

## CHAPTER 104

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104 Ava: Training (I) The best way to deal with all the confusion involving feelings? Exercise. Jericho watches in approval as I push myself past my limits, determined to grow stronger. New bruises appear and disappear each day as my supernatural healing kicks in. Lisa, on the other hand, is covered with them, in various stages of healing. I'm determined to ignore everything about Lucas and Clayton for as long as I can. It's easier to just... not deal with it all. Healthy? Probably not. But hell, I'm just going to settle for making it through each day for now. An odd, itchy feeling doesn't stop all day. Lisa smacks at my hands every time I begin scratching at my neck and shoulders. My belly looks as if it's been clawed by a raccoon, though the marks fade within half an hour each time. IN Ave Taning (0) "You have to stop that, Ave. You're driving yourself insane. The more you scratch, the more you'll itch. Just take some Benadryl." "Fast healing means a fast metabolism. Benadryl won't even touch it, and I don't know wolf dosing. I'd have to go to a healer to figure it out." I've explained this to Lisa before, but her exasperation over my scratching overcomes minor details like that. It doesn't bother me. I repeat myself as often as I need to. I just worry that other wolves in the pack might bother her. So far, Lisa hasn't gone anywhere without me. Between the guards always nearby and Kellan's presence every morning before training and every afternoon after, we haven't done anything outside of our apartment. Even our food gets delivered. Lisa's company is amazing, but we're both going a little stir-crazy. That might be what's wrong with me. "Full moon's coming up," Jericho announces out of nowhere, and I almost jump ten feet in the air. #W2112 That're you doing? Dun!" 104 Ava Training (0) Lisa and I exchange a startled glance before picking up the pace. My muscles scream in protest as I push myself to sprint faster around the track. The itching across my skin intensifies with each stride, a maddening sensation that refuses to relent. Full moon. The words echo in my mind, taunting me with their significance. As a shifter who has never experienced a shift, the concept of the full moon's power remains foreign to me. Yet, an inexplicable sense of anticipation builds within my chest. Ever since that day in the forest, running almost as fast as wolves, I've been desperate to feel that inner power again. I haven't felt a hint of it since that day. Jericho's watchful gaze burns into my back as I round the bend, my breath coming in ragged gasps. Lisa falls into step beside me, her face flushed with exertion. "What do you think he means by that?" she pants, her words punctuated by labored breaths. I shake my head, unable to form a coherent response. My breath is too short and my brain too confused by how I feel about a full moon. 15:22 104 Ava: Training (1) It's like my body is yearning for it. It makes no sense at all. Even in full-fledged wolf shifters, the moon is nothing more than an enhancement. An aphrodisiac for some, and a hair trigger on anger for the others. They're a little more volatile, a little more inclined to drink, a little late to sleep. But otherwise, it doesn't really do that much. So why do I feel like bathing in the silver moonlight of a full, round moon? Bizarre. Everything lately is just bizarre. That's the problem. Where the f@ck is normal, and how do I go back? As we complete another lap, Jericho's voice booms across the track once more. "Faster! You think you can outrun your enemies at this pace?" I grit my teeth, channeling my frustration into each pounding step. The relentless itching beneath my skin keeps me from hitting a decent stride. I'm too distracted. Lisa craps out before I do, barely making it the full five miles. She's so sore that I spend an hour every night massaging her from head to toe. Human bodies are 15:22 104 Ava: TrainwWw.n.Vel(w)(r)M.coM

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ing (1) weak. I would know; I lived in one all my life. The changes of late are not what I expected. The fact that I yearn for the moon so fiercely worries me, even as excitement thrums through my veins. When I finish my fifth mile, Jericho's right there in front of me, like a f@cking unwanted ghost in my face. "Lunges, Ava. The entire track." His voice cracks like a whip, making me flinch. "Lisa, squats." "What? Why can't I do lunges too?" Lisa protests, her face flushed from exertion. She still hasn't finished her five miles. Jericho turns his steely gaze on her. "Life isn't fair. Get over it. This is a performance-based treatment." Indignation flares in my chest at the dismissive way he treats my friend. I set my hands on my hips, ready to argue, but think better of it. Jericho isn't the type to tolerate backtalk. With a huff, I begin my lunges, feeling the burn in my thighs almost immediately. Each step is a challenge, my muscles screaming in protest. I grit my teeth, determined to prove myself. 100 Ava: Training (1) One leg out. Dip my body down. Hold it. Back up with another wide stride. Dip down. Hold it. Burn, muscles, burn. Breathe in, Breathe out. It's easier to lose myself in this than it was to keep my mind from wandering unpleasantly during my run. Jericho strides over, his critical eye assessing my form. "Lower. Keep your knee above your ankle." I adjust my stance, the ache intensifying. Just as I find a rhythm, Jericho thrusts a pair of 5-pound dumbbells into my hands. "Hold these. Arms out." He demonstrates, his muscular arms parallel to the ground. I gape at him, disbelief etched on my face. My arms are already trembling from the mere thought of it. I'm exhausted. He can't possibly be serious. "Did I stutter? Move!" Jericho barks, his voice echoing across the track. Okay. He's serious. The weights pull at my shoulders as I extend my arms. What had seemed nearly weightless in one hand is 15:22 10 Ava: Training (1) now far worse than I expected, my hands floating slowly toward the ground. Taking a deep breath, I raise my arms, determined to see this through. Jericho might have added to my calisthenics, but I'll be damned if I'll let him win." As I lunge forward, the dumbbells seem to grow heavier with each passing second. Sweat trickles down my face, stinging my eyes. My breath comes in short, sharp gasps. Lisa shoots me a sympathetic look as she powers through her squats, also ordered by Jericho. Comment View All > Post your first comment! Vote 13 1 Fandom Swipe left to continue > Send Gift 105 Ava: Training (1)Ww.W.NôêlW@rM.(c)©™