

Chapter 29

Aislinn shifted awkwardly . "Well, I guess that you might have a right to ask that after the way we spent the morning. But I can honestly tell you that I don't really know. Not that I see why it should matter," she added with a knowing look. "In any case I prefer to answer my door with clothes no matter who is there. I've never known any guys who were quite that free. Even with good friends. Maybe you could arrange for me to get something to where for when I'm on my way out of here?"

"Aislinn," Cullen came over and sat down on the bed facing her. He knew from the tone, the run on attempt at changing the subject and the look on her face that he was in dangerous territory. He was speaking slowly and Aislinn figured that he was choosing his words very carefully. "As far as you and I are concerned, I don't care what you are. I want you here regardless. You can be an alien for all that matters," he smiled at her and she smiled back at the attempt to be light hearted. "But I'm in a difficult position when it comes to balancing my personal life with protecting the pack."

Aislinn's face dropped and became more tired and sad. "So if I were a danger to you would you get rid of me?"

Cullen quickly moved closer to her and reached out to touch her cheek. He forced her to look into his eyes. "No. I don't think I'd be capable of giving you up at this point. But I need all the information I can get if I'm going to make sure everyone is safe."

Aislinn smiled at him weakly. She put her hand on the back of his, turned her face to kiss his palm and pulled his hand away. "I'm sorry but I told you the truth. I was born human. At least I thought I was. I don't know. Rafe," he felt her shudder at the mention of that name, "has confused me about a lot of things."

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"Alright, so start from the beginning. Who is Rafe? How do you know him? How did you know about the things you said to me at the restaurant the other night?"

"That's all a long story," she said and it was apparent that she didn't want to talk about it.

Cullen nodded. He got up and headed over to a table where he had left his phone the night before. He hit a button and waited, all the while smiling at her reassuringly. "Hey, Sarah?" Cullen paused and then growled into the phone. "I told Keith an hour. You'll get your explanations then. For now I need you to bring some clothes up here for Aislinn." There was another pause. "I don't know," he answered, then looked over at Aislinn. "What size do you wear?" She raised her eyebrows as if to say the question wasn't polite. "Oh come on," he said exasperated. "I can't get you clothes if I don't know what to ask for."

"Six," she responded.www.n.eV(e)/w_e(r)tt.(c)om

Cullen echoed the number into the phone. "And give me some time." Then he hung up and walked over to Aislinn with a frustrated air.

"You know I could have just worn my work clothes." She indicated the pile he had made the night before. "I was just giving you a hard time," she said apologetically.

Cullen mirrored the concerned look she was giving him and shook his head. "My frustration isn't for you. Please don't take it like that. And the clothes aren't an issue. There are plenty lying around here somewhere. We tend to go through them regularly," he smiled.

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Aislinn smiled back but it was only half-hearted and when he continued it dropped from her face completely again. "I'm sorry I have to push this. But I get the impression that you know a great deal that could help with some things we've been having trouble coping with."

"Can't we just go back to having sex," she grinned wickedly. But Cullen's eyes told her that she needed to be serious and answer him. She shifted uncomfortably, then shot a heavy glare at Cullen. "I'm not used to being able to trust people the way you're asking me to trust you right now."

Cullen was trying to be understanding, but he didn't have a lot of time and was a bit hurt that she'd fuck him but wouldn't trust him. "I can't make you talk to me," he said and the hurt came through in his tone. "But you did say that you feel safe with me."WwW.Nôv@lw_e(r).c.ômm

Aislinn nodded. She did feel safe with him. She wanted to trust him.

Cullen could see the conflict in her eyes as she stared at her hands and considered what to do. "Aislinn, I don't even know your whole name. I can tell you that the amount of trust I had to have in you to bring you up here was pretty high. I got used to trusting my instincts some time ago. I wonder why you're fighting yourself so hard right now. I give you my word that I won't hurt you. You may not know it, because you aren't part of the pack, but my word is worth a great deal to me. I don't make promises lightly."

"Alright," she said slowly. I guess I have to start trusting someone sometime. God I hope he is what he seems to be, she thought and tears almost came to her eyes. Aislinn hadn't wanted anything this badly in a long time. She hadn't dared to think she could have a family again, let alone a lover. And she wanted this to be so much more than just a onetime thing. "The burning buildings," Aislinn started, remembering the vision she'd had in the restaurant.

Cullen nodded encouragingly. "I need to know how you knew about that and what else you might know."

Aislinn sighed. She knew that she might as well get it over with. I suppose if he's going to decide I'm not worth the effort because of my past then it would be better for it to happen sooner rather than later. Aislinn resigned herself to the possibility of a miserable outcome and decided to just give him the whole story from the beginning. "Okay, I guess I should say that I've had premonitions, visions for as long as I can remember. When I was little I was told that it was just coincidence that I was dreaming about things that happened. The visions didn't get detailed or strange until after Rafe." Cullen's eyes narrowed but he sat silently waiting for her to continue.

"In the beginning it was just vague impressions about things. My mother used to tell me that I was psychic, just like her. It always bothered my grandmother. She would tell my mother not to encourage me. They fought a lot about that." Aislinn's eyes glazed over and sadness over took her features. Cullen was tempted to comfort her but he didn't want to take the chance that she'd stop talking. "I believed that for a while. The visions didn't actually get strong or bad until I met Rafe. That was in college. About seven years ago. I was earning my masters in folklore." She smiled at him wanly. "Maybe I was always headed in this direction. My thesis was on gothic lit. You know Frankenstein, Dracula, and the reality that resulted in the fiction. My mother always argued with me about my college career. She didn't think I'd ever get a job with that kind of degree. I told her that I'd get my doctorate and teach it. I couldn't help it. I was just drawn to that stuff." Cullen chuckled and grinned at her. Thinking how gorgeous her eyes were.