

Gladiator

Saxa's Journey – Book Three

By

Pasha Baker

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Chapter One

"Has anything else happened between our lovely naughty slave and her conniving centurion lover?" Senator Publius asked as he arrived one morning, entering the Legatus's tent without warning as he often did, his personal slave trailing behind. Saxa only knew a little about the senator's slave who had only joined them for the current trip; that he replaced his old personal slave, who was rumored to be on his deathbed at one of the senator's homes in Rome, that he was much younger than the legatus's own manservant, the uptight Pious, and that he was very good-looking with shoulder-length light brown hair with silvery cream highlights which accentuated his tan skin. The new slave's slanted, gold eyes met Saxa's and he smiled at her in a silent apology for his master's crudeness.

Saxa did not return his smile. Instead, she blushed at the senator's words and became very busy cleaning the legatus's chest plate.

"Saxa! Wine!" Saxa hurried to do as her master bid, wishing the legatus's moodiness would abate, feeling it had been quite awhile since he caught her in the arms of the handsome centurion and he had punished her quite enough for the matter, plus she hadn't seen or heard anything from the warrior since.

"I have some news you might appreciate, Marsus; I heard last week Centurion Gaius's father, Augur Luciantus, has died."

Saxa looked up from her job at the news.

Legatus Marsus gave the senator a disgusted look, "Why would his father's death make me feel any better?"

Senator Publius leaned towards the legatus while his eyes remained on Saxa, as he tried to keep his voice confidential, "Because Centurion Gaius is a bastard and the son of a concubine. His father, his illegitimate father, was the reason the young whelp rose as quickly as he did through the ranks."

"He's an excellent warrior, senator."

"Ever forthright aren't you Legatus Marsus? Perhaps he is, but, at any rate, his father had planned to sign off part of his property to his favored boy, but he never actually finished drawing up the scrolls, so, they could just disappear... just give me the word."

Legatus Marsus glowered as he chewed a chunk of bread. "Why would I do that?"

Since that morning Saxa had been busying herself with random things keeping a good distance from the legatus as possible in order to stay out of his way, but the news of her ex-master's father made her want to hear more.

"What are you doing, Saxa?" The legatus lifted his hand to motion the senator to stop talking as he turned to glare at his female slave who had settled with her mixing bowl nearby.

"I... uh... am just making dinner..."

"Well, why don't you find a baker's tent in order to buy us some bread and wine?" Her master dug in his braccas pocket for coin.

"Yes, Master." Saxa took the money and left with the new posted guard falling in behind her.

An hour after dinner had finished, Saxa left the tent full of the legatus's companions and headed to the creek that snaked through a cypress grove nearby in order to refill an amphora with water and to dump her washing basin. It was late enough in the evening that the posted soldiers, readied to be off in order to have their own dinner weren't interested in her bothering them with her nightly routine. She was returning to the legatus's tent, walking back through the trees when she was grabbed from behind and yanked into the brush causing her to drop her amphora and leave it spilling out its contents behind her.

"Master Gaius!" She kept her voice to a whisper when he loosed her mouth from his hand, it being quickly muffled as he crushed her lips with his own.

"I've been looking for you. Your new guard won't let you alone." His eyes flicked over her face, "and it's been over two weeks since we last lay together."

"Aren't you worried you might be killed?"

The centurion shook his head. "At first I wanted to do as the legatus ordered me to do and I tried to get over you, but tomorrow they send me out again, and since I am likely to die anyway, it is worth the risk."

"He keeps me inside all the time ever since he found us together. He barely even lets me go out on my own just to fill a water vessel."

The centurion lifted a brow, and smirked. "If I knew there was a wolf at my door wanting my woman I would probably do the same." He pulled her back to him. "Before I go, I want you one last time..." His eyes were languid on hers as he gripped her by the hair and kissed her.

Hastily, he laid his cloak upon the ground and urged her down upon it, placing her on all fours then yanking up her skirts while he situated himself behind her, gripped her about the waist and with a low groan began thrusting into her. Saxa pinched her lips tight to silence her moans while keeping her rear up against him as his pelvis smacked loudly against her buttocks. She grimaced with his final shove in, then moaned in reply to his growl as he came.

Saxa sat in her lover's lap, her arms around his neck, his around her waist, enjoying a moment of closeness in the shadows of the trees as a chilled wind brushed across them.

"A storm's coming..." Gaius looked to the darkening sky.

"A bad sign." Saxa rested her head back against his pectoral, while he stroked the hair from her face and pecked gentle kisses across the pale freckles that delicately laced their way along the skin of her forehead and cheeks, stopping to smile down at her worried look. Saxa wanted to take in every part of him, her gaze taking in the sooty lashes that outlined his jade eyes accentuated by the deep bronze of his flesh, the refined curve of his long nose almost meeting with the upper bow of his sensually sculpted lips. Cupping his chin in her palm, she turned his face to hers and kissed him fully, sighing as she rubbed her forehead against his. "He says we are to leave for Rome soon."

He made a slight grimace. "I have heard."

"Do you know when you are to return?"

"It will only be a few weeks, not as long as the last time. I need to return home to my father's house to put his affairs in order..."

She pulled back to look at him. "I am so sorry! I heard about your father's death..."

"Thank you." Gaius's eyes glazed over. "He was ill for a long time. And now I must figure out what to do about his household and the concerns of my sisters."

Saxa waited for her ex-master to mention his plan to take her as his wife as he claimed he

would when he left her the first time. He shook his head. "But I cannot think on such sad news. Let us dwell on other matters..." He brushed his knuckles across her cheekbone. "For soon, my darling, the legatus will notice you are missing."

A feeling inside her surged. "I cannot bear him any longer!" She grabbed at the collar to his tunica as she rose up to meet him face him. "I don't want him. I want you! Take me with you."

The centurion smirked in reply. "Would that I could." He cupped her face in his hands. "But not just yet, my sweet. I will finish this last exhibition, finish my service and then I will be done with my service to Rome and I can return home." He kissed the top of her forehead. "In the meantime, I'm certain the legatus will provide well for you; he has a fine home, he dresses you well and keeps you safe. I will let him take his fill so that he will be more ready to part with you when I come. And even if he is not fully ready to give you up, my father has left me with plenty of coin and a renowned vineyard that will quickly provide me with more, then I will be able to solicit the legatus until he finally gives you up, no matter the price."

Saxa's eyes searched his for a long moment for truth. "You promise?"

"Yes, Saxa, I promise."

She clung to him in one last kiss, his arms enveloping her as tears threatened but she made them stay.