

Talking to the Moon |

Training

Training

The following morning, I'm the first one up in our cabin. I'm not usually an early bird, but the thrill of starting training has me wide awake.

Once I've showered and dressed, the others are beginning to stir. I give Clara a gentle nudge and she blinks sleepily at me. "What time is it?" she mumbles, stifling a yawn.

"Time to get moving or you'll miss the first day of training," I tell her, tossing her a towel for the showers.

"Thanks, girl. I would've slept the whole day if you hadn't woken me." She hops up and rushes off to the showers.

"Just be quick, okay?"

We make our way to breakfast and find an empty table. I'm munching on some bacon when Micheal slides into the seat next to me. "Morning, Olivia. How was your night?"

"About what you'd expect. How about yours?"

"Didn't sleep much. Met a lot of new people, though. My group's pretty cool. Did you meet anyone?" Micheal swipes some of my food, earning a swat from me.

"Yeah, I did. This is Clara." I gesture to Clara sitting next to me.

"Hey, you're cute. Are you single?" Micheal grins at her. Clara blushes and nods. "Too bad we can't date while we're here."

"Since when has that stopped you? I've never known a rule you didn't try to break," I retort. "Did your group leader tell you that?"

Micheal chuckles. "Nah, I heard it from a guy in your cabin actually."

My attention is drawn to Leo and the alpha entering together. They're deep in a conversation that seems to be making Leo increasingly angry. They part ways, with Leo storming out and the alpha stomping over to his seat.

"Who ruffled his feathers?" Micheal asks. I shrug and continue eating; it's not my business.

“Leo? That’s the alpha’s little brother. They’re always fighting because Leo’s reckless and the alpha’s the complete opposite. Or so I’ve heard.” Clara shares this tidbit of information.

So Leo is *an* alpha, but not *the* alpha. That explains his strong, dominant personality. I shake off my thoughts and get up to clear my tray and head to the training grounds.

“See you later, Micheal. Good luck today.” I pull a starstruck Clara along with me and we head out.

The day is warm, so when we reach the field, I shed my hoodie, revealing my sports bra underneath, my necklace tucked safely inside.

I’ve paired it with short exercise shorts and sneakers, and my long dirty-blond hair is pulled back into a ponytail.

The rest of my cabin soon joins us, and then Leo appears. He’s still angry, but he’s good at hiding it.

“I need to gauge your current skill level, so I’m going to pair you off. We’ll start with same-sex partners and then move on to the opposite sex. Just do what you normally do so I can identify your strengths and weaknesses,” Leo instructs.

I’m relieved when I’m paired up with Clara. I’m a confident fighter, but the unfamiliar surroundings have me on edge.

We’re the seventh pair up for assessment. I go easy on her at first, not wanting to embarrass her, but it doesn’t take long for me to realize I could’ve taken her down in a few moves.

I draw it out, almost as if I’m toying with her, but that’s not my intention.

Realizing my mistake, I sweep her feet out from under her and pin her down effortlessly. She taps out, and I release her. I offer her a hand and help her up. “We good?” I ask.

“Yeah, sure. Just a bruised ego, but I’ll survive.” Clara smiles at me and dusts off her legs.

“What the hell was that?” Leo demands. He’s looking straight at me, and I realize his question wasn’t directed at Clara, it was meant for me.

“What do you mean?”

“You could’ve taken her down right away, but you hesitated. Why?” Leo snaps. He can be a real jerk when he’s angry.

"I was sizing up my opponent, learning her habits," I lie. Lying seems to be becoming a habit for me, and I've never been one to lie before.

"That's a load of crap, and you know it."

"Okay, it's crap, but I didn't want to embarrass her." I glare at him, and he crosses his arms over his chest, his muscles flexing.

"You're here to become a lycan, not to make friends," Leo snaps.

"I'm here to become a better fighter, to hone my skills and serve my pack. Sometimes a little compassion and grace is better than being strong and ruthless," I snap back.

Leo steps toward me, and I hear Clara gasp. I stand my ground, stubborn as ever, and Leo's eyes shift to black, flecks of gold swirling within them. His wolf is in control now. "Get ready. You're fighting me next."

I take my stance in the ring and wait for Leo to make his move. He doesn't. Instead, he circles me, studying me.

I don't need to study him; I already know he likes to use his height to his advantage and will likely attack from above.

I see his left leg shift, preparing to jump, and I smirk.

He leaps, and as he closes in, I drop to my knees and let him sail over me. I spin quickly on my knee and face him. He's on his stomach, starting to roll over, when I punch him in the ribs.

He gasps for breath, and I know I've hurt him. I step back and give him a moment to recover before I attack again. I've already shown him what happens when he attacks. Now it's time to show him what happens when I do.

"Leo, you okay?" I tease him, trying to throw him off his game. He's been acting like a jerk, and it's hard to reconcile this side of him with the kind man I saw last night. Was that all just a show?

"I'm fine," he snaps back, his eyes dark with anger. Anger can lead to mistakes, and he's just made his first one.

I stand tall, watching him closely. He lets his guard down for a split second, but it's back up before I can take advantage of it.

"I love your muscular arms, and those moonflowers..." I say, licking my lips and holding his gaze. I take a step towards him, then another, and another.

Leo is so focused on my lips that he doesn't realize I'm now within his reach. His eyes are still dark, but there's a hint of golden desire in them—I've got him under my spell. This is almost too easy.

He shakes his head, trying to clear his thoughts, but before he can fully regain his focus, I seize the opportunity and lunge at him. I step on his bent knee, climb up his torso, and wrap my legs around his neck.

Using my momentum, I swing my body and flip him over, so he lands flat on his back with my legs still wrapped around him. I squeeze until I feel his hand tapping out on my waist.

I release him and stand up, offering him my hand just like I did with Clara. The rest of the cabin is laughing and snickering at Leo's defeat. A small female wolf has taken down the big, bad alpha lycan.

Leo grabs my arm, but instead of letting me help him up, he pulls me down beside him and rolls on top of me.

"Clever. Naughty, but clever," Leo says, pressing his hard erection against my stomach.

I gasp and glance at the others, but they don't seem to notice what Leo is doing.

"Are you going to take care of the problem you created?" He grinds his hips into me.

"Not likely." I can feel the wetness between my legs and hope he can't. I can't let him know how much he affects me. My body is betraying me, lusting after someone else. I can't give in.

"I can smell your desire," he whispers in my ear, low enough that the others can't hear. I push him off and join the others.

"Next group, get ready," Leo calls out, his voice echoing across the field. His eyes aren't dark anymore, and he's smiling. He's enjoying our little game; he likes the chase.

I need to keep my distance from him, but that's going to be tough since I'll be spending every day with him for the next two years. I wonder if Alpha Jason would let me switch groups, but I already know the answer to that.

Weeks pass, and I do my best to avoid Leo, but he always finds a way to corner me. He never touches me inappropriately, but his eyes say it all.

He wants me, and he's willing to wait. I suppose I should be grateful for that, considering lycans aren't known for their patience.

On the fourth week at the Academy, Leo challenges the top candidates again, including me. He wins every match and gives us tips on how to improve.

After several hours, the day's training is over. Leo announces that there's a party by the pool and encourages everyone to come.

"I hope to see you all there," he says, locking eyes with me and licking his lips.