Chapter 40

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As planned, Liam smoked out the traitors' dwelling within Dark Moon. After his talk with James, he forced himself to discard his emotions, overwhelming him and putting his pack together again.

Liam used his bond with the Dark Moon to locate those who weren't connected; the traitors, and then he sent James after them. It was a surprise attack. He had carefully orchestrated with James and their strategy team.

They led everyone to believe that they were concentrating on setting traps at the borders while they sent an undercover team to infiltrate pack members.

The traitors took to their heels into the forest as James razed their hideouts. Meanwhile, Liam laid an ambush in the forest. Together, they killed many, but that was just the beginning of Liam and James' plan.

Liam wanted them to lead him to their secret entrance into his territory and hideouts in the forest, so he let some of them go and followed them as they fled. Anger at what happened to Nicole and Garrett burned in his heart. He couldn't rest until he had gotten rid of every one of them. But it seemed they had some sort of magical influence because, after a while, it was like they had disappeared. Liam was filled with rage. Liam, James, and the warriors searched for the traitors for hours until they finally caught a whiff of their scent outside Darkmoon's border.

Liam's wolf growled in anticipation as they followed the trail deeper into the forest. He could sense the traitors nearby, their fear mingling with their excitement.

As they got closer, Liam heard the sound of laughter and chatter coming from a clearing ahead. He motioned for James to stand back and the warriors to fan out as he approached, his senses on high alert.

As he stepped into the clearing, he saw a group of men gathered around a fire, their faces twisted in cruel amusement. Liam recognized them immediately. There were more than a few wolves. This was the territory of the Alphaless pack closest to his. They had been the pack that had helped the witch capture Nicole. His wolf snarled in anger at the sight of them.

"Hello, boys," Liam said, his voice cold. "Miss me?"

They turned to face him, surprise quickly turning to fear as they saw the anger in his eyes. They scrambled to their feet, reaching for their weapons. Liam's back bent, his wolf taking over as he shifted into his werewolf form.

The traitors backed away as Liam charged at them, his fangs glinting in the moonlight. His wolf was a powerful one. It swung and attacked with deadly precision, its movements fluid and graceful.

Screams and roars were heard as more traitors jumped out from within the shadows. Liam felt it, the power of dark magic oozing through the air. James shifted into his werewolf form and joined the fight, his massive form dwarfing the traitors as he attacked them with a ferocity that made even Liam's wolf hesitate.

The warrior wolves jumped out like perfect timing, too, ripping out throats, heads, and bowels in one movement. Liam's anger and agility fueled them. Together, they fight off the traitors, their bodies moving in perfect synchronization. As they battled, Liam heard the traitors shouting insults at him and laughing at his efforts. "You think you can take us all on, Alpha? You're nothing without your precious little witch bane!" one of them taunted.

Liam's blood boiled at the mention of Nicole. But then he felt a fresh and even deadlier wave of magic. It weakened his joints and threatened to paralyze him. All around him, his warriors were weakened, leaving just him and James.

Anger surged through him, and he roared as he attacked with renewed vigor. James fought beside him, his massive jaws snapping at the traitors' throats.

The battle raged on, the sound of clanging metal and snarling werewolves filling the night air. Liam felt a fierce satisfaction as he struck down one traitor after another, his anger fueling his movements.

Finally, there was only one traitor left standing. He was a skinny man with shifty eyes and a sneer on his face. He held a knife in his hand, his body trembling with fear as he faced Liam.

"You'll never defeat us, Alpha," he spat. "We'll come for you and your mate again and again until we get what we want."

Liam allowed himself to return to his human form and then stepped closer, picking up an axe and keeping it at the ready. Liam might have been in human form, but his wolf was very much in control. His eyes were golden orbs that saturated his surroundings with raw and unfiltered dominance.

"I don't think so," he growled. "You and your pack are no match for us. Leave now, and I might spare your life."

The traitor hesitated for a moment before lunging at Liam with his knife. Liam easily blocked the attack, his sword slicing through the traitor's flesh with deadly accuracy. The traitor fell to the ground, his body twitching in pain.

Liam stood over him, his chest heaving with exertion. "Don't ever threaten me or my mate again," he warned, his voice cold.

The traitor whimpered in fear, his eyes wide with terror as Liam took the final blow. Liam turned away from him, his wolf receding as it shifted back into his subconscious, satisfied. James followed suit, his massive body shrinking down to its human size.

As they walked away from the clearing, Liam felt a sense of satisfaction wash over him and something new, something different.

Mate? His wolf had referred to Nicole as a mate.

Even the traitor he had just killed. Was there something that he didn't know going on?

"They're a larger network than we anticipated,"

James said, coming up beside him. "We may have won this battle and expunged the traitors from within us, but this is deeper. At least we have an

insight into their entrance point. But this is far from over. They will come for us again, of that I am certain."

Liam merely nodded, his head full with the new discovery.

Mate? How?

"Remember the first attack on me?" He said suddenly.

James peered at him curiously and then nodded. "After cleaning this place up. Release those who were in that attack and not from around here. Set them free. I have a plan,"

"Noted Alpha,"

They walked through the forest in silence, their bodies still tense from the battle.

"Alpha, we need to be on high alert," James said, breaking the silence. "They will be back soon." Liam nodded in agreement. "I know. We will be ready for them. They won't catch us off guard again. All I need is Darkmoon's trust."

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