

Talking to the Moon |

Dinner Plans

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The next morning, I'm up and out of the cabin for a run before anyone else stirs. Judging by their rumpled clothes and the fact they're still out cold, I figure it'll be a while before they wake.

I head toward the forest, following the same paths I'd run as a wolf on my first night here. I need to clear my head, to think about the choices I've made. I'm not exactly proud of the fact that I've slept with Leo, who is essentially my boss for now.

He holds my future at the Academy in his hands, and I can't afford to screw it up by getting involved with him. It was just sex, a one-time thing. I resolve to tell him that the next time I see him. As long as he keeps his hands to himself, I should be able to keep my thoughts in check.

I wrap up my run just as training is about to start. Today's focus is endurance, something we all need to work on. Clara has better stamina than any of us, and I'm glad to see her excelling, especially since she hasn't before.

Leo spends the day training with us, sticking close to me the whole time. It's starting to get on my nerves, and I can't help but wonder if he's marking his territory, like all male wolves do, especially alphas. I need to tell him to back off, but not in front of everyone else.

By late afternoon, we're all exhausted. Some of the guys from the cabin are wrestling, trying to impress the women. Judging by Clara and a few others, it seems to be working.

"Don't look now, but the alpha's heading this way," Clara says, her eyes dreamy. "Isn't he just so hot?" She fans herself as if she's overheating.

"What about Michael?" I tease. "I saw you two getting cozy last night."

"Oh, he's great, and I think there might be something there, but I can still look, can't I?" Clara giggles. "Oh shit, he's coming over here."

"Clara, how's training going?" Jason asks, his face neutral.

"Just fine, Alpha Jason, thank you for asking," Olivia replies, baring her neck in respect. Jason nods, and she relaxes.

“And Olivia, how are you?” He turns to me, smiling.

“I’m good. How about you, Jason?”

Clara’s eyes widen as she hears me use his first name and not his title. I also didn’t bare my neck, since I’ve been given permission to use his name. Plus, I’ve never been one to be intimidated by alphas.

“I’m doing well, but I’d be even better if you’d join me for dinner tonight,” Jason says, winking at me.

“I...uh, sure, I’ll join you.” What is it with me and brothers? Do I have a sign on my forehead that says “I like to sleep with brothers, preferably at the same time”? I sure know how to complicate things.

“Great. I’ll see you at seven in my office. Enjoy the rest of your day, ladies.” Jason heads back to the pack house, leaving me to wonder why he’s asked me to dinner.

Clara is beside herself with laughter. “Jason? You call him Jason? When did this happen and why is he asking you to dinner?”

“Who asked you to dinner?” Leo has snuck up on us and caught part of our conversation.

“Alpha Jason. I think he’s into her,” Clara teases.

Leo scowls at me, his eyes turning black with swirling gold flecks. His wolf is surfacing, and he growls softly before turning and stalking off.

“What’s his problem?” Clara asks once he’s out of earshot.

“No idea,” I lie. I know he’s not thrilled about me being alone with Jason, but I doubt Jason is really interested in me. He’s probably just trying to get under Leo’s skin. At least, that’s what I hope.

After a shower, I slip into a white summer dress, let my hair air-dry into loose curls, and apply a bit of mascara and lip balm. It’s almost seven, so I head over to the pack house. The place is deserted when I walk in.

Jason’s office is upstairs, so I start toward the staircase. As I take the first step, an arm wraps around my waist, pulling me back into an empty room. “Don’t go,” Leo whispers in my ear.

“Leo, I have to. I already said I would.” His touch sends a jolt of desire through me, and I cross my legs to try to quell it. It doesn’t work. I feel like I’m in heat.

“Please,” he begs.

I sigh, relaxing in his arms. “It’s just dinner. What’s the big deal? He probably just wants to talk about my training.” Why am I explaining myself to him? I don’t owe him anything, not even an explanation.

His hold tightens, and he nuzzles my neck. “It’s not just dinner. He likes you, and you’ll like him too, they always do. I can smell your desire.”

I turn to face him, cupping his cheek with my hand. “Leo, I don’t know what you want from me, but I’m not one to mess around.”

“I already told you, I plan on making you mine. Don’t go up there,” Leo pleads again.

I extricate myself from his arms. “I’ll see you tomorrow at training.” I head upstairs without looking back and knock on Jason’s door.

After a moment, he calls for me to come in. When I open the door, I see a small table and two chairs set up in the middle of his office.

Jason is standing by the doorway, filling two glasses with wine. He’s dressed in slacks and a black button-up shirt, looking undeniably handsome.

“Olivia, you’re right on time.” His smile is the kind that makes knees weak.

“This is all so lovely. You didn’t have to go to all this trouble.”

“I wanted to. Come.” He extends his hand, and I place mine in his. He guides me to the table, pulling out my chair in a gentlemanly manner. It’s a refreshing change from what I’m used to.

“Thank you, Jason.”

He takes a seat across from me, gesturing for me to start eating. The plate in front of me is piled high with gnocchi, smothered in a lemon garlic sauce that smells divine.

My mouth is watering, and I haven’t even tasted it yet. I take a bite, and the flavor bursts in my mouth. “Wow, this is incredible. Who made this?”

“Thank you. I did. Cooking is one of my hobbies,” Jason confesses, grinning.

“Tell me about your hobbies.”

The evening flies by, filled with delicious food, drinks, and laughter. Jason is easy to talk to, and he never once makes me feel uncomfortable. He's a wonderful man, and any woman would be lucky to have him. Any woman but me.

As dinner comes to an end, I'm feeling a bit tipsy. "I think I need to head to bed," I declare, finishing off my last glass of wine.

"Already? You could always stay," Jason suggests, his smile tempting. It's hard to resist him, but I have to.

"I really need to go."

Jason rises and offers me his arm. He pulls a little too hard, and I stumble into his chest. "Sorry." He smirks.

He leans in for a kiss, and just as his lips brush against mine, I pull away. "I need to go." I step away from his warmth and make a beeline for the door. "I had a great time, thank you."

"Olivia, wait," Jason calls out, taking a few large steps to catch up with me. "I didn't mean to scare you off, I just really like you."

"I...I like you, too, but I'm not ready for this." I gesture between us.

It's true, I'm not ready for a relationship. With Leo, it's just about sex. At least, that's what I keep telling myself. But Jason wants more.

Jason closes the distance between us, his body pressing against mine. He takes a firm hold of my hips and leans down to nuzzle my neck.

I hear him inhale, then whisper, "I'll wait for you." He kisses me behind the ear, and a wave of desire rushes through me.

Jason chuckles. "I can smell your arousal, Olivia."

I'm mortified. I can't do this. I can't sleep with two brothers again; it seems I haven't learned my lesson. I push him away and bolt out of his office, down the stairs, out the door, and toward the training grounds.

I start pacing the field, berating myself for my actions. "Why do I do this to myself?" I ask the moon, but as always, it remains silent. "Am I destined to be alone?" The crickets chirp in response. "Fuck me."

"Gladly." I spin around to find Leo standing behind me. I really need to be more aware of my surroundings.

“Leo? You startled me.”

“How did dinner go?” Leo’s face is clouded over, his smile gone.

I stride toward him, grab him by the neck, and pull his lips to mine. “I don’t want to talk about it.”

I press myself against him, feeling his hard arousal through his pants. “Take your clothes off and lie down.”