

Jurassic: The New World

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Jurassic: The New World

by [TiatheTiger](#)

Summary

Just one month after the events in Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom, Claire Dearing and Owen Grady are learning to live side by side with the dinosaurs they struggled to escape. Good news comes in the form of a custody hearing for Maisie Lockwood. Claire and Owen are granted guardianship of the girl and take her home to begin their new life together, but the following morning they wake up to find Maisie missing. Who took her, and what will it take to get her back? Claire and Owen are willing to do anything to save their daughter, including forming a partnership with the company that ruined their lives.

Notes

This story contains Jurassic World and Jurassic World Fallen Kingdom spoilers. If you haven't seen the movies and you plan on seeing them, don't read this first! You can read without having seen JW/JW:FK, but some references may be confusing.

Chapter 1

This is docket O-20183904 in the case of Owen Grady and Claire Dearing vs. International Genetics Incorporated for the custody of Maisie Lockwood.

Claire squeezed her fists under the table and forced herself not to run her sweaty palms over her sleek black skirt. *The last time I dressed this nice, I was almost eaten by a dinosaur*, she thought as she took a second to glance down at her outfit. Their court hearing required something a bit fancier than the casual pants and t-shirts she started wearing after Jurassic World went to hell.

"I'll admit, this is an unusual case," the judge said, bringing Claire out of her daydream. Owen stood tall beside her. She was glad to have him there. Her hand crept to the right until it met his and held on tight. Claire was still getting used to the idea that she could hold his hand now that they'd decided to give coupledom a third try. Going through another traumatic incident together solidified their rocky relationship. "There is no precedent for the custody of a... well, of a clone. I suppose this is the world we live in now."

Owen squeezed Claire's hand beneath the table. After Lockwood's death and the incident at his estate, all of his assets were seized. This included the information surrounding Maisie's existence. As soon as it was out, there was no putting it back in the box. Owen and Claire knew they'd have to fight to keep Maisie, they just didn't think it would be against InGen.

"Your honor, InGen has proprietary ownership over the science used to create the clone sitting before you. It is imperative that they are given custody of the child," the leach defending InGen told the judge. If Owen hadn't been standing between her and the plaintiff, Claire would have jumped across the room to claw out his eyes. How dare he talk about Maisie like she's some kind of science experiment? She's a child!

"We would like to enter into evidence the sequence required to clone a human being which was developed by InGen thirty years ago."

The judge accepted the pile of papers with disinterest. "This means nothing to me. I'm a judge, not a geneticist."

The lawyer looked smug. "We have brought one of the world's most respected geneticists along to explain the information in that folder. Dr. Henry Wu is actually responsible for much of the cloning done by InGen."

Owen and Claire shared a look. The last thing they expected was for Dr. Wu to testify against them. He was supposed to be hiding out until the dust settled and humans got used to dinosaurs roaming the streets of the United States. A month had passed since the incident at the Lockwood Estate, but the US population had not yet learned how to cohabitate with the de-extinct creatures. Neither Owen nor Claire were sure they ever would.

Dr. Wu was sworn in and allowed to describe his scientific discoveries. He avoided eye contact with Owen, Claire, and Maisie seated quietly behind them. What was he so worried about? That if he allowed himself to look at the faces of the people he ruined, he might suddenly grow a conscience? Not likely.

After the testimony, the judge looked slightly less disinterested than before. "Your Honor, Maisie Lockwood is a clone of Mr. Lockwood's late daughter. We are not here to dispute this fact. However, does that mean she should be subjected to scientific experimentation?"

"Objection!" the vile lawyer from the other side yelled out. "Conjecture. The defense has no way of knowing what InGen plans to do with Maisie."

The judge all but rolled her eyes. "InGen just had a scientist explain to the court how Maisie was created. I think it's safe to assume we all know what the company plans on doing with the young girl. Overruled."

Claire stepped just a bit closer to Owen. Was it possible this was going their way? They'd had to scrape together their non-existent savings to afford a mediocre lawyer. Compared to InGen's still thriving money pit, they were sure they'd lose before the proceedings began. "Your Honor, Maisie deserves to be with people who love her, not with people who are going to treat her like an experiment. Further, the defense would like to enter into evidence documents pertaining to Maisie's birth. Though Lockwood was an early part in creating InGen, he had already severed ties with the company when Maisie was born. Lockwood used his own facilities on his personal estate to bring Maisie into the world. InGen has no grounds for taking her from the people who have been caring for her for the last month."

The judge took the documents and read them over. Claire felt tears pooling in her eyes. Their lawyer was careful not to talk about Maisie the way InGen's lawyer did, like she was just another one of their experiments and not a living, breathing little girl. It was how Claire had treated the dinosaurs for her first few years at Jurassic World. Her behavior towards those beautiful creatures was what led her to found the Dinosaur Protection Group in the first place. It may have taken her a long time to figure it out, but she finally understood that dinosaurs were animals and they deserved rights, too. Just like Maisie.

"Does the defense have any witnesses they'd like to call?"

This was their moment. "Yes, Your Honor. We would like to call Iris to the stand."

Iris stood slowly and made her way to the wooden box beside the judge. Once she was sworn in, she was allowed to testify.

"I raised Maisie," she explained to the judge. "And I raised Mr. Lockwood's daughter before that. I know what Maisie is like. She's a rambunctious little girl who likes to wander and play practical jokes. She simply cannot be placed into a facility to be tested. She needs to be with a family who loves her. I believe Mr. Grady and Ms. Dearing are perfect to care for Maisie. They are familiar with her background and they treat her like the child she is. She will live an incredible life with this couple. I urge you to send her with them."

Claire allowed the tears to fall readily. She hadn't known what Iris might say about them, but her testimony was perfect. Claire remembered the first time she saw Maisie. She'd been lurking in the shadows, ready to pounce. Iris's description was spot on.

"Thank you, Iris," the judge said. Iris returned to her seat and waited primly for the judge to make her final decision. It was a family court, because for all intents and purposes it was a custody hearing. No jury would hear the testimonies. The judge would decide Maisie's fate. Owen wrapped his arm around Claire's back and pulled her flush against his side. Whatever happened, they'd have each other. That was important for both of them to remember.

"As I said when we began this hearing, this is a unique case. We are setting the precedent with this decision, and I believe the decision is clear. Maisie Lockwood may be a clone, but she is also a child and she deserves a stable home with people who will care for her as a human, not an experiment. I rule in favor of Mr. Owen Grady and Ms. Claire Dearing. You now have sole custody of Maisie Lockwood. We release her to your care and will be following up to ensure she is properly looked after."

The judge said more, but Owen and Claire couldn't hear it. They were too busy hugging each other and Maisie. They were going to be a family. After everything they went through on the island and at the estate, it was about time they got some good news.

"I've never had a Mom or a Dad before," Maisie said quietly. "I'm not sure I'll be any good at being a daughter."

Claire wiped a tear from the girl's eye. "We've never had a daughter before," she told Maisie. "We'll be learning together."

"As a family," Owen added. He took in the two most important girls in his life and fought back tears of his own. He wasn't sure how to be a father, but he knew he wanted to love and protect both Claire and Maisie for as long as he lived. Attachments are hard and they get complicated, but for the first time in his life, Owen wanted them. He had been attached to Claire for longer than he cared to admit, and with Maisie added to the mix he felt whole. He only hoped nothing would take that away from him.

Iris joined them as soon as their group hug finished. She put her hands on Maisie's shoulders and smiled. "I'm getting older, girl. I would have taken you myself if I thought I could keep up with you."

Maisie giggled. "You'll come to visit, won't you Iris? Owen is building a cabin in the woods where we'll live. You can come and make sure I always take my bath!"

Iris smiled at the girl's pronunciation of the word 'bath.' As hard as she tried, the Queen's English never stuck. "Of course, I'll visit. You can't keep me away."

Maisie surprised Iris with a bone-crunching hug. "I love you, Iris."

"I love you, too, girl. Now, you'd best be getting on to your new home. First, I have something to discuss with your parents. Would you give us a moment?"

"Of course, Iris," Maisie said. She took a seat in the audience, far enough away that she wouldn't overhear the adult's conversation.

"What is it, Iris?" Claire asked. Her stomach bubbled with nerves. Was she going to try and take Maisie from them?

The woman took a deep breath. "Mr. Lockwood was afraid something of this sort would happen upon his death. He was even more worried that the courts would rule against any money he left to Maisie, so he left part of his fortune to Mr. Mills and the rest to me. He was unsure what Mills might do with the money, but he knew I would spend mine on Maisie."

"What are you saying?" Owen asked.

"I have inherited quite a bit of money. After the reparations, which were limited due to the general sleaziness of those injured or killed in the incident, it still adds up to a large sum. Because of Mr. Mills's death, all of Lockwood's money is now mine to do as I wish. I must keep some for myself, though I hate to do so. It will serve me through my retirement. The rest, though, is yours. I encourage you to spend some on a college fund for Maisie. She's a brilliant girl. Besides that, it is up to you what you do with the money. Just promise me Maisie will have a good life."

Claire held tightly to Owen who could no longer hold back his tears. They had no idea how they'd afford a child, but now they wouldn't have to worry. "We love Maisie and we will be the best parents we know how to be," Owen promised Iris.

"Thank you. I will have the lawyer transfer the money to you right away."

"Thank you, Iris," Claire blubbered. "You have no idea what this means to us."

"I do, dear. I do. I hope you know what it means to me that Maisie has found a mother and a father who will care for her as if she were their own."

"We do."

The three hugged and Iris made her exit, stopping to chat with the lawyer first. He promised her that the funds would be available to Claire and Owen the next day. First on the agenda was to take Maisie shopping for new summer clothes. They bought her a few spring outfits, but hotter weather was coming and she would need tank tops and shorts. Claire's sister already planned on bringing her son, Gray, to play with Maisie as often as possible. Though six years apart in age, both Karen and Claire hoped the two would become close friends.

They have a lot in common, including their love for dinosaurs. Claire was glad Gray hadn't stopped researching the animals even after the Jurassic World incident, and that Maisie hadn't given up on dinosaurs after what happened at the estate.

Maisie joined her guardians as soon as Iris left. "Is everything okay?" she asked.

"Better than okay," Owen explained. "Your grandfather made sure you'd be taken care of." The young girl's face fell. "I miss him," she admitted. "He was the only parent I ever knew, besides Iris of course."

"We know, honey," Claire said, patting Maisie's hair. "Why don't we head home, okay? It's been a long day for all of us."

Maisie nodded. "Yes, lets. I can't wait for the cabin to be finished so we have a real home." Claire laughed. "Me, neither. How about it, Owen? How much longer until our real home is finished?"

"Well, I should be able to hire a couple guys to get things moving faster. Hopefully in the next few months it'll be ready to move in."

"Perfect!" Maisie said. "And I get my own room?"

"Of course you do," Owen said. "Let's get going, shall we?"

They piled into Owen's van and drove the thirty minutes to their secluded home in the woods. The cabin sat unfinished with a small trailer beside it for sleeping. The three of them had been sharing the trailer for a month since Owen and Claire were given immediate temporary custody of Maisie after the Lockwood Estate incident. It was only when they arrived at the trailer again after the hearing that it felt real. Though the home was temporary, the family was permanent.

It was after eight at night when they got home after a fast food dinner. A small group of Compsognathus, tiny dinosaurs that pack an unexpected punch, waited outside the trailer door. Owen kept a locked box of food behind the trailer for this purpose. He tossed a few freeze-dried lizards towards the dense forest to distract the little creatures. While they ate, Maisie patted one on the head.

"Maisie!" Owen called. "Don't touch them."

The young girl shrugged. "I would pet a squirrel if it let me. These dinosaurs are harmless."

Owen and Claire remembered an incident on Sorna many years earlier when a little girl was injured by Compsognathus, but they didn't want to scare Maisie. It was better that she wasn't afraid of dinosaurs, even after what they went through on the estate. Now that the dinosaurs are free to roam North America, they knew they'd be seeing more and more of them.

"Come on, Maisie," Claire said. "It's time for bed."

Owen opened the door to the trailer and the three climbed inside. After changing into her pajamas and brushing her teeth, Maisie settled into her bed, which doubled as the kitchen table when flipped open.

"Goodnight... Mom and Dad," she said before closing her eyes.

Claire cried happy tears into Owen's shoulder. "Goodnight, sweetheart," she whispered.

Though relatively early, Claire and Owen were exhausted. It had taken a lot to prepare for what amounted to a couple of hours in court. The work was worth it now that Maisie was home for good.

"Goodnight," Owen whispered in Claire's ear when they climbed into the larger bed at the head of the trailer. "I love you."

"I love you, too."

They drifted off to sleep quickly and deeply. For the first time in years, Claire didn't have a single dinosaur fueled nightmare. When she awoke before the sun in desperate need for the bathroom, she felt genuinely relaxed.

Until she noticed the empty bed where Maisie had been asleep.

“Maisie?” Claire called out. She opened the trailer door and listened, but everything was quiet. “Maisie? Where are you?”

No one responded.

“Owen!” Claire screamed. She shook her sleeping boyfriend until he blinked away the grogginess from his eyes. “Owen, wake up.”

“I’m up, what’s going on? What time is it?”

“I don’t know,” Claire cried. “But Maisie’s missing.”

Owen sat up straight. “What did you say?”

“Maisie’s missing!” Claire yelled.

“What?” Owen jumped out of bed and flung open the trailer door. He yelled Maisie’s name just as Claire did, then flipped on the outside light. It had rained during the night leaving mud where dry grass and dirt had been.

Outside the front door, Owen noticed something strange. He jumped down to get a closer look and sure enough there were footprints in the mud approaching and leaving the trailer.

“I don’t think Maisie’s missing,” Owen said.

Claire joined him outside the trailer. “What do you mean? Then where is she?”

“I don’t know,” he told her. He met her eyes. “But I think she’s been kidnapped.”

Chapter 2

Claire stared at Owen trying to understand what he was saying. Kidnapped? That wasn't possible.

"No, she wasn't kidnapped," Claire reasoned. "She probably went to chase the Compsognathus. Or that baby triceratops we've seen wandering around. She hasn't been kidnapped."

"Claire," Owen said calmly. "Look at these footprints. They don't belong to a dinosaur."

"How could someone have taken her? We were right there!"

Owen examined the trailer. One of the windows was slightly open with duct tape still stuck to the wall beneath. A small piece of hose was covered in mud on the ground. He picked it up and took a whiff. "I think they drugged us. That explains why I didn't have nightmares."

Claire wiped at her eyes in an attempt to stop the tears. "I thought it was because the court case was settled and we had Maisie with us!"

Owen pulled his crying girlfriend into his arms. "I know. Me, too. Listen, we need to call the cops."

"Won't they make us wait twenty-four hours?"

"That's a bullshit rule they made up for TV. Besides, Maisie is a child. They always care more when a child goes missing."

Before Claire could react, Owen had his cell phone out to call the police. He informed them that his daughter was missing and they assured him they'd send a team out immediately to investigate.

While they waited, Claire and Owen sat on the cabin porch. "Who would do this? Who would take Maisie from us?" Claire asked.

Owen fought back tears. "It smells like InGen to me. They lost in court so they decided to just take her."

"Would they really do that?"

"Come on, Claire. We've seen what these people are capable of. They're the ones who made the Indominus Rex and the IndoRaptor."

Claire sniffled. "I authorized the Indominus."

"Hey. That may be true, but you didn't know what it was capable of. These people are scientists. They knew what they were creating and they didn't care what the consequences might be."

Claire wanted to believe Owen was right, but a part of her still felt guilty for the lives lost at Jurassic World. If she hadn't been so caught up in the wow factor of a new dinosaur, Jurassic World might have still been open and none of this would have happened.

But then they wouldn't have had Maisie.

"This isn't your fault," Owen told her for the thousandth time since they left the Lockwood Estate. He carried his own guilt on his sleeve. If he had known his raptor research would lead to the creation of the IndoRaptor, he never would have joined InGen.

"Owen, we've lost everything. We can't lose Maisie, too."

Owen held tight to Claire. "We'll get her back. I promise."

The rumbling of a car coming up their long driveway ended their moment. They jumped up to meet the officers.

"You must be Owen Grady and Claire Dearing," a young officer said. He was probably in his

mid-twenties, fresh from the academy. He barely filled out his navy blue uniform. His dark brown skin was clear and young, without any of the telltale signs of aging or disaster that Owen and Claire had. "I'm Officer Douglass and this is Officer Jordan. Can you tell us about your daughter? How long has she been missing?"

"She's nine years old," Claire told the officers. "She has brown hair and brown eyes. She's about this tall," Claire holds up a hand to indicate the young girl's height.

"She was taken sometime during the night," Owen added. "I think whoever did it pumped a gas into the trailer to keep us asleep. We found duct tape and some pipe outside the window." Officer Jordan glanced towards the trailer. She was older than her partner, and she looked more like an officer. Her arms were thick and strong from training. It was hard to tell under the uniform, but she probably had a hard set of abs. Her blonde hair was tied tightly in a bun at the base of her neck, mostly hidden by her cap. "Can you show me?"

Owen nodded. He led the woman to the window and showed her the tape and the flexible piping.

Claire stayed with the male officer. "What else can you tell me, Ms. Dearing? Do you know who might have taken your daughter?"

She hesitated. The world was well aware of who – and what – Maisie is. "Officer, our daughter is Maisie Lockwood," Claire finally said. "Yesterday we beat the company InGen in court for custody. There's a good chance they're behind this."

The officer failed to hide his surprise. His mouth dropped open and his blue eyes gaped at Claire. "Why do you think InGen is responsible?"

"They weren't happy about losing. They think Maisie belongs to them. Owen thinks they would go to great lengths to get her back."

Officer Douglass wrote down everything Claire told him. "And you're sure she was kidnapped? There are a lot of wild animals out here in the woods. Could Maisie have wandered off in the middle of the night?"

Claire's face flamed. "Were you not listening when Owen told you about the scene at our window?"

"We have to cover all the bases, Ma'am. I'm not trying to upset you."

She took a few deep breaths but they did nothing to calm her down. "I understand, officer, but Maisie didn't just wander off. She was taken. There were human footprints leaving our trailer. Only one set."

"Can you show them to me?" Officer Douglass asked.

Claire nodded and brought the young man to the door of the trailer. Owen and Officer Jordan were deep in conversation about possible gases. Claire eyed the woman carefully. She was about the same age as Claire but a few inches shorter. Her hair was light blonde. Before Claire, blondes were Owen's type. They'd been through so much together that Claire thought their relationship was rock solid, but that didn't stop the flicker of jealousy in her stomach. She wondered briefly if Owen might feel the same jealousy at seeing her with Officer Douglass, but he never even looked their way.

"The barefoot prints are obviously mine and Owen's," Claire explained. Neither had thought to put on shoes before traipsing through the mud. That might work to their advantage, though, because it distinguished their prints from the ones likely belonging to whomever kidnapped Maisie.

Officer Douglass took a few photos of the prints. He followed them until they stopped on the driveway. "The perpetrator probably got into a vehicle here. I'd guess they had a getaway driver. Maisie was probably asleep the whole time."

Claire started to cry again. The thought of her daughter waking up in a strange place not

knowing where she was or who she was with was too much to handle. "You have to find her, Officer. Please."

"We will do everything we can. An amber alert has already been sent out, so everyone in the area is looking out for her."

Officer Jordan and Owen approached, Officer Jordan holding an evidence bag in her hands. "We should get this to the lab and see if they can't identify the gas."

"Can we have a number to contact you?" Officer Douglass asked Claire. She gave him her Dinosaur Protection Group business card which had her cell written in green at the bottom.

"Please, call us with any updates," she begged.

"We will," he assured her. "And you call us if you have anything more that might aid in our investigation."

Claire nodded. "What's next? Will you check InGen's labs for signs of Maisie?"

Officer Douglass winced. "Unfortunately, suspicion isn't enough for a warrant. We'll head over there and ask some questions, but we won't be able to look around unless they invite us in or we have sufficient evidence to get a warrant."

"But they took my daughter!" Claire cried.

"We will find out who has Maisie. The problem is, InGen has a competitor. Biosyn. I'd bet they've heard about Maisie and would go to as much trouble as InGen, if not more, to get their hands on her."

Claire nearly fell to the floor. She'd heard rumors about a second company trying to do what InGen had mastered, but this was the first time she'd learned the name. Was it possible that this Biosyn company was behind the kidnapping? Her head spun.

"We'll be in touch, Ms. Dearing."

She could only nod. The officers got back in their car and drove off, leaving Claire and Owen to watch them leave.

Claire sat back down on the cabin porch. "Have you ever heard of this other company?"

Owen nodded. "When I first started working for InGen, they tried to recruit me. They asked me to take InGen's proprietary information with me if I joined them. I can't believe I forgot."

"So it's possible these other people kidnapped our daughter?"

"Anyone could have taken her. She was all over the news! Everyone knows she's a clone."

"She's not a clone, she's our daughter!" Claire screamed.

Owen tried to hold her hand, but she pulled away. "I know that, Claire. I want her back just as much as you do. She belongs here with us."

"Oh yeah? It sure didn't look like you cared about us when Officer Jordan was around."

Claire slapped a hand over her mouth. Did she really say that out loud?

Owen stared at her. "You're jealous? Our daughter has been kidnapped and you..."

"Don't. Please. I know I'm an idiot."

"Hey. You're not an idiot," Owen said. "A little dense, but no idiot."

That made Claire smile. There was a lot she loved about Owen, but his ability to be funny even in the worst of circumstances was her favorite quality of his. "I'm sorry."

"Don't be. I won't lie, it's kind of hot that you got jealous."

"I just know how much you like blondes," Claire said. "And she's never gotten you almost killed by a genetically modified dinosaur. Probably."

Owen laughed, the sound resonating through the still forest. In all of the craziness of the morning, Claire hadn't realized how early it still was. The sun had barely begun to rise.

"I love you, Claire. Red hair and all."

He leaned down to place a gentle kiss on Claire's lips. When she pulled away, Claire snuggled into his shoulder. "They'll find her, right?"

“They will,” Owen promised. “And if they don’t, we will.”

Owen’s confidence made Claire feel a bit better, but her body still shook with worry for their daughter. What was she doing? Were they taking care of her? Was she already being probed for scientific experimentation?

Noticing Claire’s racing mind behind her wide eyes, Owen stood. “There’s nothing we can do right now but wait. Maybe we should try to get some more sleep. We’ll be able to search better if we’re well rested.”

Claire was hesitant but she finally stood and took Owen’s outstretched hand. “I don’t know if I’ll be able to sleep,” she said.

“Me, neither,” Owen replied. “But we can at least try. Maisie needs us to be at the top of our game.”

This time, Claire laughed. “That day at the park, I’d gotten like three hours of sleep the night before. I was so nervous about the investors coming.”

“I had a full night’s sleep,” Owen said.

“Of course, you did,” she replied. “That’s why you were able to save us.”

Owen squeezed her tightly. “You saved me, remember? You killed that Pteranodon.”

She smiled at the memory. “And then you kissed me. Our first kiss, I might add.”

“Exactly. Not everything about that day was terrible.”

“Not all the memories were bad,” Claire remarked, thinking about what Owen had said when they revisited the island. They were near the scene of their first kiss when he said it, too. It was what made her realize they never should have broken up.

Had a month really passed since they were running from lava and hiding from mercenaries? That meant they’d only been together for a month. If they counted the two years between Jurassic World and their most recent breakup, their relationship was a lot longer. It certainly felt like they’d been together forever.

“I love you, too, Owen,” she said suddenly. “I hope you know that.”

“So when Office Douglass calls with non-Maisie related questions, you won’t answer?”

His question startled her. “You were jealous, too!”

Owen laughed. “I’m not sure I can compete with Officer Tall Dark and Handsome.”

“Oh, Owen, there’s no competition.”

He kissed her again. “Good.”

They walked arm and arm into the trailer, leaving muddle footprints on the linoleum floor. “I think we should wash up before we get in bed.”

“Probably for the best. I don’t want your dirty feet touching me while we pretend to sleep.”

“My dirty feet?” Claire exclaimed. “Look at yours!”

Owen laughed. “We’re both a mess. You can shower first.”

He kissed her once more and released her into the small bathroom. As tempting as it was to join her, the shower was barely big enough for one person, let alone two.

Living with Maisie in the trailer made it difficult for Claire and Owen to get intimate. They made it work by sending Maisie to hang out with her cousins at Claire’s sister’s house, but it wasn’t convenient. All the more reason for Owen to finish the cabin so they had their own room.

Having a physical house would be a new adventure for Owen. He went into the Navy right out of high school and lived in temporary apartments, in tents, and on ships until he got out. Then he started his work with InGen and brought his bungalow to Isla Nublar.

Owen finally decided to build the cabin when he left Claire. She could never be happy living in a house on wheels and he could never be happy without her. He planned on winning her back once the place was finished and he could promise her more than a trailer. Their trip back

to Isla Nublar sped up the process. His relationship with Claire and Maisie are the only good things to come out of that trip.

And Blue, but Owen tried not to think about her too much. If he did, he might get overwhelmed with worry. Was she okay? Had she been captured?

Claire emerged from the shower, pulling Owen from his thoughts. She had wrapped her slim body in a rough, white towel. Claire looked just as beautiful as she did on their first date.

Owen swore to himself he would never screw things up again the way he did back then.

“All yours,” Claire said. She picked through the drawers and found a pair of pajamas to change into. With Spring in full bloom in their southern California town, a tank-top and cotton shorts was all Claire needed for an easy sleep. Luckily, the trailer had air conditioning. Owen’s shower didn’t last long and soon enough they were cuddled together in bed, both wishing for sleep.

“What do we do now?” Claire asked quietly, snuggling against Owen’s side.

“We stick together,” he answered. “For survival.”

She laughed. “I’m never leaving your side again,” Claire promised.

“Ditto,” Owen said.

Claire’s breathing steadied and Owen smiled. He wasn’t lying when he said Maisie would need them at their best and he knew a few more hours’ rest would give them the energy they needed to find their daughter.

Owen closed his eyes. Within seconds, he was drifting off to sleep. Unfortunately, without the supplement of a sleeping gas, his dreams turned into nightmares.

The worst one was him watching Maisie get picked up by a Pteranodon and not being able to do anything to save her.

Chapter 3

Claire's blaring phone woke her and Owen from their fitful sleep.

"Did you find Maisie?" Claire asked as an answer.

"What? Maisie is missing?" Karen responded.

Claire sighed. "I'm sorry, Karen. I should have called. Maisie... we think she was kidnapped this morning."

Owen tried not to be disappointed. He climbed out of their bed to use the bathroom while Claire spoke with her sister.

"Oh my God, Claire! How did this happen? Who took her?"

The reality of the situation sunk in for Claire. How dare she sleep while her daughter was missing? She'd been a mother for a day before the unthinkable happened. Whenever Claire was in charge, something terrible happened. Why hadn't she learned her lesson with Jurassic World? After Maisie is rescued, Claire would leave her and Owen to live without Claire around to screw it up.

"Claire, where is your head? Come back to me."

She sighed. "I don't know what to do, Karen. We went to sleep after the cops left."

"And now you're refreshed and ready to find that little girl. Listen, Claire, the boys and I are coming over. We'll help you search for Maisie."

"Thank you, Karen," Claire said.

Owen climbed out of the miniscule bathroom. "How is Karen?"

"She and the boys are coming over."

He nodded. "Good. We need all the help we can get."

"I'm a terrible mother," Claire blurted. "You would be better off without me."

Owen sat down on the bed and laughed. "It's been less than twenty-four hours, Claire."

"And Maisie is missing, then we went to sleep!"

He rubbed her back to try and calm her down, but Claire pulled away. "Listen, Claire," he said. "There was nothing we could have done at five in the morning. Three hours of sleep cleared our heads. We're ready to go."

"We should have started looking three hours ago!" Claire cried.

"And done what? Scoured the woods? We know she's not out there. Someone took her.

Knocked down InGen's door? That would have gotten us arrested. We'd be no help to Maisie from behind bars. Don't beat yourself up about this. It's not your fault and it's not mine."

Claire sobbed. She'd cried a lot the last few days. First, it was about the court appearance and worrying Maisie would be taken away. Now, it was because Maisie had been taken. Just not by the courts.

"What if we don't find her?" Claire asked. She finally allowed Owen to wrap her in his arms.

"We will."

"How can you be so sure?"

Owen adjusted them on the bed so he could look in Claire's eyes. "We made it out of Jurassic World. We made it off Isla Nublar when it was basically exploding around us. We got out of Lockwood's Estate. If we can get through all that, we can find our daughter."

Claire knew she'd have to hear this over and over again before she believed it, but for now it was working.

A knock on the trailer door drew them out of the moment. Karen threw her arms around

Claire the second she opened the door. "Oh, Claire. I'm so sorry. Tell us what we can do."

Claire took in her nephews behind her slender sister. The boys got their father's brunette hair and height. Zack towered over her and Gray seemed taller than the last time she saw him. Had it only been two weeks? They had come to pick up Maisie for the weekend so Claire and Owen could have some alone time. It felt like a lifetime ago.

"Hey, Aunt Claire," Zack said, taking his turn to hug Claire. He hugged Owen, too, as soon as his mom released him. Gray's hugs were tighter than his older brother's. It reminded Claire of the day he arrived at Jurassic World and surprised her by wrapping his arms around her waist. They've become much closer since that day. Claire didn't want to be an island anymore. She wanted to connect with people, especially her family.

"You boys know a lot about computers?" Owen asked when their reunion was over.

Zack nodded. "I pretty much live on mine."

"Me, too."

Owen smiled. "Good. I need the two of you to do some research to help us find Maisie."

"We're on it."

Zack opened his backpack and pulled out two Apple computers. "Gifts from Dad the last time he was too busy to take us for the weekend."

Claire winced. Karen and her husband had tried to work out their problems after the park incident, but they ended up divorced six months later. The boys' father was supposed to see them every weekend but he bailed on that obligation too many times to count. With Zack in college, their father pretty much disappeared from Zack and Gray's lives. He still paid child support for Gray, at least.

"Do you guys have wifi?"

Owen and Claire looked at each other. The cabin would have cable and internet, but the trailer did not.

Zack caught the look and laughed. "No worries. We have hotspots on our phones."

"Good, good," Owen said. "Once the cabin is ready we'll be out of the dark ages, but..."

"You don't have to explain yourself Uncle Owen," Gray said. Owen liked when Claire's nephew used the title. He hoped one day they would make it official, though every time they got closer, Claire pulled away. Owen worried that Maisie's kidnapping might be the end of what they had finally gotten back.

"Thanks, kid," Owen said. "I need you both to search out Maisie and see if you can find anyone who might want to take her. Then we need you to investigate InGen and Biosyn. Tell me everything you can find about the two companies."

"On it," Zack said. He set up the kitchen table to get to work. Gray plopped down on the stool across from his brother and opened his laptop. "I'll start with a few basic Google searches on Maisie. Gray, you look into InGen and Biosyn."

Gray nodded and disappeared into his computer. With that taken care of, the adults left the boys in the trailer so they could talk without disturbing their progress.

"What do you want from me?" Karen asked. "Should we set up a search party or something?"

"You two stay here in case the officers come by or call with news," Owen said to Karen and Claire. "I have someone I need to meet."

Claire scrunched her brow. "Who?"

"I'll tell you if any good comes out of it."

She frowned but nodded anyway. "Be careful."

Owen kissed her cheek and twirled his van keys around his finger. The used Dodge made more sense than his old truck, which they traded in a week after Maisie came to stay with them. Claire's sedan was more practical, but the van had more leg room for long drives. It

would also have more space should their family grow in the future.

Claire watched the van's taillights until they were completely hidden by trees.

"I know this is a ridiculous question, but are you okay?" Karen asked.

"I want Maisie back," Claire told her sister. "But I'm terrified of what happens when we do have her back."

Karen nodded. "Parenthood is scary and hard. At least you and Owen have each other."

That made Claire smile. She did have Owen. If the way he protected the boys at the park and Maisie at the estate were any indication, he was going to be an amazing dad. She was lucky to have him by her side through all of this.

"I don't want to mess things up for them. I feel like all of this is my fault."

"Oh, Claire, you know deep down that isn't true."

Claire wiped a stray tear from her cheek. "I keep telling myself that, but everything I touch goes wrong. The park, the rescue operation, now Maisie..."

"If you say they'd be better off without you, I might actually slap you."

Claire remained silent. That was exactly what she planned to say.

"I'm going to use a Mom saying on you, are you ready?"

"Go for it. It can't hurt."

Karen wrapped her arms around her younger sister. "Trust yourself, Claire. You know more than you think you do."

Claire snorted. "That's a doozy."

"I know, but it's true. What happened with the park and the estate, that stuff sucked. But you're here now, and you're a mother. You can't let those mistakes define you. You're smarter than that," Karen told Claire.

"You know, this isn't how I expected parenthood to happen. I wasn't even sure I'd ever have a family, and now I have Maisie and Owen..."

"And me, and the boys. You're not an island, Claire. You never were. You're more like... a peninsula."

They both laughed. "I don't know what that means, but I'll take it. Thank you, Karen. You being here means the world to me."

"Hey, there's nowhere else I'd rather be. Now let's go see what the boys have learned about the possible kidnappers."

They walked into the small trailer one after the other and sat down beside the boys, ready to come up with the next step in their plan.

**

Owen knocked on the door to the single-story ranch. The grey panels had been recently replaced, but the stone walkway was in need of repairs.

An older man with greying hair answered the door. "Can I help you?" He asked.

"Dr. Alan Grant?"

The man nodded. "That's me."

"My name is Owen Grady. You may have heard of me... I worked at Jurassic World. I trained the raptors."

Dr. Grant looked hard at Owen's face. "You look like you could use a drink. Why don't you come inside?"

"Thank you, sir."

Owen followed Dr. Grant through a narrow hallway and into a bright white kitchen. Dr. Grant poured them each a couple fingers of Bourbon and invited Owen to sit at the kitchen table. After his trip to Sorna, Dr. Alan Grant continued working at his dig site until his retirement, when he left Montana for Southern California. He continued to write about his experiences

with dinosaurs and Owen noticed that, after Dr. Grant's time on Sorna, the man seemed to fall back in love with dinosaurs. At least, he didn't mind the dead ones. The live ones, though, were a different story.

"I'm assuming you didn't come by to steal my alcohol," Dr. Grant said.

"No, Dr. Grant," Owen told him. "I came... well, have you heard about Maisie Lockwood?"

"Please, call me Alan," he said. "I have heard of the girl. Lockwood cloned his daughter, right?"

Owen nodded. "Yes, and my... girlfriend and I, we adopted her. In fact, just yesterday we won custody. But then this morning... we woke up, and Maisie was gone."

Alan's face fell. "I'm sorry to hear that. Have you had any luck finding her?"

"No, but we have some leads. What do you know about Biosyn?"

"Now that's a name I haven't heard in a while," Alan said. "I don't know much. They were always years behind InGen in terms of research. There were rumors they were behind what happened at the first park, but those were never confirmed. Is that who you think kidnapped your girl?"

Owen shrugged. "It had to be them or InGen. They're the only two companies who would have the gall to pull off something like this. InGen lost in court, so they're our prime suspect. But if Biosyn is trying to get ahead of InGen..."

"They're a pretty good suspect, too," Alan finished for him. "I see your dilemma. How can I help?"

"Honestly, I'm not sure. I don't know why I came here, exactly. I think I wanted to talk to someone else who got it."

Alan finished his drink and poured another. "I read about what you did with the raptors. You know, those things almost killed me. A few times."

"They're highly intelligent creatures. If I didn't imprint on them at birth, they would have tried to kill me, too. They did try to kill me, actually, when the indominus took over as the alpha..." Owen paused, a chill running down his spine. He could practically hear the genetically enhanced dinosaur purring outside Alan's home, though Owen knew the thing was just bones in the water on Isla Nublar now.

"It doesn't go away," Alan said. "If that's what you're wondering. It's been a long time and I still have nightmares about Jurassic Park and Sorna."

"Did you ever visit Jurassic World?"

Alan drew a line in the sweat on his glass. "I thought about it. Ellie, Lex, Tim, and me, we were all going to go together, but we couldn't do it."

"And now there are dinosaurs living in the woods around your ranch."

"Yes, there are. I don't think I'll ever get used to that."

"It's my fault," Owen said suddenly. "If I hadn't conducted the research on raptors, none of this would have happened."

Alan took a deep breath and focused on Owen's eyes. "That's where you're wrong, Owen. There are only two men at fault for all of this, and they're both dead. We're just stuck cleaning up their mess."

"Hammond and Lockwood had the ideas, but..."

"But nothing, Owen! Don't you get it? Everything starts with an idea. They wanted to play with life and death, and now we're paying for it. This is on them. None of it is on you."

Owen carefully considered Dr. Grant's words. He wasn't sure he could believe them yet, but it made sense. Owen didn't make the dinosaurs. Everything he did was a product of the labs Hammond and Lockwood started long ago. "You're right," Owen said.

"Damn right I am!" Alan laughed. "And about your little girl. I still have some contacts... I'll

see what they can do to help find her. If InGen or Biosyn have her, it won't be easy, but we'll get her back."

Owen stood and shook Alan's hand. "Thank you so much, Dr. Grant."

"Owen, please. It's Alan. I know we didn't go through it together, but we've been through enough to be on a first name basis."

Owen nodded. "Thank you, Alan. I really appreciate it."

"One more thing," Alan said. He pulled his wallet out and handed Owen a business card.

Owen expected it to be Alan's business card, but it was a therapist instead.

"What is this?" Owen asked.

Alan tapped the card. "Dr. Anderson is the best in the business. She saved Ellie, Lex, Tim, and me after Jurassic Park when she was fresh out of school. She moved her practice to California a few years ago."

"Claire and I both saw therapists right after Jurassic World, but I stopped going when we ended things three years ago. I'm not sure if she still goes..."

"It's worth giving Dr. Anderson a call, at least. She takes couples and individuals. You said you wanted to talk to someone who gets it, and Dr. Anderson is as close as you'll get. At least, as close as you'll get with someone who has a license to help you. And if that's not your thing, my number's on the back. You can reach out any time. I'm no therapist, but I'll do what I can."

"Thank you, Alan. This means a lot."

Owen put the card in his pocket. He wasn't sure if he'd ever use it, but just having it was a comfort.

Alan watched as Owen got into the dark blue mini van and drove off, back towards his makeshift home.

When Owen arrived, Karen, Claire, and the boys had a notebook's worth of intel. He saw something he missed in Claire's face. Hope.

"Can I talk to you outside?" he asked Claire. Karen and the boys busied themselves with the information, starting to outline a plan.

Claire and Owen sat on the steps of the cabin. "Is everything okay?" she asked. "Who did you go see?"

"Dr. Alan Grant," Owen told her. "He was... one of the survivors from Jurassic Park. He was on Sorna once, too."

"I remember him. We met once a long time ago. He thought Jurassic World was a bad idea. We should have listened to him." Claire sighed. "Why did you go see him?"

"I needed to meet with someone who knew what it was like."

Claire nodded. "Did you get what you went for?"

"I think so," Owen said. "He reminded me that none of this is my fault. Or yours, for that matter. He said we're just cleaning up someone else's mess."

"That sounds about right," she responded. "I'm glad you got what you needed."

"He said he'd help with Maisie, too," Owen said. "He's calling some people he knows."

Claire looked relieved. "I feel like we've done nothing. On TV, when someone goes missing, there are search parties and tip lines and ransom requests... why is it so different in real life?"

"I think progress is quieter in real life," Owen said. "Like the research Gray and Zack are doing, or the calls Dr. Grant is making. They're all steps towards getting our daughter back."

"I couldn't do any of this without you," Claire admitted. "I love you, Owen."

"I love you, too."

Owen kissed Claire hard on the lips, pulling her body close to his for just a few seconds before they had to pull away.

They smiled blissfully at each other until reality settled over them once again.

“Let’s get our daughter back,” Owen said. He stood and offered a hand to Claire, but she ignored it.

“Yes,” she answered. “We’ve got the beginnings of a plan.”

Together, they walked back into the trailer, but this time, it felt a lot like walking into a battle.

This was another war they were going to win, no matter what.

Chapter 4

InGen's California headquarters were less... extravagant than the group expected.

"Are you sure this is the place?" Claire asked when they pulled up in front of the large, unmarked warehouse.

Owen nodded. "This is it. I guess they're not too keen on people knowing who they are."

"Can you blame them?" Zack said. "There would be a lot of trouble out here if they did more advertising."

Zack was right. It took one of Alan Grant's contacts for them to access InGen's location. The company managed to keep their headquarters a well-protected secret. That made Owen wonder what they were hiding inside.

"Everyone remembers the plan?" Owen whispered. "We get in, introduce ourselves, and request an audience. Look around for other options in case it doesn't work."

Everyone acknowledged the plan. It wasn't ideal, but it was what they had to work with on short notice. Maisie had been missing for less than twenty-four hours, but with no ransom call and no trace of the young girl, Owen and Claire knew they had to do something to speed up the process. They couldn't just wait around for someone else to get Maisie back. Neither of them were good at sitting on the sidelines, especially now.

Owen started to take the lead but Claire brushed ahead of him. He smirked at her back and followed close behind.

The warehouse had two glass doors on the farthest side of the building, but that appeared to be the only way to get in. All of the other doors were metal and likely only opened from the inside. Of course, the entry doors were surrounded by thick woods. They wouldn't have noticed them if it weren't for Gray pointing them out. His keen observation skills would help a lot on the mission.

Claire pulled one of the doors, expecting it to be locked, but found it opened easily for her. She walked inside nervously until she reached a reception desk. The older woman popped her gum and looked over her glasses at the group.

"You must be Claire and Owen Grady, and Karen, Zack, and Gray Mitchell," she said.

"We've been expecting you."

Claire didn't bother pointing out that she had her own last name. If she ever did get married, she planned to hyphenate, but that wasn't the point.

"Where's Maisie?" Owen growled.

The woman continued to look bored. "Dr. Wu will see you."

A pair of security guards appeared around the corner to lead them into the proper building.

Claire hesitated. "Where are you taking us?" she asked.

"Follow us, ma'am."

The older guard attempted to take Claire's arm, but she pulled away before he had the chance. Owen would have knocked the guy out if he grabbed Claire, so he was glad she was faster than the aged man.

"You can take us there without touching," Claire admonished. He had the good sense to look scolded. "But first, tell us where we're going. Do you have Maisie?"

"Dr. Wu's office is just down this hallway. He will explain everything to you."

Was everyone around here a robot? They wouldn't put it past InGen to staff only artificial intelligence. Nothing about this company was real anymore.

Claire met Owen's eyes. "What do you think?" she asked.

He shrugged. "We have no choice."

Karen and the boys agreed without reluctance. "Let's go," Karen said. She followed behind her sister with her head held high. She hoped the guard would try to touch her, because she started practicing self-defense after her husband left and she had yet to use it on a real opponent.

The squat guard didn't try to touch Karen, much to her dismay. He brought the group down a sterile hallway towards a single, frosted glass door. After two taps with the man's chubby knuckles, the door creaked open like it was a thousand years old.

Owen and Claire shared a look. The squeaky door was eerily similar to the ones at Lockwood's estate. The doors they had to hide behind as they were hunted by a dinosaur this company manufactured.

Claire walked first into the strange office, followed closely behind by Owen, Karen, Zack, and Gray.

Dr. Wu stood from behind his desk, causing everyone to wonder who opened the door for them. Everything about this seemingly abandoned warehouse was creepy.

"Welcome!" Dr. Wu greeted them. "I've been expecting you."

Owen charged the doctor, grabbing the collar of his lab coat. "Where's our daughter?"

Dr. Wu remained calm. "I don't have your daughter, Owen," he told them.

Owen didn't back down. "Forgive me for not believing you after all the shit you put us through."

Claire put a gentle hand on Owen's arm. He lessened his grip, but didn't let go.

"If we took your daughter, we would be breaking a court order. You could sue us, and we both know you've proven you can win. InGen is on thin ice as it is after Eli Mills' mess." Claire cringed at the name of the man who swore he wanted to help the dinosaurs. If she hadn't been so quick to listen to him, they might have avoided this situation.

"Yes, we wanted Maisie, but we don't have her. But we know who does."

Owen's grip tightened once again. "Who took her?"

"Mr. Grady, I'm going to have to ask you to back off."

Reluctantly, Owen released Dr. Wu and took a step back. His hands were clenched by his side, ready to take Wu again if he needed to.

"Excellent. How about we have a seat, shall we?"

There were five heavy, wooden chairs lined up in front of Wu's desk. Two in the front, three in the back. Dr. Wu hadn't just been expecting Owen and Claire, he knew they would bring reinforcements. Owen took note of this. How could Wu have known exactly how many people would show up?

Claire took a seat in the front row with Owen beside her. The boys flanked their mother in the back.

"Tell us who has Maisie," Claire said calmly.

"We will reveal her location to you, Ms. Dearing, but we want something in return."

"Are you blackmailing us?" she asked. At least Dr. Wu used her last name. "After all you did?"

Dr. Wu scoffed. "All I did? I only ever did what I was told. In fact, if I remember correctly, it was you who gave the green light on the indominus..."

Claire tensed. Wu was right, and she would carry that guilt for the rest of her life. At that moment, though, there was something much more important to worry about. This man knew where Maisie was. "Please, just tell us what you know about Maisie."

"As I said, we want you to give us something in exchange for help in getting your daughter

back. We will offer you our resources, our horde of security guards, and an exact location for Maisie's whereabouts. All we want is one tiny thing in return."

"Name it," Owen said desperately. He hated being played with, but he could tell by the sparkle in Wu's eye that the doctor wasn't backing down. Dr. Wu had inherited all of InGen after the Lockwood scandal and he was keen to hold onto it. What he wanted to do with it, Owen wasn't sure. He planned to find out after Maisie was safe at home.

"Ms. Dearing?" Dr. Wu asked.

Claire silently asked Owen what to do. When he gave a slight nod, she told Wu she was in. She said she'd do anything to get Maisie back, and apparently selling her soul to the devil was part of anything.

"Excellent," Dr. Wu said. "After the incident with Lockwood's estate, InGen has been working on a few new things. We've put the military on hold for now, but we have other ideas for the raptors."

Wu watched Owen for his reaction, but Owen remained passive. What Dr. Wu couldn't see was how tightly Owen and Claire held each other, blocked from his sight by the massive mahogany desk.

"If you capture Blue and bring her to us, we will provide all the necessary information and resources you need to get your daughter back."

"Why don't you capture Blue yourselves?" Owen spit.

Dr. Wu's nostrils flared. "You think we haven't tried? The creature evades us at every turn. She refuses to be caught."

"What makes you think we'll have different luck?"

"Blue trusts you. You caught her on the island. We know she helped you kill the indoraptor. You have a bond with that animal, and InGen plans to use that bond to lure her in."

Owen took deep breaths to stop himself from crying. Blue had been through enough. He couldn't be the one to put her back in captivity. The other escaped dinosaurs caused trouble all over North America, but not Blue. She only hunted wild animals, and never more than she needed to survive.

Owen knew because he kept track of her, and she kept track of him. They had no contact after that night she ran free, but he knew she was behaving.

But if Owen and Claire were going to get Maisie back, they needed Dr. Wu's help. Neither of them wanted to admit it, but their research hadn't brought them any closer to finding Maisie and the police had no leads. Dr. Wu was their only hope.

"We'll do it," Owen said finally.

"Owen, no," Claire cried.

Owen shook his head. "But we do this on our own. If Blue even suspects you're with us, she'll run."

Wu nodded. "Understood. You have one week to capture Blue and bring her to us."

Dr. Wu opened a small box on his desk and pulled out two darts. Claire looked at them, confused, but Owen knew exactly what they were.

"I'm not using those darts on Blue." They were the same darts that some idiot brought to Sorna. The darts used venom from the south sea cone shell and it would be deadly on Blue. "They're a new formula," Wu promised. "This will put her to sleep in one shot, but it won't hurt her. She'll stay asleep for six hours after just one dose. That should give you enough time to get her to us. We have reason to believe Blue is here in California still."

Owen didn't have to ask how they knew. He was beginning to unravel how InGen's new operation was working, and he didn't like it.

Claire took the dart box from Dr. Wu. She wanted nothing more than to get out of his stark

white office. The only color was the shiny, wooden desk. It was completely out of place in the otherwise hospital-like office. Claire had to talk some sense into Owen, and that wasn't going to happen with Wu watching their every move.

"We except updates as you go," Wu told them. "We'll give you a call in, say, two days?"

Owen nodded. "We'll have a plan by then."

No one thanked Wu before walking out. He may have offered them the opportunity to find Maisie, but his cost was high.

Once outside the building, Claire opened her mouth to begin her spiel, but Owen stopped her.

"Not a word until I say so. Follow my lead."

The serious look on Owen's face kept their mouths shut. Owen powered up the van and drove. They talked candidly about the meeting and how they had to find Blue. Everyone allowed Owen to lead the conversation, though they were thoroughly confused.

Owen parked the van outside the trailer and motioned for the group to stay quiet. He led them through the woods for a mile before finally stopping.

"InGen knew we were coming," he said finally. "I couldn't figure out how. It didn't make sense that they had those five chairs set up for us already, and they knew Karen and the boys' names. Then it hit me: they knew we were coming because they heard us talking. The trailer is bugged."

"What?" Claire whispered. "How can you be sure?"

"I can't be until I sweep the trailer, but I'm pretty sure. It would explain a lot. How he knew we were coming, how he knew Maisie was missing..."

Claire hadn't thought of that. The Amber Alert had only gone out that morning. InGen didn't exactly scream 'connected to the outside world.'

"That thing he said about the indominus being my fault... I had been talking to Karen about that earlier. About how I feel like I screwed Jurassic World up."

"He played to both of our weaknesses in there. And he's going to keep doing it until he gets what he wants."

Claire teared up. "We can't give him Blue. They'll do horrible things to her..."

Owen looked around. InGen hadn't come stampeding through the woods, so he figured they were probably safe.

Before Owen had a chance to speak, Claire started up again. "You raised her, Owen. And you've risked her life for her over and over again. You went to an exploding island to save her!"

Owen blinked. "You think I went back to Isla Nublar for Blue?"

"Of course. I told you she was still alive..."

He pulled Claire into his arms. "I didn't go back to the island for Blue. I care about her, I do. I raised her. She is an incredible animal. But the only reason I went on that ridiculous trip, was you. As soon as you said you were going, I knew I had to go, too."

"Seriously?" she asked, blinking back tears.

"Seriously," Owen promised. He kissed her lightly then pulled away. Romance could wait. They had a daughter to save.

"What are we gonna do, Owen?" Zack asked. "That Dr. guy seemed pretty serious."

Owen nodded. "He wasn't messing around, but we can't give them Blue. I don't know how yet, but we're gonna double cross them. We'll keep Blue safe and get Maisie back. It'll be risky..."

"But worth it," Claire finished. "Blue deserves to be free. We'll find her, and we'll make sure she stays that way."

Karen, Gray, and Zack all agreed.

Claire looked around. “Now what?”

“First, we strip the trailer for bugs. We’ll move them to the cabin so InGen doesn’t get too suspicious. They’ll still catch some of our conversations, just not the important ones. After that... we’ll make a plan.”

It sounded daunting to Claire, but she trusted Owen and she knew her sister and nephews were there to help. The sun started to set behind the trees, reminding Claire it had been almost a full day since Maisie went missing. And almost a full day since they’d eaten anything.

“Why don’t we order a pizza first, and de-bug the trailer later?”

Owen smiled, but his eyes were sad. Maisie loved pizza. They had it at least once a week for the month they were together. There was only one place that would deliver to their secluded home, and they always gave a generous tip to the poor kid who had to bring them their food.

“That sounds like an excellent plan.”

They walked back to the trailer, Owen and Claire arm in arm, and tried not to worry about the pile of tasks they faced.

Saving Blue would be hard. Betraying InGen would be harder. Finding Maisie might be impossible without InGen’s help.

Even so, they would do everything to succeed in all three. They had been through so much already, including Karen who survived a nasty divorce and a newly dinosaur-filled lifestyle, and the boys who had years to recover from Jurassic World. Together, they would find Blue and Maisie.

No matter the cost.

Chapter 5

Claire pulled on her hiking boots and waited for Owen by the door. Even though they'd removed all the bugs from the trailer, Claire still hated talking in there. They had found thirteen bugs in the tiny space. Thirteen! Knowing InGen had listened to every word said in the trailer made Claire's skin crawl. She hoped they listened in on the intimate stuff, too, because at least that would be uncomfortable for them to monitor.

She also wondered how long the bugs had been there. When did InGen install them? She guessed they'd snuck in at some point while she and Owen were with their lawyer fighting for Maisie. That was the only time Claire could think of when InGen would know they were out. Unless they were doing more than listening in.

Claire couldn't stand the thought.

Owen climbed out of the small bathroom and took in Claire's outfit. She put her hands on her hips as his eyes raked her body. When he started to chuckle, she covered herself with her arms. She thought she looked good in the tank top and work-out shorts, but maybe she was wrong?

"Sorry," Owen said. "I'm not laughing at you."

"Really, because it sure feels like you are."

Owen put his hands on Claire's waist. "I was actually just thinking about the moment I fell in love with you."

Claire flushed. "What?" she gasped.

"Do you remember when we got to that cliff on the island and figured out the boys jumped?"

Claire nodded. She couldn't forget anything about Jurassic World, no matter how hard she tried.

"I was set to go on without you, but you insisted on coming along. You tied up your shirt in the front and stood kind of like you were standing before, only in heels."

"Well, when I went in to work that morning, I didn't exactly plan to be chasing a dinosaur across the island."

"True. But you worked with it. You're adaptable. And that was when I realized I loved you."

Claire wasn't sure what to say. They'd shared 'I love you's' a lot over the last month, but she hadn't stopped to consider what it meant. Had Owen really loved her for that long?

"I thought it was when I hit the Pteranodon," she said.

Owen laughed. "That was a close second."

Claire lifted herself up onto the toes of her boots and kissed Owen hard. "For me, it was that day in the van. You remember which one?"

He kissed her lips, then her cheek. "I know exactly what you're talking about."

Owen took Claire's hand and led her to the still unfinished cabin. They hadn't come up with a concrete plan yet, but they knew they had to keep InGen in the loop. The bugs were now placed throughout the cabin. Owen and Claire figured they would go a few times a day to talk about trivial things, and their plans to find Blue, so that InGen didn't know they'd found the bugs. It wasn't exactly a foolproof plan, but it was all they had.

"What do you want for breakfast?" Claire asked.

Owen shrugged. "Cereal is fine."

Cereal is what they brought to the cabin. They poured two bowls of Special K and topped them off with milk.

Owen pushed the freeze-dried strawberries around. "Who puts fruit in cereal?"

Claire rolled her eyes. "It's good, just eat it."

Sighing, Owen took a bite of his cereal and was surprised to find he actually liked the taste.

Who knew the 'healthier' cereal options could actually taste good?

Claire smirked. "I knew you'd like it."

He laughed. "You hoped I would."

Grocery shopping was hard when living in a trailer with a microscopic refrigerator. Their breakfast options would increase as soon as the cabin was finished – if it was ever finished – but for now, they had to settle for simple things like cereal.

Their earlier conversation weighed heavy on Claire's chest as she ate. "Owen?"

"Yeah?" he responded, his mouth full.

"Would we be together if it weren't for Maisie?"

Owen dropped his spoon into the milk-filled bowl, causing a spill. "How could you even ask me that?"

She sighed. "It's a valid question."

"I loved you before Maisie was in the picture. She's an added bonus, but she's not the only thing holding us together. Is she?"

"No, she's not. Not for me."

Owen stood and wrapped his arms around Claire's neck. "We keep having these same conversations over and over."

"I know, I'm sorry. I just... I need the reassurance."

He kissed the top of her head. "I'll keep reassuring you for as long as it takes."

Claire nodded and leaned back into Owen's hard chest. If someone had asked her after the disastrous first date with Owen, if she thought the two of them would be living together someday, she'd have laughed in their faces. And yet, that was exactly how things turned out.

"We should start tracking Blue today," Owen said after a few moments of silence. This was a part of their planned conversation. "InGen said they thought she was in the Southern California area. They gave me coordinates for the last time she was spotted. I figure we should start there."

"She won't be there anymore," Claire pointed out. "Especially if she was being followed. She'd have known they were onto her."

"True, but we might be able to track her movements from there."

"Pick up her scent?" Claire joked.

Owen nudged her shoulder. "Something like that. Are you ready to go?"

Owen's bowl sat unfinished and her own was mostly filled with soggy flakes and rehydrated strawberries. Neither of them had much of an appetite so long as Maisie was missing.

"Do you think Maisie is okay?" Claire asked, standing from the table.

"I have to believe she is," Owen said. "Without a ransom or any other threats, the only option is that Maisie is being held for science. They'll need her alive to run tests."

The thought of their sweet girl being tested made Owen and Claire angry, but it was reassuring at the same time. As long as whomever took Maisie still needed her, she would be alive. They just had to rescue her before her usefulness ran out.

Owen found two bugs in each of their cars, but they decided to leave them in place. Their strategy was vastly underdeveloped, but the most important thing was that InGen didn't know that Owen and Claire were onto them.

While they drove, Claire and Owen sang quietly along with the spotty radio and made small talk. It took less than thirty minutes for their GPS to bring them to a State Park entrance.

They would have to go the rest of the way on foot.

“Up here,” Owen said. “The last sighting was at the edge of the clearing.”

Claire followed Owen through the grass. It was a Summer weekday, but the field was free of visitors. The new wildlife kept people away from open areas.

Owen spotted Blue’s prints quickly, but the trail ended at a stream. There was no sign of tracks on the other shore.

“She’s a good swimmer,” Owen said, watching the flow of the slow-moving water. “I’d guess she jumped in and swam until it was safe to come out.”

“Owen,” Claire gasped.

He looked around. “What? Do you see her?”

Claire shuddered and struggle to calm her breathing. “Look,” she whispered. She pointed to a space between trees to her right.

Owen followed Claire’s finger right to a giant footprint in the mud. One far too big for a raptor.

“Is that what I think it is?” Claire asked. She grabbed Owen’s shirt in fear.

“If you think it’s a T-Rex print, then yeah, it’s what you think it is.”

They stood quietly and listened. The only sounds were rushing water and a steady breeze rustling the trees.

“I don’t think she’s here,” Owen said.

Then, of course, they heard the roar.

“Or maybe she is.”

Footsteps rushed towards them. Owen pulled Claire with him behind a bush, hoping it would hide them from the predator. Unlike Blue, the queen of the dinosaurs was behaving badly after her wild release. Unfortunately, no one had been able to catch her.

Owen carefully lifted his phone from his jeans pocket and scrolled through the contacts. Thankfully, he’d added Dr. Grant’s number from the therapist’s business card.

Dr. Grant answered on the second ring. “Hello?”

“Alan, it’s Owen,” he whispered. “We’re kind of in a situation and we need your help. Can you meet at this location? And bring tranquilizers.”

Dr. Grant didn’t bother to ask what the situation was. He took down the coordinates and promised to be there as soon as possible.

The steps got closer until Owen and Claire felt the dirt beneath their feet vibrating. Their hearts raced as they each considered their options. They could try to make a run for it, but the T-Rex could run faster than them. Hiding behind a bush didn’t seem any better. They couldn’t stay still forever.

“We have to move,” Owen concluded.

“Why would we move? She can’t see us if we don’t move?”

“She’ll smell us.”

Claire sniffed her shirt. “I don’t smell! You might smell, but I don’t!”

Owen rolled his eyes. “You smell like that vanilla lotion!”

“I thought you liked it?”

“I do, but it’s very pungent. That’s not ideal when we’re running away from Tyrannosaurs.”

“Fine, I’ll stop wearing it,” Claire said.

“I didn’t say that!” he responded. “We can talk about this later. Right now, we need to move.”

Claire didn’t argue this time. When Owen gave the signal to follow him, she crawled behind him through the dirt. It amazed her how comfortable she’d gotten with getting dirty ever since Jurassic World. Before that day, she wouldn’t be caught dead crawling through the forest. After, it became a regular part of her life. When she founded the Dinosaur Protection Group she found herself getting dirty fairly often. The people who hated what she stood for

weren't afraid to let her know. Usually, they did it by throwing mud, food, or other disgusting things at the protesters.

Owen settled against the trunk of a wide tree. He looked carefully around it, but the T-Rex was nowhere in sight. She'd stopped moving, too.

"Are we safe here?"

"Probably not, but we can't move too far. Dr. Grant won't be able to find us."

"What will we do when he gets here?" Claire asked. "Kill her?"

"You know I wouldn't do that. I can't believe you even asked."

She bit her lip. "Well, what other option do we have? Tranq her long enough to get away? Then what? She continues to terrorize the country?"

Owen shushed her. "We'll figure the rest out after, but our first priority is to subdue her. Alan should be here any minute," he whispered.

"Oh, you're on a first name basis now?"

"Yes, we are. We bonded yesterday. I'm sure he'll insist you call him Alan, too."

"I met him before, remember?" Claire pointed out. She had visited his dig site in Montana a year after the park opened. She wanted him to consult with her on Jurassic World, but he refused. He said he wasn't as bad as after the Jurassic Park incident, but he wasn't ready to be face to face with dinosaurs. She wondered how he was handling the new world. Was he doing better than she was? Claire hadn't slept much in the weeks following the Lockwood incident. Even the five years after Jurassic World were spent mostly tossing and turning until sleep dragged her under. When she did fall asleep, she was plagued by nightmares.

She was just glad she hadn't woken Owen up with her thrashing around in bed. The man slept like a rock, which was good for her. One of them had to get some sleep.

"Did he tell you to call him Alan?"

Claire couldn't remember. "I don't think so."

"Well, things are different now. Shared experiences change people."

"Changed us," she responded.

Owen didn't have a chance to say anything back because the footsteps returned, this time closer. Too close for comfort.

The T-Rex was close enough that Owen and Claire could hear her breathing. She would sniff them out soon, and they'd be in trouble. She may have saved their lives on the island, but he doubted she would be so lenient this time around. Not when she was probably struggling to find sufficient meals. Owen and Claire would have been a tasty snack.

The dinosaur sniffed the air. She must have liked – or strongly disliked – what she smelled, because she charged forward again.

Her head appeared beside the tree where Claire and Owen hid. They stood absolutely still, watching the T-Rex's eye blink close enough that Claire could hear the lid slide against her slimy eye.

Then she roared.

"Run!" Owen called. Claire took off through the forest. The trees were dense enough that they got a head start on the dinosaur.

Claire dodged behind a tree and expected to hear the thundering footsteps following her, but the woods were silent. "Did we lose her?" Claire asked.

"That's not possible," Owen said. "Where did she go?"

"You look like you could use a hand," a voice called from a few hundred feet back. Owen sighed, relieved. The T-Rex was going to find them, but now they had weapons to fend her off.

"Your timing is excellent, Dr. Grant."

Alan ran to their tree and handed Owen and Claire each a tranquilizer gun. "Sorry I couldn't get here sooner. My weapons were hidden away. Haven't had much use for them."

"You're here now, and that's what matters," Claire said.

"Claire Dearing, right?" Dr. Grant said, shaking her hand. "It's nice to see you again."

"You, too, Dr. Grant."

"Please, call me Alan," he said. Owen gave her a look which she ignored.

Owen checked around the tree again. He spotted the T-Rex a few trees away. Why wasn't she following them? "What's the plan?" he asked.

"Our only hope is to catch her off guard. We all open fire. It'll take a few of these babies to knock her out. I've got some friends coming in to help us after she's subdued."

Claire and Owen were relieved that Alan had made a plan. They were tired of coming up with things on their own. Maisie took up so much of their brains that they weren't sure they had it in them to evade the Tyrannosaurus.

"Do we have a clear shot from here, Owen?" Alan asked.

Owen peeked around the tree again, expecting to see the T-Rex in her same hiding place. Instead, he came face to face with a Tyrannosaurus only a few feet taller than him.

"What the hell?" he shouted. He immediately opened fire, knowing it would anger the mother. He had no choice, though. The young dinosaur was too close for comfort.

Alan and Claire took Owen's firing as their cue and were both shocked to find the baby instead of the mother.

"How is there a baby?" Claire screamed. The T-Rex fell to the ground after a few shots landed in her thick skin. "There's only one T-Rex!"

"On Sorna, they learned to breed on their own, but here... Wait a second, do you see that?"

Owen and Claire looked where Alan was pointing. The baby wore a collar with a B logo.

"That's Biosyn," Owen said. "I saw their logo when we were researching them yesterday. Dammit, they made a T-Rex! And released him!"

"How do you know it's a boy?"

Owen pointed, and Claire nodded. Definitely a boy.

A boy whose mother was very, very angry with them.

She charged from her position, giving the group only seconds to open fire. They shot as many rounds as they could get off. Luckily, they managed to hit the T-Rex enough times to knock her out. She landed beside the young T-Rex with a thud.

"She was protecting her baby," Claire marveled. "Not even her baby, really. They likely share no DNA. She recognized the species and... well, adopted him." The T-Rex had stopped chasing them because they were far enough away from her son. She only started her pursuit again because the baby got curious and they shot him down.

Owen was amazed that the giant creature showed such compassion for the young one. She was like a mother bear protecting her cub even though, like Claire pointed out, they weren't related.

It reminded Owen of what Claire was willing to do to get Maisie back. What he was willing to do to get her back. Owen never thought he would identify with a tyrannosaurus, but they had a surprising lot in common, apparently.

Alan pulled out his phone and dialed a number. "We're going to need two cages," he told the person on the other end. "There's a baby."

"What are you going to do with them? We can't send the baby back to the lab. Why would they release him in the first place?"

"I'd guess they heard there was a female out in the wild and they wanted to see if she would protect the baby or attack it. They're probably monitoring him."

Claire teared up. "How could they do this? What if she'd killed him?"

Owen rubbed her back. "They're safe now."

"What are you going to do with them?" she asked again.

Alan holstered his gun. "It's too dangerous for her to be here. The others, even the raptor, they're okay, but the T-Rex? She can't stay around all these people. I've arranged for her, and now the baby, to be transported to the island."

"But the island was destroyed by the Volcano. They won't survive."

"Not that island," Alan told her. "Sorna. Not all of the dinosaurs were removed for placement in the new park, and like I said, they learned to procreate. They'll survive there."

Claire didn't bother wiping at her tears. "Really? They'll be okay?"

"I promise, Claire."

She'd been promised the dinosaurs' safety before, but Eli Mills wanted to sell them.

Somehow, she knew she could trust Alan, though. He wouldn't lie to them, and he wouldn't traffic the dinosaurs.

"How will they get there?" Claire asked.

Alan smiled. "A friend of mine, her son is in the Navy now. He owes me a favor or twenty. He promised the dinosaurs safe travels to Sorna."

"Thank you," she said. She couldn't help herself – she pulled Alan into a hug.

"These dinosaurs didn't ask to be brought back. The least we can do is protect them now that they're here."

Claire still truly believed that the de-extinction of the dinosaurs was a miracle, but more and more she bought into Dr. Malcolm's ideology. Just because they could do it didn't mean they should have.

The dinosaurs slept soundly until the Navy arrived with iron cages and transport vehicles.

Claire dared to pet the baby before they loaded him up. His skin was smooth and cool, just like his adoptive mother's. She shuddered to remember the night she took blood from the T-Rex. Was that really only a month earlier? It felt like a lifetime ago. Claire unlatched the Biosyn tracker from the baby's head. He would truly be free now.

Owen, Claire, and Alan watched as the Navy towed the two dinosaurs away.

"Not exactly like their usual missions, but Charlie Degler will take good care of those animals. Don't you worry, Claire."

"Charlie Degler? Why does that name sound familiar?" Claire asked, trying to place it in her brain.

"He's Ellie Degler's son."

Claire's eyes widened. "Ellie Degler. Dr. Sattler?"

"The one and only."

Claire hadn't met Dr. Sattler, but she'd read all about her. She'd been at the original Park with Alan, but after the incident, she put some distance between herself and the dinosaurs. Claire wondered how she did it. Would Claire ever be able to do the same? She didn't think so.

"That's incredible," Owen said. "Thank her, and Charlie, for us. Please."

Alan smiled. "Will do. I'm glad you called me, Owen."

"I'm glad you showed up," he said. He shook Alan's hand and laughed. "We couldn't have done it without you."

"You have my number if you need me again," Alan told them. He shook Claire's hand as well. "For dinosaurs, for Maisie, or just to talk."

"Thank you again," Owen called. The man disappeared through the woods, leaving Owen and Claire to catch their breath.

"That was close," Owen said. Claire only nodded.

How many more times could she be almost eaten by a dinosaur before the giant creatures finally won? She knew she had to fight back and get Maisie, but how much more could she take?

Claire wasn't sure, and she hoped that after they found Blue, she could final get some peace and quiet.

At the very least, not have a dinosaur try to eat her in real life, or her dreams, for a while.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Owen couldn't sleep, so he sat on the cabin porch and stared at his lock screen. He had taken a photo of him with Maisie and Claire two weeks into their new arrangement. They were all happy, smiling broadly after Maisie's first trip to McDonald's. She'd loved the ridiculous little plastic toy she got in her happy meal. It still sat on the ledge beside her bed.

Where was she? When they finally found who took her, Owen knew he wouldn't be able to rein himself in. He was going to kill whoever took his daughter away.

Sitting at home felt so wrong. There was nothing they could be doing out in the world, but getting to be in bed when Maisie was who knows where? Owen hated that this was their life. He had to put an end to it.

While Claire tossed and turned in their bed inside the trailer, Owen made a note in his phone. It was rough, but it was a plan.

At six in the morning, after falling asleep on the unfinished wood of the cabin porch, Owen pulled splinters from his clothes and returned to the trailer. Claire was already up making coffee in their miniscule kitchen. One of the most important things in the cabin, aside from separate bedrooms for them and Maisie, was a large kitchen. Some of Lockwood's dirty money would go towards the best appliances.

"Did you sleep outside?" Claire asked.

Owen kissed her cheek. "Not on purpose."

"You know the Compsognathus could devour you as a midnight snack."

"I tossed some chicken breasts to occupy them."

Claire rolled her eyes. "You need to be more careful."

"I'm fine, Claire. See?"

Owen spun so Claire could inspect his body. Aside from wood stuck in his flannel pajama bottoms, he appeared unscathed.

"I'm just saying, I don't want anything to happen to you..."

He kissed her lips this time. "I love you."

"I love you, too." She sipped her coffee. "What were you doing out there, anyway?"

Owen held up his phone. "I made a plan. Two plans, actually. One that we'll actually follow and one we'll tell InGen about when they call."

A soft knock on the door interrupted them. Owen checked out the window to find Karen and the boys waiting to be let in.

"Good, you're up," Karen said. "We couldn't sleep, so we came by to help."

Owen and Claire had wanted to start the search alone since they knew Blue wouldn't be where she was last spotted. After the T-Rex incident, they were glad they made that choice.

"How did it go yesterday? Any sign of Blue?" Zack asked.

Owen and Claire shared a look. "No," Owen told him. "We did meet the T-Rex. And her baby."

Karen spit her coffee over the linoleum floor. "Her baby?"

Claire rubbed her sister's back. "He had a tracker. It belonged to Biosyn. With the help of Dr. Grant and the Navy, we sent the baby and the adult to Sorna."

"Oh, thank God," she said. "One less thing to worry about."

If only an ocean's worth of distance was enough for Claire to stop worrying about the T-Rex. "We have a new plan," Owen said, changing the course of the conversation. "The mom and baby actually made me think of it."

Claire, Karen, Gray, and Zack sat around the small table and waited for Owen to explain his plan. He opened up the note on his phone and skimmed the notes he made, thankful they still made sense despite being written in the middle of the night.

"The T-Rex came after us yesterday because we got too close to her child. Blue behaves the same way. Any time we were in danger on the island, she came to the rescue. When the indoraptor was attacking us at the estate, Blue was there. I think if we get close enough to her location and make her believe we're in danger, we can lure her out. Then we can get Dr. Grant to help send her to Sorna."

"Owen," Claire said. "We can't send her away!"

"It's the only way she'll be safe!" he shouted. "I don't know what they want with her, but I'd reckon it's going to be bad."

"Uncle Owen, what's stopping InGen from getting her once she's on Sorna?"

Owen knew this was a problem, but he'd considered it. "The air and water spaces surrounding both Isla Sorna and Isla Nublar have always been protected. People have gotten in before, but since Jurassic World it's been nearly impossible. Only the military can gain access. I don't think InGen will be able to get onto the island. Even if they do, they'll never be able to catch her."

The group agreed this was probably true, but Claire didn't like the idea. "Why can't we keep Blue here, with us?"

"She needs to be free to roam around as much as she wants. She'll get that on the island. If she's here, I'll constantly be wondering if InGen is lurking in the shadows ready to capture her."

Claire nodded. Owen loved that dinosaur so much that he was willing to part with her so she'd be safe. Isn't that what Claire wanted to do as soon as Maisie was safe? How could she admonish Owen for doing it with Blue?

She took Owen's hand. "We'll figure it out. Let's focus on finding her first."

Owen explained the rest of the actual plan to the crew over coffee. It would require most of the day, and they had to get InGen off their trail, so they would start the real plan tomorrow, after they exhausted the InGen friendly version.

After they had settled what would actually happen with Blue, Owen, Claire, Karen, and the boys settled into the cabin for cereal and fake discussion. They talked about Zack's college and Karen's promotion at work. They expressed how much they all missed Maisie and wanted her back. Finally, Owen brought up the second note on his phone and told them their fake plan.

"When we were in the woods yesterday, we saw Blue's prints." That part wasn't a lie, at least. "She got into the water, but I know her. I can track where she would have gotten out. I'd guess she stayed in the state park because there's tons of food and a fresh water source. She's smart, so she'd want to be somewhere that has everything she needs. She'd also have a shelter. Once we find that, we'll corner her and shoot her with one of these darts from InGen. Karen, you'll have to stay the farthest away. Blue knows our scents, but she won't know yours. You might scare her off."

"Got it," Karen said. Claire squeezed her hand. She knew her sister would rather stay home than confront the dinosaurs that almost took her children and Claire, but Karen wanted to save Maisie as much as the others. Capturing Blue was a necessary evil to succeed.

"As soon as Blue is subdued, we'll call InGen and turn her over in exchange for Maisie's

location.”

Everyone nodded, knowing they wouldn’t be turning Blue over. In fact, Owen’s method probably wouldn’t lead them to Blue. She would never let herself be cornered.

“When do we start?” Zack asked. They agreed he would be the one to bring this up.

Owen checked his watch even though they’d rehearsed the answer. “It’ll have to be after dark. Raptors like to hunt at night, and then she’ll go back to her shelter for eating and resting. We’ll start around three in the morning. Does that work?”

“We’ll be there,” Zack answered.

They ate and talked more to ensure InGen got an earful. As expected, Owen’s phone rang less than ten minutes after he’d laid out the ‘plan.’

“Hello?” he answered.

“Mr. Grady, how is your search going?”

Owen bit back a laugh. “We ran into some trouble yesterday, but we finally have a solid plan. We’ll track Blue while she’s hunting and follow her to her lair where we’ll subdue her for your guys.”

“Excellent!” Dr. Wu responded. “When do you expect to have her?”

“Tomorrow morning.”

“Ahead of schedule! I knew you were the people for the job. Call as soon as the raptor is out and we’ll bring you Maisie’s location.”

“See you tomorrow, then,” Owen said. He hung up angrily, though pressing a button on his cell phone wasn’t nearly as satisfying as throwing down the receiver used to be.

The crew returned to the trailer where they could speak freely, but they were all exhausted and knew they needed to rest up. Karen took the boys home and told her sister and Owen to try and sleep. They were going to have a long night, and probably an even longer day, after they found Blue.

With everyone gone, Claire held up a card to Owen. “What is this?” she asked.

Owen didn’t have to study the card for long to know it was the therapist Dr. Grant recommended. “She’s apparently a genius,” Owen explained. “Alan suggested we consider going to see her.”

“I think it’s a good idea.”

“You do?” Owen asked. Claire had been the first to stop going to therapy in the five years between Jurassic World and the volcano’s eruption. He assumed it would be him trying to convince her, not the other way around.

“I do. So I made us an emergency appointment. We have to be there in an hour.”

Owen was surprised but knew there was no arguing with Claire once she made up her mind. He showered first then waited for Claire to be ready. Once she was, they climbed silently into her car. Neither knew what to say. They both hoped they’d find their words before the doctor called them in.

They both hoped seeing a therapist would stop the nightmares, but they knew that part was futile. Until Maisie was home, neither of them would have a good night’s sleep.

But therapy was a step in the right direction.

The room was dark. So dark that Maisie couldn’t even see her fingers when she held them within inches of her face. Where was she?

Her heart rate spiked, causing a machine to beep erratically. Maisie tried to calm herself, knowing the beeping would summon someone in a lab coat and she’d be plunged out of consciousness again, but she couldn’t.

“Miss Lockwood,” a robotic voice said. Fluorescent lights suddenly lit up the room, burning

Maisie's eyes. "We advise you not to struggle."

Maisie didn't know she was struggling until she felt a pinch where cold gloves held her arm. Sticky red liquid flowed from the needle into a bag hung beside the bed. Or was it the other way around?

"What are you doing to me?" Maisie cried, her voice hoarse. She tried to free herself again from the needle, but the man stopped her with restraints around both her wrists.

"We are simply finding your true potential, Miss Lockwood. You should be happy to be a part of what will be the New World."

Maisie sobbed as she tried and failed to escape her cuffs. "I don't want this! You can't test me. I'm not some science experiment!"

The man laughed. Even that sounded artificial, though Maisie knew he was human. She could see it in his cold eyes. Human, but uncaring. He reminded her of Eli Mills. She'd never liked him, and it turned out she was right to distrust him. She trusted her instincts when it came to the man before her, too.

"You already were a science experiment, Miss Lockwood."

She knew that was true. She hated her grandfather for it, but she had accepted it. Claire and Owen loved her even though she was a monster like the dinosaurs who attacked them!

Claire and Owen. How long had it been since she'd last seen them? They were likely worried sick about her! She knew they would come for her. They wouldn't let these monsters turn her into a lab rat.

That thought settled Maisie. The beeping slowed to a steady pace then stopped altogether.

Maisie guessed it only went off when her heart was too fast or too slow.

The quiet was eerie. She longed to work herself up again if only for the comfort of sound.

"Good girl, Miss Lockwood. It won't be much longer now. You have been an excellent patient. Your body is reacting better than we expected."

What did that mean? Maisie tried to ask the robot man but she lost her words. Her mind was clouding over and her body ceased to move.

It was only then that Maisie noticed another needle in her arm, this one connected to a syringe plunged deep. A sedative, she thought. She'd learned a lot about medicine from the books at her grandfather's estate.

Not enough, though, to know what the blood bag connected to her arm was doing, and how important it was for her to stop it.

If only she weren't falling into yet another deep, sedative induced sleep. She might have been able to figure it out before it was too late.

Chapter End Notes

I want to thank everyone who has been reading this story thus far! The arc I had planned for this story is nearly over (It'll be 10 chapters + an epilogue), but I'm so in love with this world and these characters that I already have a Part Two planned. I'm also working on a prequel to Jurassic World that explores Owen's origins. I'm so fascinated with his character that I wanted to give him a bit of a backstory that I think works for who he is in the movies, but especially for who he is in my series.

Thanks again, everyone. I love you all!

Chapter 7

Owen had been almost excited about the therapy session until they sat in silence for ten minutes. The doctor watched them, waiting for them to talk. Wasn't she supposed to be asking questions?

"This is ridiculous," Owen said. He stood from his spot on the couch and marched for the door. "We should be out there finding our daughter, not waiting for some crackpot to tell us what we already know."

"Owen!" Claire gasped. To Dr. Anderson, she said, "I'm so sorry."

Dr. Anderson shrugged. "I've been called far worse. Why don't you sit back down, Owen. We still have almost an hour left together."

He laughed bitterly. "I'm not going to sit here for another hour while you stare at us. Can you read minds? I doubt it. Alan was wrong about you. You're nothing but a money-hungry..."

"Owen," Claire warned. "Please, just sit back down."

Owen refused, but he didn't walk out of the dimly lit room, either. He was grateful for the natural light streaming from the windows. His old therapist, the one he saw right after Jurassic World, had the worst lights. Owen would often tear up even when he was talking about something happy. The brightness hurt his eyes. It was part of the reason he stopped going. That, and he figured he was screwed up for life after what he saw. No doctor could fix him.

"What brought you here today?" Dr. Anderson asked. It was her first question in over five minutes. The initial questions were like those games teachers force students to play on the first day. Getting To Know You Questions. Owen hated those kinds of questions.

"Dr. Alan Grant recommended you to us," Claire said when Owen ignored the doctor. "He said you helped him and his friend a lot after Jurassic Park."

"Why now?" the doctor asked. "It's been more than five years since the Jurassic World incident, and you've both been to other practices. What changed?"

Claire hoped Owen would jump in, but he remained silent. His eyes followed a bird out the window. No, Claire realized, not a bird. It was a Pteranodon. They were among the more dangerous new additions to North American wildlife. Injuries were reported up and down the West Coast.

"Did you hear about what happened with Lockwood's estate?" Claire asked. It was a silly question. Everyone knew what happened that night. The evidence was outside their windows. Dr. Anderson nodded politely. "I did. The two of you were there?"

"We were," Claire told her. "But that wasn't... that's not why I wanted to come here today."

If Owen was surprised, he didn't show it. Claire had said they were coming to work through what happened a month ago, and years ago, but there was more to it than that.

The therapist readied her pen over a mostly blank sheet of paper. "So what made you come here, Claire?"

A stray tear fell from Claire's eye. She didn't want to admit the truth. Would the doctor think she was a horrible person – a horrible mother?

Claire took a breath. It didn't matter what this woman thought of her. When Claire found the therapist's card in Owen's things, she took it as a sign. She needed someone to talk to.

Someone other than Owen, who got it, but didn't get it at the same time. He was fearless, sleeping through the night, able to focus. Claire felt like she was drowning and no one would

throw her a lifesaver.

"Yesterday, we found the T-Rex," Claire began. "She... she was with a baby that another lab cooked up. We got too close to the young boy, so the mother... chased us. No one was hurt, but... it stirred things up again. I haven't had a full night's sleep since before Jurassic World. I have these nightmares of dinosaurs chasing me... and then yesterday, one of those nightmares came true again. I don't know what to do, I just want it to stop..."

She sobbed into her hands. It was more than she'd told anyone, not even her last therapist. Something about Dr. Anderson made Claire want to open up.

Just allowing the words to escape her lips made Claire feel better. She wasn't fixed, but she felt like she could be someday. With help.

Owen stared at Claire's heaving figure. How did he not know she was struggling? She never woke him up or showed her fears on her face. Owen felt like an idiot for thinking it was only him who still had Jurassic nightmares.

He sat down on the couch and rubbed Claire's back. "I feel the same way," he told both her and the doctor. "I usually wake up a few times feeling paralyzed. Sometimes, when it's really bad, I can't move but I'm still in the nightmare. The indoraptor is attacking me, or Claire, or Maisie, and there's nothing I can do about it..."

Claire looked up at Owen, shocked. "I didn't know you were having dreams, too."

"I didn't want to worry you," Owen said. "I thought you were sleeping through the night. If I'd known..."

She leaned into his shoulder and cried some more. How could a couple be so terrible at communication? They would never last if they couldn't talk to each other. Claire added their lack of communication skills to her growing list of reasons she should leave when Maisie is found safe. How is she supposed to be a good mother when she can't even deal with her own demons? Maisie will have problems of her own, especially after this week. Owen will be better equipped to handle it on his own, without having to worry about Claire, too.

"This is good," Dr. Anderson said. She handed them both tissues from a box and waited quietly while they cleaned up their faces. Neither stopped crying, but they could see the doctor without tears clouding their vision. "Let's go back to the T-Rex, Claire. What was going through your mind when you saw it in the wild?"

Claire blinked. She didn't want to think about it, but she had to. "I was thinking that it was happening again. We were back on the island. Back on the estate. We would never truly be safe."

"That's it, Claire," the doctor said. She discarded her pen and paper and sat forward in her chair. Claire's last therapist didn't take notes at all, and Claire preferred it this way. She felt like she had the therapist's full attention. "You crave safety. Have you felt safe since leaving Jurassic World?"

Had she? She ran through the years after they escaped the park. Only a few moments of real, true safety popped up. "When Owen and I first left the park, I felt safe then. And when we were driving around in his van. I always felt safe in the Dino Group headquarters. People sometimes protested us and threw things at us or threatened us, but they never scared me. I was in control there."

Dr. Anderson nodded quickly. "You feel safe with Owen, and you feel safe when you're in control."

Claire hadn't realized how true that was until the doctor said it out loud. Owen did make her feel safe. And yet the urge to flee was still strong. "I guess so."

"I don't want to encourage an unhealthy attachment," Dr. Anderson said. "You can't always depend on someone else to keep you safe. From what I've read about you, you're good at

protecting yourself. You just need to feel in control. I think you need to find a hobby that allows you full control over everything. Maybe a craft or cooking? Something that will occupy some of your time. It will help anchor you, and we can work up to you feeling safe even when you're not totally in control."

Claire wasn't sure she believed that was possible, but this was more than her old therapist ever did. She'd never been given therapy homework before.

"Now, Owen," Dr. Anderson said, shifting her body towards Owen. "In your nightmares, someone is in danger and you're unable to save them, is that correct?"

Owen nodded. The worst ones were when Claire or Maisie were being hauled away by carnivores and he was forced to watch. He could handle his own life being in danger, but when it came to Claire and Maisie, he couldn't bare to watch them suffer.

"You want to save everyone. You, like Claire, like to be in control. You like the responsibility. That can be dangerous, though, when things go wrong. I want you to try and take a step back. Let Claire be in the lead for a while. You'll see that she can handle herself, and it will help ease your mind."

That, Owen could do. He had seen Claire in action on the island – both times – and in the estate. Over the last month, he'd let himself forget how strong she was. She saved his life as many times as he saved hers. He had to trust that she would keep herself safe. He couldn't put that much pressure on himself.

"Thank you, doctor," Owen said.

Dr. Anderson checked her watch. "We made a lot of progress today, but our time is up. I think we should start with weekly sessions and keep working on the underlying issues that are causing your fear and lack of sleep. Are Wednesdays good for you?"

Being tied to Jurassic World made it hard for either of them to find a job, so they were free pretty much twenty-four/seven. The only worry was Maisie. They still had to find her.

"Wednesdays work," Claire said. "We'll see you next week."

"Same time," Dr. Anderson told them. "I'll see you next week. And good luck with your search for Maisie."

They both smiled sadly. It felt like their search was going nowhere. Claire was angry that movies and TV shows made kidnappings look so... intense. It wasn't like that with Maisie. She knew that was in part because Maisie wasn't a normal child, but she still deserved to be found!

Blue would save them. Once they found Blue, they would be one step closer to finding Maisie. Their plan had to work. And then, once it did, Claire would decide what her next step would be.

"We'll find her," Owen said, reading Claire's mind.

Claire wiped at a stray tear. "Maisie is the only good thing that came out of all this," she said. "We have to find her."

Owen agreed, but he didn't like the darkness behind Claire's eyes. What was she thinking about? He flashed back to when Maisie first disappeared. Claire carried a burden bigger than either of them could handle. She felt responsible for Jurassic World, the estate, and now Maisie. He couldn't fix the first two, but he could help with the last.

He took Claire's hand. "Tonight, we put our plan into action. Maisie will be back home with us soon. I promise."

Claire wished Owen wouldn't make promises when they both knew it would be hard to keep. Still, she wanted so badly to believe him that she did. It was the only thing holding her together.

By that time the next day, they would have Blue. Maisie wouldn't be long after.

Claire thought if she kept telling herself that over and over, she might eventually believe it was true.

Only time would tell if it worked.

Chapter 8

Owen hadn't been lying when he told Dr. Wu they were starting their plan in the middle of the night. It wasn't the same plan InGen heard over the bugs, but it started at the same time. The crew napped on and off all day as best they could. After their therapy session, Owen and Claire were pretty wired, but they knew they had to sleep if they wanted to find Blue and Maisie. They managed to get a few hours of fitful sleep.

Karen and the boys arrived at the trailer at two in the morning as agreed upon. The five of them were groggy, but the adrenaline would wake them up completely soon enough.

"Are we ready?" Claire asked. Like Dr. Anderson suggested, Owen put her in charge of Operation Find Blue. The velociraptor would likely only come to Owen, but Claire was calling the shots. Owen felt a small amount of relief just watching Claire ask the simple question.

The boys nodded. Karen looked hesitant, but the sight of Maisie's empty corner of the trailer pushed her over the edge. "Let's do this," she said.

Claire drove the van back to the state park. They wore black burglary clothes without the face masks so that they'd blend in with the darkness of the night. Most dinosaurs had incredible senses of smell, so the visual camouflage would only go so far, but it made them all feel better to have a level of protection.

"Here we are," Claire said when she parked in the same lot she'd been in with Owen the day before. She stared at the forest in front of her half expecting the t-rex to come running towards them and finish off what she started.

The forest remained still.

After their therapy session, Owen had a better understanding of the crippling fear plaguing his girlfriend. He sensed her apprehension looking at the forest and squeezed her arm. "The t-rex is gone," he reminded her. "The most dangerous thing in the woods right now is Blue and she would never hurt you."

Claire hoped he was right. Would Blue sense the harm Claire had done to Owen and Maisie and come after her for it? A part of Claire wanted the attack if only to prove to herself and everyone else what a burden Claire was.

"Everyone remembers the plan?" Claire asked as she exited the van quietly. She couldn't let her fear stop her from leading the team. They were counting on her.

"Got it, Aunt Claire," Zack said. He held up the backpack of supplies he brought. Gray and Owen had identical ones while Karen was to stay with the van. They had Army-surplus grade walkie-talkies in case InGen – or Biosyn – decided to show up. Karen was the lookout and the getaway driver.

"Let's fall out, then. Owen, you take the lead. You'll be able to track Blue's most likely location."

Owen nodded and headed for the woods. He had to force himself not to give orders and take control. Claire could handle it. He knew she could.

They arrived at the part of the stream where Blue's footprints ended. Owen held up a fist to stop the group.

"What do you see?" Claire asked in a harsh whisper. Owen nearly laughed. The woman was terrible at whispering. He'd noticed it on the island and at the estate.

"We need to follow the stream against the current. That's where she would have gone if she

were in danger.”

“Upstream we go, then,” Claire said. Owen continued on, following the flow of the river. He spent enough time with Blue from the time she was born to the incident on Jurassic World to know her instincts. He held a degree in animal behavior that helped him understand the decisions creatures make, especially in danger.

“Are you okay, Aunt Claire?” Zack asked. Claire’s face had become paler the longer they stayed in the forest. Owen’s reassurances helped, but not enough. She still expected the t-rex, or Blue, to jump out and attack her.

Claire shook her head. “Not really. I... I haven’t been totally okay since Jurassic World.”

Zack patted her back. “Neither have I. Gray, too.”

“Did you see someone, when you got back?”

“Absolutely,” Zack told her. “We couldn’t have handled it if we didn’t. I stopped going last year and Gray still sees a therapist once a month.”

Claire wanted to feel better that she wasn’t the only one still suffering, but she only felt worse. It was her fault that Zack and Gray had to see therapists. She added that to her long list of reasons she deserved to be punished.

“Gray mostly goes for other things, but he told me he talks about the dinosaurs a lot. You know he still collects fossils and figurines? The whole thing on the island didn’t change his mind about dinosaurs.”

“It didn’t!” Gray added. “They were just doing what their instincts told them to do. Kind of like what we do every day, or what we’re expecting Blue to do.”

Claire envied his resilience. She still believed in the miracle of the dinosaur, but her desire to be near them waned. She would gladly observe them from afar, especially the skeletal versions, but being in a forest teaming with the creatures caused her heart to race and her palms to sweat. She would have to bring that up in therapy next week.

“I still get nightmares sometimes,” Zack continued. “Not as often as that first year, but every once in a while. I don’t know if they’ll ever go away completely.”

The thought terrified Claire. Would she be scared for the rest of her life? She didn’t want that.

“This can’t be helping,” Claire said. “Being out here, looking for Blue. Why are you doing it?”

Zack looked confused. “Why wouldn’t I? Why wouldn’t we? We love Maisie. Blue saved us on the island. We would do anything to help them both.”

Gray nodded in agreement. Claire stopped to scoop both of them in her arms. “Thank you, boys.”

They didn’t know what they did, but they hugged their aunt tightly. The human contact felt good for all of them.

Owen heard the group stop and glanced back. He had been so focused on tracking Blue that their conversation didn’t register. Were they okay?

There wasn’t time to ask. He’d found Blue’s tracks again, on the other side of the stream. It only took a mile of walking to find where she exited the water.

“Here,” Owen said. “Across the stream. Blue got out there. No one has tracked her since then, so her shelter is likely in this area.”

“Let’s cross the stream, then,” Claire suggested, attempting to stay in control, despite the fact that Owen was more experienced and knew Blue better. She plunged first into the frigid water, thankful for her rain boots. All four of them wore water safe footwear for that reason. Across the stream, Claire saw Blue’s footprints clear as day. The dinosaur was within a few miles. The thought both excited and terrified her.

“If we do it here, she’ll find us. We’re close enough.”

“Are you sure?” Claire asked. She wasn’t sure herself. Perhaps their plan was a bad idea... “Positive,” Owen said, pulling off his backpack. Gray and Zack did the same. Reluctantly, Claire followed suit.

They slowly put on the thick safety pants and jackets they had purchased at a military store. The clothing would protect them from the inevitable attack they were about to bring on.

This part of the plan had, ridiculously, been Claire’s idea. After the morning session, she went over their idea in her head and realized Blue wouldn’t fall for fake danger. They had to be in real danger in order to lure the dinosaur out.

“Is everyone protected?” she asked as quietly as she could. She checked her nephews’ gear and they looked safe. Would it be enough to fend off the small dinosaurs they were about to attract? She could only hope. “Okay, she said. Let’s do this.”

Before she could change her mind, Claire opened the scent-proof container in the bottom of her backpack and pulled out slimy raw chicken breast. It was the same food they kept on hand to feed the compys on their land. The plan was to draw the compys in, let them attack, and hope Blue would hear their fear and come to the rescue.

The small dinosaurs arrived almost instantly. Claire’s hand shook as she hand-fed the creatures. Zack, Gray, and Owen did the same.

It was all calm until Gray ran out of chicken. He had fed his group of dinosaurs too quickly.

“No!” he screamed. Six of the Compsognathus lunged at him. In his surprise, Gray stepped back. He tripped on a rock and fell to the forest floor. More dinosaurs tackled him, searching for food.

Claire sprung into action. This was not supposed to happen; no one was supposed to actually get hurt.

“Help me!” Gray screamed. “Get them off!”

Claire used her backpack to swing at the creatures while Zack and Owen attempted to lure them away. For every one dinosaur Claire knocked out, two more would jump on the struggling boy.

“Gray, just hang in there,” Claire told him. “I won’t let them hurt you.”

“Get them off!” he repeated. It didn’t look like they were biting him, just trying to find where he kept the chicken hidden. It wouldn’t be long before they realized he didn’t have any more food and started attacking more aggressively.

A scream from behind them brought everyone to a halt.

Claire nearly cried from happiness. She would recognize that scream anywhere.

Blue bounded from her hiding spot in the trees and attacked the Compsognathus that were on top of Gray. She was careful never to hurt the young boy. Owen had been right, she recognized them!

At the sight of the giant velociraptor, most of the small dinosaurs fled. Blue chomped down on the last few. The six of them were finally alone, and safe. With Blue around, Claire knew no other dinosaurs would mess with them.

Claire, Owen, and Zack collapsed to the floor beside Gray. In tears, Claire asked if he was okay while checking his body for injuries. His protective gear was tattered and his face had a few scratches, but he looked otherwise unharmed.

“I’m okay,” Gray finally said, his voice shaking. “I’m okay.”

In his face, Owen saw the same fear he felt in himself. Gray might be okay physically, but mentally, this would take a toll.

“Good thing I’m still in therapy,” Gray added, hoping to make everyone laugh. No one did.

“Thanks, Blue,” Owen said. The velociraptor accepted his touch gratefully. She nudged at his side, then pointed behind her. “I’m sorry, Blue. We can’t let you roam around. There’s a safe

place for you to go. Dr. Grant is going to help..."

Blue repeated the motion more frantically this time. Her darting eyes met Claire, Zack, and the now-standing Gray.

"Blue, this won't hurt," Owen said. He reached into his backpack slowly to retrieve his gun. Blue continued to nudge him. She started running a few paces away, looking back, and returning to their circle, only to repeat the movement again.

"Owen, stop!" Claire shouted. "Don't shoot her!"

"We talked about this," he said.

She put a hand on his shoulder. "No, watch."

He did as Claire told him. He'd barely been paying attention to Blue's frantic behavior, but now he focused on it. What was she doing?

"Owen, she wants us to follow her," Claire said. "She wants to lead us to something."

He looked confused. "What could she possibly want to show us?"

"I don't know," Claire admitted. "But we have to follow her."

"Let's go," Zack said. Gray steeled himself beside his brother.

Claire admired their bravery, but they couldn't come. She wouldn't be able to focus on anything if they were in danger. "Boys, you need to go back to your mom and tell her what happened. We'll keep the lines open and our GPS trackers on. As soon as we know where Blue wants us to go, we'll call you."

The boys hesitated, but finally agreed. Claire refused to leave until the boys were out of sight.

Blue continued her attempt at getting Owen to follow her.

"Okay, Blue," Claire said when the boys were gone. "What do you want to show us?"

Blue made a low sound and trotted in the direction she had come from. Claire and Owen hoisted their backpacks onto their shoulders and followed the dinosaur.

Neither had any idea where they were going, but they trusted Blue. She was on their side. And she was about to take them somewhere they never could have expected.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

Sorry it's taken so long for me to update! I actually got promoted to Junior Literary Agent at work in the time between chapters, so I've been insanely busy. Don't worry, though - this story is still important to me! I've finished writing the main story and am working on the epilogue and the sequel as we speak. I'll update more often, promise!

Maisie struggled to pull herself from the drug-induced coma. She focused on the faint beeping coming from her heart monitor until it got louder and louder. Finally, her eyes opened and she could make out the harshly-lit hospital room.

Unlike last time, Maisie kept her heart steady. It wasn't an easy feat for a terrified little girl, but she knew if the machine started to beep erratically, the scientist-doctors would come back.

She shifted her arm and felt the pinch of a needle. A thick, red liquid flowed into her arm. She knew for sure that she was on the receiving end this time. She didn't know how, but she could just tell.

What are they doing to me? She muttered to herself. Why did I need more blood?

Maisie searched the bag for answers, but she moved too far and the needle came loose. A frantic alarm sounded and within seconds she was surrounded by nurses in white coats.

"We need the transfusion to complete," one said, re-inserting the needle. "We don't have much time left."

A familiar voice responded, but she couldn't quite place him. "We'll get it done. Tomorrow, Owen and Claire will bring us Blue, and we'll send them on a wild goose chase for Maisie. It'll buy us enough time."

At the mention of her parents, Maisie began to cry. Were they even looking for her? She knew they had to be. They wouldn't leave her in the cold, windowless room forever. What was taking so long, though? Why did the crazy scientist want Blue? Would Owen really give up his beloved dinosaur to find Maisie?

The little girl knew he would. Owen loved her. But Maisie also knew that Owen would do whatever it took to save both her and Blue. She only hoped he could come up with a plan soon.

A dark-skinned nurse towered over Maisie with a strange-looking smile. "I'm sorry, sweetheart, but we need you to sleep just a while longer. Soon it'll all make sense."

Maisie doubted it would ever make sense, but she couldn't fight the anesthesia being pumped into her veins. The only comfort as she fell asleep was that Owen and Claire were searching for Blue, which meant they would be searching for Maisie, too. She was sure that her parents would find her, she just hoped it wouldn't be too late.

Claire struggled to keep up with the two-legged carnivore. Over the last few months, Blue had learned the forest inside and out. She was able to dodge trees and holes in the ground

gracefully, but Claire and Owen weren't so lucky.

"Shit," Claire screamed, her ankle twisting in yet another hole. Her adrenaline kept her from feeling the pain too strongly, but she knew it would be excruciating when it was all over.

Blue slowed when she heard Claire fall. She nuzzled Claire's shoulder, urging the woman to stand and follow her. Whatever Blue wanted Claire and Owen to see, it was important.

"You okay?" Owen asked, offering Claire a hand. She accepted it and got back to her feet.

"I'm fine. We have to keep going."

Claire started forward with only a slight limp. Blue trotted ahead, but this time at a much slower speed. The dinosaur's intuition was incredible. She knew that Claire was struggling to keep up, so she adjusted her speed. How much of that was Blue, and how much was Owen's training? Claire knew that Owen blamed himself for the indoraptor because of his work with Blue, specifically, but Claire was grateful that he raised such an incredible dinosaur. Blue had saved their lives multiple times, and who knew what she was trying to show them now.

"How much farther?" Claire asked Owen, her breath coming out in ragged puffs. Her trips to the gym did nothing to prepare her for a ten-mile chase through varying terrain. Even Owen, who maintained his former-army physique quite well, was struggling to catch his breath.

"I don't know," Owen panted. "I don't even know where we are anymore. Is this still State Park territory?"

Claire couldn't be sure, but it didn't seem like it. The Park was well maintained and carefully marked with appropriate trails. Claire hadn't seen one of these signs in a few miles. "Where is she taking us?"

"I wish I knew," Owen responded. "I just hope we get there soon."

Zack and Grey found their mother worrying in the van. Her face went dark when she saw her son's scratched face, and darker when she realized the boys were alone.

"Where are Claire and Owen?" she cried.

Zack put steady hands on his mother's shoulders. "They're okay," he promised. "Blue found us, and she saved Grey's life. Then she started acting like Lassie and begged Claire and Owen to follow. Claire sent us to find you, but their GPS trackers are on."

Karen raced to the van and pulled out her computer. "Where are they headed?"

Grey keyed in the codes for Owen and Claire's tracking devices and the three of them looked at the screen.

"Where are they going? They're like fifteen miles away from where we saw them."

Karen studied the map carefully, her face falling as soon as she made the connection. "Shit," she said. "Get in, boys. I know where Blue is taking them."

"Where?" Zack asked. Karen didn't answer. She couldn't. The boys would have to see for themselves.

Blue's steps slowed as they neared a clearing. She purred back at them, and Owen and Claire assumed she meant for them to keep quiet. She took a few more paces forward and pushed aside a tree branch, revealing their location.

Blue had led them to InGen.

"Why did you bring us here?" Claire asked, wishing Owen had taught the dinosaurs to speak. Blue nudged Claire's stomach and motioned towards Owen.

"What is she doing? What is she trying to tell us?"

Owen watched as Blue repeated the gesture desperately. Finally, it clicked.

"Maisie?" he said. "Is Maisie in there?"

The dinosaur recognized the young girl's name and started to jump and scratch her feet in the

rocks. She had led Owen and Claire to their daughter.

“Those sons of bitches,” Claire screamed. “They lied to us!”

Owen pulled her back before she could storm onto InGen’s property. “They did, and we’ll get Maisie back, but we can’t just walk in the front door. They think we’re out tracking Blue for them, remember?”

The sun started to rise behind the InGen headquarters. It would have been a beautiful sight if it weren’t for the awfulness of the company inside.

“Claire?” a whispered yell came from Owen and Claire’s left. “Owen?”

“In here,” Owen whispered back.

A few beats later, Karen, Zack, and Grey stood in front of them, shielded by the brush. “We followed your GPS trackers here. Why would Blue bring you to InGen?” Zack said.

“Because InGen has Maisie.”

The three newcomers gasped. “You can’t be serious,” Karen said, her face flushed. She looked as ready as Claire to take on the entire corporation with her fists. “We have to get her back.”

“And we will,” Owen promised. “But first, we need a plan.”

Owen looked at Claire, whose eyes stayed trained on the warehouse ahead of them. “I know what to do,” she said.

Owen wasn’t surprised. It was Claire’s operation, and she was going to lead them right back to their daughter.

“We’re all ears,” Zack said.

Claire leaned forward and the others joined her huddle. “Okay, here’s how it’s going to work...”

Chapter 10

Owen hid behind his designated tree, ready to go on Claire's signal. It was incredible how Claire could come up with a plan despite her anger. That was likely why she did so well managing Jurassic World. She was quick on her feet, and good under pressure. He just hoped Claire's plan worked. Owen didn't think he or his girlfriend could handle it if they failed.

"On my mark," Claire whisper yelled. Owen passed the sentiment on to the boys who hid behind the next two trees down. Their mother was the lookout.

"One, two..." Claire paused a few extra beats before darting out from behind her tree.

"Three!"

InGen was surrounded by armed guards, but they didn't dare shoot. That was one of the many assumptions Owen had made. The guards knew that Owen and Claire were InGen's only hope at finding Blue, so they weren't allowed to shoot.

Claire walked casually towards the guards despite her hasty exit from the tree line. She approached a side entrance that they had spotted doing recon. Two guards stood outside. Both were taller than Claire, one wide with muscle and the other lanky and thin. Owen watched Claire hand for the signal and tamped down any lingering worry he had about her. This would only work if he was calm and focused, which he couldn't do if he was scared that his girlfriend was in danger. Claire was very capable of taking care of herself. She'd proven that on more than one occasion.

The red-headed woman's voice carried across the open grass and into the trees where Owen hid. "Hey, boys. I need to speak with the good doctor."

"Not a chance, pretty lady."

Owen winced. Calling Claire 'pretty lady' was a terrible mistake. Her goal was to use the low-dose tranquilizer darts Owen had stored in the van, but if something went awry, Claire was prepared to use other methods. She and Owen didn't spar in their front yard for no reason.

"Come on, fellas. You can let this pretty lady in, can't ya?"

"Sorry, ma'am," a different guard said. "We're under strict orders not to allow you inside. Straight from the mouth of Dr. Wu."

Claire clenched her fist behind her back. It was almost go-time.

"I'm asking nicely."

The lanky guard laughed. "I really wish we could help you, but we just can't. You can try going around front and checking in at the desk."

"Such a shame, boys. I'd hoped we could do this the easy way."

Claire took one step back and the guards relaxed. They were too stupid to be afraid of a small red head. That was their second mistake. Owen was glad he wasn't those guards.

As soon as the men let down their defenses, Claire pivoted on her left foot and swung her right up and around, hitting the larger man square in the jaw. He stumbled, but didn't fall over.

Tall and lanky sprang into action, attempting to point his long gun at the moving woman. He was clearly fresh out of training and no idea what to do should someone actually try to break in. That was good – InGen wasn't expecting them.

And, thanks to Zack and Grey's computer expertise, InGen didn't see them coming, either.

Their surveillance cameras ran on a constant loop to protect the soon-to-be intruders.

Claire laughed at the younger guard's attempts. "Really?" Her right fist slammed into his face. He crumpled to the ground in a solid heap. One down, one to go.

"Your turn, buddy. And by the way: I hate being called a pretty lady. I'm so much more than that!"

She definitely was. Claire ducked beneath the large guard's punch and rolled behind him. Laying on her back, she kicked the back of his knees, causing him to fall. He reached for his gun, but Claire was much faster. Her boot dug into the back of the guard's neck.

"Honestly, you should have just let me in."

Claire took a dart from her pocket and released the safety tip. Before the guard could make another move, she stuck the needle point into his neck. Within seconds, the man was fast asleep. The tranq would only last an hour or so, and the other guard would likely wake up first. They didn't have much time.

Claire moved her fingers into the OK symbol. It was simple and a bit cliché, but it worked.

Owen, Zack, and Grey jogged across the open field to where Claire waited for them.

"Easy, peasy," she said with a grin. Owen couldn't help it – he pulled her up against his chest and kissed her hard. Watching her take out those guards was hot.

Zack tapped Owen's shoulder. "Okay first of all, gross. Second, we really need to go before anyone comes to check on these guys."

Owen released Claire and she straightened up her shirt. It was caked with mud, torn from tree branches, and clung to her sweat-soaked skin, but Owen didn't care. She looked insanely beautiful no matter what she wore.

Zack and Grey made quick work of stripping the guards down to their skivvies and putting on the uniforms. Luckily, both boys were tall, so the clothes fit okay. Zack was engulfed in the larger man's outfit, but not so much so that he looked ridiculous. Owen would have to ask Zack what his workout routine was. The kid had gained some muscle definition over the years. Not that Owen really needed a new workout, but it never hurt to try new things. With dinosaurs on the loose, strength and agility were more important than ever.

Once the boys were dressed, they used the guard's keycards to enter the building. The light blinked green and the doors unlocked. The foursome headed inside, watching their backs as they moved.

"We need to find the main security office," Zack whispered. "I can find where they're holding Maisie that way."

"Down this hallway, right, third left, right side."

No one gave Grey's instructions a second thought. He memorized directions the way he memorized dinosaur facts. They had seen the InGen blueprints for a split second before putting the plan in motion, and Grey was able to figure out where they would have to go. That was why he was with them and not outside with his mother.

Zack and Grey went ahead to scout each hallway. It wasn't likely that the two boys were on InGen's radar, so they could blend in as security better than Claire and Owen. Their faces were probably plastered on the break room wall.

Only one person had to be tranqed during their journey to the control room. Well, not including the two guys who were in charge of watching the monitors. Claire took them out quickly, and Zack and Grey settled in front of the computers.

The boys were able to divert the feeds remotely, but they couldn't get a good look at the system without risking someone noticing.

"This is the only control room," Zack confirmed after fiddling with the technology. "We can unloop the cameras and find Maisie now."

They could have brought Blue in to track their daughter, but it would have been hard to hide an angry dinosaur. Much easier to hide angry parents and cousins. Blue wasn't happy with the command, but she obeyed Owen and stayed at the tree line.

Zack flipped through hundreds of camera feeds. Each member of the group took a monitor and watched for any sign of Maisie.

"Stop!" Claire yelled after a few minutes. "Go back one."

Zack obeyed, and everyone looked at Claire's screen. Sure enough, Maisie was there, looking small and frail in a hospital bed. A needle stuck in her arm.

"Is that blood?" Owen asked, pointing to the bag hanging on her IV stand. It was impossible to tell in the black and white video, but it definitely looked like blood. "What are they doing to her?"

Claire rubbed Owen's back. "Whatever it is, it stops now."

Zack put the monitors back on their loop and Grey spouted out directions to Maisie's room. It was only a couple of hallways down, on the right. Unfortunately, there were a ton more people in that area. Luckily, they were wearing lab coats, not security uniforms.

"What do we do, Aunt Claire?" Zack asked as they peered around the corner. "We can't take all of them."

Claire nodded. Owen could see the wheels turning behind her eyes as she revised her original plan. Though, truthfully, the plan had only gone as far as the control room. It was always going to be improvised from that point on.

"There's only one thing we can do," Claire said. "We make a run for it."

"What?"

"We run. They're scientists. They'll chase us, but hopefully at least one of us will get to Maisie first."

Owen studied his girlfriend's face. Her features were set and determined. There was no talking her out of this plan, and if the rest didn't agree, she would have run on without them.

"Fine. On three, we run."

Claire counted them off. "One. Two... Three!"

Owen, Claire, Zack, and Grey took off down the final hallway towards Maisie's room.

"Stop!" "Wait!" "This area is restricted!"

The scientists yelled after them, but none actually tried to stop them. They called security, but it was too late. Less than a minute later, all four of them were at the door to Maisie's room.

"You don't want to do that," a familiar voice said. "Open that door, and we won't hesitate to eliminate you."

Owen had his hand on the knob. Through the window, he could see Maisie asleep in the bed. She had to be in a drug-induced sleep to stay quiet through all of the chaos in the hallway. He swallowed down tears threatening to spill over. These monsters were doing tests on his daughter, and they wouldn't get away with it.

"We came for Maisie. She belongs with us. You have no right to her."

"Maisie is an experiment, not a human. The judge never should have sent her with you. You don't know what she needs."

"What she needs?" Claire screamed. "What she needs are her parents. Not some scumbag scientists running tests on her blood!"

Dr. Wu chuckled. "You never understood what I did, Claire. You never appreciated me. And now you think we're running tests on the girl's blood. If you had only listened..."

Claire grabbed the man's collar. Owen didn't bother trying to get her to back off. If she hadn't done it, he probably would have. "You listen. Give us back our daughter, and we won't report you for this. We'll tell authorities we found her in the woods."

“Give us Blue.”

“Not a chance.”

“Then Maisie stays with us. Go ahead and talk to the police. They won’t believe you, and the ones that will, we’ve already taken care of. You’d be surprised how little it costs to buy loyalty these days.”

That explained why the police weren’t doing more to find Maisie. They had known where she was the whole time. A week had gone by with no sign of their daughter, and the police just kept lying to Claire and Owen, acting like they were looking.

Owen’s ears burned with rage. “Wu, I’m telling you once, and only once. Give. Us. Back. Our. Daughter.”

“No.”

Then all hell broke loose.

And it wasn’t Owen or Claire. Not even Zack or Grey.

Red lights filled the hallway and an alarm screeched from speakers high on the walls. Owen, Claire, Zack, and Grey covered their ears, but it did nothing to drown out the horrid sound.

“Wu, there’s been an intrusion.”

The scientist pointed to the four people in front of Maisie’s door. “Yes, I see that.”

“No,” the guard said. He held up a tablet for Dr. Wu to see. “A different kind of intrusion.”

Before anyone could respond, a horrifying scream sounded from down the hall. In response was a familiar sound.

“Blue!” Owen cried. His raptor turned the corner and ran full speed towards her master. She hit the guard with her tail and squared up to attack Dr. Wu, but Owen called her off.

“Wait. Blue. Halt.”

The dinosaur glanced at Owen, then back at the doctor. She snarled, but didn’t attack.

“That’s a good girl.” He turned his attention to Dr. Wu. “Now, we are going to go in there and get Maisie. She’s coming with us. If you try to stop us, I won’t call Blue back.”

The doctor shook, but not in fear. Rage filled his eyes.

“It doesn’t matter,” he spat. “We don’t need her or the raptor. We have something else, something bigger. You won’t see it coming. None of you will!”

Owen didn’t have time to consider the threat. He finally opened the door to his daughter’s room, only Maisie was no longer in the bed.

The small girl jumped from behind the door, brandishing a surgical knife. She stopped herself before using the weapon.

Tears fell immediately. Owen and Claire collapsed to the floor and pulled Maisie in for a group hug. Zack and Grey joined them.

“I’m so sorry, sweet girl,” Claire said through her sobs. “You are never leaving our sight again.”

The girl giggled. “I’ll have to leave eventually, Mom. Just, not for a long while.”

This brought a smile to both Claire and Owen’s lips.

“Come on, then,” Owen said, standing and holding out a hand to his daughter. “Let’s go home.”

Maisie nodded. “I’ve been waiting a whole week for you to say that.”

Owen held her hand tightly. Claire may have been joking, but he didn’t plan on leaving Maisie’s side for a very, very long time. Now that he knew what it was like to lose her, he would make sure it never happened again.

No matter what it took.

Epilogue

Chapter Notes

This is the last chapter of Jurassic: The New World. However, never fear: I'm working on a Jurassic World prequel that provides backstory on Owen. Then I'll be posting part 2 to The New World, which picks up after the cliffhanger in this epilogue ;)

Two Months Later

Claire stared at her suitcase and swore under her breath. The hard-shelled black luggage had mocked her for two months, reminding her of her promise. You said you would leave, it whispered. You promised to let them move on without you.

Packing would have been easy. She barely had any clothes to her name, and what she did have was transferred into the new house over the last week. The cabin that she and Owen finished together, despite her talk, despite her conviction, despite her fear that she wasn't good enough.

"You've had one foot out the door since we left the estate."

Claire jumped. Owen leaned against the cherry wood door frame. Claire had chosen that finish. She picked the burgundy paint for their room, the grey towels for the bathroom, the tile for the kitchen. Owen chose the bedspread, the living room carpet, the dining room table. It truly was their house. Together.

"But I just can't leave."

Owen sat on her side of the bed and waited. Claire shut the closet and joined him. "Talk to me, Claire. What's going on with you?"

No tears came. They saved themselves for the night, when she was alone. "I'm not good enough, Owen. I... Jurassic World was my fault. I dragged you back to that island, I put you and Zia and Franklin in danger. Then the estate, that was me, too. Can't you see? I'm bad for you."

Owen had the audacity to laugh. Claire punched his arm, but a smile crept onto her face as well.

"You can't be serious. You're going to take credit for all that shit?"

"If it weren't for me, you wouldn't be here right now."

Claire turned away, focusing on the television hung on the wall across from their bed. It was off, but the black screen was a better show than Owen's face.

He took her hand and squeezed. "I don't want to be anywhere but here. But Claire, if this isn't what you want, I don't want you to feel like you have to stay. You can still be in Maisie's life, even if you're not in mine."

She considered this for a minute, then two. During the week that Maisie was missing, all Claire could think about was getting her daughter back, and leaving. But once Maisie was asleep in her bed in the trailer, that desire to go was nearly gone. It only crept up on occasion, when Claire thought about what she couldn't bring to their family. Peace, safety. Happiness.

"I'm scared." Her voice was thin and quiet, nothing like the authoritative tone she used to

take on. Too much had happened over the last few years, and not enough of it was good. “I’m terrified,” Owen admitted. “But we can do this. If we can fight dinosaurs, we can raise a daughter. Together. As a family.”

“We still don’t know what they did to her at InGen. What if...”

Owen squeezed her hand again. “The doctors said that Maisie is healthy, that she’s a normal little girl. As normal as she can be. If InGen did something, then we’ll find out and we’ll figure it out when it happens. For now, let’s enjoy what we have. A beautiful, smart, funny, adventurous daughter. And us.”

Claire leaned her head against Owen’s shoulder. “We are pretty great.”

“The greatest.”

She laughed. She couldn’t help it, the sound just spilled from her lips. “I love you, Owen. I can’t promise... I don’t know if I can ever be all in. I might always stare at my suitcases with a foot out the door. But I can promise I love you, and I love our little girl.”

Owen kissed her temple. “That’s all I ask.”

They stayed like that for a few minutes, until a playful shriek from outside tore them from their peaceful moment.

“Are you okay to join the party? I can tell everyone you’re not feeling well.”

Claire stood and studied her reflection. Her legs were toned, her arms muscular. She looked different in her shorts and tank top than she ever had before. She liked feeling strong. It helped her answer Owen’s question. “I’m ready. And... I’m sorry.”

He bent down to kiss her lips. “Don’t apologize, just talk to me, okay? When you feel like running away, I’ll help you remember why you wanted to stay.”

“You’re a poet now, huh?”

Owen grinned. “For you, babe. Only for you.”

Hand in hand, the couple joined their guests outside. The offending shriek had come from Maisie, who chased her older cousins around the yard. Without the trailer taking up space, they had plenty of room to roam.

Owen had built a couple of picnic tables with extra wood from the construction project, and they were full of adults watching the children play. Karen was the first to notice her sister exit the house. She jumped from her spot at the table and wrapped Claire in a big hug.

“You okay?” she asked.

Claire nodded and promised they would talk later. Karen seemed reluctant, but she released Claire, who was quickly greeted by the other guests.

“Thanks for having us!” Zia said, wrapping her arms around Claire. “This is my girlfriend, Jamie.”

Claire shook hands with the young, blonde woman. She had a fossil tattoo on her right wrist. That alone proved Jamie was perfect for Zia.

Franklin was next, awkwardly hugging Claire with his gangly arms. “I don’t have a girlfriend, but thank you for letting me come anyway.”

Everyone laughed. Dr. Grant had been in the middle of discussing his theories with Zia when Claire made her grand entrance, and the two picked up where they left off the second Zia sat back down. Jamie joined in the lively conversation. Franklin paid more attention to his phone, probably trying to find service. There wasn’t much of that around, unless you connected to the cabin’s wifi. Even that was a bit weak. Owen and Claire didn’t mind, though. They kind of liked the disconnect from society. Plus, there was a grocery store ten miles down the road. So it wasn’t like they were totally in the middle of nowhere.

Claire moved off to the side, beside Owen, to take in the gathering. The house had only been finished for a week, and this was their official housewarming party. All of the important

people in their lives were there.

Owen fidgeted nervously. Claire hooked her arm through his. "You okay?"

He nodded. "I'm great. I'm gonna get the grill going. Anyone hungry?"

He left Claire alone by the front porch, but she didn't mind. She sat down beside Karen and watched Owen prepare the hamburgers and hot dogs they'd bought for the party.

Maisie was the first in line for food. She was a picky eater, but hot dogs were her favorite.

She held open the bun for her father. Just as Owen brought the tongs towards Maisie's plate, a Compsognathus leaped from behind the grill and stole the dog.

Maisie gasped, but Claire couldn't help but laugh. This was the new world they lived in, one where dinosaurs were as big a threat to picnics as dogs and squirrels. For some reason, Claire didn't mind it as much as she thought she would. The years since Jurassic World had taught her to live with animals, not against them.

Owen was more careful with the food after the dinosaur incident. He managed to serve the guests without another mishap.

Everyone sat at the picnic tables and chatted, chomping down on delicious food. Owen pushed his potato salad around his plate, and a hamburger remained untouched next to it.

Claire nudged him. "Seriously, Owen, are you okay?"

He studied her with a look she didn't recognize. Before she could ask another question, not that she knew what she would ask, Owen stood, raising his plastic cup like he was about to give a toast.

"As you all know," he began, his voice earning the guests' attentions. "It's been a hard summer for our family. It's been a hard year, a hard few years. But we've survived it, because we've been together."

Owen looked at Claire, then. Only her, like the rest of the party disappeared.

"I know that you're scared. I'm scared too. But if there's one thing I've learned this year, it's that it's scarier to live without you. I never want to be without you again, Claire. I love you too much. And I will love you for the rest of our lives, if you'll let me."

He dropped to one knee and held out a small velvet box.

"Claire Michelle Dearing, will you marry me?"

Claire's hands covered her gaping mouth as she nodded. She may be terrified all the time, she may wake in the middle of the night with horrible memories of the park and the island, but she will never stop loving Owen. She learned that years earlier, and it was a lesson she'd never forget.

"Of course, of course, of course."

Owen jumped up and hugged his fiancée, then stopped the movement so he could slip the ring on her finger.

"Just so you know, I asked Blue for permission before I proposed. She gave us her blessing."

Claire had no doubts he was telling the truth. They had planned on sending Blue to the island for protection, but Owen couldn't part from her. She was safe for the time being, with InGen distracted by their secret project. The time would probably come when Blue had to move to the island, but Owen and Claire liked having her around for now.

Maisie was the first to hug the couple. "He asked me, too. I said he'd be stupid not to propose."

Claire kissed the top of her daughter's head. "You've got that right, kiddo."

The rest of the party was a frenzy of hugs, congratulations, and ice cream cake. Claire couldn't stop staring at her ring the whole time. It was crazy to her that just hours earlier, she was plotting a potential escape. She couldn't imagine leaving behind what she saw in front of her. Good thing Owen was there to talk her down. That he always would be.

As the sun set, the guests dispersed, promising to visit again soon.

Claire, Owen, and Maisie were cleaning up the trash after Karen and the boys, the last ones standing, drove away.

“That went well,” Owen said, kissing Claire. “I’m glad you said yes. Would have been embarrassing if you didn’t.”

“Did you think I might say no?”

“Absolutely.”

Claire laughed. “I love you too much for that.”

Owen leaned in for another kiss, but a scream from Maisie stopped him. “Maisie, what’s wrong?”

The little girl held her hands over her ears and fell to the ground. “Make it stop!”

“Make what stop? What do you hear?”

A rustling sounded from behind them. Claire and Owen turned to find Blue at the edge of the forest surrounding their home. She clicked a couple times and lifted her chin, waiting for an answer.

Maisie uncovered her ears and turned towards the dinosaur. Her eyes were wide, fear painted on her face.

“What’s wrong, Maisie?” Owen asked again, quieter this time.

Maisie pointed at the raptor.

“I could hear her.”

She paused.

“And I understood what she said.”

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