

Chapter 58

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There was a sound in the hallway and Aislinn looked up to see a disheveled, abused woman barely walking, being led by the arm down the hall. When Ranaild saw her he had to be held back in the entry way. Rafe knelt down next to Aislinn and spoke softly to her. "Look how weak they are. So attached to one another that they'll sacrifice their entire lives just to be together. They'll have nowhere to go now. And every time they look at each other they will know that he betrayed his pack to save her. They'll spend their lives running away, feeling guilt rack them, and all because lycans have a terribly misplaced idea of loyalty and love." Rafe stood up and sneered at them. "Pitiful."

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Elise was shoved into Ranaild's arms and they stood there holding each other. Elise's sobs could be heard all the way down the hall. The few lycans present could feel the pain that had been caused in them by what Rafe had done. Jenna appeared in the doorway. She was watching the couple and toying with a ring on a chain around her neck. She looked over at Rafe and could see the wheels in his head turning. Before he could change his mind about letting them go Jenna waved her hand and the pair was ushered out the door.

Aislinn laid her head back down on the marble floor. The cold felt good against her feverish face. She took a couple long breaths and waited. She didn't know what Rafe intended to do next but there wasn't anything she could do about it.

Jenna watched. She knew that Rafe intended to make Aislinn his alpha. Here she was again. She had even allowed herself to be subjected to a mating with the muin bastard and he was going to throw her aside the minute he didn't need her any longer. But for now his connection with her was keeping the Tairneach accepting of him as alpha. He still needed her a while longer. That would buy her time. She fondled her father's ring on the chain around her neck and her eyes fell on one of the larger lycans in the room. He nodded to her submissively and she smiled back. Not yet, she thought at him, but soon.

Cullen was standing in the security suite. The watchman had found Aislinn on the tape. His heart was sinking into his stomach. He watched Aislinn walk through the lobby and out the front doors. He noted the direction she had gone in. But who the hell knew where she went after she left the building.

He watched the tape and saw several different members of the pack coming and going at the same time. A couple of them even watched her leave. But she had that air of someone doing exactly what she should be doing and no one stopped her or said anything.

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Cullen pulled his cell phone out of his pocket. He called Keith. When the tired voice came through the line Cullen growled at the phone. "Aislinn is missing," he said simply.

That woke Keith up. He looked at the clock on the night stand. It said 7am. The sun was just barely peeking through the windows. "How long?" He said getting out of bed. Jaylyn growled a complaint. She spent most of her time in bed recently, seeing as she was heavily pregnant and due to drop any time now.

"Since she left the meeting yesterday," came the deadpan over the line.

Keith was surprised that it had taken this long for Cullen to call. "Where are you?"

"The security suite." Cullen was still watching the tape. She looked like she was fine. She just left. "I'm watching the camera footage of her leaving the lobby. There are a few others who left at the same time. I'm going to start calling and see if anyone saw anything. I want you to get Brinah working on that stuff she said she could do. I get the feeling I'm going to need it sooner than I originally intended."

"I'm on it." Keith had already left the room and was headed into the elevator. He'd need Sarah, considering he didn't know what room Brinah had been put in. He put his cell phone back in his pocket and headed for Sarah's room.

Cullen watched the tape and paused it. He stared at the man who left shortly after Aislinn. Ranaild. He opened his cell and searched for the number then hit send. On the other end of the line Ranaild held his phone up and looked at the caller ID. Then he looked over at Elise. She stared at him with tears in her eyes. They were walking down a deserted street headed away from the Tairneach manor. Ranaild couldn't face it yet. When he knew that Elise was safe he would probably go to Cullen and confess what he had done. But for now he silenced his phone and placed it back in his pocket. Cullen left a message, telling Ranaild to call him back.

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Cullen forwarded the tape to the next people out the front door. Celia and Mack. Cullen growled and shook his head. That's just what he needed. He found Celia's number in his phone and hit send. Again no answer. Celia was down the hall in the gym. She was running the track, trying desperately to get Mack and what had happened out of her head.

Cullen dialed Mack angrily and listened to the phone ring and ring. He was about ready to rip the computer panels out of the desk when Mack picked up the call. "Yeah," a tired voice came into the phone.

Cullen's dead pan voice was eerie and had Mack listening to the man on the other end of the line with even more attention than usual. "You and Celia were on your way out of the building last night about the same time as Aislinn. Did you see her?" Cullen was answered with an extended silence that had him wanting to crawl through the phone and shake the man on the other end of the line.

"Yeah, Ranaild was following her." Mack was suddenly sick to his stomach. Celia had been right. "Cel thought that he was up to something and was trying to follow him. I thought that you'd stuck Ranaild on her as a tail and talked Celia down and brought her back to the den." The apologetic tone on the other end of the line did nothing to stem Cullen's temper.

Cullen threw the cell phone across the room then proceeded to have a temper tantrum that included destroying quite a bit of computer equipment. The poor man on duty had to jump several times to get out of the way. Suddenly Cullen stopped and stared at the ceiling with his hands balled into fists at his sides. "The report," he said far too calmly. He looked over at the security guard. His eyes were wild swirling amber. His wolf was ready to go at anyone who breathed wrong. "I wanted more proof. I ignored the report. His name was in the report," Cullen said to the confused guard. Then he turned and left the room.