

Chapter 12

CLAIR

"Are you okay, princess?" He stopped at the foot of my bed. The worry in his eyes was gone now and replaced by confusion.

On the way he rushed in, he probably wasn't expecting a grinning female in the bed. "I'm sorry I didn't knock. I thought I heard you scream, and I got worried. Are you okay?"

I just looked at him. My eyes were probably sparkling with happiness.

"Yes! I shifted!" I said excitedly, more to myself than to him.

"Yes! And you did well." He said before he let out a rare smile and my heart just skipped a beat. "How do you feel now? Muscle pain? Headache? Hungry?"

"Yeah, a bit of everything you said. Especially the last one." I giggled softly before I looked around the room. "Where are we?"

"Packhouse. You said you didn't want to go home." He sat on the end of the bed, making it dip against his weight.

He sat with his back facing me. It gave me the chance to take a closer look at him, even on just his backside. And I took my time to indulge in his features - his muscular back, his broad shoulders, his arms with their bulging muscles, his

neck... his hair.

Even from this angle, he appeared to be too good to be true. He was too perfect and I caught myself ogling him again.

I didn't know when I started to move, but I found myself raising my hand and running it over his hair. I felt him stiffen from my touch.

"You keep your hair longer than I can remember," I said softly while I continued to feel his hair. They were the darkest shade of black. They felt soft and hard at the same time, and I couldn't stop twirling my fingers around them.

"You don't like it?" He asked without turning around.

"I like it. It looks good on you." I wanted to touch him more, but he shifted from his seat and stood on his feet to face me, hands in his pocket.

"You need to go home, Clair. The day is almost over. But you need to eat first. I have food prepared for you in the kitchen."
His voice was back to the icy tone he used when I met him at his office on my first day.

I frowned while thinking if I had done something wrong. "But I don't want to go home."

"I promised Aaron I'd ask you to go home. And your dad, he's been coming around here every hour to check on you." He sounded annoyed, and it hurt that he wanted me out of here, so my father and my brother didn't have to disturb him over and over again.

He turned around and was about to walk away when he

stopped and looked at me as I rose from the bed. I stomped on my feet and made my way around him, aiming to walk ahead of him.

"I'm sorry if my brother and father keep on harassing you! I'm going! No need to throw me out!" I walked past him with my hands up, but he grabbed my wrist before I could go further.

"Who said I'm throwing you out? And will you stop acting like a kid!" He gritted his teeth, his temper thinning. He let out a low growl before he continued. "Dammit Clair, if it were up to me, you'd be staying here! And don't you dare step out of this room wearing only that! For Goddess' sake, you don't have anything under my shirt!"

My eyes grew bigger as my cheeks burnt in embarrassment when his words sank in. Why did he need to say it out loud? My nose flared, more out of embarrassment than anger. I mustered all I had to turn around and look at him.

His jaw twitched as if he was trying to control himself from saying something more.

I narrowed my eyes before I snapped at him. "The hell I care! Nobody knows I'm naked down there! Let me go!"

His eyes squinted before they dilated, but it was gone in seconds. Damn this man! How could he control his emotions so quickly?

"But I know you don't have one! And fuck, if I allow you to walk around without anything underneath! Now, put a fucking underwear on before I do it for you!"

We stayed staring at each other, his jaw twitching, my hands coiling into fists.

He gave up first and let out a sigh. "I'll wait for you outside the door. You have five minutes."

He let go of my arm and picked up my duffel bag, which I didn't notice sitting on the floor beside him, and threw it on the bed before walking and slamming the door on his way out.

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JAKE

I told her I would wait for her outside her door, but I didn't. I couldn't.

I have a fully erected dick that needs handling. This attraction I had for her was going out of control already. A simple touch or even just thinking about her was sending my lust into overdrive. I never lusted after a female the way I did with her, and I had no fucking idea why I couldn't fight it.


I couldn't tell how many cold showers I had taken for the last few days or how many times I found my release with just the mere thought of her.

This girl - she was slowly becoming the death of me.

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CLAIR

Aaron picked me up from the pack house after Jake notified him that I was awake already.



All the way home, he kept apologizing for 'abandoning me' - his words, not mine - while I shifted and no matter how many times I told him that I was fine and that I would never take it against him, he still refused to rest the case. Until I snapped at him and told him that I was not alone, that Jake was there when I shifted, and that he assisted me on my first run. And that everything went well and that he didn't need to be bothered by it.

His mood changed after that, and he stayed silent until we arrived home. I just shrugged it off and didn't bother him as well, since his apologies for this nonsense had ticked me off already. Plus, I was pissed off at Jake, so I appreciated the silence between us.

Dad was waiting by the front door when we arrived. He didn't say anything and just enveloped me in a hug and peppered my head with kisses, slowly melting my heart. It took me a while before I was able to swallow my pride and hug him back. I was the first one to apologize afterward.

While we were eating, Dad asked about my shifting.

I told them about the pain, how I thought I was dying, and how Jake came to assist me until Rain was able to come forward. I also told them how marvelous it felt to run around on my paws and see the forest from a different angle. All in all, I told them it was a perfect moment.

But I didn't say anything about Jake giving me a kiss or that my wolf licked him. I don't think they would appreciate that and I don't think I wanted to share that moment with anyone.



It was ours. And I wanted it to stay that way, just ours.

Dad was relieved and thankful that the Alpha was there and felt the need to thank him personally for helping me, despite him knowing that, as an Alpha, Jake would gladly do it for his pack. He felt guilty too, that he was the reason I ran away.

I have to stop him from beating himself by telling him that it was entirely my fault for being irrational and acting like a child on impulse. I told him I had to control my outburst when I'm upset - I tend to do things that I would regret later on.

Dad told me it was natural, especially since I was left to fend for myself growing up. He reached for my hand and apologized for sending me away, but he said, in time, he would tell me everything about why he did it, and, hopefully, I would understand and fully forgive him.

I just smiled back. But in reality, I was secretly rolling my eyes. I had forgiven Dad, but we all knew his reason was stupid. Unless, of course, there was something deep behind his reason, but I didn't think so.

But aside from that, Dad and I were in such high spirits during dinner that I could not break his heart when he asked me if I could stay longer. So I agreed to another month. My birthday was coming in two weeks' time, and after that, I would stay for another two weeks.

On the other hand, Aaron, my brother, was in a foul mood throughout dinner. He wasn't saying anything, aside from




the occasional 'yes' and 'no' when we asked him things. But we just let him.

After dinner, I offered to wash the dishes, but Dad refused and asked me to rest or go to bed early since I needed to recuperate from my shifting. I didn't have the energy to argue.

Besides, who wants to wash dishes anyway? So I went off to bed and shut everyone out.

Despite having a little row with Jake today, I slept with a smile on my face – memories of him cuddling me after I shifted to my human form lulled me to a dreamless and peaceful sleep.

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