

# EMPIRE OF STORMS

BY SARAH J. MAAS

---

She didn't give him the chance to explain as she traced her tongue over the seam of his lips, as her fingers unlatched the buckle of his worn sword belt... And just to see what he'd do, she palmed him through his pants. Rowan barked a curse... A hand slid up the plane of her torso while he lowered himself over her, his lips nestling against hers. She gasped a bit at the touch, gasped a bit more as his knuckle grazed the heavy, aching underside of her breast. As he leaned down to kiss the other. His teeth grazed over her nipple, and her eyes drifted closed, a moan slipping out of her... His tongue flicked against her nipple, and her head tipped back, her fingers digging into his shoulders, urging him to take more, take harder. Rowan growled his approval, her breast still in his mouth, on his tongue, his hand making lazy strokes from her ribs down her waist, down her thighs, then back up... She might have panicked, might have been mortified, had he not lifted his mouth to hers, had those phantom hands of ice-kissed wind not kept working her breasts, had his own hand not continued stroking, closer and closer to where she needed him. "You're magnificent," he murmured onto her lips, his tongue sliding into her mouth. The hardness of him pushed against her, and she bucked her hips, needing to grind herself against him, to do anything to ease the building ache between her legs... She slid her hand between them, and when she closed her fingers around him, marveling at the velvet-wrapped steel, Rowan groaned again, pushing into her hand. She pulled her mouth from his, staring into those pine-green eyes as she slid her hand along him. He lowered his head- not to kiss her, but to watch where she stroked him....But Rowan gripped her wrist, drawing her hand away. She opened her mouth in protest, wanting to touch more, to taste more. "Let me," Rowan growled onto the sea-slick skin between her breasts....

"Do your worst, Prince." Rowan's smile was nothing short of wicked as he pulled away to run a broad hand from her throat down to the juncture of her thighs. She shuddered at the sheer possession in the touch, her breath coming in tight pants as he gripped either thigh and spread her legs, baring her fully for him....Rowan kissed her navel, then her hip. Aelin couldn't take her eyes from his silver hair shining with salt water and moonlight, from the hands holding her wide for him as his head dipped between her legs.... She moved, hips undulating, begging him to go, go, go. So Rowan did, sliding a finger into her as his tongue flicked that one spot, and oh, gods, she was going to explode into starfire... Then Rowan had a hand braced in the sand beside her head, fingers twining in her hair, while the other guided himself into her. At the first nudge of him, she forgot her own name. And as he slid with gentle, rolling thrusts, filling her inch by inch, she forgot that she was queen and that she had a separate body and kingdom and a world to look after. When Rowan was seated deep in her, trembling with restraint as he let her adjust, she lifted her burning hands to his face, wind and ice tumbling and roaring around them... ..He leaned in, claiming her mouth as he began to move, and they let go entirely... And as his thrusts turned deeper, she dug in her fingers, dragging her nails across his back, claiming him, marking him. His hips slammed home at the blood she drew, and she arched, baring her throat to him. Release blasted through her like wildfire. And though she could not remember her name, she remembered Rowan's as she cried it while he kept moving, wringing every last ounce of pleasure from her, fire searing the sand around them to glass. Rowan's own release barreled through him at the sight of it, and he groaned her name so that she remembered at last, lightning joining wind and ice over the water... On and on, he spilled himself in her...

-Page 349