

## Dark Obsession 47

### Chapter 47. An Unexpected Trial EVANGELINE.

One minute I was looking down at Zedkiel at the table and the next we were being whisked away. Apparently, our first round was meant to start simultaneously, or so we thought.

“What is this?” Maryka asks holding up the envelope in her hand.

We were each given one; they are identical aside from the name on it. Mine reads ‘Zedkiel’ in gorgeous gold embossed writing.

“Well, this is part of your first test.” Jean says. “Let’s say you are the queen and this city is under attack, and you are most likely going to be kidnapped or killed. Now, to save your people, you have the chance to leave your Alpha a message. Where will you put it, knowing that time is short, and he must find it before anyone else?”

“Is this part of our test?” Celia asks, frowning. 4

“Yes, it is. It’s a good chance to display how in touch with your Alpha you are.” Jean replies in a clipped tone. 2

Celia looks down. “Then that’s surely unfair. Some of us have been married for far longer-”

“There is no place for protests.” Jean says calmly, yet her eyes are hard as she glares at Celia. “You have five minutes to think of a place and then you have a further five minutes to tell one of our messengers who will place the envelope exactly where you ask them to. It can be anywhere, in your Packs even and the rest... well, that depends on if your Alpha can find it.”

“So, it’s a combined examination...” Kayla murmurs worriedly.

I’m no longer listening, focusing on what Jean just said and staring down at the letter in my hand. Think Evangeline think!

Where should I put this so that Zedkiel will find it? Celia wasn’t wrong to panic. Zedkiel and I don’t really have a place we’ve spent much time together, aside from our bedroom. That is the first place that comes to mind, but where could I put this in our quarters?

I close my eyes, trying to think where Zedkiel would look.

A sudden thought comes to my mind, and my eyes fly open. When Zedkiel is angry, he bangs doors! I can use that!

If I have it placed above our bedroom door on the ledge, I’m uncertain it’ll be considered a valid place, but it is worth asking... if not, I should think of a backup...

“It seems that we at least have two Lunas already trying to think of a solution. The clock is already ticking.” Jean says, giving us all a hard stare.

H\*ok up to see Poppy. The Luna of the Moonshine Pack is also silent as she thinks deeply.

"I've decided." I say suddenly. Jean raises an eyebrow.

"Take her to the adjoining room, take note and then place her in the allotted area..." There's something about that sentence that makes me uneasy, but I don't think much of it as I follow one of the men to the adjoining room.

I quickly and politely ask them to place the letter above the door on the ledge of the door to our quarters. "What if he doesn't find it? Are you certain this is your final choice?" He asks me and I nod.

"Very well, I

will place this above the door, on the doorframe to yours and the prince's quarters. That is correct, yes?"

"Yes please."

Even if it doesn't fall, at least after he goes to the bedroom, maybe he'll spot it.

"Very well then, let's take you to your destination." I nod and I'm passed onto another man and told to follow.

I'm nervous, something tells me, Zedkiel finding that letter is vital.

I sure hope I made the right decision!

We head down the hall when one of the men stops. "There are some warmer clothes for you to change into inside the washroom and please do use it. The night will be long."

"Oh, of course!" I say surprised and grateful for the consideration, but at the same time, I'm concerned by what he means that the night will be long.

"We will wait for you." The man nods and motions for me to enter the bathroom.

I step inside and find I'm not the only one there.

"Please change into these clothes Luna." The dark-haired woman says, holding out a bag.

"Thank you." I say, taking the clothes and putting them on. There are sweatpants and an oversized hoodie that I slip on. Once I exit the toilet, I wash my hands and the other woman gives me a smile.

"Good luck Luna!" She says.

"Thank you." I say before I exit the bathroom. Spotting the guards down the hall, I walk towards them and they continue to lead the way.

Ten minutes later, I'm no longer hoping but praying that Zedkiel finds that letter as I'm led through to the back of the castle and down into the lower grounds of the castle. It's clear this area isn't really used anymore.

"Please don't be alarmed, Luna." One of the two smiles. "Please come in."

My heart thumps as I walk down the dirty steps into the empty pool and into the middle of it, where they gesture for me to stop. It's dark and empty, without any light. One of them bends down and binds my ankles together.

"Fear not Luna, Alpha Prince Zedkiel will find you. Remember, the rules are simple. You are not to free yourself or try to escape. This test is for prince Zedkiel. If you break the rules, you will immediately fail this round." One of the men says nervously. It's clear he's terrified about doing this.

I guess Zedkiel's wrath is something everyone should be afraid of!

"What are you going to do to me?" I say as I look at the dirty empty pool I'm standing in. It isn't the largest, but it's big and dirty. This place hasn't been used for years...

"You are just to wait until the prince comes, and depending on how fast he finds the letter, he'll be assessed and graded on how efficiently he finds you."

I nod as I'm tied to something in the empty pool, but because my ankles are bound, I can't turn.

"Oh... but is it necessary to tie me?" I ask.

"Yes." The dark-haired one replies with a smile, as he then ties a cloth around my mouth.

"This is part of the contest, good luck Luna." The other says as I stare at the huge rock that the other side of the rope is tied to.

At least my wrists are free.

I thought that too soon because the next thing they do is tie my hands behind my back.

It's just part of the contest... I tell myself, taking a deep shuddering breath. They won't hurt me. I'm trying not to panic when they tie my hands painfully tight and then they turn and climb out of the pool.

I hear a gurgling sound before I hear water gushing. (5)

Looking at the edge of the pool, I see the two men who stand at the top looking down into the pool. Only then do I realise how deep it is. They are standing a good foot above my head... if this pool fills up... I'll drown...

It'll take time... it'll take time...

Hoping for one last sentence of encouragement from the two guards, I watch them, but they don't bother looking back at me, not even once.

I close my eyes, taking deep breaths to calm myself when I hear the door shut and the old rusty padlock reapplied to the door, leaving me all alone... 2

Time feels slow, yet fast. I don't know how long I've been here, but my legs that are tied together feel heavy and numb. The icy water that smells of mould and copper is making me nauseous, and it isn't clean. I can feel bits of something or other in the water brush against my hands at times.

I'm beginning to panic; I can no longer feel the lower part of my body and the water is past my shoulders now. I can't swim, the weight tied behind me keeping me bound to the floor.

If no one comes, I'm going to drown... Surely they are watching this? Right?

Maybe they lied to me... maybe I'm meant to free myself.

Panic settles into me as I begin to tug at the bindings around my hands. My heart is pounding, and my hands feel numb.

A part of me tells me I must obey the guards who said I was to remain in one spot and not try to free myself and the other part of me is telling me to fight for myself, that no one will come until it's too late.

I can't waste any more time!

The water has reached my chin, fear settles into me and I'm unable to stop myself panicking as I begin yanking and wriggling against the binding around my wrists, scolding myself for not trying to loosen the ropes sooner.

They burn into my skin. I can feel it through the numbness of the cold as I yank on my hands, trying to tug free. I gasp when I stumble and go toppling sideways into the water.

No!

I rip and pull at the ropes; something goes into my eyes and I squeeze them shut despite the sharp pain of whatever it is lodged into my eye. I try to tug free, but the weight of the rock I'm tied to is dragging me deeper into the water.

No, this can't be happening. Surely the cameras must be here somewhere! They must know I've fallen! Help me!

'No one will help you Evangeline, only me... Let me out. That same voice commands.

'Zedkiel will come.' I say, despite the panic I'm in, no longer able to breathe as I struggle to free myself.

The ominous tone in her voice unnerves me.

'He won't. No one will ever come for you, Little Evangeline. I'm the one who should have survived! LET.

OUT!' 5

I can't think straight, I can't breathe...

My entire body is screaming in agony and my head feels heavy. I'm struggling for air, but there is none.

I look up to the surface of the water as a surge of strength rises through me and I tear free from the bindings around my hands. I rip the cloth from my mouth as I squint down at the rope around my ankles and begin fumbling with them, blood from my wrists is seeping into the water as I yank at the rope, and the dirt is stinging my eyes, and my strength is failing.... 1

My vision darkens and I'm no longer able to breathe. I gasp only for a huge gulp of water to fill my lungs and I claw at the rope fruitlessly.

Zedkiel...

My eyes flutter shut, and I reach up towards the surface, but... it's... too far...

It's too late...