

## “Do Not Stray”

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[#Fictober18 \(October 2018\) writing challenge](#)

Day 25: “Go forward, do not stray.”

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Astral projection didn't come easy to many witches, but once Vinnie experimented with a few spells, she uncovered a previously latent talent for it. It was like walking in a dream—strange, surreal. She hadn't quite got a grasp on keeping herself tied to the astral plane.

And that was why Mason was here now.

“Relax,” he told her, not for the first time. “Breathe deeply.”

“Okay.” She took in a deep breath and exhaled slowly. Her eyes were shut tightly against the light of the room. Vinnie sought a place of calm, of comfort, and let herself... drift.

It always felt strange, like a pulling in her belly. A part of her wanted to retreat back but she ignored the feeling and focused on how freeing it felt to detach herself from a physical form.

She felt far away, light as air. She opened her eyes—or her astral eyes, as her physical ones were still closed. There she was, sitting straight-backed but relaxed on the couch, and there was her godfather sitting across from her, watching intently. She was thankful that Mason was there to guide her. The astral plane wasn't one so easily accessed and that was her next step.

“You will see the place between, where the astral meets the physical,” he instructed.

And she could see it. It was shimmering, like the haze that covered hot asphalt in the summer. Vinnie moved toward it, reaching out to touch it. It felt like silk, like a ribbon between her fingers. Strange. She hadn't thought it would feel like anything.

“When you pass through, go forward. Do not stray.”

She wouldn't. She'd heard horror stories of those who'd lingered in the doorways of the between, who became trapped—and she had no intention of becoming another cautionary tale. As she moved forward, she did so tentatively. Her fingers closed around the shimmering partition and pulled it open.

Or, she tried. It wouldn't give. The confusion was enough to break her concentration. Her astral body jerked backwards and when she reconnected with her physical one, she gave a gasp. Her heart raced, her breathing ragged.

“Just breathe.” Mason leaned forward. “It feels worse than it is.”

He was right. Of course he was right. She'd calm down in time. It was always jarring when the connection was broken.

“I was closer that time. I was able to touch it.”

Mason nodded his head and Vinnie reclined back into the couch, satisfied with the little progress she'd made, glad Mason approved, and longing to do better the next time. And she would. Practice made perfect and she planned to practice a lot.