

Our New Home

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The water is lapping at my paws. The rain pelted against my fur. The trees swayed in the wind. I felt miserable. My pack is travelling to new territory, since ours was stolen from us by the Alpha Pack. We are part of the Leaf Pack. We used to live in this wonderful national park, where we could hunt and play as we pleased. Then they arrived. At first they were friendly, so most of us thought it would be nice to have some new dogs around. I will admit that I thought that too. In our pack, only three dogs didn't trust the newcomers. They were- our deputy leader Mistfur, Cloudear, and Cloudear's puppy, Pinetree. The friendliness between us and the Alpha Pack didn't last long. Soon, they started crossing our borders and stealing our food. Fights started to break out. But I didn't think there was much in it. At least, not until four nights ago. I was awoken by a loud yelp of pain, followed by a gurgle. I crept out into the middle of the clearing of trees where our camp was, and saw our leader, Sorreltail, lying on the ground, blood pouring out of his neck and hind legs, dying. Cloudear and some others had followed me out of the small cave where we slept. They stood there in shock, whilst I ran over to see if there was anything i could do to help Sorreltail. He looked at me slightly when i came over to his face. The way he looked still haunts my nightmares, he murmured one word to me, 'Alpha', then his head slumped on the ground, not moving at all. I stood there for less than ten seconds before the Alpha Pack leader barrelled into my side, sending me flying across the clearing. When I looked up at him, he was covered in blood. But he didn't have any cuts or scars along his body. I hurled myself at him as the whole clearing erupted into fighting. Alpha Pack versus Leaf. Our pack is much smaller than theirs. They soon drove us out of the clearing, that was when Mistfur called to us to retreat. When we got to the end of our territory and theirs, they stopped chasing us.

Mistfur made me the new deputy, since she became leader. Pinetree doesn't really understand what's going on. She keeps messing around. But she is happy that she was right in not trusting the Alpha's.

'Oak!' squeaked Pinetree, 'look where your going! You nearly stood on me!' I sighed, the only reason I nearly stood on Pinetree was because she and the other pups were running around getting under other dogs paws. I was about to tell her to stop, but there was no need. One of the elders beat me to it. Pinetree walked up to me,

‘why is he always so grumpy?’ She asked, I said that I didn’t know and she shouldn’t talk about her elders that way. But I have to agree with her. Right now he’s barking at a raven, screaming “shut up, Nevermore!” I walked on, playing over everything that had happened in the last few days in my head, the noise, Sorreltail, the battle, the retreat, and now, us trying to find a new home. *Oh no* I thought, *here comes Pinetree*. For Pinetree was bouncing towards me.

‘Hey Oak’ she said ‘do you realise that some day you will be leader of the pack!?’ I hadn’t realised it, I hadn’t even thought about it. She was looking up at me waiting for an answer.

‘Lets hope that takes a very long time to happen,’ I said, ‘it might not even happen at all.’

‘What do you mean?’ She looked shocked, ‘your deputy! Of course you will be leader!’

‘I mean that I might die before I could become leader, these things happen’ she looked upset now, ‘but it most likely wont happen’ I added hastily. Cloudear walked over at this moment.

‘What most likely wont happen?’ She asked as Pinetree bolted to her.

‘Oak is going to die!’ Pinetree barked.

‘What!?’ Cloudear yelled, ‘what do you mean Oak’s going to die!?’

‘I’m not going to die!’ I said, ‘Pinetree said that I will eventually be pack leader, and said that I might die first—’ Cloudear’s body relaxed itself.

‘Don’t scare me like that Pinetree’ she said sighing, ‘I thought you meant that he was actually dying now.’ Pinetree whimpered at her,

‘But I don’t want him to die...’

‘Don’t worry’ I said to her, ‘I’m not going anywhere.’ *I wonder how she would deal with it if I did die.*

‘Oak, are you ok?’ Asked Cloudear. She was always asking me that when I’m quiet for some time. Cloudear was still looking at me.

‘What? Oh yeah I’m fine, just thinking.’ I answered and smiled at her. She smiled back at me. Almost as if to say ‘look at me! Im here!’ Pinetree leapt onto my back. It was raining harder now. The rain was almost painful. Water started rushing around the pack. Dogs were being swept off their feet. The lake had risen, faster than anyone could notice it. The water was up to my stomach.

‘Oh no!’ Brackenfoot cried out, she and some others were looking at some small shapes and two larger ones out in the middle of the lake. Then it hit me. They were dogs, the small ones were pups and large ones were elders. Pinetree was about to run into the water to try to save her friends, but I grabbed her by the scruff and flung her backwards, away from the water.

‘You’ll only get yourself killed. Get to high ground!’ The last part was directed at Cloudear, who nodded and started moving everyone up the hill. With a last look at everyone moving away, I plunged into the water. I was swimming towards the pups as fast as I could. When I reached them the elders were trying their best to guide them towards the shore, I took over. I could clearly see that there were six pups and two elders. I grabbed three of the pups by the scruff and started to paddle to shore as two other dogs swam towards the rest of them. After leaving the pups with the waiting dogs I swam in again, I saw only one dog approaching, she had two pups by the scruff and was dragging them with difficulty to shore. I swam out as an elder was swimming with the last pup, pulling it in the direction of the shore as it swam itself. ‘I can get him to shore myself’ he yelled over the waves, ‘Greypaw is still out there trying to get Root in!’ I nodded and swam out to where I had got the other pups.

Dread clenched my heart as I went under the water to look for them. I saw Greypaw sinking with his teeth in Root’s scruff. I swam as hard as I could to try to bring them to the surface, I knew it was no use, they were both already dead. The misery made me want to swallow a mouthful of water and die too. But I couldn’t do that, they wouldn’t want me to give up. I grabbed Greypaw’s scruff and heaved up to the surface, dragging Root with him. When I eventually made it to the shore I blacked out.

‘Where am I?’ I asked looking at Cloudear who was sitting beside me.

‘Your at our new camp,’ she answered, ‘you’ve been unconscious for a week.’ I looked at her, about to ask where Greypaw and Root were. But she answered my unspoken question. They were dead and they had been buried, no other lives were lost. I laid back and said, ‘lets go and look at this new camp,’ Cloudear helped me to my feet. Leaning on her shoulder, I hobbled into our new home.