

Chapter 1: The Attack in the Night

It was the sounds of snarling and growling that woke them up.

They were all trained to be light sleepers. In the mountains, you had to be. You never knew when an attack would come at night.

They lay still, hoping the noises would go away. But then suddenly, there was a loud thud as some creature struck their door. "I smell humans inside," it yelled. The creature pounded on the door several more times.

The door stood. It was made of strong wood. Behind the wood were several steel beams that reinforced the wood. The beams ran across the door frame horizontally. They were about an inch wide, and they were separated from each other by about one foot. And behind the door were two large boulders that they pushed into place every night before bed. The door would hold, at least for a while. And then...

They were all looking at each other. Finn put his finger to his lips to motion everyone to stay quiet. Then, as quietly as possible, Finn climbed out of bed. The others followed his example.

Finn grabbed his sword from where it hung on the wall. He took it out of its sheath. Carlyle took one of the axes from the wall. Margaret took one of the knives. Catherine took the crossbow, and pulled back the strings, and fitted an arrow.

The pounding on the door stopped. For a moment it was quiet.

"They're looking for rocks," Finn said quietly. "Stay ready."

A couple minutes later, there was a crash of something colliding with the door. The wood cracked. The steel beams held. The two boulders kept the door in place.

Another crash as another huge rock collided with the door. Then another crash.

Pretty soon, the wood began to crack and break. And then, monstrous hands began to tear the broken wood away.

Then, one of the ogres stuck his face through a gap in the steel beams.

"Now," Finn said. Catherine pressed the trigger on the crossbow, firing an arrow right into the ogre's right eye. The ogre screamed in pain and immediately pulled his head back outside..

Catherine hurried to fit another arrow into the crossbow.

Another ogre put his arm in through the door. Finn raised his sword high and swung it down. The ogre's arm came clean off.

There was a cry of rage from outside. "Now they're really angry," Margaret warned.

There was a pause, and then they could hear one of the ogres running towards the door at full speed. He crashed into the door, forcing the door from its hinges completely. The two boulders were now the only things holding the broken door in place, but they also wobbled from the force of the impact.

"The next one will be it," said Finn. His voice was tense.

The ogre smashed into the door again. The door completely fell apart, and the boulders were knocked back.

The ogre stepped into the house and roared like a lion.

Catherine's heart was pounding fast. She could feel the adrenaline flowing through her. She raised the crossbow and fired an arrow at the ogre. The arrow hit the ogre in the neck, but as soon as Catherine had fired it off, the crossbow suddenly burst into flames while it was still in her hands. Catherine screamed out and dropped the crossbow on the ground in shock. Margaret quickly threw a blanket over the crossbow and smothered the flames. Catherine looked over at Margaret. Margaret looked back at Catherine. Margaret could see that there was a question in Catherine's eyes. "Not now," Margaret said. "We need to deal with the ogres first."

Meanwhile, the ogre screamed out in pain as the arrow pierced his neck. Flinn swung his sword and sliced the ogre's head out.

"Quick, out into the open," Flinn said. "If we have to fight them, then let's do it where we have room to swing our weapons."

Flinn dashed out the door. Carlyle followed him. Fortunately, it was a full moon, so they could see the ogres clearly. There were five more ogres standing outside. They were big ugly things, covered in grayish blue skin.

One of them roared, and charged towards Finn. Finn thrust his sword right into the ogre's chest, killing it instantly.

Another ogre charged at Carlyle. Carlyle hacked at the ogre with his ax to try to keep it at bay. Flinn quickly came to Carlyle's aid, swung his sword and with one stroke cut the ogre's head clean off.

Margaret and Catherine followed them outside. Margaret carried the crossbow now. It was a little bit singed, but still functioning. Margaret fitted an arrow into the crossbow and fired it at one of the ogres. It went right into the ogre's chest, but didn't go deep enough to kill it. (Ogre's have very tough skin.) But it still caused the ogre to cry out in pain. The ogre charged towards Margaret, but once again, Finn swung his sword quickly, and cut off the ogre's head.

It was at this point that the remaining two ogres decided to flee.

Finn collapsed to the ground in exhaustion.

"It's over," said Margaret.

"For now," Finn said, panting.

"I don't think they'll be back tonight," Margaret said.

Finn stood up slowly. His joints ached. "I'm getting too old for this," he said.

"Just a few more years," Margaret said. "You did good tonight, Finn."

"The door is completely shattered," Finn moaned.

"We can fix it," Margaret said. "We've got plenty of extra wood planks still in the cave. And the iron bars are still in good condition. But we should get inside soon. Aefar and the other vampires hunt at night."

“Yes,” Finn agreed. “Let’s get back inside, before anything else shows up.”

“We can barricade the entrance with the table,” Margaret said. “The wood is strong, and if we turn it on its side, it’ll more than cover the doorway. And we still have those two boulders we can use to reinforce it.”

“Good idea,” said Finn. “I don’t think the ogres will be back tonight anyway, but that table will stop anything else that might want to get inside.”

A howling sound pierced the cold night air. They all looked at each other.

“The wolves!” Carlyle said.

“They’re still a ways off,” said Finn. “Come on, hurry. Let’s get that table in place!”