

# Enslaved

“Paul, stop calling. You’re the alpha, which means you’re the leader. Surely you’ve killed someone before. It’s not that hard.”

And the panic starts right back up again.

Why would he be coaching someone on how easy it is to kill? Because it can’t be that easy, can it?

His heavy tread makes the floorboards groan. I stare at the door, my heart lurching so hard in my chest, I swear it’s leaving bruises.

But the steps aren’t coming toward me, they’re moving away.

A cupboard door squeaks open, and I wince.

It slams and I jump.

A low rumble that can only come from an empty belly, and the steps move even further away.

I’m almost breathing normally when the creak of a door, followed by a soft click, announces Keane’s departure.

But I don’t move. My gaze never leaves the door as I visualize Keane stalking toward his truck. I could be wrong about what vehicle he drives, but something tells me a guy who finds killing so easy that he gets frustrated when other people can’t do it, drives a truck. A big one. A big black truck with big silver wheels that—

Snap out of it, Briar. And start looking for a way out of here before he comes back and decides to eat you. And not in a good way.

I spend the next several minutes scanning the room for anything that will help me escape. A narrow bed pushed up against the wall. A three-drawer walnut dresser, and a door that probably leads into a bathroom. And a window. My eyes miss nothing.

It makes sense that I try for the door first, and then the window because... well... window. But it’s small. I’m small too, but I have hips and a butt that mean wriggling out of a narrow window comes with risks. I’d rather Keane Destin didn’t come back to find me wedged in it.

The low purr of a truck engine starts up, and I hear Keane drive away. For the first time since I woke with a big bad wolf shaking me awake, I can relax. I'd been dreaming about Liam, strangely enough. Actually, I was begging for his help, and then the dream kind of went a bit... wonky.

Suddenly it wasn't Liam but Keane, and I wasn't begging for his help at all.

A blush prickles over my cheeks as I wrench my mind back on track.

"Escape, Briar. The focus should be on escape and not...that," I mutter as I tiptoe to the locked bedroom door.

The door rattles under my hand, but it doesn't open, so I shove at it even harder.

Minutes later it still hasn't budged.

So I release my hold on the knob and throw myself against it, again and again.

I'm sure I waste another ten minutes trying and failing to force the door open, and the only thing I get for my trouble is a sore shoulder that I'm almost positive is going to leave me with bruises tomorrow.

A witch who can't even get herself out of a locked bedroom on her own.

What a joke.

I have no clip in my hair that I could use to pick the lock, and even if I did, just because I've seen someone do it in a movie, doesn't mean my skills lie in lock picking.

You could use the dresser as a battering ram.

"You can't even force a door open with your shoulder, Briar," I mutter beneath my breath, "what makes you think you can drag a dresser across the room?"

Defeated for the moment, I lean my back against the door, hoping if I think just a little longer, a brilliant idea will come along and smack me over the head.

I doubt Keane is going to be taking his sweet time wheeling a cart around the grocery store, since I'm almost positive that was his stomach grumbling in there. And even if that's where he's gone, O'Neale's Grocers istiny. He could go up and down each aisle and be done in five minutes flat.

A wolf growls in my ear. I spin away from the door, clutching my chest with a desperate plea to please don't kill me on my lips.

But there's no one there.

