

CHAPTER 33

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33 Ava: Selene's Return Panic seizes me as I pat frantically at my neck, searching for the familiar weight of my necklace and finding only smooth skin. Where is it? How could I have lost it? Hurriedly, I retrace my steps, dripping water across the tile as I scour the bathroom. I get down on my hands and knees, peering under the sink and toilet, my heart pounding with rising dread. Nothing. It's not here. Wrapping myself in a towel, I venture back into the main room, my gaze darting frantically about as I search for any sign of the missing crystal. I rifle through the sheets on the bed, tossing pillows aside as my desperation grows. Not there. I get the bright idea to check my pockets, but it isn't there either. Shit. f@ck. 14:52 1/8 33 Ava: Solone's Return you." I clutch the towel tighter around myself. "Thank you. I just showered, so it's perfect timing." It dawns on me that I hadn't even checked for a change of clothes before showering. My brain's been defective since I got here; it's no wonder I didn't notice the necklace missing. I end up in a soft cotton hospital gown that buttons up in the back, instead of gaping open. Nurse Jenna left a cup of water at my bedside and showed me how to use my call light in case I needed anyone. Too bad none of them can help me materialize a missing necklace. I try to relax in bed; I can't. I try to relax in the recliner they've provided; I can't. I try to drink water; I can't. Food? Perish the thought. I wouldn't be able to swallow that, either. The thought alone makes me nauseated. I keep reaching out for Selene in my mind, meeting only silence. It's something I should be used to, after 14. 36 33 Ava: Selena's Retur years of it—but it's amazing how you adapt to change. I can't imagine life without Selene anymore, even when she isn't in my head. It's wrong. I fall asleep in fits and starts. Every few hours, a nurse comes in to check all my vitals, and it takes a long time until I can fall asleep again. But even a restless sleep replenishes your energy, and I wake at sunrise feeling ever—so—slightly refreshed and ready to take on the world. Well—maybe not the world. But definitely to ask Alpha Clayton if I can go back to the scene of the accident. Unfortunately, that doesn't go well. Apparently, he's too busy to just be called down to the hospital because a strange woman wants to meet with him. By lunch, I'm nearly crawling out of my skin with agi

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tation. *** Ava. 4/8 33 Ava: Selene's Return I drop my spoonful of orange jello in shock. Selene! Where have you been?! ...can't...far... It's like her voice is ebbing and flowing in my mind. I'm sure she's saying so much more than I can hear, but the important word is there. I must be too far to maintain a connection. This isn't something any other shifter could have explained to me; all their wolves exist with them. I've never heard of a wolf that can manifest into their own body, even if it is a dog's form. Relief blossoms, relaxing every inch of taut muscle as I lay back in my bed. My breath escapes me in a long sigh. Selene is close. She must have been running all night. I'm not sure how fast she can run, but it must have been hard on her. Selene? I ask after a few minutes. I can hear you, her voice whispers, and I can feel tears in my eyes. 14:52 5/8 33 Ava: Selene's Return I'm in a hospital run by the Aspen pack. Their alpha saved me last night. I quickly give a summary of events, feeling her presence strengthen every minute. Are you hurt? I shake my head, forgetting she can't see me. Ava. Are you hurt? Not bad, mainly from the car crash. I have some questions, though. They said I'm going into heat. They want me here until my heat is over. Selene goes silent, but I can still feel her. It's good to have her back. That will be problematic, she says, sounding grim. Has the alpha scented you? You mean, sniffed me? Yes. I can hear a faint growl in my head. Has he gotten near the scar on your neck? No, I respond obediently. Good. Keep him away from it. When did you lose the necklace? I look around. How did you know? Can you see me? 33 Ava Selene's Return No. If you're going into heat, it means you lost the necklace. Oh. That's news to me. Would have been nice to know... Um, I don't know. I thought I might have lost it during the crash, but now I'm thinking I might have lost it earlier. The guys who kidnapped me kept saying I was going into heat. Selene's sigh of frustration fills my head. Will you be safe there? At the hospital? Yes. I nod, then remember she can't see me. Yes. Alpha Clayton seems to be very kind, and has a good reputation as a leader. I don't think he will do anything to me. She sighs again. I need to look for the necklace. Don't lose the ring, too, or we will really be in trouble. I touch the ring, needing the physical reassurance that it's still there. It is. Are you going to explain it all to me now? What I am? Why I'm in heat? Why this necklace 14:52 7.9 33 Ava: Selene's Return keeps me from going into heat? Selene goes silent for a while. Her voice is fading when she finally responds. We will talk, Ava. Comment1 View

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