

## Chapter 42

Cullen had to give Keith credit. He was nothing if not efficient. Cullen was looking over the pile of reports on his desk. It had only taken Keith 24 hours to produce a background report on Rafe Senach. Cullen was reading over the man's information. He looked relatively innocuous, if the reports were taken at face value. There really wasn't much more to it than what Aislinn had told him the other day, except some previous addresses that Keith already sent people to check out along with the address of the compound that Aislinn had been held at. The idea of what the man had done to her had Cullen contemplating the things he intended to do to Rafe.

Cullen also had a list of names. On the list were three bookshop owners, a couple collectors, and a librarian. All of whom shared the last name Senach with Rafe or, Keith had found out, were related to a Senach. Keith had done some digging and had pulled up some information on the family name. Apparently a lot of Senachs had been dying recently. They were a fairly normal family from public appearances. They didn't participate in politics. Most of them were teachers or writers. Cullen picked up a history book that Keith had provided with the report. It was written by a woman who called herself Alissa Morgan and covered information on ancient Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. That hit a cord with Cullen. Keith had found out that 'Morgan' was her pen name and she was one of these Senach. Keith was currently in the process of trying to find a couple of them. All of the unexplained deaths recently had Cullen wondering if the entire Circle was the problem or just this one member.

Cullen sat back in his chair and tried to remember what his father had told him about the Circle. Cullen hadn't thought about his father in a long time. Dyfan Arnauk had died long before Cullen had become strong enough to be an alpha. Cullen had always wished he'd been around to see the pack. The only thing Cullen knew was that the Circle had spent the last thousand years keeping their heads down and practicing pacifism to a fault. That was why the Pack Council and the Circle Council had parted company in the first place. The various pack leaders hadn't been willing to go quietly into the night, so to speak, and the Circle Council hadn't been willing to stand and fight. They wanted the Pack to play guard dog but avoid direct confrontation. It just went against Pack instinct and after a few hundred years the Pack left the Circle on its own. It wasn't a bad separation. Both sides of the issue agreed that they weren't compatible any longer. Like an amiable divorce. But that was what the Circle had been like. Live and let live.

After a dozen decades or so the Circle had been hidden for so long most of the people who had been a threat to them were either involved in different wars or dead. Another couple hundred years and even the lycans started to forget about them. By the time Cullen's father had told him the stories about the Circle they were legend and most lycans didn't even believe it any longer. The main legend being the one about the druids creating the first of the lycans. But that couldn't have been true could it? Lycans were born. Not created. All the ridiculous werewolf movies the humans liked to make up and the biting coach drove him nuts. Most lycans thought of that legend as similar to the Greek legends the humans had. No one really believed it. If you wanted to make a lycan, or any other were for that matter, two of them got together and had a good rut. Biting could be fun and with the human obsession to be more than a boring old human he could understand why they made that crap up. Everyone just assumed the druid stories were similar. Or the druids looking to give the lycans a god impression. He didn't even know if the stories were told to kids any more. But could there be something more to it?

Cullen was debating on what he should say to Aislinn about it. She seemed to have accepted that Rafe had done something to her. The way that it sounded, from her description of the compound he was calling the Circle, he was either recruiting weres or he might be creating them. If he was creating them who knows what he had done to Aislinn. But if he had been trying to turn her into something Cullen didn't understand why she couldn't change. Rafe couldn't make someone half into a were could he? It didn't make a lot of sense. Cullen pushed the thoughts out of his head and went back to the reports. *www.novélwörM.com*

Keith hadn't been able to produce any concrete information on anyone in their pack causing trouble. But there was a list of tentative names of men who had been acting more agitated than usual and people who had been out of contact. That list included reasons for the inability to get a hold of them.

As far as the bonfires and Jenna went there wasn't anything new or helpful on that front either. Jenna was still missing and the Tairneach were threatening war. Cullen had even had a phone call from one of the feds who kept an eye on the pack interactions. He'd spent part of his afternoon reassuring the man that he had it all under control. He just wished he believed what he had told the fool on the phone.

The questions about the bonfires led to omegas who said that Jenna had made them do it and had told them where to get the stuff to do it. Cullen had been given a small pouch containing an assortment of plants that the omegas had put on the fire to turn it green. Apparently Jenna had said that it was for decorative purposes. Now half the omegas who had been at the reservation that night were panicking and thinking it was all their fault.

There was a knock on his door and Cullen groaned. He had too much information floating around his brain at the moment. He didn't want any more. When Aislinn popped her head in the door and smiled at him he couldn't help but smile back with relief. He waved her in and she closed the door behind herself.

"I was thinking about dinner. You interested?" she asked as she walked around his desk and stepped up to him.

Cullen grabbed her hips and pulled her down onto his lap so that she was straddling him, her hands were on his shoulders, and she was nose to nose with him. He nuzzled her playfully. Gods I got it bad, he thought. "You have no idea how glad I am that you're not Keith."

She smiled wickedly. She settled down onto the growing erection beneath her and chuckled. "I think I can guess how glad you are that I'm not Keith." She put her arms around his neck and kissed him passionately. This whole experience was scaring her. Not in any of the ways that Cullen thought it might. All she could think about each time he touched her was the idea that every time she had found something good in recent history, Rafe had shown up and destroyed

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"How has your afternoon been?" Cullen pushed her hair away from her face. He was contemplating shoving the reports off of his desk and taking her on it. *(w)ww.novélw(ó)r@.Com*

Aislinn giggled at the look in his eyes. She knew exactly what he was thinking. "Didn't you get enough last night and then this morning," she teased, knowing that if he wanted more she'd willingly give it and she hoped the smile on her face told him as much. "All the women are avoiding me," she responded to his question. "So it's been a pretty uneventful day. I guess Meredith told them all that I broke her arm. If I did," Aislinn looked skeptical, "I really didn't mean to. But she has it all wrapped up and keeps whining about it. There appear to be two groups of people."

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