But know this.” Sirren carefully upped her volume to agonising levels. “If I am not obeyed: You will suffer the wrath of my divine judgement.”

Some screamed as they cowered away, but none showed any sign of disagreement. Sirren smiled again, and sudden tension in the air vanished.

“Very good. I think we'll get along just fine.”

Even before she had left the building, the mesmerised senators, having seen the death and chaos in the heavens, went quickly about making arrangements for a religious revolution unlike any in the history of Aria.

“

*Seems to me like she's gone far enough, now.” Arios observed. “If she was one of mine, I'd be burning her already.”*

“

*Patience, Arios. Something has to happen first. Just wait a little longer, Brother. If you're bored ... go play with your own universe.”*

“

*It's your game. I was just saying.”*

“

*And that is why we all love you. Now shush, she is almost there.”*

Leaving the wormhole open, Sirren returned to Velor having completed her work back home much faster than she had expected.

This time when she re-entered the magnetic field she didn't mind at all. In fact she found the experience quite sensual. With a grin she realised Velor was going to be her home now. While she still had to be very careful, she did not have to worry as much about obliterating the whole planet with a misjudged footstep or angrily spoken word. And here her divinity was undeniably on display, for she was the only homo-supremis able to fly here. And with smug satisfaction, fly she did. With Eilera's power now added to her own Sirren was now able to break the sound barrier several times over and quickly reached her destination.

The pale grey-cloaked remnants of the Enlightenment were engaged in heated debate. That debate stopped as Sirren entered the bright chamber, the shaking officials at the door sealed the chamber her glad to be free of her dominating presence.

Careful not arouse them too much, Sirren crushed their willpower with just the commanding tone in her voice.

“You have nothing to discuss, unless you're talking about me. Stop your bickering; listen to the will of your god ... and obey. Your goddess has come, and demands worship.”

At great length and with intricate detail, Sirren laid out her extremely unreasonable demands. Everything she had asked of the Arion senators, she extorted for them. And much more. The tower of light was to be demolished and replaced with a colossus in form of the deified Sirren. All names were to have "Child and Servant of the Great God Sirren" added to them. All these and numerous other whimsical fancies were vehemently agreed to. Unanimously.

It would take time, but by the end of the day workers had already begun making her commands a reality. Confident they would not displease her, Sirren left to pursue the one thing she coveted most. More power.

The old man couldn't believe it.

"You're to what?"

"Apparently this Arion lady thinks she's a god. Everyone saw it grandpa. Insane right? You should have heard it ... her voice was out of this world. Reports say it was Federation-wide ... but that's got to be propaganda ... right?"

"Got to be. Do you say your crew's going to the cathedral? That's sacrilege, that is."

"C'mon Gramps. It's only a museum these days."

The conversation kept over and over in the aged Velorian's mind as made his way slowly through the crowded cathedral. It was not a thick crowd, not the like ones shown in ancient images on the many wall displays. And where eons ago they could have sat and listened to a lecture on enlightenment, they now gathered in tight knit groups, admiring the historical artworks and some even reading the information plaques.

His granddaughter was absolutely right of course. It was a museum these days. And had been for eons, ever since the Disillusionment, when the tribes of Aria had Velor first gone their separate ways, belief in the Goddess Skietra was regarded as quaint. An outdated notion that belonged in science fiction. Only a love history and culture had allowed the still grand and imposing building to retain its former glory, the stones kept new and fresh through extensive preservation and restoration works. But now, after thousands of years, it would be returned to its former purpose. Only this time the god worshipped here would not be Skietra. Once work was complete, the altar would carry the semblance of a pretender. A false god.

"How could we have forgotten?" he wondered aloud to himself, drawing concerned glances. Paying no heed to them, the old man made his way to the imposing yet reassuring statue of Skietra atop the main altar and kneeled piously before her.

Silently, and with absolute sincerity, he prayed for guidance. He prayed for forgiveness. And he prayed, at length, for salvation.

"

*About time," Arios declared as his sister finally rose to her dainty grass-stained feet.*

"

*Told you they'd remember me. It's time to put my toys away. You wait here ..."*

Sirren approached the second staging ground with relish. There were only 2,164,728 left at this one, a small drop to her ocean, but Sirren hungrily claimed them just the same. She knew she didn't need any more power to dominate the universe, but she also knew she would never stop harvesting ever more from the enslaved galaxies.

Already her mind turned to the eternity of domination ahead. For now her long-term goal was increasing her power. She knew that by the end of the next day there would no more Velorian military left. After that it would take a few weeks for the Arion Imperial Army to regroup. Then her feasting would be done. At least

until she could let the population recover. It would take twenty years to get the program up and running, but Sirren's fast intellect had already decided her next course of action. The breeding programs of the Arion military would be expanded, and similar operations on an equally grand scale established on Velor. Billions of clones would be raised, trained hard and in mind and body, and then sacrificed to the new goddess. Her power would know no end. And after seeing Eilera returned to youth, Sirren suspected her life would know no end either.

Clearing the last Velorian from the outpost, Sirren moved toward the churning tunnel to Velor and for third time in as many hours found herself stunned to a standstill.

There in front of her, was the most stunningly beautiful young woman Sirren had, or could possibly have, seen in her life. Her hair was as dark as night, yet shone with vibrant life. Her features, naggingly familiar, were unsettling in their perfection. Her body, draped in revealing and elegantly cut gold fabric, was put together in a way that defied belief. Desperately, not even conscious of it, Sirren sought a flaw. She found none. She also found that she couldn't see through the gold, or through the woman's flesh. That made her nervous, but she hid it well.

"So you want to a god, eh?"

Sirren was stunned. How could she hear her talk ... here in the void?

"You hear me because I want you to."

The voice was enveloping, seductive.

"Do you know who I am, Sirren of Aria?"

Sirren just stared. Finally her reluctant mind admitted who she was looking at.

"You're ... Her. But how can I ... ?"

"You can talk here because I want to hear you. You have been busy these last few days. Haven't you little one?"

"I ..."

"It's alright. I know. I wanted you to."

"You ... but you're ..."

"Forgotten. By both your silly tribes. Did you know that nobody has prayed to Me since the Great Division? The Velorian's call it the Disillusionment, but I guess you know that now."

Sirren just gaped, completely put out by the appearance of the Goddess before her.

"Everywhere else I am honoured. But not here. Why is that you think?"

"I ... I don't know."

"Of course you don't. You're just a silly little mortal. How could you have possibly seen what I've seen? Even with that hyped-up brain of yours you could never comprehend the Multiverse."

The smaller built Goddess was suddenly very stern, chilling her sole audience member to the bone. To make matters worse, the ancient Goddess's hair was now purest blonde, bringing up years of Sirren's worst fears.

"You've been bad."

The voice boomed in Sirren's head, making her wince.

“You’ve been a very naughty little ant, haven’t you, Arion? And now it is time to face your punishment.”

Sirren wrestled with her doubt only a moment before engaging her special power. Irradiating incredibly attractive Goddess, Sirren gasped in instant gratification. Her power instantly doubled. And then the new level doubled. And doubled again. Sirren began to appreciate the true meaning of exponential as her strength continued to grow unchecked as more and more energy flowed into her from Skietra’s exposed skin. As Eilera had done, Skietra remained intact. Unlike Eilera however, her exquisite physique lost absolutely none of its conditioning as her molecules released endless streams of energy. Just as Sirren got comfortable with the intense influx, having great difficulty doing so, Skietra chilled her to the bone by brushing her gorgeous blond hair back over her ear.

“Does that feel good, sweetie?”

Amazed, Sirren concentrated and focused the full might of her ability upon the smaller Goddess, only to hear her laugh heartily as the power flow became almost unbearably painful.

“It does feel good. I can sense it. Too good, perhaps, for your tiny brain to handle.

Sirren roared in frustration, her body glowing now and pulsing with ever greater strength. Her roar disrupted the wormhole and completely destroyed the outpost. Skietra remained unaffected. Even her hair remained almost perfectly still.

“Take your time. Soak it up, Sirren.”

Sirren was in pain now. The power was too pure, too great for her take any more. But to her horror, when she tried to blink away the particles streaming to and from her eyes, she found her lids would not respond.

“I can’t ... urgh ... stop!”

“That’s right. How could you possibly stop when I don’t want you to?”

As Sirren pulsed brightly all over and continued to grow, now ten feet tall and rising, her muscles still thickening uncomfortably, Skietra watched on with mild amusement in her sparkling eyes.

“You do know what infinity is, don’t you Sirren?”

“... Arghh ... make it stop!!”

“Infinity is what I am. It’s one of the perks of being a god. Infinite life ... infinite wisdom ... infinite appetite ... and infinite POWER.”

As she blasted away the entire galaxy with the last word of her sentence, threatening to tear the now immeasurably powerful Sirren apart, the petite blonde exploded with breathtakingly perfect and indescribably intimidating muscles. The energy pouring into Sirren increased dramatically, making her scream.

“That’s right. Hurts now, doesn’t it? Want more?”

Skietra grew again, increasing both her surface area and the amount of power generated in her divine body. Sirren opened her mouth awkwardly wide as the power streamed in even faster now.

“What’s that? More? Okay. I thought you were greedy. But I just had no idea, did I?”

Sirren could sense it coming. She was approaching her absolute limit. If left to her own devices, she would have perhaps one day achieved this level power. But just one minute exposed to Skietra’s might she had almost maxed out, and the idea frightened her more than anything she thought possible.

“What’s wrong, Sirren of Aria? I heard you running around telling everyone you’re a god. But you’re nothing

but a soldier. You don't even have an official rank ... and you want to challenge me for mine. That's just priceless. Mind you, this is my entire fault really."

Skietra shrank to her former size, but somehow the energy flow remained steady.

"That special genetic code of yours came to a certain Betan in a dream. Only it wasn't his dream. It was mine. I needed someone like you to do my dirty work. I don't like violence. Some of my family do ... but I'm a lover not a fighter. Every now and then though, a girl's gotta do ... know what I mean? I don't like it, but if you can't be bothered to worship your Goddess, then your Goddess must be vengeful. What would Papa say if I let you keep on living without respecting your Creator? I'd never hear the end of it from Arios, let me tell you."

It was close now. Sirren could actually feel her body losing the fight to contain the obscene power Skietra was forcing down her throat.

"I should thank you. But I've gone and made you a little too powerful. And you did declare yourself a god, take over my churches, and what was that last idea you had? Farming people. Disgraceful. People shouldn't get it into their heads that can treat other people like animals. Only Gods can farm mortals, Sirren. It's kinda what we do. Anyway, I've got to and re-establish my religion. After this, the people will be crammed in like sardines. Oh I forgot. Ha! You don't know what sardines are, do you? Maybe in your next life, mortal, you'll find out."

With that Sirren felt the power-flow surge to new incredible heights as Skietra really opened the floodgates. Sirren, all her hopes of eternal domination fading with the last her sanity, screamed once more. The debris that was all that remained of this remote galaxy was further smashed by her impossible cry. And then her pain was no more. Finally giving up the fight, her body burst apart in the most violent release of energy ever seen in this universe.

*Allowing the ball of pure energy released by Sirren's demise to consume three neighbouring galaxies before deciding enough destruction had been done, Skietra smiled. Limitless though her power was, drawing in that energy at once inspired a satisfied sigh. Not moving from the spot she cast her awareness through the multitude of galaxies and took back her dominion. Her will crept into the minds of a chosen few ... her prophets ... and instructed them to begin rebuilding the old religion. She briefly thought about addressing the peoples of Aria and Velor directly, but then if she did that then their faith would be meaningless. Only those whose doom she brought, or special reward, ever got to see her face to face. No. After the events of the past few days, there would be no need for further theatrics. Leaving the drastically altered universe behind, Skietra reappeared beside her brother.*

"Did you like that?"

"

*I don't know, Sis. It's not how I would have done it."*

"

*Well it's your turn. Show me what you got."*