

Talking to the Moon |

Running

They don't chase after me. They don't call my name. The years we spent together, they mean nothing now. The whispered words in the dark, the promises we made, they were all empty.

I was foolish to think we could have a future together, even though the Moon Goddess herself had paired us.

A pain flares in my stomach, but I ignore it. I figure the hurt from a broken mate bond will take some time to fade. Breaking two of them, well, that's bound to take even longer.

I make it to the pack house and head straight for Alpha Darren's office. He's known for burning the midnight oil, so I'm sure he's still there. I pause outside his door, taking a few deep breaths to steady myself.

I knock and wait for his response. "Come in," he calls after a moment.

I grip the door handle, turn it, and push the door open. Inside, I find a weary alpha buried in paperwork at his desk.

"Ah, Olivia. How's the party?" I don't answer, just step further into his office. "Never mind that. What can I do for you?"

"Alpha Darren, I've made a decision," I say, cutting to the chase.

"And what's that?" Alpha Darren raises an eyebrow and smirks. He thinks he knows what I'm going to say; he knows me too well.

"I'll go—but only on one condition."

"What's that?" Alpha Darren laughs. He wouldn't expect anything less from me.

"You can't tell anyone where I am or what I'm doing," I demand. But inside, I'm pleading with him to agree. Running away might not be the answer, but it's all I have right now.

Alpha Darren looks at me for a moment, considering my demand. "What should I tell them when they ask?"

By *them*, he means the twins. I don't care what they think, as long as they don't know the truth and as long as they don't come looking for me.

“Tell the twins I left to find my mate. That you don’t know where I am or for how long, and you can’t contact me... Tell them I might not come back.”

“Why? Why are you asking this of me? What happened?” Alpha Darren asks, concern etched on his face. “Why wouldn’t you come back?”

I lie. “I’ve been thinking about what you said the other day, and I’ve decided to give us all a chance to be happy. Who knows? My mate might be at the Academy.” I shrug, surprised at how easily the lie comes.

“Alright then, I’ll do as you ask, as long as you check in with me once a month.” Alpha Darren stands and pulls me into a bear hug.

I smile and make a promise I don’t intend to keep. “I will, and please make sure Micheal keeps quiet too.”

Alpha Darren chuckles. “I will. The van leaves tomorrow, five a.m., out front. Be ready.”

“Thank you, Alpha Darren.” I rush out of his office before he can ask any more questions. I can’t bring myself to tell him that his sons rejected me, even though I know he wouldn’t have approved anyway.

The old ways of determining a wolf’s status in a pack are outdated, and while the White Oak Pack doesn’t adhere to them as strictly as some, some traditions still linger.

Most females consider themselves lucky to be part of this pack, where much of the old misogyny has been eradicated.

I close the door to my bedroom and pull out the only bag I own. I fill it with clothes, a hairbrush, deodorant, and a few other essentials.

I’m almost finished when I feel a sharp pain in my stomach again, a bit lower this time. I touch between my legs and pull my hand back to find blood.

My mind races and panic sets in. I don’t know what’s wrong, but I know I need help.

I mind-link Greyson, though my thoughts are a bit scattered. “*Greyson, I need you...please.*”

“*Where are you?*” he responds immediately, his voice strained and worried.

“*In my room. Hurry, I’m bleeding.*” I cut the link and stumble into my bathroom. I try to pull down my pants and underwear to see what’s wrong, but it’s a struggle.

I’ve never heard of rejection causing internal bleeding, and I’m at a loss.

Greyson bursts into my bedroom and then into the bathroom when he doesn't see me. He calls my name, but I can't answer; I'm too caught up in my panic.

He sees the discarded clothes on the bathroom floor and scowls. "What happened?" he asks, stepping closer.

"I don't know. Please get me some pants and help me to the clinic," I beg. I just hope the twins don't see us on the way.

Greyson grabs some sweatpants, helps me into them, and then lifts me up in his arms. He rushes out of the pack house and heads for the clinic. "Are you in pain?"

"Yes."

"Where?" He quickens his pace.

"Everywhere."

When we get to the clinic, the nurse shows us to a bed. Greyson lays me down gently and pulls the curtain closed.

We wait for the doctor, both of us jumping when she suddenly pulls the curtain back. "What seems to be the problem?" she asks, not looking up from her chart.

"I'm bleeding."

"Where?" She looks up and quickly spots the blood. "Ah. Were you injured?"

"No."

The doctor pulls out a machine, lifts my shirt, and applies some cold gel to my stomach. She hums a tune and after a few moments, she tuts.

"Have you been under a lot of stress?" I shake my head. "Were you rejected?" she asks bluntly.

I stare at her, and I hear Greyson's breath catch in his throat. Tears well up in my eyes, but I don't answer her.

The doctor leans over, her hand resting on mine in the first real show of empathy I've seen from her all night. "I'm sorry, sweetheart, but you lost the baby."

She pulls her hand back and exits the room, leaving us in the wake of her words. I'm left staring at the empty space she just occupied. What baby?

Greyson is the first to break the silence, his voice shaky. I'm still reeling from the shock. How could I not have known I was pregnant?

"Are...are you okay?" he asks, his voice barely above a whisper. "Did you know you were pregnant? I swear, I'll kill them both!"

I wipe the gel off my stomach, pull my shirt down, and swing my legs over the side of the bed. "Greyson, don't."

"Don't what? Protect you? I might be late for that, but I can still make them pay," he retorts, his arms flailing in frustration. "I'll take them out one by one. Probably while they're sleeping..."

"I'm leaving. First thing in the morning."

Greyson stops pacing and looks at me. "Where are you going?" I shake my head. "Olivia, don't do this. We've been friends for years. You can talk to me."

I sigh and start to leave the clinic. Greyson follows, matching my quick strides. "I'm enrolling in the Lycan Academy, I didn't know I was pregnant, and it was the twins'."

"What was the twins'?"

"The baby. It was theirs. Or one of theirs, I guess. I don't know." I pick up my pace, but Greyson keeps up. We reach my room, where my bag is packed and my bloodied clothes are scattered on the bathroom floor.

I reach for the ruined clothes, but Greyson grabs my wrist before I can touch them. Tears are streaming down my face again, and I manage to choke out a few words. "Please don't tell anyone."

"Go lie down. I'll handle everything." Greyson guides me to my bed and tucks me in. "I'm going to miss you, Olivia. And don't worry—I won't say a word." He kisses my forehead and leaves the room with my soiled clothes.

After a few minutes, he returns with a mop and bucket and cleans the blood from the floor. He closes the door quietly behind him as he leaves, and I don't see him again for months.

I'm jolted awake by the blaring alarm. I'm still in pain, but I'm hoping a hot shower will help. After showering, I pull on some sweatpants and an oversized T-shirt, and throw my hair up in a messy bun.

I leave behind everything the twins ever gave me, including the T-shirts I'd taken.

Everything except the necklace they gave me. I can't bring myself to leave it. It'll be my daily reminder to never make the same mistake again, to never love someone so blindly.

I'll never give my heart and soul to anyone again.

The van is waiting outside the pack house, and Michael opens the door as I approach. There are other wolves inside from different packs, but none that I recognize.

The driver gestures impatiently at me, clearly annoyed that I took my time getting ready.

This is it. The decision that will change my life forever.

I turn around, taking one last look at the place I've called home my entire life, then glance up at the twins' windows. Their lights are on, and I can see their shadows moving behind the curtains.

They're already up, ready to face another day as alphas of the pack that I once loved being a part of—until now.

"Veni, vidi, and amavi," I whisper before I toss my bag into the van and slide in next to Michael.