She paused, staring at him with a frown that creased the sliver of flesh between her eyebrows. What was wrong with him? All she ever wanted to do was help, and he stood there, daring to deny her the use of her newfound ability. The cut on his hand was fresh, dripping with blood that could have well been made from droplets of rubies. He could sense what she was mulling over in her head and sternly said her name, as if it was a warning; “Kalani.”

The woman cleared her throat and looked back up to lock his amber gaze with her cinereous one. Kalani had been in charge, once before, and now this man she had grown fond of was so locked in on his own superiority that he felt as though he could order her to do anything. But she wasn’t one of his lackeys, one of his dogs that he could command and growl at. The blonde had slowly caught on, and she knew that he was fond of her as well. If he had any sense left in his bones, the Captain would not deny her the use of her power.

Still, she didn’t know the extent of what she could do. Not until that moment. At first, she noticed her own bruises disappearing in a matter of moments, small cuts closing up like they were never meant to brandish her skin. But was it possible for her to heal others, specifically the man before her whose rougue-ish look took her breath away? He dared say she couldn’t, and the look in his face told her that, even if she could, he didn’t want her to.

Again, he spoke her name, much firmer than before. “Kalani, don’t.”

With as little response as she had self-control, the woman snatched his palm in her hand and covered it with the other. The Captain immediately attempted to jolt free of her grip, but it was too late. He felt the pain in his hand ebb, and once he could rip it away from her, the flesh was without any flaws, just his usual callouses from working on the ship for many hours.

Kalani, on the other hand, had cringed and pulled her hands away just as quickly as he had pulled his own from her. Why did it hurt? She had healed him, which was an accomplishment in and of its own, but why was she, herself, hurting? The blonde looked down at both her palms. What she found made her gasp and the Captain frown, a look of guilt shining across his eyes.

There, in the same, correlating side that the man’s wound had occurred, lay a cut that could have mirrored his own. The woman watched the liquid rubies leak from under her skin. “I took it from you.” She looked back at the Captain, whose face had taken on a dark look before he carefully gripped her chin between his fingers so she would hear all that he was saying to her.

“You tell no one that you have this power. Do you hear me? No one can know. Hell, I shouldn’t even know.” He cleared his throat and frowned again. “Never use this ability on anyone, ever. Not even me.”

Again, there he was, commanding her around. But this time, there was something in his voice that made such commands sound more like a plea. As if he could have been begging her to not go back on his words. So she abided and cast him a quiet nod.