

ANOTHER GOODBYE



CADELL

Summary: Rather than having a summer's day of talk and fun, Cadell is faced with another difficult goodbye.

WC: 1059 words

Setting || Near the borders of Riverfell, Summer 2024



It's a warm summer's day, yet rather than spending it at the lake looking for herbs with Ruby, or the densite with Sigrid, or hell, even hunting with Lynx even though hunting is harder with their partial blindness, they are at the borders with Osonia.

The two had been on a walk near the borders, talking about the major shifts in the pack even just since Cadell joined. Apparently even those had only been the latest shifts of many. The conversation had been rough, yet Cadell had felt like Osonia understood the exhaustion the

rose coloured wolf felt all the time these days. Cadell had spent a lot of time with the light female the last few moons, generally having more fun than Cadell could remember in some time. They had just turned to a new topic, that of what chaos the future might bring next, when suddenly Osonia's head had shot up. She'd looked simultaneously startled and frozen.

Afraid yet excited.

Rather than explaining herself, the pale wolffess had simply run off, leaving Cadell behind, seemingly without sparing a single thought for them. At first they had just stared at the spot where she had been, until their legs started working, and they could follow after her.

And, oh, what a sight that meets them when they get to the borders. Their new friend is hugging two strangers tightly. From the embrace and the slight smell of salt and something familiar, Cadell can only assume that whoever these wolves are, Osonia definitely knows them.

They keep to the background, unwilling to bring any attention to themselves. If Osonia sees them there, she doesn't say so, too caught up in hugging and babbling at the others. Something about the embraces makes Cadell's own heart tighten uncomfortably in their chest, as they are reminded of how they would feel if they saw their own family again. Especially their parents. Or Kira who had disappeared before they were even exiled.

So rather than stepping forward and being told about the new faces - faces who are so much like Osonia's that they can't help but think they must be related - Cadell stays where they will blend in with the shadows of the trees, even if anyone looks at them, though none of them do. It's as if Osonia has forgotten that they were even there in the first place. Maybe she has. Maybe she didn't expect them to follow.

Maybe she hasn't spared them a single thought at all.

They can hear soft admonishments directed at Oso, but aren't close enough to tell what's being said. And then, the pale trio get up, and the strangers move to leave, though the pale wolf looks back, as if sensing the pale yellow eyes on the back of her head.

Cadell almost expects her to simply move on without a comment, but instead, she gestures for them to come closer with a smile unlike any other they have seen adorn her.

“Cadell.. These are my brothers, Ramiel and Nasri. We have been separated for a very long time, and.. I don’t want to part from them again, so... I’m— I’m sorry, but I have to go.” The words both soothe and hurt. Brothers. Siblings. Family.

All things that Cadell no longer have. Things they can’t imagine suddenly having again. And yet, if it had been Kira, Zodiac and Aurora, if their siblings had suddenly been here, wanting them to come along on an adventure.. Would Cadell have stayed?

No. Not even for a friend. **“I understand. Be safe out there, Oso. The sun shines on you, my friend.”** Saying the familiar blessing hurts, but in a good way, almost like picking at a scab. **“Fair winds take you.”** Another ‘bruise’. The greeting makes them miss the sea spray of the ocean they grew up near. But they can’t go back. They will never be able to go back... They hope Osonia will be safe. But surely, with family by her side, and away from the chaos of this pack that was supposed to be salvation for them both... Surely she will.

“Goodbye, Cadell. Be safe.” They hear the words as if they’re uttered from a distance rather than from within the hug Osonia has swept them up in, and they have to swallow hard to not sob into her shoulder. **“Goodbye, Osonia. Take care of her.”** The last sentence is directed at the males who have been watching them with curious but respectful glances. They both nod at the rose-coloured wolf, and something in the eyes of especially the bigger one tells them that they will do so by whatever means they have.

Now, with this goodbye said, the three collect themselves. Osonia looks around the area once more, and then, they leave. Cadell has an odd feeling that they might never see her again. But they will ask the spirits to look after her, and bring them a sign if she needs help, much as they regularly do for Leone.

As the silhouettes of the departing wolves disappear, something within them cracks and splinters, like a tree touched by lightning, their insides feeling as if they’re on fire. In a rather unusual show of emotion, tears start streaming from their eyes, and a soft sob escapes the

otherwise tightly controlled wolf. It is only because they are alone that they let the emotions reign over them.

“I don’t get it. Why? Am I that easy to forget and abandon? Do I really mean so little?” The words aren’t said to anyone in specific, it’s simply Cadell wondering aloud. Why is it always so easy for others to push them into the cold? What will Cadell tell the new Lady? That Osonia had seen her brothers, and decided to leave with no word? In other packs, that might be a cause for being hunted down... Hopefully that will not be the case here.

Cadell has been wondering if they can even stay here now that Calumina - the wolf who gave her acceptance for them to join, the wolf who seemed to trust them despite their past - has left.

This new abandonment doesn’t speak well for their future in Riverfell.

Maybe they too should leave? There are no siblings waiting for them at the border, but maybe..

Maybe they can find out where Kira went?

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