

## Chapter 182: Cramps

Claire

After Asha was born, Tereshan got me in to see the doctor. He told us what we already knew. Salvatore is going to be a large baby and I'm a tiny momma.

So, three weeks later, I was put on bedrest. I hate it. Every. Long. Minute. Of. It.

After the first day, I told Tereshan that we had to come up with some other way. I can't sit in bed, in our bedroom all day doing nothing. Feena had tried to bring me work to do, but she kept having to leave to go take care of something. Lucy tried to fill the gaps, but honestly, there's too much work to do in the pack to have to babysit me and now that I'm out of commission, they have to do their jobs and help cover mine.

So, Tereshan spoke to the doctor and agreed that if Tereshan carried me, I could go to his office and do some work to help him. He had a recliner brought in for me and it's better, but believe me, sitting on your butt all day long, even when you have something to do, gets old. I'm used to being busy. I don't know how to sit idly.

Tereshan swears that I'm helping him tremendously by ordering supplies and putting in our orders for food. It does free up some time for the others who are now busy setting up the phytomining system.

After Asha was born and she and Zoey were given a clean bill of health, much to Keegan's relief, he came back to tell

Tereshan what he hadn't before. The phytomining was effective. It would never produce the amount of gold that true mining would produce, but it is effective enough to make it financially worthwhile to do.

They came up with a system of farming the flower fields in thirds. Keegan had gotten the mining process completed in three months, so this way, he'd always be starting a part of the mining process while he's finishing one. That will also give the area that was mined time to regrow, just in time to be harvested again three months later.

Once that process was in place, Tereshan had me set up the work schedules. This did take some time and I had to get Feena to help me, in order to make sure that everyone had a shift.

I had missed the alliance gathering, since I was too far along and the doctor didn't want me on my feet that long, but I heard from Feena and Lucy that it was a success. As expected, many pack members found their mates and we've had the 'pack shuffle' as Tereshan calls it. But it's been good. Shifting pack members from our pack and even Keegan's into Weston's has helped that pack feel more confident in their Alpha. Tereshan told me he's doing a good job and like Vivienne who calls me and Zoey for advice, Weston goes to Tereshan and Keegan when he wants advice or to discuss a problem in his pack.

The new borders have been effective and while our patrols have found scouts trying to push past our new borders, they haven't gotten through. Tereshan is debating on removing the bombs in the tunnels, or leaving them until after the next battle, the one we know we still have to survive.

I'm in Tereshan's office, reviewing the work schedules for the next couple of weeks when I feel a cramp in my side. I've been uncomfortable all day today. Usually, I can find a spot where I'm less uncomfortable, but today, I keep shifting around and no matter how I sit, Salvatore has been pushing against something inside me.

I rub my side absently as I look at the work schedules. I told Tereshan I'd get these done today while he's out in the fields, checking on everything.

I shift around again, trying to find a comfortable spot when I feel another cramping pain.

'Claire? Are you okay baby?' Tereshan mind links me. He's been a constant presence in my head since I went on bedrest. He has made sure that either he or Feena have been there for me every time I've needed to go to the bathroom, which is a lot, he makes sure that I have small portions of food all day and that I always have water available for me. He's been great, really, but I'm still grumpy about being on bedrest and today I'm really uncomfortable.

'Yes. Your son is just pushing on all of my organs. I can't seem to find a comfortable place to sit.' I tell him.

'I'm too far away, I'm sending Feena to check on you,' he says.

'I'm fine, Tereshan, really.....' I start to say, just as Feena knocks on the door to the office.

She smiles as she walks in. I feel another cramp in my side moving around to my back. I grit my teeth, rubbing my stomach.

When I open my eyes, Feena is there in front of me, watching

my stomach.

"Claire, I think you're in labor," she says to me.

"It's just cramps," I say.

"How long have you been having them?" she asks me.

"I don't know, I've been uncomfortable all morning. They've only started to become really uncomfortable in the last hour or so."

She looks at me a long moment. "Claire, we're going to the pack hospital. If Dr. Baron says it's just false labor, you can blame me. But you're not going into labor on my watch without being in the pack hospital."

I watch her eyes go unfocused.

"Did you have to tell Tereshan?" I ask, gritting my teeth again as another cramp ripples through my stomach.

"He asked. He's my Alpha. Sure did," she says, in her typical efficient way.

A moment later, Dane comes rushing into the office. "You're in labor?" he asks, his eyes wide and breathing hard.

"I won't know until I get to the pack hospital," I say grumpily.

"Well, Feena can't carry you that far, she's too far along herself. I'll carry you. Alpha said it was okay," he says coming to scoop me up.

As soon as he does, fluid comes leaking out from between my legs, dripping onto Dane.

"Oh!" I say, looking at Dane's horrified face. "Sorry."

"Get her to the pack hospital, she's definitely in labor," Feena says, taking control.

He begins to move as quickly as he can without jostling me. The next cramp that comes isn't a cramp, this one hurts, and I know that Feena is right, these are contractions and I'm in labor.

Feena must have told Tereshan because a moment later, I feel Magnor's presence heavily in my mind.

'We're on our way, mate.'

'Hurry, Magnor,' Damara says, sounding exhausted in my head. She's been working hard to heal my body as Salvatore has grown.

'Something is wrong, Claire.'

'What?'

She doesn't answer as Dane rushes in shouting orders. The doctor and two nurses get me set up on a hospital bed. They begin strapping equipment all over me, checking my heart rate and the baby's.

As soon as the heart monitor starts, I know something is very wrong. My baby's heart rate is much too slow.

'Damara, what's going on?'

'I'm not sure, but our baby isn't doing well. I think he's too big.'

Dr. Baron turns to me. "Luna, we have to take your son from you. He's in distress and he's too big for you to birth naturally

anyway. Your own body is starting to react, so we're going to sedate you while we get him out. Without Alpha here, I need your permission before we put you under. Can I take your baby to save his life?"

"YES! Do what you need to do, save my son!"

I feel a prick in my arm and see one of the nurses taping an IV to my arm. The other puts an oxygen mask over my face.

"We'll get him out, Luna. We'll take care of your son." One of the nurses says, just as the sedative begins to take effect.

'Tereshan!' I shout in my head before I'm dragged into unconsciousness.