

## Chapter 52

For the most part Sarah and Keith had been supporting Aislinn being in the pack because Cullen so obviously wanted her there. He was the alpha and if he wanted this non-lycan outsider then whether they thought it was a good idea or not Keith and Sarah backed him. He so rarely asked the pack to just do something because he said so. Besides, she seemed to make him happy and they were his friends.

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Sarah and Keith had heard the edited version of Aislinn's story from Cullen during the elders' meeting. But hearing the detailed version from her own lips was much more compelling. They found themselves feeling for her and actually wanting to help.

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Brinah's eyes were wide and she looked as though she may cry. Aislinn tried to gloss over some things but Brinah seemed to have an innate sense of when she was skipping ahead and forced the extra information out. The only thing she was able to keep from her grandmother was the fact that Rafe had done something to 'change' her. She just couldn't bring herself to let her grandmother know how different things really were. She knew that her grandmother was looking for a way to bring her home. Brinah was shaking her head and looking scared when the entire rendition from Rafe creating his own Circle to his obsession with Aislinn and now finding the standing stones was finished.

Brinah let all her air out as if she hadn't breathed for the past hour. "You are all in a great deal more danger than you have any idea. I suppose," she said in a defeated tone, "I would be talking to air if I suggested that you abandon this place and take shelter somewhere far away."

Cullen growled at that. "We're not druids. We don't run and hide."

Brinah looked at him with fear painted in every feature on his face. "Then you're all going to be killed."

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Ranaild entered the lobby of Madadh-Allaidh Saobhaidh. He felt like his life was coming to an end. To some extent he figured that one way or another he would be dead. Either Rafe would kill him or Cullen would kill him. Hell Aislinn was rumored to have closet fighting abilities. Maybe she would kill him. Any way it happened he would probably be dead by the end of this. He may even have to kill himself if he couldn't find a way out. He had done his best to avoid harming anyone. But with the dagger coated in his mate's blood tucked into the back of his jeans to give him the strength to go through with his assignment he headed for the elevator, inserted his key, and hit the button for the 13th floor.

As the elevator proceeded up the elevator stopped at the 3rd floor and a human couple stared at the stormy faced lycan in the elevator. One look at the man had them deciding to wait for the next one.

When the elevator finished its agonizing ascent to the main floor of the den Ranaild nearly vomited on the floor. He walked into the great room. Everyone who saw him got out of his way. They didn't know why Raniald was upset, but he wasn't a lycan to mess with when he was angry. He was one of Cullen's best men and a pack elder. They assumed that whatever the problem was, it would be above their heads. No one even asked what was wrong.

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Ranaild asked an omega where Cullen and Aislinn were. When he was told that they were in an office meeting, just down the hall, he decided to take a seat and wait. He just needed an opportunity.

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Cullen stared at Brinah with angry fire. "I don't accept that as an option."

Brinah glared right back. "Then you're a fool."

"The druids were never so powerful that what you're suggesting could be possible." Cullen was speaking with a deadly calm and his features had taken on the stony look he got when dealing when someone he was trying to intimidate and control. Brinah was unimpressed by Cullen's appearance. That all by itself was impressive. But it reminded Cullen of Aislinn's firey attitude and softened his opinion of Brinah slightly.

"We've told you why we brought you here. Now you need to tell us what you know about Rafe and what we can do about his mind altering coach. Then if you don't want to stick around and find out how it'll turn out that's your call."

Brinah's eyes narrowed. "I find it interesting that Aislinn did all the talking and the story was for the most part hers, for years, before you all came into the picture, accidentally. It's interesting that you seem to count her as one of you. If anything she's a watered down druid. Not a lycan."

"That doesn't change the fact that Rafe is trying to take a piece of my territory. Stop trying to alter the subject. I'm getting the impression that you may not be able to be as helpful as you originally seemed to indicate. If the only reason you told us you could help was so you could come here and attempt to take her home with you I'm afraid you'll find that Rafe is more intent on getting his hands on her than you understand and you'd be risking both your lives leaving. Your presence here now negates the possibility of your leaving without the danger of him following you."

Aislinn found Cullen's calm strange to watch. He was always so passionate with her it was as though he was another person. She didn't like the way her grandmother and Cullen were arguing. "That's enough both of you. Grandma you said you could help us make something."

Brinah looked at her granddaughter. Her eyes were searching Aislinn's. Cullen wasn't the only one referring to her as being with them. She was afraid she had permanently lost her granddaughter. A tear formed in the corner of her eye and she leaned toward Aislinn and reached out to put her hand on her cheek. "If you choose this life here, you'll never be able to go home Aislinn. There are a great many people there who love and miss you."

Aislinn's breath caught in her throat. Cullen just sat there waiting for her response. She didn't even look at him. If she managed to get away from all of this and he dealt with Rafe she could very easily go back to her life with her family. Rafe hadn't changed her enough to make a human existence impossible. He watched her with her grandmother and he saw the loss in her eyes. She didn't want to make the decision. He knew from the way she had spoken to him about her mother and her grandmother before that she missed them all terribly. He could easily understand that. He knew how he would feel if he was pulled out of the pack. Not that he wouldn't willingly leave it all for her. But he couldn't make her make that choice. Especially since she didn't seem nearly as interested in being here as he was in having her here.