

Chapter 116

Cadifor looked from one of them to the other and then raised his eyebrows at Cullen. "If Keith's busy then I'll assume it's just you and I." He started pulling his clothes on.

"Yeah, Aislinn's going to show Makeda around. You and I will finish getting a hold of the people we need to talk with. I'm assuming that Malik is downstairs by now. They were all supposed to arrive by this morning. But with Jaylyn going into labor I haven't been able to get any of the normal people in one spot to get the information. It's still early."

Cadifor smiled. "I always did like the fact that your pack is less rank and order and more family."

Cullen didn't know how to respond to the compliment. Cadifor looked Aislinn over briefly. "So this is the one with the visions. Pretty," he said.

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Aislinn nodded respectfully to Cadifor. Cullen stood patiently as his friend approached Aislinn and walked around her looking her over as if she were livestock at a fair. He leaned into her and smelled her hair deeply. Cullen took a deep breath, but dealt with it. He knew he'd have to cope with a lot of males checking Aislinn out soon enough.

Cadifor's eyes shifted from the icy amber to a golden glow and he stepped away from Aislinn as if he'd been bitten. He looked over at Cullen. "I see," he said and Cullen nodded in return. "We'd better get going," Cadifor said. "But I have to admit, I won't argue if Makeda talks her into some play."

Cullen and Cadifor went to the door and headed out. Aislinn caught a look from Cullen as they left. He was leaving it up to her. When Aislinn looked back over at Makeda the woman was smiling broadly.

"You're surprised," Makeda said to her. "By what?"

"Sorry," Aislinn sighed. "I'm still relatively new around here. I seem to run into something I find surprising on a daily basis. I was raised human. I've only been around here a little over a month. It's been an adjustment to say the least."

Makeda smiled at her wickedly. "Well, I've been around for a long time. And," she got up from the bed and walked over to Aislinn. "I'd be more than happy to help you adjust."

"Why don't we start with that tour I was told to give you," Aislinn said.

Makeda shrugged. "Whatever you like. I tend to find people much more interesting than buildings. But anything's better than sitting in this room all day."

By noon Cullen, Sarah, and Cadifor with the help of Malik were entrenched in compiling a list of confirmations of lycans that would be joining the Arnauk on the reservation until after the mating ceremony. A group of Senach had arrived and were being more a little secretive as they sat in confidential groups in different areas of the great room, library, and any other gathering place they could get to. A meeting had been held with the elders, who were in awe of the fact that Cadifor was actually in the Madadh-Allaidh Saobhaidh. A general announcement was made about what the druids were doing there and why. The pack was told that Cullen and Aislinn would be mated and that the druids were being brought in as well as other lycans from outside packs as a diplomatic message for the future relations of the Circle and the Pack Council.

Cullen had complained about not giving the pack the truth. But Malik and Cadifor had been adamant that it was a need to know basis. This way if word did leak to Jenna she would only get the impression that she was being left out of a party. Not that they were preparing for war.

When Keith finally arrived he looked haggard but happy. "Two girls," he announced and there was applause. He got a lot of pats on the back and jokes about sympathy for the new father of two girls.*www.noVElWorm.cOm*

Cullen stepped up to Keith and shook his hand, then pulled his best friend to him and hugged him hard. "Thanks," he said.

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Keith laughed. "No problem. What for?"

"Another reminder as to why I bother with the rest of this bullshit," he said and indicated the reports on his desk that the group had been working on.

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Malik watched with pleased interest as the alpha interacted with his men. He knew that Nora would be happy to know that not all alpha lycans were war mongers. The Circle had been concerned about the forced re-involvement with the lycan population. But Malik was coming to the conclusion that it might not be as detrimental as they were thinking.

Malik continued to help with phone calls and by having very specific messengers relay information to alphas that Cadifor wanted involved. Their intent was to make it into a diplomatic meeting just like they said it was. With the correct alphas and a small group of betas from the various trustworthy packs in the area, in combination with the druids it would be much more difficult for Jenna to win this fight. They were still concerned though that they didn't know exactly what they were up against. Unfortunately Malik had no connections inside any lycan packs. The druids had kept their distance from the lycans. It was one thing to hide amongst a human population. But lycans knew their own and that made observation of inner pack workings impossible for the Circle.

Malik was more than happy to help Keith however, and the two of them were more able to get information out of Keith's contacts in the Tairneach. Between the two of them it was much easier trying to ferret out what exactly Jenna was up to and none of the word he managed to get was good.

It seemed that everywhere Aislinn looked there were strange faces. As much as she wanted to speak with the druids that were arriving she found that they were no easier to talk with than the lycans had been in the beginning. The druids kept to themselves and managed to make everyone uneasy since it seemed that they were watching everything.

Makeda was a great deal more helpful than Aislinn had ever dreamed and she started to wonder who was giving the tour to whom. Makeda appeared to be an expert on lycan and druid behavior. Aislinn would lead her into an area of the den and Makeda would study the lycans about the room then point out to Aislinn appropriate and inappropriate things that were going on. Then she'd watch the druids for a while and tell Aislinn what had their attention and why. Aislinn loved the fact that Makeda was frank, honest, open and actually seemed to be enjoying explaining pack behavior to Aislinn. In that one morning Makeda managed to cover everything from the way Cadifor and Cullen had behaved in the bedroom to why the different ranked lycans were behaving in different ways toward the new arrivals, lycan and druid.