

Tereshan

It's early in the morning when we arrive back at our packhouse. It's been a long, grueling day. We were able to fill some of the holes in Alpha Keegan's border defenses just in time for the attack. I wasn't surprised, but it just means that everything is different in this timeline. Everything is happening faster, and I need to move faster, get my pack together more quickly so that I can ensure that Claire doesn't die in this timeline, even if I do.

I left Keegan to clean up the dead bodies on his land, ensuring that our patrols would continue running through the night and let me know if there was another attack. I doubt there will be. This was the swerve attack that Franco used in the last timeline, only this time, I was prepared. Claire and Dane did a great job but neither of them was born an Alpha. And yeah, I had advanced knowledge of how he would attack, but I also would have made sure our pack was secure before pulling warriors to Keegan's pack in the last timeline.

And this is why I know that it has to be her and I together working through this timeline. She was always meant to be my Luna, I was always meant to

take her as my mate. We will become a power couple, once we get through all this shit.

There is still so much to do. On the drive home, I talk to Dane about increasing our omega training, one in the morning and one at night. At night, we'll start training on how to use weapons. It will be good for the warriors too. And I need to make sure that Claire works with Feena to stock the safe rooms with weapons. Knives, hammers, axes. I need to order more so that we have enough for each of the safe rooms and to train all the omegas. Based on the last timeline, I already know Jacoby will be incredible with hammers and Elise will be good with knives. But I need to work with Claire. I have no idea where her skill will lie, since it was my skill with knives that I used in her body.

When we get back, the packhouse is quiet. It's been a long, tense day and anyone that isn't on patrol is sleeping. I say goodnight to Dane and head upstairs wanting nothing more than to shower off the muck of this battle and then curl up with my mate. Please goddess, let her be in our room.

When I get to the top of the stairs, I see Jesiah on watch.

"Thanks, Jesiah. Get some sleep. Tomorrow will be

another long day."

"Yes, Alpha." He says, walking off.

When I get to my room, I'm surprised but pleased to hear the water running in the bathroom. I'm surprised that Claire isn't asleep, but I guess I shouldn't be. She's a great leader. She wouldn't go to bed until she knew that everyone in the pack was safe.

As I step in, I see a small pile of things that smell like Claire. I walk over to them and see the pictures of her family and small toys that were in her old room. I frown as I walk into the closet and smell the musty smell of clothing. I look in the hamper and see what must be her clothes left in her old room now in here.

I turn, looking back at the small pile of things then at the clothes, my heart soaring. She moved in. She really moved into our room.

I walk to the bathroom, opening the door and leaning against the doorjamb, waiting for her to notice me. I watch as she rinses her hair, talking softly to herself. It sounds like she's making her to-do list for tomorrow. She always has something going on in that intelligent mind of hers.

I watch as she jerks, before wiping her eyes and looking at me.

"You're back," she says softly.

"I'm back and it looks like you moved in?" I ask, hoping I'm right.

She turns off the water, and I step into the bathroom, handing her a towel.

"Well, if we're going to do things right this time, do them together like we've said, then we need to be together, right?" she says, wrapping the towel around her body before grabbing another one and doing some flip and twist thing so that the towel ends up on top of her head covering her hair.

"You smell like death. Are you hurt?" she asks me. I like that she's worried about me. No one has really cared enough about me to ask for a long time.

"No, but I do need to shower. And then, I'd like nothing more than to curl up in bed with my mate and sleep."

"That sounds like a great idea. Do you care if I stay in here and finish getting ready for bed while you shower?"

"I don't mind. Actually, I'd prefer it."

I strip off my clothes, turning the water back on and stepping in. I look down and see the blood washing off my body.

"Talk to me about what happened here." I say as I turn and begin to wash my hair. I take a deep breath and love that the room smells like sugared lemons.

"There's not much to tell. The patrols did a great job. I think we both know that if they could have gotten through, Franco would have attacked. He didn't. The safe rooms are ready, but we need to get weapons into them. We don't have them in this timeline," she says.

"I thought of that on the way home. If you don't mind, I'm going to have you and Feena order what we need, both for training and for the safe rooms. Dane and I are going to double up on omega training."

I hear her stop moving and I open my eyes to see the hairbrush halfway through her hair.

"Do you think that's a good idea? They aren't strong yet," she asks me.

"Claire, Franco is moving much faster this time

around. We have to get ahead of him and the only way I can see to do that is to double our defenses. I talked to Keegan today about building the lookouts. After the attack, he's going to work on that. Not only that, but we need to figure out how we're going to feed the other packs. Keegan wants to cut Franco out of the food supply completely. It will shut down the grocery stores, but that will impact the other packs and we already know what happens when they think that we are hoarding their food."

"We need a pack meeting," she says.

How does my little mate say one thing that brings the entire puzzle in my mind, the one I've been struggling to put together, into focus?

I turn off the water, grabbing my own towel.

"You mean, invite the packs together, let them know what's happened and then make a plan that cuts out Franco?"

"Well, I didn't quite think it through that far, but yes."

I walk to her, leaning down and gently touching my lips to hers. "You, my little mate, are brilliant!"

I grab my phone and quickly send a text to Keegan,

telling him not to burn the bodies and that I want to have a pack meeting tomorrow or the next day with the other packs.

Keegan: A excellent idea. I'll start spreading the word in a couple of hours. You do the same. Let's plan to meet here at dinner time tomorrow.

Me: That works

I go back into the bathroom and see that Claire has already brushed her hair out. I'm exhausted, but I know how good it feels, so I take her brush and begin combing it through her hair.

"You want to hear something interesting?" I ask her.

Her eyes are closed and she's swaying slightly as I slowly pull the brush through her hair. "Yes," she says softly.

"Alpha Keegan is sporting a mate mark."

That makes her eyes fly open and she turns around looking up at me. "WHAT?"

I smile, turning her back around, watching her in the mirror as I start to brush her hair again.

"Apparently, Zoey is very impressed with you. So, she

offered Keegan a compromise. She would mark him, if he was willing and then when she was ready, she would let him mark her."

Her mouth drops open in surprise. "Really?"

"Yep. Look at you, being a trendsetter."

"So, I guess that means they are staying in his pack?"

"Yes, because not only is Zoey mated to Keegan, but her sister is also mated to his Beta, or I should say, the Beta's son. He's about to take over for his father, so Amelia will become the Beta female to her sister."

Her smile fades a bit. "Does he know about her and what happened to them?" she asks, concerned.

"That's my understanding. And now their entire pack hates Franco for what he did, not only to their future Luna and Beta female, but also for attacking the pack today."

I sigh, it really is the action of a desperate man.

Claire turns again, putting her hand on my chest.

"One day at a time, Tereshan."

I take her hand and pull it to my mouth, kissing her knuckles.

"One day at a time. This day is done. Let's shut it down."

We crawl into bed and Claire curls up against me. I wrap myself around her and even with everything going on, I'm happier than I've ever been in my life.