

Chapter Fourteen

Theia stares at Epona, eyes dilated with fear, mouth wide open from the sharp inhalation of breath she took as she heard the fateful story. Her heart is pounding so hard it feels as though it will thump its way out of her ribcage. So many thoughts are rushing round and round inside her head that she cannot make sense of anything.

Epona has been continuing to explain what she means by '*a new focus*', but mostly all Theia can hear is noise, not words. *She* can't focus. What Theia can gather is that what Epona's kind have a plan - for people to live on planet Earth without the natural resources we depend on. That's not something new to focus on; that's a death sentence.

Having now discovered the fate of Earth's inhabitants and what Epona is truly doing here, she fears that she is the wrong person to have been thrust into this position of responsibility. She should have told someone. How could she have been so stupid? She has to stop this chain of events, but has no power, no connections, and no ideas. How can she take on an alien race?

She needs to tell someone who has power and connections and ideas. Someone who will believe her. But who? What if she is our only hope? Theia has never sought to be a heroine; she isn't equipped to be one. This must be why Epona felt safe to tell her, because Theia doesn't have the mettle to do anything to stop her.

Or does she?

Theia feels queasy trying to work out the options before her. What options does she have? She lives in the middle of nowhere, with so few friends she can count them on one hand. All she has in her arsenal right now are words.

"But, but people have done so much! Created so much good!" Theia pleads. "We've created antibiotics and vaccines to combat illnesses," she says as she paces the room. "What

about the conservation programmes, and all the money raised by people to support charities?

There has been so much kindness and progress...”

Epona holds up her hand, commanding silence.

“You call it progress despite all the destruction. You take advantage of everything; of each other. That is not kind. You hurt each other deliberately. You hurt yourselves. Charities are needed because you don’t look after one another, or your planet, in the first place. You don’t realise the implications of your actions, and those of you who do are blinded by greed. If you don’t exist, so much more life will remain.”

There is steel in Epona’s eyes.