

## Claire

Somehow, I make it to my room without anyone seeing me. I lock my door and fall onto my bed, sobbing. Everything had been so good at first. He had been sweet and kind, but then, he hadn't seemed to care that he was hurting me and then...then he rejected me. Damara was howling in pain in my head. I had heard him say something but between the pain and Damara, I couldn't hear him. Then he was screaming at me to leave.

I curl up in a ball, my body aching from his intrusion and the rejection. I cry until I fall asleep. When I wake, his smell is all around me. I kick the sheet onto the floor, and I get up, going to the shower. I don't care how cold it is, I have to get his smell

off of me.

I stand under the lukewarm shower until it turns icy, but I don't feel it. My mind has gone cold, my wolf has gone silent. The cold just numbs my aching body. I get dressed and head downstairs. No matter how much I hurt, I still have my job to do.

I walk into the kitchen, ready to start work. I don't speak, I just get to work. It's not long before Feena calls me into the pantry.

"What happened?" She asks.

"Nothing." I say, looking at the ground.

"Was it Beta Roman?" She asks. We all know to steer clear of Beta Roman. He's made it clear that he feels he should be allowed to use omegas as he wants. Only Alpha Tereshan keeps him from raping us

as he chooses. I guess Alpha Tereshan is at least decent enough to not let us be abused that way. He doesn't care about physical or emotional abuse, but we're not allowed to be raped. I guess what happened to me last night was considered consensual.

"No." I say, not wanting to share my embarrassment and horror with her.

"Okay, get back to work. I'll try to make your day as easy as possible."

"Thank you, Feena."

I've been chopping vegetables and making bread for the breakfast sandwiches when Feena calls me over again.

I walk over and see Dane, one of our warriors, standing beside her. He nods at her, and she walks away. Dane has always

been kind to us, always looks out for the omegas and helps us when we can.

"Here. Take these." He gives me three pills.

"What are they?" I ask, looking at the large white pills in my hand.

"Pain killers. You're very small, so you can probably take a half, maybe even a quarter. That will make them last longer."

I look up at him, seeing nothing but kindness and concern on his face. He's about ten years older than I am.

"What makes you think I need pain killers?"

He leans in, moving close to my ear. "I can smell the blood on you." He whispers before pulling back.

My eyes fill with tears at his kindness.

"Thank you." I whisper back at him.

"Let me know if you need anything. I'll help you in any way I can."

And that's the key. He's only a warrior, there's only so much he can do.

I nod and he sneaks out the back of the kitchen, going back to whatever warrior duty he has.

I turn, heading back to the kitchen and Feena hands me a glass of water, giving me a meaningful look.

"You're already limping. It will only get worse. Believe me." I look up at her and realize she understands what I'm going through. Well, sort of. I have to assume that the person that assaulted her wasn't

her mate. I snap a pill in half and pop it in my mouth, swallowing it down with the water.

It takes about 30 minutes before it kicks in, but when it does, I realize the best thing I could have done was to take that pill. I feel numb and the pain is muted.

"I'm giving you Gamma Bryson's office to clean today." Feena tells me. He's the easiest of the ranked members to get along with. He's not cruel, but he also doesn't do anything to stop the others from being abusive, including his mate.

I nod as I finish my kitchen duties and grab my cleaning supplies.

"Here, you didn't eat." She says, pushing a breakfast sandwich into my hands.

"Thank you, I'm not hungry. Maybe the others can share it?" I ask her.

She takes my hands, holding me in place.  
"You need to eat. You'll heal faster, and so will Damara."

At the mention of my wolf, a tear falls down my cheek.

"Has she gone quiet?" Feena asks me.

I nod, not able to speak through the pain in my chest.

"She's not gone. She'll be back. But you need to help her. You need to keep up your strength so she can get stronger too."  
She pushes the food back into my hands.  
"So, eat. If not for me, do it for her."

I start to turn, but in a rush of emotion, I

throw myself into Feena's arms. She's like a mother to all of us. She looks after us and ever since my parents died, she's looked after me.

"Thank you." I say, teary.

She rubs her thumbs over my cheeks.

"You're stronger than you know, sweetheart. You'll get through this. You'll survive. I'm always here if you need me." I nod before heading to Gamma Bryson's office.

The offices of the ranked members are on the first floor next to each other. This way, they can go to see each other quickly if needed. Or, in instances where they aren't talking about something private, they can shout across the hallway to each other.

When I turn the corner, I make sure that



Alpha Tereshan isn't in his office. I have to pass it to get to Gamma Bryson's office. I rush to his office and knock quickly before walking in.

"What the fuck, omega?" Gamma Ivy is here and apparently I interrupted something because she is in Gamma Bryson's chair straddling his lap.

"I'm sorry, I thought you'd be at breakfast." I say, my eyes on the floor.

"Well, you thought wrong, didn't you?" She comes to stand over me.

"Ivy, leave her be. She's here to clean my office."

"Maybe she should wait outside until we're done, Bryson."

"I have work to do, Ivy. We can continue this later."

She leans down, putting her mouth near my ear. "Watch yourself omega." She sniffs.

"Why do you smell like our Alpha?"

My heart constricts. What do I say?

'Cleaning.' Damara pushes forward to help me.

"I cleaned his office and his bedroom yesterday. His scent must still be on me."

"Make sure my mate's scent isn't on you when you leave his office today. If it is, this will be your last day on this earth. Clear?"

“Clear.” I say, still looking at the floor.

She stomps out of the room, and I hear Gamma Bryson sigh.

“Come in, Claire. Go ahead and start cleaning. I’ll be leaving shortly.”

I begin cleaning the office, hoping that I can get out of here before Alpha Tereshan gets to his office.