

Paw Patrol



The city had come alive with bright, vibrant lights. The sounds of, shouting, slurring, singing and laughter filled the crisp air. There were so many people, all dressed up in fancy outfits with tantalizing amounts of shiny rings, dangling strings and strips of fabric that were just *begging* to be swatted or chewed on. Not to mention the assortment of all kinds of boot laces.

There were *twolegs* and *no-eyes* and robots—sorry, robots—of all different kinds. There were red-skinned ones, blue-skinned ones, and even green-skinned ones! Ivoshar had said that they called this a “party”. Apparently, it was a time where they danced and drank and ate and communicated with each other, but Fela wasn’t sure what was so special about that. The twolegs tended to do that all the time, with the exception of her master, of course, who usually elected not to.

Ivo had also said that the parties tended to spin out of control in the later halves, and usually ended with a massive mess that someone was left to clean up. Fela did not see anything wrong with that part, honestly, and idly imagined the amount of leftovers from all the exotic looking foodstuffs she had never seen before.

Fela knew which of the *twolegs* to target if she needed anything. And if anything got too scary, she could always find her master. She could never explain how she picked him out from a crowd, but a combination of his scent, and just the tiny feeling she got in her chest that helped her know he needed her. She reminded herself that she had to be brave for him. He saw many things, but missed so many more. That’s why he had her, to watch his back and make sure nothing bad ever happened to him.

She began her patrol on the outer perimeter, keeping both her master and his mate in her peripheral vision. Fela watched them as they held hands, and moved from crowd to crowd interacting with each of the other guests.

Jeepers, but there are a lot of twolegs...

Continuing on, Fela wove her way through a sea of legs and feet. She huffed and growled when someone *dared* to almost step on her swishing tail. They should have been more careful and mindful. Didn’t they know she had to work twice as hard to walk with only three paws? Despite her handicap, Fela moved her smaller frame with practiced ease.

Fela, I’m going to need you to be on guard tonight at the party, Ivoshar had said. She would not let the older, scarred Cythraul down. No she would not!

From what the white-with-brown-spots Cyhtraul could discern, however, there seemed to be no noticeable threats. Everything seemed to be in order. Her ears folded back as she sniffed the air and tried to sense something out of place. There was nothing, though.

And then suddenly things got quiet. Too quiet. That should have been her first clue that something was terribly, terribly wrong.

She watched her and Ivo's masters move towards a new group. This gathering had the tall woman in all black clothing. Fela knew her from the countless straps along her legs, but master had warned her not to try and play or go after them as that would have been rude. Fela, of course, was no such thing. She was a perfect angel. Beside the tall woman, who the twolegs called 'Alaisy' were the pair of Zabrak twolegs she had met at the last gathering. Sera Kearn and Karran Val'teo, if she remembered correctly.

Fela remembered Sera the most, as the female Zabrak had recognized her talent for the hunt and acknowledged her. That made her a-oh-kay in her book.

As Fela snuck a pastry from an unguarded table and nearly swallowed it whole, she turned mid-chew to see a small furred creature with pointed ears and a tail perching in Alaisy's arms. But this creature was not of her pack. It was no Cyhtraul, or even an Arx Wolf, really. It was something *else*. Something...strange and sinister?

Whatever it was, it was getting ready to make a move. Fela tensed.

"Could I please hold him," she heard Sera Hearn ask. "Just for a little bit? I left Knickers at home for the safety of us all."

"Ke'chako here is probably the only reason I have made it this long without hurting anyone," Alaisy's mechanical voice replied.

A '*Ke'chako*', *interesting*, Fela mused. She had never heard of a *Ke'chako*. As the Cyhtraul studied it closer, however, she noticed that it had a black band of fur that covers its eyes like that of a...mask of some kind. It stood out against the *Ke'chako* white coat.

That's when it clicked. Ivoshar had warned her of those kinds of masks. They were the kinds that bandits wore! And bandits were evil low-lives that stole from others.

Fela watched in growing horror as the tall woman passed the *Ke'chako*

Fast comes Fela, the fabled huntress! Fela sung to herself as she sprinted towards the center of the group and then leapt up into the air to intercept the bandit that was clearly trying to steal something of Sera's.

The Ke'chako noticed her, and made a loud shriek followed by a long hiss. The sound was terrifying and shook Fela to her core. Yet before she could connect with the creature in an attempt to sacrifice herself for the protection of her pack, an unseen hand arrested her flight.

"Fela, no," Marick Tyris' voice cut clear as a bell through the rest of the commotion. Fela froze, and looked over helplessly at her master as he extended one hand and levitated her towards him. She landed in his arms but resisted his hold as she tried to wriggle free.

But master, you don't understand, I have to protect her from the bandit!

Whether Marick understood her plea or not, the half-Hapan seemed to piece out the situation all on his own. His too-blue eyes studied the *Ke'chako*, realization dawning on his face. He lifted Fela up under her arms and turned her so she could face him, nose to nose.

"Fela. That is a Tooka. His name is Ke'chako, and he is a friend," he spoke softly but firmly to her.

Fela huffed, turned her nose up into the air and looked away. "I know you were just trying to protect us, but I promise, everything is alright." He gave her a small, secret smile that she knew was reserved for her. Her heart thrummed, and she nuzzled her head against his cheek in gratitude.

Marick placed Fela down, and the three-legged Cythraul pup turned to face the rest of the party.

"Thank you, young huntress," Sera Kearn said with a slight bow. "Would you care to join me in a quest for out of place...snacks?"

Fela's tail started to swish furiously as she yapped and pranced over to the Zabrak. There was still plenty of time for her to patrol, after all.



Marick Tyris watched his Cythraul pad off with Sera Kearn, exhaling slowly through his nose. He could feel Atyiru's hand clutching at his arm. He turned his face towards her, and caught her smile at the same time as he took in the familiar shape of her nose. He looked down briefly to admire the dress she had picked out, and felt that his simple suit offered little by comparison. Still she seemed happy, and that was what mattered.

Meanwhile, Marick continued to keep his senses open, his eyes always shifting and moving and taking note of every exit and entrance. He was still working to understand how the new Shadow Lady operated. Compared to Telaris' straightforward approach to...everything, and the

Collective's single-minded drive, he realized that he would need to learn much more about Lucine Vasano.

Time would tell. Tonight, however, there seemed to be no threat. A rare moment of peace and tranquility that he wished he could truly enjoy.

He couldn't, of course. His mind was always working, turning, and he knew better than to hope that peace would ever truly find him.