

Chapter 167

Rhona exited the elevator and came directly over to the group of people gathered at the couch. One look at all their faces and she immediately began checking Aislinn over.

"I'm fine Rhona. I only need to calm down," Aislinn said, almost grateful at having to deal with Rhona's fussing. It briefly interrupted her miserable thought process. "Are you able to give me anything that could calm my nerves," she asked hopefully.

"I hesitate to give you anything like that while you're pregnant. Maybe some tea and a little rest would be the best medicine for whatever has you this upset. It's not good for you or the babies," Rhona added with concern.

Aislinn nodded. "That sounds like a good idea. I'm guessing that no matter what I tell them they won't be able to find her any sooner. They're already looking for her."

Sarah wasn't sure what to do. She sounded so defeated. She could already imagine the conversation if Aislinn called Cullen with this kind of news. He was already worked up. Every time Sarah had spoken to him on the phone recently he was aggitated and wanted to know how Aislinn was. He was doing his best to fulfill his role as Alpha but it was fairly obvious he would rather be being a mate and father at the moment. Who could blame him?

"Rissa," Sarah said with a bit of a crack in her standard authoritative tone, "take Aislinn for some tea and get her to her bed. Drake come with me. I need to know exactly what happened." Everyone moved to do as they were told. At least following orders broke the discomfort of standing around staring helplessly. Rhona went with Rissa to help with the tea.

Drake and Sarah walked into her office and closed the door behind themselves. "I don't really have much more to add," Drake said.

"I know. I just wanted you with me. I'm going to call Cullen."

"I don't know how smart that is. You don't really have all the information. She's holding something back."

"You're right. But I'm guessing that when Cullen gets Aislinn's call he's going to go a bit crazy. She's upset enough already. Right now she'll need him to be calm and handle it rationally at least when he's talking to her. Last thing we need right now is for her to go into labor early due to upset. If this is all dependent on the birth, then maybe we can talk to Rhona about something to delay it until Jenna is in custody. The most important piece of information for Cullen right now is to find her." Sarah nodded to herself as if she was getting all of her thoughts straight. "So I need to warn Cullen about the call that's coming. Tell him to be calm. And that finding Jenna has now become more imperative than it was before."

Drake had to admire her thought process. "This is why you got this job." He hugged her tightly. It was a rare moment when she so obviously needed outside strength to do anything.

Cullen could feel Aislinn's abject misery. Tired of meetings, uncertain what was happening at the den and feeling helpless to do anything productive, he paced the hallway outside the meeting room. For the past hour Aislinn's upset had been increasing in intensity. He had attempted to call her but was unable to get through and she had yet to return his call.

Cadifor came charging out into the hall. "You strain our friendship Arnauk," he growled. "No one walks out on Council meetings."

Menacing growling emanated from Cullen's chest. "Something is wrong."

Cadifor actually paused. In their long time friendship, he had never seen Cullen Arnauk so disturbed. "Aislinn?"

Pacing across the floor Cullen didn't answer. "She's not returning my calls. And whatever the problem is, it's getting worse."

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When Cullen's cell rang he answered it without looking at the caller ID. "Aislinn, are you alright?"

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"It's not Aislinn," Sarah answered. "She's okay. Upset and scared but safe and okay."

Cadifor was frustrated but sympathetic. He was torn between being a good friend and being a leader. He needed to be dragging Cullen back into the meeting whether he liked it or not. At the same time he was curious about the call. This situation certainly seemed to be moving around Cullen and Aislinn. Cadifor became a councilman not only due to his long existence but a certain intuition about the moving of the Fates. Right now, he felt that he needed to give Cullen some leeway. For the moment.

Cullen's face went deathly white. Cadifor wondered if the man was going to be sick all over the floor. "I understand. When she's able, I want to hear her voice," was all he said.

"So tell me," Cadifor snarled.

Even after several deep breaths Cullen's voice cracked a bit when he spoke. "We need to get our hands on Jenna now. If Aislinn gives birth and we don't have Jenna to send Brennus' soul back to wherever he came from, the baby will die."

Cadifor had no idea what to say to that. Frankly, Jenna had gone on the back burner when this meeting was called to figure out what to do about he human government not playing ball and then Nora Senach died and that flipped things around even more. He was already frustrated by Cullen's inconsistent unreliable behavior since he had gotten here. Now this.

Clearing his throat, Cadifor tried to be sympathetic, but he also knew that a majority of the council would be unconcerned with Cullen's home life. Right now the Council focus was on keeping the missing weres out of the human news and the druids from going back underground without a way to keep tabs on them. "Cullen, Jenna is not a current priority."

The glare that Cullen leveled on Cadifor nearly made the ancient lycan flinch. "Maybe not your priority."

"What about Mira? This other faction you suggested? We were trying to convince the Council that we needed to add that to our agenda. You want to go back in there, now that you've charged out unreasonably and tell them we need to further split our efforts to include the Jenna issue as well?"

Cullen continued to Pace. He couldn't think straight.

Cadifor stepped in Cullen's way and grabbed his shoulders. "Listen to me for a minute. The weres, the druids and the mess with Jenna are all related. It seems Aislinn is in the middle of all of it. I think we need to remain calm and deal with the situation at hand."

"I've always trusted your opinion Cadifor. But I don't know that I'm willing to risk this. I need to go to Aislinn and we need to find Jenna."

"And where are you going to start looking? I have been tracking the woman for weeks. I still have men working on it. Do you really think that if you go back to your den something magical will happen that will put her in your hands?"

Cullen growled and stepped away from Cadifor, knowing the man was right.