

Chapter 11: Dungeon

-Clara-

My cell is at the end of a long corridor in the basement of the building. Here is where criminals are incarcerated. This building is called the dungeon. Rogues, traitors, and heavy offenders are sent to this place.

There are no windows where I am staying. Mason put me here, no... he threw me here.

I landed on my knees, and he did not care. Mason walked away from me, still boiling in anger. lanthe howled with all her might at this action, deeply hurt, calling for her mate to come back for her. But I did not say a word.

After meeting Mason at the pond, I convinced myself to go to my Luna and tell her what was happening despite the death threats of Mason.

Luna Michelle was like a mother to me... Why would it be wrong of me to pour my heart out to her?

My fated mate did not want to acknowledge me as his, and telling her mother might have been a foolish attempt, but was it bad enough for him to hurt me like this? Is it wicked of me to try to find a way to survive and be happy? Or is this just because I am an omega?

Luna Michelle was not surprised at my revelation. She told me that somehow she has always known because Mason used to be so close to me. I do remember how he used to be, caring and nice. He gave me more than once his chocolate pudding without asking mine.

We both laughed at silly things we remembered from those years. Mason used to take care of my peeled knees. He gave me his sweater when I was cold and hold my little hand more than once. I have that memory of my hand in his... but that happened so long ago.

She said that we had a big fight when I was around six because I played with Josh while Mason was training. He got so jealous that he asked me to avoid Josh and hide inside whenever he came. I do not remember Josh at all from those times, just Mason.

"Mason had you in his heart from the start. We just need to remind him." She said.

Those memories and Luna's words warmed my heart, giving me hope. I felt like I was breathing again.

My Luna told me more than once that I would be a precious gift for Mason if I were his mate. I did not believe it then but decided to believe that now.

According to her, once fated mates find each other, nothing else matters. She was not angry about losing the merge with Red Moon Pack and told me that Marissa would not her true mate very soon, too.

Luna Michelle asked me not to worry. Besides, once Mason and I were together, she will tell us something important.

I had faith in my Luna. I felt I should have told her everything from the start... two years ago. It would have solved Mason's suspicions.

I allowed myself to swim in a sea of fantasies, where he would understand, accept me, and we would love each other deeply.

I was going to finish high school, there are just six months before my graduation. I would keep studying to become a nurse at the pack hospital, then I would work so hard to improve the lives of our werewolves. Everyone would receive support for education regardless of their rank.

lanthe was happy and wagging her tale. I could almost feel it. Mason's scent was lingering on me after our moment at the pond. So, I changed into a clean dress and stood before my big window. Looking at the blue sky, I prayed to Moon Goddess for a happy ending.

Brusquely, Mason kicked the door of my bedroom open, almost tearing it down. It was left hanging on its hinges. His alpha aura was in full display, ready to kill.

He rushed to me and abruptly tugged on my hair at the base of my neck, pulling it so my head could face him directly. He is taller than me, and his actions were hurting me.

There was a mix of emotions in his eyes. Lust, pain, and anger. Then, he kissed me violently, hurting my lips. I think he told me something, but I am not even sure of what it was. I zoned out of the situation.

Too shocked to understand his sudden behavior, I do not know if I fell or if he pushed me, but I ended up on the oor.

I could not understand what was happening when he grabbed my arms viciously and shook me with violence.

My poor Luna Michelle was not able to stop him, she screamed at him, but it was futile.

Is this ruthless male the pup I knew as my best friend at six? No, this one is not even the cocky Young Alpha of two years ago.

Darkness and cold surround me now. lanthe is with me. Silent or not, it comforts me to have her.

I have always feared the dungeon and the werewolves that are sent here. All criminals, despicable ones... yet he put me here.

"How could he do that to me?"

I felt a lump in my throat. I am tired of crying while lying here alone in the darkness. The guards do not even look at me... Am I that pitiful?

I can still remember the shocked faces of everyone at the packhouse while Mason pulled me all the way out of my room to the street and then to the dungeon of the pack. It is not a short distance, yet he did it on foot. He wanted everyone to see me as a criminal, one who deserved to be punished this way.

On the street, I saw how the crowd formed on our path to the dungeon. Mason was providing them with a show at my expense. It was entertaining for my bullies and pained my friends.

I could not fight back or scream. lanthe did not anything, either.

I have buried in my brain Angel's pained face. She was crying for me. There was nothing for her to do. Karima, Dorothy, and Jenna were there, one embracing the other.

Jenna hid her face in her hands. Carter and his cousin were among the crowd formed on the street. Sky had a smirk on her face. She had an evil look, and her eyes turned black; her wolf was also enjoying the spectacle.

I wonder where my years of training with my Luna went are, and how it is that I did not even scream... nothing. My lips were sealed.

Lying here, I changed my prayers to Moon Goddess. I would prefer the earth to open and swallow me whole.

I am so embarrassed and so sad.

Is it just my pride, the one hurt? Or is it my heart beyond broken? It was my other half who did this... my own soulmate.

I think someone brought me some food.

There is a metal plate with something that seems to be black mud. But I am not hungry; I am just cold... if someone could just bring me a blanket, the cold would go away. I hate the cold.

Somehow, I fell asleep lying on the thin, dirty blanket that I found on the oor because there is no mattress here.

There is a sink in the corner, open for everyone's view, which I assumed would serve as a bathroom. I do not even want to look at it.

Exhausted from all the events of this day, I closed my eyes again.

It smells like dirt, mold, and rotten meat. My enhanced sense of smell is a nuisance while being here.

My body hurts, and I am wounded, but lanthe is not healing me. Your wolf is supposed to help you with that, but mine cannot. At least not now.

My left arm is bruised black and purple from his hold, and my knees are still scratched.

My wolf stayed silent. She is weak from the pain our mate has caused both of us.

Jax tried to reach lanthe at some point hours ago, but she did not react. I can feel her emotions; she blames herself for what happened.

It is not her fault. I took such a decision... talk to Luna Michelle, right or wrong, it was my decision... well.

I am tired of crying and feeling hurt. Mason embarrassed me and treated me as a criminal in front of everyone. This is not the way to treat your mate.

I guess his rejection will close. I am dead. He will say the social words, and it will be over.

Everything seems surreal to me as if I am dreaming the life of someone else. Nonetheless, it is real; and it happened to me.

I rolled on my back to face the black wall. I do not want the guards to see my face. They come to check on me every while in a while.

I feel like freezing. So much cold. I am hugging my knees and trying to keep warm.

"Is this how your fated mate should treat you?" I ask myself again... No, that is not the question, "how do you recover from something like this?" there... that is the right question for me, and lanthe.

Mason hated that I did not shut up about us being mates, and I told Luna Michelle. I have told everything to Angel and her parents, indirectly, way before... His order came a bit late.

His Alpha voice does not compel me. I can choose to do as I am told or not. I have no idea why, but I have never submitted to him or anyone.

"We are mates. That is why his orders do not have an effect on us." lanthe nally comes back to me with a full sentence.

I imagine she is right. That might be the reason behind my inability to fear the aura of high-ranked werewolves. Maybe.

If I comply with an order, it is because I am expected to do it. However, never without my will.

I feel like throwing out, there is nothing in my stomach, but it hurts more and more. It only intensifies.

As I move to the other side, I see another metal bowl with food. This time is the mud is green. I cannot eat it.

lanthe is awake now; she is bearing this pain with me.

Although, I feel dizzy and weak.

I have not mind-linked anyone from outside by will. Mason warned me. If I try, he will punish me with a silver leash on my neck.

Silver is very painful for a werewolf, and it will hurt me even more because I am an omega.

I believe him now; he does not care that we are mates. Mason hates me, and my stomach hurts again. My bowels twisted so painfully.

Hours passed, and I think I fell asleep again, despite the pain. Then, I sensed her presence. Rose is here, but I am so mortified to look at her considering all that happened. I hid my face behind my hands.

The guards allowed her to enter my cell, and she kneeled. I could not face her yet.

"Clara, please... look at me" She is crying.

"Clara... I have something for you... please, look at me." Rose insisted and touched my arm. I winced but sat down to face her. She gave me something to drink from a black bottle. I accepted it because I was very thirsty. It had a lemon taste.

Feeling better after emptying the bottle, I looked at her. Rose does not have pups of her own neither has her mate yet. However, she gives this motherly vibe.

Rosy is a protector of the weak despite being an omega; she has a strong temper and a disciplined look. Always proper and rigid. Yet, she is here kneeling to be closer to me, without makeup and bags under her eyes. I can see now that she cares deeply about me.

"I am here to take you out. Luna Michelle got your liberation pass." She threw a long black cloak on me, covering me and protecting me from the cold. At that moment, I noticed the cold was also inside of me.

As a doll without a will, she pulled me up and hugged me tightly, trying to put together the broken pieces of me to stand up and walk.

I relied my weight on her as I felt weak and empty. The way out of the dungeon was like a long, never-ending corridor.

Outside, a car with open doors was waiting for us to get in. Mr. Simmons did not take the step in. Mr. Simmons helped me while Angel and Mrs. Simmons were inside.

There were sad smiles on their faces that I could not bear... The pity. Angel is holding my limp hand while my head was on Rose's shoulder. My stomach is feeling better now. The pain receded.

I slept at the Simmons' house after a hot bath, and they just let me sleep. When I wake up, Angel forced me to eat. How can I misbehave with my sister? I am grateful and ashamed as well. They told me to stay in. I did not listen; I feel like I have created the mess I am in.

The pain in my stomach came back today, and it is increasing its intensity as time passes.

"Clara, it is time to talk." Summer was sitting at the bed's foot.

I do not want to think about what she is about to tell me, but I know I must put on my big girl pants and face what is coming for me. I have moped enough already.

"I know," I said and sat looking at her. I feel stronger after having more regular meals and water.

"Please, listen carefully to what I have to say..." I did not interrupt Mr. Simmons. This is going to be a long conversation.

"It is time to make a decision, Clara. I know you are brokenhearted, sweetie; but you need to make a choice." She caressed my cheek.

"A choice?" I asked confused, do I still have a choice?

"Yes. You have options... I would like to see it that way. We made the first choice for you before because you were weak and hurt. Well, you are still hurt... Yet, this decision is yours to make."

"I am sorry, I just do not understand." I was confused. She hesitated a moment before her explanation continued.

"Clara... we got something. A potion. One, strong enough to help you survive Mason's rejection... You need another dose since the pain of your bond breaking with him will be unbearable soon. I think you are already feeling an increasing pain in your chest or stomach by now. Am I right?" She asked and pointed at my chest and then to my tummy.

"Yes, there is a pain in my stomach. It has intensified..." I hate this. I am getting angry at Mason and at what he is making me go through.

"The potion is already losing its strength when the day is not even over. And Mason is not helping either."

"What? What do you mean?" I asked puzzled, he is being away from me for several days by now.

"Marissa is back..." I see. This is the pain of my mate cheating on me, breaking our bond. lanthe growls angrily at the jerk of a mate we received.

"There is more to tell you... Mason is accusing you of treason for bewitching him... to become his Luna." She sounds very calm, but I can tell she is also so mad at Mason.

"What? I do not understand..." Mason is unbelievable!

"Apparently, he found potions in your room and a paper with an incantation with his name." How is it possible? I have never approached a witch or got near to anything magic. Luna Michelle knows me, Rose, and the omegas of the house, too.

"I would never do that to him... or anyone, especially him." This just gets worst and worst.

"He also found Josh's gift and the open date invitation of Luna Margaret to their pack." Like he would care about those things, I should have left when I was invited there!

The formal accusation occurred on the day I was locked in a cell. He checked my room after talking to Luna Michelle and Alpha James. My trial is scheduled in three more from yesterday. Where am I supposed to bring witnesses for my defense?

Mason is absolutely sure that I am not his mate, and he plans to prove it on his trial. He also wants to banish me for good from the pack accusing me of treason.

My supposed charge is a criminal attempt against the Alpha's family and its truthful lineage, which is an act of treason in a pack of werewolves.

I am angry at him; those were not the charges against Sky, and she walked away without the embarrassing show on a discrete trial. All in consideration for her family! The difference between her and me is that she committed that crime, not me! I am his real mate. Mason has gone too far!

Luna Michelle wanted to be my defender, but she cannot because she is Mason's mother and my Godmother. Conic of interest! Are they kidding me? Mason is the accuser, victim, and judge of this trial!

"Mason has put you in a terrible situation. We fear he might reject you as part of his strategy to banish you. That is why you have to make a decision."

I understand his mind now.

Mason takes me to trial, so he can reject me socially in front of everyone. If I am not his mate, I will survive, and he will banish me for treason... And I will become rogue. Because who would accept me in any other pack if accused of those charges?

However, I am Mason's mate, and his rejection will kill me. Regardless, he will be free of me. And he will prove his love for Marissa... killing me.

"Right now, Mason and Jax are in conflict. One of them will prevail, but we do not know who... You can wait, but if you wait too much, hoping for Mason to change his mind or Jax to be stronger than Mason, it might be too late... You can die, Clara." I swallowed the lump on my throat.

"My life is in his hands." I can tell that Mason will not choose me. This time, lanthe did not argue with me.

"Not necessarily... But the solution is not less painful."

I was confused.

"However, if you decide to survive, if you are willing to overcome the pain... we can help you, just say the words..."