

## 5. Imprisoned.

\*Aleksa\*

I didn't get much sleep last night. Apart from the fact that I was basically sleeping on the cold, hard and lthy oor, I was suffering the effects of my mate breaking our sacred bond. The pain had started a little while after Lachlan had left last night.

The other prisoners, which I found out were rogue wolves, were shocked to discover that I was being held in the same conditions they were. I had ignored them initially, and then I realised it was going to be a long night, so I would at least make small talk with them to be polite.

A rogue wolf is a wolf that has been either kicked out of their pack or has left of their own free will. A rogue wolf often has long unkempt fur, and has a foul smelling odour emitting from it. If a rogue wolf is found in pack territory, they are generally taken to the pack dungeons or killed on site, although at Evergreen Pack we generally imprisoned them until we had questioned their reasons for being on pack lands.

The rogues I spoke with last night didn't seem threatening, they had engaged in polite conversation, and I was surprised to hear the reasons that they had become rogue. Kaia, the rogue in the cell on the left of mine, had left her pack as she was mated to a warrior that had continued to betray their bond. She spoke of how females were treated in the pack and she worried about her friends, but she had to escape their cruel and barbaric ways. Mason, in the cell to the right side of mine, had left as he didn't respect his alpha and didn't agree with his way of ruling, so he decided to go out on his own as a lone wolf, which had been working ne for him until he accidentally stumbled on Evergreen Pack territory.

After speaking with the other prisoners for a few hours, the pain started to subside. Lachlan must be asleep, I thought to myself. I would take this time to rest my body and try to come up with a plan to escape with my pups. That was the hard part, I guess, as I didn't know how long I would be staying in the dungeons. If only I could enlist some help. The only way I could make this escape work was if someone could help me escape the dungeons, then get to Liam and Layla so that we could escape.

There was just no way I could pull this off on my own. I would just have to leave without anything. No clothes, no belongings, no money. We would run like our lives depended on it. And then we would hide. And pray to the moon goddess that Lachlan never found us.

A few hours must have passed by because I noticed a change in the guards. I hear them chatting and Rick, who's now taking over the shift, is looking shocked.

They turned to me and looked at me. They nished their conversation, then Chad bowed his head towards me. "Good morning Luna, I have nished my shift. I hope I don't see you here tonight. Good luck Luna". Then he leaves the dungeon.

Rick went up to the cells and spoke to me. "Luna, I am so sorry. I have been ordered to watch you today. I don't understand what has happened?". He says with obvious distress in his voice.

"Well Rick, I am still trying to understand things myself. But basically, my mate is not who I thought he was. He is a cruel man. He has been betraying our bond since we met and doesn't intend to stop betraying it".

With that, Rick gasped. "Luna, I am so sorry - I don't know what to say. Are you sure?" He asks.

"Yes Rick, I saw it with my own eyes and he has not denied it. He expects me to be happy with this arrangement and to share him with goddess knows how many others". I said.

"But I have no intention of doing that. This is not what I signed up for! I will not subject my pups to this. Please - you have to help me!" I pleaded.

"Luna, I'm sorry, but I pledged to serve my Alpha. I can't go against him. Surely you can nd a compromise?" Rick said hopefully.

I sigh in defeat. I realised that Rick would not be the one to help me escape from this prison. "It's OK Rick, I understand your position". I said sadly. "You are right, we will nd a way to work things out, I'm sure". I said, with a half smile on my face. Knowing full well, I have no intention of making things work, and nor does Lachlan. But I can't have Rick thinking that I would escape. I need everyone to be clueless if this is going to go the way I want it to go.

"Apologies Luna, I need to do my rounds. If you need anything please let me know". Rick says as he turns the corner of the cell.

"Gutless! He could help you but he has his own agenda! So you are the Luna of Evergreen pack? What kind of an Alpha imprisons his own Luna? He doesn't deserve you!" A gruff and masculine voice came from the darkened corner across from my cell.

I am curious as to who the voice belongs to. "That is kind of you to say". I said to the mysterious voice. Something feels familiar about this voice. It made me feel safe for some reason.

"You are brave to refuse and challenge your fated mate. Especially that of an alpha. Not many she-wolves could do that, they would be enthralled by the mate bond. You must be very strong." He said to me.

"My so-called mate imprisoned me because I tried to reject him. He is my fated mate, but he is unkind and cruel and he betrays our bond constantly. I don't want any part of it". I say.

My curiosity had peaked so I asked the mysterious voice "Why are you in the dungeons? Can I ask what you did to end up here?"

"I was attacked near the borders of your territory, by many rogues. I managed just ne defending myself against the rogues, until your warriors intervened and got in a cheap shot and blindsided me". He said venomously.

"I wasn't on your pack lands, I have been imprisoned falsely. And I am waiting to speak with your Alpha". He says.

"I am sure it's just a misunderstanding, surely you will be on your way soon enough" I said optimistically to the mysterious voice.

I sit back against the wall of my cell. I wonder if my Gamma Caleb is aware of what is happening. Surely he will be looking for me this morning? I hope he can help me. Because if anyone could, it would be him. He has always been there for me when I needed him in the past.

I started to wonder why I hadn't heard from my wolf Amber. She has been so quiet since we discovered our mate betraying us. She was angry at rst and then she had just disappeared. Maybe she needs time to heal, I think to myself.

I hear the trapdoor to the dungeon open and I can hear footsteps. I hear voices and I realise that one of them belongs to Caleb. I feel hopeful that he may be able to help get me out of here.

"Luna, I just heard about what happened. I was looking for you this morning and when I couldn't nd you I bumped into Chad who had just nished his shift. How did this happen? Is it true- did the Alpha really throw you in here? I don't understand". Caleb says breathlessly.

"It is true, Caleb. I know that you know of Lachlan's indelity. Please don't insult my intelligence", I say matter of factly.

"I'm sorry, Luna, but my hands were tied. I wanted to say something but I was commanded by the Alpha to not say one word. So I physically couldn't. And to be honest, I had hoped he would realise how lucky he is and just stop." Caleb says with pity in his voice.

An alpha command is a strong and clear directive or order given by an Alpha. Behind it is the full strength of the Alpha. So, the person who is commanded cannot ght it unless they are of Alpha status or of higher ranking.

"I assumed as much, Caleb. Thank you for being honest with me now. Caleb - I need to get out of here. I need to leave this pack with my children. I can't live like this, we can't live like this." I said desperately.

"I know it's a huge ask but I can't do this without your help. I know this would be dangerous for you and Kali too. But I am desperate. I am begging you." I said pleadingly.

Caleb looks at me. He takes a moment to think about what I have just asked him. He turns to me and says "What were you thinking, Luna?".

"Well, rstly, I need to make sure I can access the children. I need you to nd out whether or not they are still attending daycare. Then I needed to nd a way to get them together dungeons and then we need to get to the border as quickly as possible. We will need to have transport located near the boundary so that we can escape with haste. From there I can gure out the rest as I go." I said assuredly.

"Wow, you have really thought this out. OK, I will have to talk to Kali, as she will have to be part of this. She will be able to risk too. We won't be able to stay here in this pack as it won't take Lachlan long to gure out who helped you. I will speak to her. She can help to organise the twins as she has been helping out at the daycare recently as part of her training. I will come and see you later tonight and let you know what I have organised". Caleb says.

"Thank you Caleb. I really appreciate this. I look forward to seeing you later." I said to Caleb with a sigh of relief on my face.

I sit back against my cell and rest my head for a while. I feel relieved knowing that I have Caleb on my side, and I am feeling optimistic that I will be getting out of here soon. Just as I closed my eyes, I heard his voice.

"Have you come to your senses yet, Aleksa?" Lachlan says in a smug tone.

I looked up at him with disdain all over my face. "I will never be OK with what you have done, Lachlan. Locking me up in this dungeon will not change my mind", I said deantly.

"You always were a stubborn one. I think a little more time down here will change your mind, Aleksa. I will win. I always win. I will have my Luna and I will have any she wolf I desire. It is my right as an Alpha," he says cockily.

Just then, a snicker came from the cell across me. Lachlan turned to the sound. "Who are you to laugh at me! Show yourself now before I rip you to shreds with my bare hands", he demanded.

At that moment, my mysterious cell mate moves to the front of his cell and I gasp. He is stunningly gorgeous. He is about 6'4, very muscular and built with gorgeous thick black hair. I can't see him all that clearly because the dungeons are so dark. But from what I can see I am stunned. He is absolutely gorgeous!

Lachlan started laughing. "I knew your voice sounded familiar. It has been a while, old friend. What are you doing in my dungeons, Jackson?" Lachlan demanded.