

## Claire

I wake up slowly, the scent of blueberries surrounding me. I don't hate the scent like I used to. I've actually started to like it again. When I move to bury my nose further into the scent, I realize it's hair. I jerk back, looking down. I'm completely wrapped myself around Tereshan. It's his scent in my nose.

"How are you feeling?" He asks me, not moving.

"Better. Good, actually. Do you know how long I've been out?" I ask, looking at the light coming into the room.

"Just overnight. You were healing pretty quickly when we got you upstairs last night."

I lift myself up and look down at Tereshan tucked up against me. He's not making any move to shift away from me or put space between us.

"You saved my life." I say, honestly surprised that he risked coming out into the battle.

He turns his head, looking up at me. "I remember the fight with Oskar. He's a good fighter, or he was. He's dead now."

I wonder if that means that things have changed, that everything has changed now. That we've made an impact on the previous history and things will only get better now.

"Do you think...do you think that we won't die now? In this timeline?" I ask him.

"I have no idea, Claire. But he killed me last time. Your death was something different though. You drowned, right?"

"I guess. I was so cold in the water, weak and tired of fighting, that I just gave up."

"I think I understand that better now too. It's so much harder being an omega than being an Alpha, especially when your wolf is weak."

He turns away and I give him a minute, knowing it's hard for him to feel weak.

"Tell me what happened inside. I thought I heard you say the omegas are alive? All of them?"

He smiles, looking up at me again. "They fought, Claire. They fought and won. You would have been so proud of them."

"I am proud of them."

"Who's the little girl. I don't think she's an adult yet."

I frown. "The one with the blond pixie cut?" I ask.

"Uh, if that means she has short hair, then yes."

I smile at that. "Elise."

"She did great, but she may need some encouragement that it was okay to throw a knife at someone. And Jacoby is really good at throwing a hammer."

"Good to know." I sit up, thinking.

"Maybe we could have a recognition dinner or something. I'll

ask Feena what she thinks." I turn and look back at him.  
"How did Vivienne do?"

He looks sheepish before answering. "I moved her to Feena's safe room. I couldn't let her die again. Not after everything that happened before."

"You softy!" I tease him, nudging him on his back.

He hisses and arches away from me.

I'm instantly alert. "Tereshan?"

"It's nothing. Just a bruise."

Without thinking about it, I push him onto his stomach and pull up his shirt. 'Just a bruise' is his entire back and it's a nasty purple and green color.

"Tereshan!"

"it's okay, Claire. I told Magnor to save his strength for himself. Don't tell me you've never had to deal with a bruise before."

"But..." I start to say as he pulls away from me, pulling his shirt down. I can't deny what he said. I've worked with nasty bruises many times. All the omegas have, or did, in our last timeline.

"Was laying with me helping you to heal?" I ask instead.

"Yes." He says, pushing himself up.

"I'll go get a tray of food. The doctor says you need to eat."  
He says, starting to get off the bed.

"Stay put. I'll have Feena bring a tray up. You can eat on my lap and that will give you more time with me before I need to start the day."

When Feena arrives, I tell her about my idea for tonight, to honor our omega fighters. "Is Elise okay?" I ask, thinking of what Tereshan said.

"She could use some words of encouragement from her Alpha." Feena says.

"I'll be down shortly to give those to her." I say.

I call Dane in while Tereshan and I eat. I notice that his appetite is coming back, which is a good thing.

"Give me an update." I say, shoveling food into my mouth. It's truly amazing how much food this body can ingest and still stay lean.

Dane lets me know that Roman got away and Franco's Beta, Beta Holden, had asked if they could have their Alpha's body. "I figured it saved us having to burn it, so I gave it to him. This way they can mourn their Alpha."

"Who will take over as Alpha now?" I ask.

"Most likely Holden. But there will be a fight to determine who is Alpha, you can guarantee that." Tereshan says.

"Why do you say that?" I ask him.

He shrugs. "It's an opportunity to become an Alpha, but also, it seems to me that Franco didn't manage his pack well, encouraging discontent. So, they won't be a cohesive pack,

not like ours has become.”

“There’s something else we need to discuss.” Dane says, looking at the two of us.

“What’s that?” I say, setting aside my empty plate and pulling Tereshan’s back against my chest, hoping the contact continues to help him heal. Damara begins a low-level purring, sending vibrations on encouragement to Magnor.

Dane watches us for a moment then continues. “We have to have another mole. Jesiah said that Franco’s pack attacked almost as soon as we left the pack lands.”

“They did.” Tereshan says. “We could hear them even from inside the packhouse.”

“Who?” I ask. “You’re not thinking Heath still, are you?” I ask him.

“No, I don’t think it’s him.”

“Then who?” Tereshan says. He’s relaxed against me, and it sounds strange, but it feels really nice. “Where was the entry point? If we start there and see who was manning the patrol in that area, we could narrow it down.”

“Also Dane, you need to promote someone to Lead Warrior. You can’t keep doing both jobs.” I tell him. “If we had a Lead Warrior, he could be running this investigation, not you.” I say.

“Or at least act as primary, keeping you updated on the events.” Tereshan adds.

Dane nods. "I had planned to talk to you about that, but then everything happened yesterday. I want Jesiah to take over as Lead Warrior. He's strong, a good fighter, but more importantly, I trust him."

"I do too. He was good to me when Ivy threw me into the cells before."

Dane frowns. "When was that?"

"Last timeline. When I was in my own body. Anyway, Tucker was his usual jerky self, but Jesiah was there to make sure he didn't do anything."

"He's been good at training the omegas too. He's tough, but he doesn't overdo it like some of them did, namely Tucker." Tereshan says to me.

"So, you both agree?" Dane asks. I'm not sure he realizes that he's now including Tereshan in our decision-making. I guess I am too these days.

"Yes, and I have an idea. I plan to give recognition tonight to the omegas who fought off the intruders that broke into the safe room. Why don't you plan to announce Jesiah's promotion then. We can celebrate everything at once."

"I love that idea." Dane says.