

No Point in Running Now & Other Stories
by Savanna Krystal

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NO POINT IN RUNNING NOW

“What does rotting flesh smell like?” She asked Detective Daniels. This was her first day as a homicide detective. “I’ve never smelled it before.”

“It’s a putrid stench that stays in your nasal cavity for what feels like forever. Once you smell it, it’s hard to forget. Don’t worry, you’ll find out soon enough.” Detective Daniels replied. He sipped on his once piping hot coffee.

Detective Michaels had an impressive record at the police academy. She ranked top of her class. Michaels graduated with honors and worked her way up the ranks. She came from the VICE. She loved her job, but she got tired of chasing prostitutes and drug dealers. She wanted more “action”, so to speak.

They entered the trailer park community where a domestic violence dispute had gone wrong. As they drove through the community, she could see the neighbors crowded around the yellow police tape whispering to each other like gossiping high schoolers.

They pushed through the crowd and headed inside the trailer. Detective Daniels turned to her, “Seems like you’ll find out what rotting flesh smells like sooner than you expected.” He smiled at her. “You ready?” He opened the door and headed inside. The sound of flies swarming filled the space. Michaels caught sight of the first victim. The flesh was gray. Brain matter and skull fragment painted the walls.

“Looks like he took the shotgun, put the end of the barrel into his mouth and pulled the trigger with his toe. Typical murder/suicide.” Detective Daniels said as he inspected the body.

The unfamiliar scent filled Michaels nostrils. Scent she’s never smelled before. You can taste it in the air too. It smelled like piles of garbage and feces left festering on a hot and humid day.

When she touched the first victim’s body, it felt cold and moist. She could tell that the bodies had been there for some time. Maggots had already covered on the body. She guessed the bodies had been there at least a week.

Detective Michaels threw up in her mouth but managed to swallow it back down. She never expected to start her career like this. "You were right, the stench is rancid." She put her hand over her mouth. Plugging her nose in the process. Throwing up on a crime scene is not the first day impression she wanted to make.

"It's not too late to run." Daniels teased.

"I'm already in. No point in running now." She replied with a hard swallow.

Detective Daniels grinned at her. "Shall we proceed?"

She nodded and walked towards the bedroom where the other body was.

She noticed the female body has defensive wounds on her arms. She too had been shot with a shotgun. A gaping hole covered her chest. "Looks like she put up one hell of a fight. Do you see the defensive wounds on both her arms? It looks like she was trying to fight him off. Poor girl. She didn't have a chance against that shot gun." Michaels shook her head back and forth as if she was saying 'no.' She got up and looked around the room for anything useful that could help paint the picture of what happened.

Michaels wanted to make sure there wasn't anything more than an abusive husband who went too far. "You can see all of the bruises all over her body. He was a long-time abuser for sure." She said as she walked around the body. She walked over to the nightstand and noticed a restraining order.

"Look at this Daniels. She had taken a restraining order against her husband. That's probably what sent him over the edge." Michaels handed the paper to Daniels.

"Good job finding this. Did you notice anything else?" He asked, testing her observation skills.

Michaels touched her chin, looking around the room once more. She noticed a bloody knife near the victim's right hand. "She might have stabbed him in self-defense. I'm going to go back and search the first body." She walked briskly back into the kitchen. "YUP! I was right. She definitely stabbed him. She probably saw that he was coming to the trailer, and she grabbed a knife. He kicked in the door and started to head to the back of the home. She was hiding. I noticed her closet was disheveled. He grabbed her by the hair. I saw a clump of hair near the victim's body..." Daniels interrupted.

"Very impressive" He was impressed with her attention to detail. She knew her stuff.

Michaels continued. "My guess is that he got even more irate when she stabbed him and that is when he shot her. He obviously didn't want to face the heat of getting caught so he turned the gun on himself. There's one thing I don't understand..." She paused for a second. "...Why didn't anyone hear the gunshot? It was loud and I'm sure the neighbor heard it. It's not like the houses are that far apart." She turns to Daniels. "Do we know who called it in?"

"We're still working on it...You did a great job, Rook. I know you're gonna fit right in. I'm glad you're my partner." They both walked out of the trailer to let everyone else do their jobs.

She smiled at him. She appreciated the compliment. Her first day reassured her that she picked the right job. She looked up to the sky and thought to herself "I hope I made you proud, daddy. I miss you."

THIRSTY

When people talk about vampires, they think of blood thirsty creatures who feast on everyone and everything. I guess it's because movies and tv shows give them a bad name. I always thought it was made up to scare young children like the boogeyman. It never crossed my mind one bit that they could really exist.

I was getting ready to close the bookstore when I saw him. His face was pale, his eyes looked dead. He was wearing a black leather jacket with a white t-shirt under it, and he had on tight dark blue jeans, leather boots and had jet black hair.

He noticed me looking at him. I looked away quickly, then looked back. "Hey. The store is about to close. Is there anything I can help you with?" I asked.

He just smiled. He walked towards me and gave me a book. It was about vampires.

He loudly whispered, "I'll take this one," His smile grew wider.

After he paid, he asked me if I liked books about vampires. I replied, "Yeah, they are fun to read about. I don't like those sparkling ones though."

"That's funny." He laughed. "I like you." His gaze was locked intensely on me.

"I'm Rafe. What's your name?" He asked.

"Katie. My name's Katie," I replied with an awkward smile.

"Have a good night," I locked the door and went home.

He would visit me every day. We had gotten very close.

One day he asked me to go back to his hotel with him and I agreed.

"Sure! I'd love that!" I said excitedly.

We got to the hotel, and we had some drinks.

"I want to tell you something. But I need you to not freak out." He said.

"Umm okay," I replied.

"Do you remember when I asked you if you liked vampires?" Rafe asked me.

"Yeah..." I answered.

"Well, I'm a vampire...." He blurted out without hesitation.

"That's funny. You're joking. You're joking, right?" I was dumbfounded.

Before I said anything else, he showed me his fangs and I screamed.

“Are you ok?” He asked me. His voice was calm.

“I don’t know. Did you bring me here to take my blood?” I replied angrily.

“No. Never. I love you. I would never do that to you. Besides, we aren’t allowed to turn anyone without their consent. It’s our coven’s rules,” He assured me.

I have nothing going on in my life. I don’t have family. I sat in silence, and I thought to myself. I wondered how it would feel for him to take my last breath and give me a new life?

“I’m in love with you too. Bite me. I want you to bite me.” I begged him.

“Are you sure?” He asked me.

I shook my head ‘yes,’ then he bit me.

I felt his bittersweet poison run through my veins. My heart stopped. But I felt alive. I died, but only for a moment, and I arose from the dead with a sudden thirst for blood.

He handed me a glass full of blood. I chugged it. “More,” I begged him.

“Yes, my love.” He handed me another glass.

After I got my thirst under control, he and I made passionate love for hours. After that, I fell asleep.

“I’ll be right back, my love.” He whispered to me as he kissed my head.

Suddenly, I heard a single POP! I could hear people screaming in the lobby. I woke up for a second, but I didn’t think anything of it, so I went back to sleep.

Rafe came barging in and woke me up.

“Baby, we need to leave. NOW!” He was out of breath.

I didn’t hessite. We left.

“What happened?” I was confused.

“Someone tried to shoot the concierge, so, I stepped in between them. Many people saw me and saw that I wasn’t fazed by the bullets. We need to leave the country as soon as possible.” You could tell he was nervous.

I packed my important things from my apartment, and we left.

I couldn’t wait to start my new life with my soulmate. It was fate.

WHERE AM I?

“Jade, are you ready to go?” My best friend Tilly yelled at me from my front lawn.

“Shit! I overslept!” I said to myself. I hurried to get dressed. I quickly brushed my teeth and grabbed my bag. I was about to head out when my mother stopped me.

“You should eat before you go.” She suggested.

“Fine!” I shoveled in two bites of eggs and fashioned the rest into an open faced sandwich. I kissed my mother on the cheek and left.

“Be safe guys! Keep in touch, love!” She shouted after me. We waved at her I hopped into the car.

“What took you so long? We’re late picking Jared and Jensen up!” Tilly's tone hinted annoyance.

“Sorry, I couldn’t sleep last night.” I yawned.

“It’s fine. Let’s go. They’re waiting for us.” Tilly put the car in reverse and pulled out of the driveway.

After we picked up the guys, we started out trip.

Our journey started off in Florida. Then we went through Alabama, then Mississippi, Arkansas. We planned on stopping in Kansas. As darkness crept in, our fatigue and hunger grew. We accidently missed the turn for our exit, so we decided to take a detour.

“What was that sound?” I asked.

“What’s what sound? We didn’t hear anything,” Tilly replied.

“It sounded like someone was talking,” I said back.

“I think you’re hearing things. I didn’t hear anything.” Jensen replied.

I say nothing. I keep hearing strange noises. I even see things in the tall grass on both sides of us. Can’t tell what it is. But I keep it to myself.

“SHIT!” Tilly yelled. “Something’s wrong with my car! It’s slowing down. We just put gas in the car.” She banged on the stirring wheel.

“That’s strange.” Jensen said with confusion.

“Pop the hood. I’ll look at it.” Jared said to Tilly.

“I see nothing wrong with the car. I think we need to find a way to call someone to pick us up. We can’t sit here all night. We have no idea where we are. We’re too far from the main road to walk there. We’re trapped here.” Jared was getting annoyed.

“Alright then. I’ll call an Uber...FUCK!” Jared yelled.

“What?” We all said at the same time.

“My phone’s dead! I just charged it!” Jared threw his phone on the dashboard.

We all checked our phones. They were all dead.

“I guess we’ll all just walk to wherever this path leads.” Tilly said.

We all started down the path. It was dark and dank. The grass was high, almost like no one ever cut it. The grass smelled funny. There were no sounds of crickets or any other creature, for that matter.

“It feels like we’ve been walking forever. My feet hurt.” Tilly grunted.

“Did you hear that?” I asked them.

“Jade, I think you’re losing it.” Jensen laughed at me.

“I’m serious guys. I hear something whispering in my ear.” I begged for them to listen to me.

“What the fuck man!” Jared sounded mad.

“What’s the matter?” I asked.

“The path ends. There’s nothing there. Just forest. What are we going to do now?”

“I don’t know man. I guess we can just keep walking through the woods.” Jared huffed.

“Did you see that?” Tilly shrieked.

“I told you! Something is following us!” I yelled.

We kept walking. Walking. Walking. Walking.

Tilly let out a loud scream. She fell into a large hole.

“Help me!” She yelled.

“We’re gonna look for a large stick or something to help you get out.” Jared said, trying to calm her down.

We couldn’t see in front of us because it started to get foggy. It was so thick, it made it hard for us to breathe or walk. We all got separated somehow. It almost felt like the fog was doing it to us.

“Hello? Guys? Where are you? I can’t see anything!” I screamed for my friends, but no one answered. I continued to scream for my friends. No one answered. I kept hearing the voices. I decided to run.

“Whoever is following me, leave me alone!” I yelled.

I happen to run into a cave like structure. It was dark and dingy, with a faint musty smell to it. Something was definitely chasing me. I just didn’t know who or what it is.

“Who’s there?” I screamed. “What do you want from me?” I screamed again. But there was no one there. I started panicking. My heart was pounding out of my chest. I was sweating and shaking. I was stuck in a dark cave, alone. At least that’s what I thought.

I could hear something moving around. Suddenly, I felt a thick wind blowing around me. It felt like it was touching me. It hurt. It felt like a bee sting. Only, it was more constant, kind of like a sunburn.

I tried to move further into the cave, but I couldn’t. I was stuck. Stuck here with the burning wind. Alone without my friends. When I put my hands over my ears and screamed, something touched me. I looked up and saw nothing. I panicked.

“WHO’S THERE?” I yelled at nothing. “What do you want from me?” I screamed.

“It’s only you that is here.” Nothing replied.

“If it’s only me, then who am I talking to?” I replied to nothing.

Nothing whispered back to me, “You.”

I woke up and nothing was there. Just me.

BUTTERFLY BALLET

“Good morning, daddy.” I smiled at him when I came into the kitchen.

“I made you good luck smiley pancakes like your mom used to make you. I know it’s not as pretty as when your mom made them, but I tried,” My father said as he kissed my forehead.

My mother used to make me “good luck pancakes”. She would make regular pancakes, but she put chocolate chips for the eyes, bacon for the mouth, scrambled eggs for the hair and whip cream for the cheeks and added two cherries on top of the whip cream.

“It’s perfect, daddy! Thank you! I can’t wait ‘til my audition. I’ve been practicing all week.” I said nervously.

“You’ll do great! I know your mother is watching you from above.” He teared up a little.

My mother died of cancer when I was sixteen years old. She went with me to every ballet class and every recital. She was my biggest fan.

“Thanks for breakfast, daddy! I’ll talk to you later!” I kissed him on the top of his head and left.

I made it to the diner in time like always.

“Raye, you are working a double shift tonight.” Danny the manager told me as I clocked in.

“NO! I have my audition today! I put it on the calendar a month ago! I can’t miss it. It’s the only time I can go. Please Danny. I need to go.” I was so upset. I thought my heart was going to jump out of my throat.

“I’m sorry, Raye. Something must have gotten mixed up. If you can find someone to switch shifts then you can leave, other than that, my hands are tied.” It felt the knots in my stomach grow. I thought I was going to throw up.

I noticed Carley counting tips in the corner booth. “Carley, I need you to cover my shift tonight. I have something important to do and I only have a certain amount of time to do it.” I begged.

“Raye, I’m sorry! I don’t have a babysitter to watch my kids. I’m sorry I couldn’t help. Maybe ask Robin. She might be able to help you.” Carley walked away.

I really need someone to cover my shift. I said to myself. I was still confident.

“Hey Robin. Are you able to cover my shift tonight? I have something important to do later. Danny forgot to take me off the schedule and now I can’t find anyone to help me. I’ll cover your shift the next time you need it.” I pleaded with Robin. Robin was always looking for more shifts, so I was still hopeful.

“That’s very nice of you, but I’m really sorry, hun. I can’t do it tonight. I have to go to my second job after this. Ask Marco.” Robin walked away.

I looked all over for Marco. I couldn’t find him. So, I ended up taking a customer’s order.

“Hey folks. What can I get you to drink?” I asked them, not really paying attention. I was still looking for Marco. I took my table’s drink order and rushed to the employee locker room.

“Marco! There you are! Please tell me you can help me out. I need someone to take over my second shift. I have somewhere to be. It’s important to me.” I begged him, still trying to be hopeful.

“No, sorry Raye. I can’t tonight. I have to pick my daughter up from soccer. I’m sorry I couldn’t be more helpful.” He touched my hand and went to bus a table.

I’m never getting out of here. I said to myself. I started getting nervous. My head started to sweat as if I was running a marathon.

I ran to the kitchen to ask Francisco. “Are you able to cover my shift tonight? I’ll work one of your shifts if you can help me. I’ll even give you half of my tips. I’m desperate.” He shook his head no.

“Sorry princessa. I can’t tonight. I have to take my mother to the airport. She’s going to El Salvador to visit family.” He stroked my hair and told me he was sorry again and walked away.

I ran to the back of the building where everyone goes to smoke during break. I saw Ally, another waitress smoking. I never really talk to her. But she was my last resort. My palms were sweaty, my heart was beating so fast I swear it was going to rip out of my chest. I started to stutter a little bit.

Hey Ally. It's Raye. I hate to ask you this since we don't really talk much, but I was wondering if you could do me a huge favor. I know it's a lot to ask, but is there any way possible you could cover my shift tonight? Danny was supposed to keep me off the night shift, but he forgot. I have to be at an audition for a ballet in New York City tonight. I have been training for this for months. I'll do anything if you could cover for me." I blurted it out.

"Sure. Why not. I need more hours anyways. Don't worry about paying me back. Just go crush that audition!" Ally winked at me. I gave her a hug, and I started crying.

"Thank you so much! You have no idea! This means so much to me. Thank you again." I was ecstatic! I was so overjoyed, I felt like I was the one jumping over the moon instead of the cow.

I finished my shift, then changed into my white leotard, then put on my regular clothes over it, packed my bag, and headed to the train station.

"Good, I have enough time to get there." I thought to myself.

I got onto the train, sat down, and waited for my stop.

Suddenly the train stopped. I hear the conductor say "Sorry folks, we seem to have some electrical issues. They are working diligently to fix the problem."

"GREAT!" I murmured under my breathe. I can't help but to think something is trying to keep me from making it in time for my audition. I pray that I make it on time.

Dear God, please help me make it on time for my audition. I never ask you for anything, so please help me. Amen," I prayed to myself.

I only had half an hour to get there, get dressed and sign in. Time started passing by fast. My chances of making it to the audition was starting to become slim to none. I kept looking at my watch as if that was going to make time go faster.

"I'm sorry, mama. It doesn't look like I'm going to make it this year. I hope I didn't let you down." I cried to myself.

I could hear the passengers whispering to each other. Their voices were loud in my head. I couldn't think straight. One passenger noticed me crying.

"Miss, are you ok?" A man asked me.

"I'm ok, I just need to be some place in 20 minuets, or I'll miss it. This is important to me." I said to him as I tried not to ugly cry on a train full of strangers.

"I hope you make it." His tone was sympathetic.

The train was still at a standstill. It didn't look like the train would be fixed anytime soon. It started getting darker, and hotter. I thought my skin was going to melt off my body. The last thing I wanted was to show up sweaty and disgusting. I took off my sweatshirt, revealing my leotard.

I noticed a woman smiling at me. It made me uncomfortable. Why was she looking at me? Was it because I was sweaty? Or was it because I was wearing my leotard. I looked away and put on my headphones and looked out the window. I began to lose hope.

Suddenly I saw a butterfly.

When my mother passed, I was devastated, I couldn't handle the loss. The day of her funeral, I saw a single butterfly. I knew it was my mother telling me everything would be ok.

Seeing this butterfly now, on my way to my future, I instantly relaxed. I knew she was here. I could feel a warm feeling wash over me. Maybe it was my mother hugging me and telling me it'll all be ok.

Just then, the train started back up. I was elated. I made it to my stop and ran like a wild horse to my audition.

I didn't make it. I was two minutes late.

I stood by the door, sobbing. My dreams had crashed down in front of me.

I saw the same butterfly float peacefully in front of my face.

"Mama, I didn't make it. I'm sorry." I whispered to myself.

I sat down on the ground next to the door and pulled my knees up to my chest and cried on my lap. Suddenly, I felt a tap on my shoulder. I looked up and it was the same smiling lady I saw on the train.

"Are you here to audition?" She asked me.

"Yes, but I was two minutes late and they closed the door already." I said as I wiped the warm salty tears from my eyes.

"Come with me." She grabbed my hand.

I was confused. But I followed her anyways. She brought me to the back of the building and walked into it. She took me to the audition room and introduced me to the other people in the room. I was still dumbfounded. I had no idea what was going on.

“She was on the same train as I was. It broke down. She made it, but the door was locked. So, I brought her here.” I was shocked.

Who was this lady? I asked myself.

“Go on, hun. Let me see what you got.” They all looked at me.

I was really nervous. But I remembered my mother always told me to never be afraid of your dreams. So, I danced for them.

No one said anything to me, they just clapped. I bowed and went to sit down in the auditorium chairs.

The strange lady asked me to come up to her.

“I didn’t give you my name. My name is Valarie. I own the company you auditioned for. I remember seeing your application and I was very impressed. That’s why I smiled at you on the train. When I saw you missed it, I knew I needed to give you a chance. I don’t know what it is about you, but I want you to be the lead dancer. Congratulations. Bill will give you all of the info you need.” She touched my shoulder and left.

What just happened? I was still in shock.

I went home and told my father what happened. He was proud of me.

If I hadn’t seen that butterfly, I don’t think I would have gotten the chance to audition.

"We did it, mom. We did it." I whispered to myself.

About the Author



Savanna Krystal is an author of children's picture books, and supernatural and fantasy novels. She is perusing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at Full Sail University. Savanna runs a successful photography business and has won awards for her work.

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