

Chapter 125

Jenna worked her way through the woods. Maon was following close behind and debating whether she was worth it. Sure she was beautiful and he used to think she was brilliant and his wolf wanted her in a way that drove him mad. But this was insane.

The men who had taken advantage of Jenna's offer to turn them into direns were in hybrid form and slinking through the shadows. In the end there had been 24 that Jenna had approved. 19 men and 5 women had taken the opportunity to make themselves into what Jenna was calling the future of the alpha. No one questioned why Jenna hadn't joined them yet.

Maon carried the bag that contained the things the druids had said they needed. He listened to the wrapped glass clink together in the pack on his back as they headed for the Arnauk cabin. He wondered how many alphas were there and how many druids were there and if they had any idea what was coming. He was fairly certain that no number of alphas was going to be capable of competing with the 24 direns he was leading in. His concern was with the fact that they were about to disrupt an event that appeared to be being sponsored by the Pack Council.

When Maon had voiced his concern with that Jenna had cooed at him and stroked his chest the way she did that always managed to make anything she said sound more reasonable. "So kill Cadifor and take his place on the Council," she'd said. "After what Rafe did the Council is ignorant to want to bring druids into their trust. You'd be saving the Pack Council from disaster if we manage to break this up. They'll thank you."

Maon growled. In after thought he wasn't sure it sounded as good as it had in the office. But it was a little late for that now. Cullen had planned the mating for nightfall. It was already dark in the woods that covered the Arnauk reservation. But the sun was yet to set completely. The Tairneach were nearing their goal. If he took his time with the mating then they would have more than enough time to interrupt the ceremony, kill Aislinn and use the stone circle to turn himself and Jenna into the much improved version of the 24 lycans that were going to make it all possible. The rest of the pack was trailing along behind it all with the druids who would perform the ritual.

Maon watched Jenna move around another bush. They were getting close enough that people needed to start watching for stray couples playing in the woods before the ceremony. This was it. There wouldn't be another chance. If Jenna didn't succeed then the pack would replace her one way or another. If Maon wanted Jenna and the pack then this was going to have to work. He kept going over the situation in his head. They had the strength to counter the Arnauk numbers. This should work. He growled in frustration. Something just didn't feel right.

Malik looked around at the crowd that gathered. He smiled. The lycans were uneasy. But there was no need for it. He was pleased that the others had decided to go ahead with the blessing, if only to show the people gathered here that Rafe was an exception and not the rule to their kind.

Malik noted with pleasure that Cullen and Aislinn had chosen to attend the blessing. He motioned to them. "It's not necessary. But as the couple to be joined, even if it isn't the way we would conduct the ceremony," he added with a smile, "you could stand in the center." Malik indicated the stone slab at the middle of the circle.

Cullen looked to Cadifor. "Trust them," Cadifor said. "That's the only way this alliance is going to go anywhere."(w)ww.©©veLW©RM.com

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Cullen took Aislinn's hand in his and lifted it to his lips, then led her toward the stone circle. Aislinn briefly hesitated. She cleared her mind and prayed that the circle wouldn't act the same way it did the last time she was here. She could just imagine what Cullen would do if she disappeared again.

When Cullen and Aislinn approached the entire circle seemed to surge with energy. There as a druid standing in front of each of the stones and they looked at each other and then at Aislinn as she and Cullen stepped onto the slab. Aislinn was just relieved that nothing traumatic had happened when she passed the perimeter of the stones.

Malik approached them. He stared into her eyes. She seemed so innocent as she looked back at him. She didn't even realize how attuned this place was to her. "I believe you may be favored by the Fates," Malik said.

Aislinn smiled. She assumed it was part of whatever they had wanted to do. They called it a blessing and Malik's statement had been complimentary.

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Malik returned to his place. The Fates would bring her to understanding if and when they chose to. Tonight was not the time for lessons of that kind. There didn't seem to be any kind of signal but the druids all began to sing at the same time. They sang in gaelic in harmonic tones and it seemed to echo through the woods. "Móran láithean dhuit is sith, Le d'mhaitheas is le d'nì bhí fàs." The words were sweet and the listeners all felt like they knew the song from somewhere, but they couldn't quite place it. On the third chorus of the beautiful melody the druids who were outside of the stone circle began to sing as well and the whole of the wood seemed to sway with the enchanting song. Suddenly lights began to flicker about the stone circle.

Aislinn wasn't sure she had seen it at first. The song was mesmerizing and made her feel a bit sleepy as she listened. It was as though she wanted to close her eyes and get lost in the song. Then there was the strange flickering light again. Then another.

The druids began to raise their voices and the lights flickered longer and longer until finally the clearing was filled with fluttering faeries. They flitted from stone to stone as though they were curious where they were until they all began to gather within the circle. There was no organization to the creatures. They fluttered and hovered like humming birds of all different sizes but no bigger than a rosebud. They glowed like starlight and left sparkling trails as they danced about the clearing and the stones. There was no counting them or seeing exactly what they looked like. Once and while as the song progressed they would hover just long enough to see a body with wings and then the beautiful ball of light would flit off in a different direction.

Aislinn was enchanted. She had never seen anything so beautiful in her life. One of the faeries flew in close to her and she held up her hand with her palm up to see if the little light would come to her. It darted about her head and extended hand. She thought she could almost hear it whispering to her.

As the druids' singing began to slow and quiet the lights began to flicker again until they vanished with the end of the song. The lycans were enraptured by what they had seen. Malik and the others smiled and then each of them in turn approached Cullen and Aislinn, kissed Aislinn on the cheek and wished her long life, children, and happiness.

Malik was the last of them. "I've never seen so many of them come to our song," he said. "You must have a fair number of gentry living here. It shows your care for this place and each other."

Ailinn smiled at him, curiosity evident in her eyes. "I don't understand. They live here?"

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Malik's smile increased. "They live everywhere but prefer places like this. They came to listen to the song. They don't always." Malik kissed Aislinn's cheek and bowed to her the way the lycans had been doing. Then he walked away as the others had done.