

Claire

I drag myself out of bed the next morning, having gotten barely three hours of sleep. I don't know how much longer I can go on like this. The pack is exhausted. I'm not sure how Roman is keeping his pack and the others going, but so far, he is.

"Claire, are you going to let me fight with you?" Tereshan asks me, getting up with me. Even though I was exhausted, I had a really good time with him last night. It was worth the fewer minutes of sleep to spend the time with him.

I don't want to let him fight, but at this point, some fresh fighters might make all the difference.

"Yes. Ask the omegas if any of them want to fight. Make sure they know it's not a requirement, but they can if they want to." I tell him. "Also, make sure some of them stay behind. I know some warriors have slipped through and you and the other omegas have had to kill them."

"I'll make sure Feena stays behind and that there are several others here who can fight."

As he goes to talk to the omegas, I get a mind link from an exhausted Dane. "Alpha Keegan is on the phone for you." He says.

"You're here?" I ask him, heading to my office to take the call.

"Came back last night. I needed a night in my own bed." He says.

I walk into the hallway where we have our offices. I sniff the air and follow Dane's scent to his office, the Beta office. When I walk in, he puts the phone on speaker.

"Alpha Keegan, Alpha Tereshan is here."

"Tereshan, good morning. I'm sorry to bother you. I know you must be busy, so I won't keep you, but this is important."

"I hope it's good news." I say, falling into a chair beside Dane's desk.

"Yes and no. However, I don't want to talk about it on the phone, not with the war going on. I know you can't get to my pack lands, so I was hoping you could make time for me this afternoon or evening."

I look up at Dane and frown. "Is it that important, Keegan?"

"It is. I believe I know why Alpha Franco wanted your pack and now why Alpha Roman wants it too." He says.

"Roman wants our pack for revenge." I say.

"That may be part of it, Tereshan, but I believe there is another reason."

"What reason?" I ask, stunned. Dane's expression mirrors mine.

"As I said, I'm afraid that if I say anything over the phone, it might be overheard. So, do you think you can make time for

me tonight?"

"Yes, definitely. If we know what their reasons are, then maybe we can negotiate."

"I doubt that very much." He says.

"Okay. When you get here, have one of the omegas mind link me and I'll get back as soon as I can."

"Thank you, Tereshan. You know I wouldn't ask for your time if it wasn't important."

"I know. I appreciate the head's up."

"What could it be?" I ask Dane when he hangs up.

"No idea." He says as we walk out of his office.

When we get to the kitchen, I see that Tereshan has organized a group of omegas, ones I'm assuming want to fight.

"Alpha, here is the group that is willing to fight." Tereshan says and I can hear the pride in his voice. Our pack has come so far. We need to defeat Roman, this time we need to kill him for what he's done to us.

I look at my omega warriors. They look terrified but determined.

"I need to know that each of you is willing to fight. I am not requiring that you do so. Claire asked to fight and said others may want to. But this is your choice."

They all look at each other and nod.

"I also want to make sure you know that it's rough out there. It's bloody, vicious and the possibility of death is high every time we walk out those doors."

"No offense, Alpha, but if Alpha Roman takes over this pack, we're as good as dead anyway." Jacoby says. I see that he has his hammers in his hand and two more strapped to his waist with some sort of belt. Tereshan has been busy in my absence.

The other omegas murmur their agreement.

Feena comes out of the kitchen looking exhausted and sad. "I'll stay here and protect those of us who remain, Alpha."

"Thank you, Feena." I look back at my omegas. "Thank you, all of you. I'm so very proud of the strong warriors you've become, of your dedication to protecting this pack. So let's go out there and show those assholes just how powerful we are, together!" I say to them. They cheer and some of the fear in their eyes melts away.

However, mine only intensifies. I know that some of these omegas won't survive the day. I've been losing warriors every day. We're killing theirs too, but as the Alpha, I feel every tether snap when one of my pack members dies.

"Okay group, come with me. I'm going to show you where I want you to fight."

I begin walking out of the room and I turn to make sure everyone is following. It's the only reason I see Dane take Feena's face in his hands and kiss her soundly.

"I love you." I hear him whisper to her. "I always have. In case

I don't make it back...."

She puts her finger on his lips. "Tell me again tonight when you come back." She says. "I'll wait up for you."

I smile and look at Tereshan. He gives me an 'I told you so' look.

I take the omegas into what we call the war room. I show them the map of our battle lines. Dane joins us and re-marks the battle lines based on our fighting yesterday and Roman's push into our lands overnight.

There are ten omegas that are willing to fight. I give them three different positions to fight in.

"I'm keeping three of you together and I've mixed up your weapons. Make sure you keep watch over each other, protect each other as you fight. The warriors will try to sneak up on you when you're fighting. Watch each other's backs."

"Claire, you're the strongest of the omega fighters. Where do you think you are best placed?" I ask Tereshan, knowing his battle strategy is better than mine.

"I'm with you, Alpha." He says to me seriously.

I look at him for a long moment, before nodding.

"Okay, everyone knows where they are going?" I ask, waiting until everyone nods.

"Let's go." I say, heading out to today's battle.