

## CHAPTER 34

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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 agitation.

\*\*\* 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 scarf 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 All > 14:52 Post your first comment! Vote 11 1 Fandom Swipe left to continue > Send Gift B/B 34 Ava Overcome (1) "Hello, Alpha Clayton," I say, smiling back despite the butterflies in my stomach. I'm keenly aware of Selene's warning about keeping him away from my scar. It's not like I want anyone near it anyway, but her caution makes me extra wary. He steps into the room, his presence filling the small space. "Please, just Clayton is fine." His voice is warm, like honey and fresh-baked bread, all things that stimulate my appetite—probably a side effect from only being allowed to eat little cups of jello. "How are you feeling? I apologize for not being able to check on you sooner." I wave off his apology, setting the jello cup aside. "I'm doing better, thanks. The nurse said I still have a little while before the peak of my heat hits." Clayton brings a chair to the side of my bed, sitting with the elegant grace most wolf shifters manage without thinking. I don't have that level of grace, probably because I wasn't raised with my wolf inside of me like the rest of them. "About that," Clayton says, sounding hesitant. "The 14:52 2/9 34 Ava: Overcome (1) doctors are certain that you are, in fact, a true omega." I nod slowly, waiting for him to continue. We'd already established that. "True omega heats are..." He claps his hands, unclasps them, and eventually rests them on the side of my bed as rests his elbows on his knees. His fingers brush gently against the side of my hand, and I'm surprised to feel fireworks explode at the contact. "Different." "Different how?" I ask, distracted by how much I want to grab his hands, to link our fingers together. "They're stronger. Wolves know when one is around, even if they can't directly scent them. So, the unmated wolves tend to get a little single-minded in their pursuit." "Mmm." I'm paying attention, or trying to, but I'm also trying not to just r@pe his hand with an unwanted hand-holding. 1 "Even I will have a hard time controlling myself, so we will do our best to keep only female employees once it's confirmed that you're entering your peak." He seems to understand what's going on in my head, probably because I've been staring at his hand without 3/9 34 Ava Overcome (1) blinking. He reaches out, and I link my fingers through his with a satisfied sigh. His voice gets a little rougher, and I blink at him as he speaks, wondering why his voice sounds so nice. "A true omega seeks an alpha when she's in heat, though a strong beta can also catch her attenti

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on," he says, and I realize that he's now sitting on the edge of my bed. And we're staring at each other, as his thumb caresses the back of my hand in a way that's driving me insane. I tilt my chin up just a little, and Clayton leans down to nuzzle against my jaw. "Do you need an alpha, Ava?" he asks in that rough voice that makes everything inside me tingle. I nod, panting a little as he drags our clasped hands up my thigh, pressing gently down against the top of my pelvis. I wiggle a little, and he bites my ear. "You smell divine." I sigh as he lets go of my hand, pulling my blanket down. He nuzzles down the side of my neck, licking at the crescent scar that's... really... important? 14.52 34 Ava: Overcome (1) Important. My scar is important. Why? Because it feels good when he ki\*ses it. Yes. And licks it. And nibbles. And bites. And- f@ck. Part of my brain function returns, and I shove at Clayton's chest weakly. "Wait. Alpha-" "Yes," he breathes, before latching onto my neck and sucking hard in a way that has my entire body jolting off the bed. I grab his head, wanting to pull him away, but instead shove him closer. Warning bells are going off somewhere, but I don't care. "Harder," I beg him, and he bites down. I moan in dizzying delight, and his hand is rough as it yanks at the bottom of my hospital gown, shoving it up 14:52 – 5/91 34 Ava Overcome (1) precision. I can feel his fingers sliding, parting me, and "ALPHA CLAYTON!" Someone's screaming. Clayton's growling as he shoves his fingers inside of me, and I'm trying desperately to keep him there, bucking against his hand. I'm pleading, he's snarling, and suddenly he's gone. I burst into tears as frustration burns through me, only to feel someone holding me gently. Someone's growling and snarling, and I want to go to them, but- "Shh, Ava. Shh." Something pinches my thigh, but I can't swat it away because there's something on top of them, weighing them down. I'm dizzy. "I feel-weird..." "I know, sweetheart. You just need to hold on a little longer. We gave you some medicine to help, okay?" "I need the alpha," I whimper. "I need him." "I know, honey, but I don't think you know what you're 14:53 6.9 30 Ava. Overcome (1) doing right now." I remember her name now, the one holding me and stroking my hair. The one who made my arms feel like they weigh a thousand pounds. Jenna. I blink owlishly, realizing my vision is blurry. I yank my glasses off my face, glad to see that everything's finally clear again. Throwing my glasses across the room, I try to pull away from Jenna. "Alpha Clayton. I need Alpha Clayton." "No, you don't. Your body's calming down. You're fine." It's not calming down. I'm hot. It hurts. I need him, but he isn't here. He rejected me. Then he apologized. And then he disappeared. I don't know where he is. "Alpha Clayton didn't reject you," Jenna says, her warm voice a soothing balm to the itch inside of me. "He just needed to come to his senses, even if he didn't want to. He's outside now, and he won't be back until your heat is over. Okay?" 14:53 C 7/9 34 Ava: Overcome (1) I shake my head. "Not Clayton. Lucas. I need Lucas." "Oh. Well, Lucas isn't here right now, and we're all here to get you through this together, okay? Hey, Nance- can you get me another dose? She should be out right now, but she's fighting it." "Her pulse is all over the place," another voice complains. "This isn't working, and Alpha's going nuts out there. I'm scared to even open the door. He might come barging in." Alpha's out there? Lucas. My alpha. I shove Jenna off me and rush to the door, opening it just before Jenna pulls me back. "Alpha!"