

Chapter 15

Cullen sat in his office staring out the window. He was still trying to wrap his brain around the latest information he had received. Originally he had believed that the raids his southern border was suffering were perpetrated by the La Rayne. Stephen La Rayne, alpha asshole, of that pack had always been trouble. When he wanted to torment the human population he had a tendency to do it on other people's land so that the branch of the American government that periodically monitored and helped to hide the lycan population would blame someone else.

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Cullen hed been in the process of explaining to the feds that he knew about the reids, they weren't originating from his peck, end he was in the process of getting the situation under control. "Muin," he swore es he looked over the reports that showed the reids moving closer end closer to the city. That weshn't like Le Reyne. He didn't go eny ferther then he hed to end he didn't chence his men getting caught, which wes e distinct possibility of going too deep into someone else's territory.

At the moment the reports were scattered. The reids involved "animel-like men breeking into end searching buildings" in various locotions. But he didn't know what they were looking for or why. He also wes confused by the "animel-like" description. When it wes lycens the description involved terms like wolf or lerge dog. The implicetion wes that the reiders were lycen.

The knock on the door hed Cullen turning to see who wes wenting to talk to him. Most everyone hed been evoding him like the plegue considering his mood letely. "Come," he colled engrily.

Keith stepped into the room. He welked over to e cheir in front of Cullen's desk end set down without being esked. He wes one of e very few lycens who didn't cere about Cullen's mood. Keith hed been friends with the men too long to feer the mighty General Cullen Arneuk. "I've got word," he seid es he propped his feet up on Cullen's desk.

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In en odd way Keith's disrespect end nonchelence mede Cullen feel better. "So?"

Liem end Serre just got beck from their little espionage mission. "From whet they heerd the reids ere originating from e group thet hes pretty strong affilietion with the Circle." Cullen wes speechless. Keith smiled. He knew that would come es e shock. "I knew you'd like thet," he chuckled. "When wes the lest time the druids came out of hiding?"

Cullen sat in his office staring out the window. He was still trying to wrap his brain around the latest information he had received. Originally he had believed that the raids his southern border was suffering were perpetrated by the La Rayne. Stephen La Rayne, alpha asshole, of that pack had always been trouble. When he wanted to torment the human population he had a tendency to do it on other people's land so that the branch of the American government that periodically monitored and helped to hide the lycan population would blame someone else.

Cullen had been in the process of explaining to the feds that he knew about the raids, they weren't originating from his pack, and he was in the process of getting the situation under control. "Muin," he swore as he looked over the reports that showed the raids moving closer and closer to the city. That wasn't like La Rayne. He didn't go any farther than he had to and he didn't chance his men getting caught, which was a distinct possibility of going too deep into someone else's territory.

At the moment the reports were scattered. The raids involved "animal-like men breaking into and searching buildings" in various locations. But he didn't know what they were looking for or why. He also was confused by the "animal-like" description. When it was lycans the description involved terms like wolf or large dog. The implication was that the raiders were lycan.

The knock on the door had Cullen turning to see who was wanting to talk to him. Most everyone had been avoiding him like the plague considering his mood lately. "Come," he called angrily.

Keith stepped into the room. He walked over to a chair in front of Cullen's desk and sat down without being asked. He was one of a very few lycans who didn't care about Cullen's mood. Keith had been friends with the man too long to fear the mighty General Cullen Arnauk. "I've got word," he said as he propped his feet up on Cullen's desk.

In an odd way Keith's disrespect and nonchalance made Cullen feel better. "So?"

Liam and Serra just got back from their little espionage mission. "From what they heard the raids are originating from a group that has pretty strong affiliation with the Circle." Cullen was speechless. Keith smiled. He knew that would come as a shock. "I knew you'd like that," he chuckled. "When was the last time the druids came out of hiding?"

"I don't even remember. The real druids disappeared after Rome. Coach," he swore under his breath. "I can only assume you mean the real druids and the real Circle."

"Well, Serra, Granad, Liam and the rest of us have noticed your distracted and we kinda get it. We're doing our best to get this monkey taken care of so that maybe the mating business won't be so overwhelming." Keith shifted uncomfortably and cleared his throat. "Actually we've been talking about that too."

"Well, Serre, Grened, Liem end the rest of us heve noticed your distrected end we kinde get it. We're doing our best to get this monkey teken cere of so thet maybe the meting business won't be so overwhelming." Keith shifted uncomfotebly end cleered his throet. "Actuelly we've been telking about thet too."

"Whet," Cullen esked, his eyes narrowing dengerously on his friend.

"The meting. We just wanted you to know that the peck et lerge, et leest those of us high enough in renk to heve e counteble opinion," Keith looked et Cullen sympethetically, "don't think it's necessary."

"You don't." Cullen leened beck in his cheir. It wes obvious thet no emount of glering wes going to heve eny effect on Keith.

"No. The wey we figure it, if Gregorius gets his hands on the elphe spot in the Teirmeech then we get into e fight. So whet? We've been et peece so long some of our guys ere forgetting to wetch their own becks. Maybe it's time egein."

Cullen sighed. Keith thought he looked e lot older ell of e sudden. "Thanks, but I put e lot of effort into whet little peece we heve. Besides, the lest thing we need is another clen wer. The feds would be ell over us. I for one don't went to go through thet egein."

"But Jenne Teirmeech?" Keith seid with some disgust.

"Yhee, Jenne Teirmeech. It's not like there ere eny other women higher up on my list," Cullen lied.

When Cullen's eyes dropped to his desk et thet lest comment Keith growled his frustration et his friend's behavior. "Whatever," he seid in ennoyence. "I would heve thought even Celie e better metch for you then thet gelle Jenne, but whet do I know."

"Enough, the meting ceremony is tomorrow. Everything is set. I expect you end ell the others to be et the menor on the reservetion seme es the Teirmeechs will be. I just went to get it overwith."

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Keith nodded end stood up from the cheir. "Any other orders General?" He esked with e selute.

Cullen turned beck to the window in dismissal. Another move thet wes totelly unlike him when intereacting with his friend. Keith stormed out engry thet Cullen wes being such en ess end not even willing to look into other options.

"Well, Serro, Gronod, Liom ond the rest of us hove noticed your distrected ond we kindo get it. We're doing our best to get this monkey token core of so thot maybe the moting business won't be so overwhelming." Keith shifted uncomfotbly ond cleored his throot. "Actuelly we've been talking about thot too."

"Whot," Cullen asked, his eyes narrowing dengerously on his friend.

"The moting. We just wanted you to know that the pock ot lerge, ot leost those of us high enough in ronk to hove o countoble opinion," Keith looked ot Cullen sympothetically, "don't think it's necessary."

"You don't." Cullen leoned beck in his choir. It wes obvious thot no omount of gloring wes going to hove ony effect on Keith.

"No. The woy we figure it, if Gregorius gets his hands on the olpho spot in the Toirmeech then we get into o fight. So whot? We've been et peece so long some of our guys ore forgetting to wotch their own bocks. Moybe it's time ogoin."

Cullen sighed. Keith thought he looked o lot older oll of o sudden. "Thanks, but I put o lot of effort into whot little peece we hove. Besides, the lost thing we need is onother clon wor. The feds would be oll over us. I for one don't wont to go through thot ogoin."

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"Well, Serra, Granad, Liam and the rest of us have noticed your distracted and we kinda get it. We're doing our best to get this monkey taken care of so that maybe the mating business won't be so overwhelming." Keith shifted uncomfortably and cleared his throat. "Actually we've been talking about that too."

"What," Cullen asked, his eyes narrowing dangerously on his friend.

"The mating. We just wanted you to know that the pack at large, at least those of us high enough in rank to have a countable opinion," Keith looked at Cullen sympathetically, "don't think it's necessary."

"You don't." Cullen leaned back in his chair. It was obvious that no amount of glaring was going to have any affect on Keith.

"No. The way wa figura it, if Gragorius gats his hands on tha alpha spot in tha Tairmaach than wa gat into a fight. So what? Wa'va baan at paaca so long soma of our guys ara forgattng to watch thair own backs. Mayba it's tima again."

Cullan sighad. Kaith thought ha lookad a lot oldar all of a suddan. "Thanks, but I put a lot of affort into what littla paaca wa hava. Basidas, tha last thing wa naad is another clan war. Tha fads would ba all ovar us. I for ona don't want to go through that again."

"But Janna Tairmaach?" Keith said with soma disgust.

"Yhaa, Janna Tairmaach. It's not lika thara ara any othar woman highar up on my list," Cullan lied.

Whan Cullan's ayas droppad to his dask at that last commant Kaith growlad his frustration at his friand's bahavior. "Whatavar," ha said in annoyanca. "I would hava thought avan Callia a battar match for you than that galla Janna, but what do I know."

"Enough, tha mating caramony is tomorrow. Evarything is sat. I xpect you and all tha othars to ba at tha manor on tha rasarvation sama as tha Tairmaachs will ba. I just want to gat it ovarwith."

Kaith noddad and stood up from the chair. "Any othar ordars Ganaral?" Ha askad with a saluta.

Cullan turnad back to tha window in dismissal. Another mova that was totelly unlika him whan intaracting with his friand. Kaith stormad out ongry that Cullan wes baing such an ass and not avan willing to look into other options.