

The Pack of Pompeii

I hear Claudia approach my sleeping hollow long before she limps around the nearest cluster of rocks. Of the three of us who work the Gentle Mountain with our two-legged shepherd, Claudia is by far the noisiest dog.

She limps thanks to the sharp teeth of a fox in her youth and, sometimes, her hind leg drags as we work the grassy slopes above the two-leg settlement. I keep her nearby whenever the wolves come raiding. Her ears are flattened against her head today, telling me that she comes to share a worry.

"Trouble?" I drag my head up off a cushion of crushed weeds. It has been an uncomfortable night.

"The goats are acting strangely," she pants.

"You'd act strangely if the only things you had to eat all day were spiky grass and thistle leaves. Leave them to the shepherd."

In the morning light, Claudia's coat gleams like the reflected light off the hillside. She's the smallest of us and, sometimes, when she curls up beside one of the rocks, I can only find her by scent.



"The shepherd is down in the town with the other two-legs," she complains. "The sun will be high soon and he is late."

"You moan as much as the goats, Claudia." Claudia wishes that we had a more attentive shepherd, but he has his own pack in the town, with his own little one to care for.

Sometimes, I wonder if Claudia would complain this much if I were male. Male alphas have less patience and are quicker to snap. She should be grateful that she has a female leader, but I'm too weary to remind her and the sun drains my energy.

Claudia rests her chin on her large brown and white paws. "They say that the mountain is too warm."

I roll onto my back, pressing against the stony ground to scratch an itch. "Goats complain about snow in winter and heat in summer."

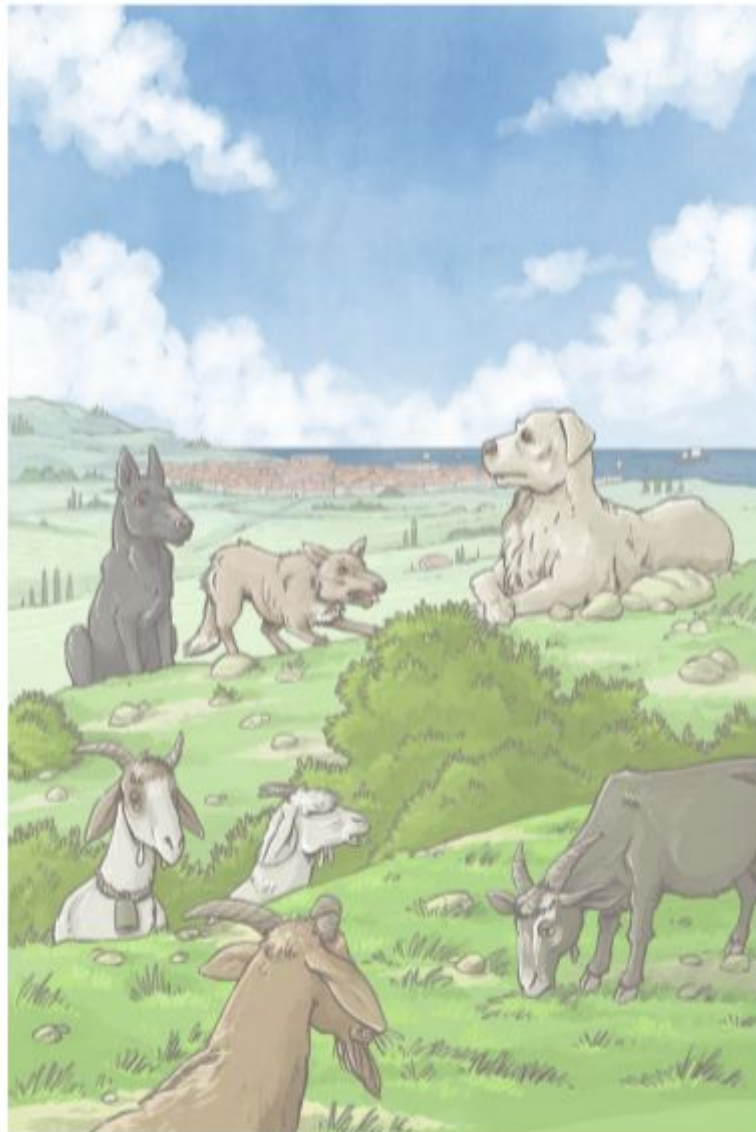
We're joined by Alba, my second. "They say that they want to leave. Where is the shepherd? He should be here."

I give Alba's black coat an envious sniff; it makes her almost invisible at night. Better for outwitting wolves.

She slashes her thick tail towards me. Sometimes, I forget that she was a pup less than two summers ago. "I'm hungry, Livia! The rabbit burrows are empty. A raven told me that they fled last night."

"Fled?"

"They must have felt the rumbling," Claudia whimpers. "I can feel it through my paws."



Week 2 day 2 challenge 1

1. Which of these names belong to the dogs in the story? Tick **three**.

Claudia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alpha	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gentle Mountain	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shepherd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Livia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alba	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Claudia is the noisiest of the three dogs.		
Alba is the smallest of the three dogs.		
Claudia has brown and white paws.		
Alba has a black coat.		

3. What does it mean when Claudia's ears are flattened?

4. Why does Livia think the goats are acting strangely?

5. "Goats complain about snow in winter and heat in summer."

What does this tell the reader about the herd of goats?

6. Who are the 'two-legs'?

7. Why was Claudia worried? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.

8. a. Which of the following words best describes how Livia feels about Claudia? Circle **one**.

protective

irritated

afraid

b. Explain your answer fully.
