

Claire

I'm leaning against Tereshan, trying to catch my breath. I've never felt that wave of pleasure in this body. I was able to find my release in Tereshan's body, but that was only because it was right there, and it was easy. It felt good, really good, but this?

I'm not sure if it's because I'm back in my own body, if it's the mate bond, or if Tereshan really has become a master at knowing how to make my body respond to his touch. No matter the reason, my body feels loose in a way I'm not accustomed to feeling.

When I had woken, I'd felt strange, achy, needy. I'd followed my instinct and found Tereshan in the bathroom. I had watched him stroke himself as his emotions, his desire flooded my system, making my body ache even more.

When he offered to help me, I didn't hesitate. My body needed something, and I didn't know how to give it what it needed. But Tereshan did. Oh wow, did he.

Now, as he holds me against him, nuzzling my ear, purring softly behind me, I'm suddenly embarrassed. I've never done anything like that. I let him watch me, let him help me. Not that his finger actually touched me, he was careful to make sure it was my hand, my finger that was stroking my clit, but still, this is more intimate than anything I've ever done before.

It sounds strange, but it's even more intimate than the one

night we had sex. Then I was overwhelmed, but it was dark, and it was fast. This time, the light was on, Tereshan never took his eyes off me, watching me as I lost myself in the pleasure he gave me.

"Whatever you're thinking, stop," he says quietly.

"What?"

"I can feel your body getting tense. Don't be embarrassed. Don't be afraid. I want us to share everything. We agreed to that, right?"

I nod, still looking at him in the mirror.

"This intimacy, this is something mates share. Just us. And between us, nothing is embarrassing, nothing is forbidden, nothing is unacceptable, unless you tell me otherwise. I want us to explore each other's bodies again, now that we're back in our own. I want you to know that you can touch me anywhere, anytime you want. I want you to feel how much I enjoy your touch, want it, and need it. I want you to become comfortable with my touch. And I want to see that glow that you have on your face right now, every day."

My eyes go wide, Every day?

He smiles at me, still nuzzling my ear. I realize, I really like that.

"I know we're not there yet, but I want us to get there, together."

Together. It's become our mantra. It's the only way we're going to get through this year alive.

"Together."

"That's my girl," he says.

He turns his head, looking at me. I turn and his eyes are intent on mine. "And Claire, you are my girl. Mine, no one else's. And I am yours."

I turn in his arms, cupping my hand on his face, watching as he closes his eyes and leans into my touch. "I'm working hard to trust that, Tereshan. It's getting a bit easier every day."

"Good. Now, go get ready for warrior training. You don't get a pass because you had an orgasm." He tells me, standing up and swatting my butt as I pass him.

"Oh!" I exclaim, turning to look at him. He winks at me before pulling off his towel and stepping back into the shower.

"What are you doing?"

"Watching you made me come again, my beautiful little mate. I'm just going to rinse off and I'll join you."

We get dressed and head downstairs in time to see everyone milling around. I sigh inwardly. Our pack is divided all over again, just like Tereshan said. Well, this is the start of bringing everyone together.

Tereshan kisses my head then goes to stand with Dane in front of the group.

"This morning is the start of our omega training. Today we'

re going to pair off, one warrior to one omega. We'll start slow, learning defensive moves. Warriors, help the omegas you're paired with learn the proper technique," Dane says.

There's a lot of grumbling from the warriors about having to help teach the omegas.

"Is there a problem?" Tereshan's voice booms out over the crowd.

"No, Alpha." Everyone mumbles.

"I will also add that anyone that uses this time to intentionally harm an omega or doesn't use the skill that you have to ensure that they are not injured during this time, will answer to me. And believe me, my punch is a lot worse than yours," Tereshan says.

"Pair up!" Dane says and everyone begins moving around, trying to find someone to pair off with.

"Claire, you're with me," Tereshan says, gesturing for me to join him.

Everyone stops to watch as I walk over to him. When I get there, his hand comes to my back, and he turns to the group. "You're Luna and I will show you the moves. Then you can practice," he says.

"Are you sure this is a good idea, Tereshan. You're much stronger than I am," I tell him, feeling nervous.

"Claire, you may not be back to full strength yet, but you're a fucking incredible warrior. I've seen you fight. That may have been in this body, but you know how to fight, you know the

moves. You just need to adjust to being in a smaller body. Also, no one touches you but me.”

That little possessive statement at the end makes my heart flutter. I feel like something may have changed between us this morning. I feel...closer to Tereshan now in a way I haven't before.

Dane tells us to get into fighting position. “First, you need to know how to protect yourself. Claire put your hands up, make a fist.”

I do, knowing that my fists also need to be high enough to cover my face in a blocking move. I see Tereshan's smile of approval and I start to relax.

“This is called a block. Now, Alpha is going to slowly throw a punch and Luna is going to block it.”

I turn toward Tereshan, and he slowly punches his fist toward me, showing the omegas what to expect and I use my back hand to block it.

“Again, this time a bit faster,” Dane says.

We show the move several times, Tereshan getting faster and faster. Then we show it on the other side.

“Okay, everyone begin practicing those moves and remember what your Alpha said. I have no problem sending you to him to get a broken nose for cruelty,” Dane says.

As Jesiah and Dane begin moving through the group, Tereshan stands up.

"Okay, Claire. You already know all of this, let's see what you remember and let's start getting you used to fighting in a smaller body," Tereshan says. "You take offense."

We get in a fighting stance, and he crooks his fingers at me, giving me the 'come get me' signal. I don't have to think about it. I was fighting less than a week ago. I know how to do this.

I go at him and instantly, I realize what he meant. My arms are shorter, meaning my reach is shorter. Everything about my attack is off.

"Remember when I was all cocky and thought I was going to fight Roman that first day? I learned quickly that you have to adjust your fighting style based on your size."

I stand, shaking my shoulders and bouncing on my feet. My body isn't as strong as it used to be, but I know that Tereshan strengthened this body, so I will too.

"You have get closer before you strike. You have to change the parts of the body you're going to attack. Instead of my face, aim for my stomach, my thighs, bring me down then take me out." He instructs and we begin to spar.

It's a lot harder. My strength and stamina aren't nearly what they used to be, but I quickly get lost in the sparring, the familiar feeling of the punches and blocks. Tereshan continues to give me pointers as we go and before long, I have sweat pouring off of me, and I'm panting from exertion.

"That's good for today, Claire. You've had enough," He says; standing up out of his crouch.

I do the same, turning to see how everyone else is doing. I was so caught up in my sparring with Tereshan that I wasn't paying attention to anything else.

When I look, I realize the entire field has stopped and is watching us.

"Nice job, Luna." Jesiah says and begins clapping. Almost immediately, everyone else begins clapping too.

"I hope you were paying attention. Your Luna has just shown you what you can do if you practice and work hard. You can all get there, but it will take time," Tereshan says, putting his arm around me.

I know I'm blushing at the attention that I'm getting, but Tereshan smiles down at me proudly, making me feel amazing. It is good to let the omegas know that one day, they will be able to fight like me too.

He takes my hand, and we begin to walk inside as Dane calls the training for the day.

"Everyone make sure you get something to eat, make sure you eat protein today to help your body heal from the workout this morning," Tereshan says, making sure all the omegas know that they have been given extra time to eat this morning.

When we get our food and sit to eat, there's already a change in the atmosphere in the pack. I look at Tereshan and I see that he can sense it too.

The two of us working together is already changing the pack faster than it did in either of the other timelines.