

*Como Continued from page 1*

crowds. It is a grassy area with a lot of shade from the trees. The back of the cage is wooded so that the wolves can easily blend in. Overall, Como management did a great job of recreating their habitat in a small area; however, the wolf that was separated from her sisters faces a different environment. His bear cage is a large rock. There are no trees and no grass, just rock. In other words, there is no place for escape. She is constantly on public display, and it is in an area that is three times smaller than the original wolf cage. The area is small for the bears, but at least they are used to being confined in these dungeons.

Upon entering the area near this wolf, she starts whining and wagging her tail. I've visited the other wolves often, and that is an irregular behavior. At least, it is odd that she responds that way to a human. Wolves respond that way to each other but rarely to humans. Then she begins pacing back and forth, stopping periodically to look with hopeful eyes. She looks like a child begging for some sort of attention.

Wolves are pack animals. They can usually be seen in large packs of five to eight wolves. The only time a wolf would be alone is if it was being punished by the other wolves. It is their form of capital punishment. They love attention especially physical attention. Punishment is usually the result of fighting the Alpha female or male and losing. The lone wolf did nothing to deserve isolation, so why is she being punished?

A Como official said it wasn't punishment.

She said, "We've attempted to place her with a different zoo, but it is not easy, and to place her back with the other wolves would be dangerous for her." For her to continue to be in isolation is dangerous as well. Como's officials make it sound as if she hasn't been there long, but it has been quite awhile.

People say the eyes are the windows to the soul. If wolves' eyes are as well, I would say that this lone wolf will die of loneliness before she would have been killed by her sisters. Are Como officials really doing all they can for her? They say they are, but the wolf continues to pace her rock coffin with little hope left in her eyes. The last time I visited her, the hopeful, begging eyes were not half as strong. Do Como officials notice, or are they just ignoring it? Protection or punishment, that is what I would like to know.

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