

CHAPTER 153

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153 Ava: A Weight off Her Shoulders This isn't so bad, right? I ask Selene, buoyed by the gentle smile on Lucas' face, At first I thought it was a facade to hide his anger, but he doesn't once lash out. Doesn't berate me. Doesn't yell. Just nods. Smiles. Listens. And accepts it all. Right, Selene says, but she sounds evasive. So when Lucas hands me a glass of water and nudges me to sit at the table across from him, I do without hesitation. "Okay," he finally says, leaning over the table to stare into my eyes. "Lay it on me." He sounds a little like he's bracing himself. I can't blame him. I am, too. I take a deep breath. "I'm not a normal shifter." He nods slowly. "We've established this." I inhale sharply, searching for the right words. How do I explain something I barely understand myself? The power within me is like the wind; it exists, and occasionally makes itself known, but I can't search for it. "I have some kind of magical aptitude," I finally say, meeting Lucas' 153 Ava; A Weight off Her Shoulders gaze. "But I need training to control it. Without proper guidance, it could be dangerous." Lucas stares at me, his brow furrowed. The silence stretches between us, heavy with unspoken questions. "What do you mean by magical aptitude, Ava?" His voice is steady, but I can sense the underlying concern. The weight of my own ignorance is crushing, and I can only shrug. "I'm not entirely sure, to be honest. All I know is that there's a power inside me, and it's not like anything I've ever known. You saw it, too. The night you saved me." His eyes narrow as he thinks back. "Your running. We assumed it was some sort of side effect from your dormant wolf." Motioning toward Selene, I say, "She wasn't dormant. Our bond is different." I take a deep breath, cautiously optimistic by his measured. responses. "I don't know enough about this, but Sister Miriam knows. She's going to connect me with a teacher so I can learn to control it." Lucas leans back in his chair, his eyes never leaving mine. "And trust this Sister Miriam?" you "I don't know if I trust her completely, but she seems to know more about what's happening to me than anyone else." Light reflects off the water in my glass, and I lower my eyes, turning the cup in circles. "I need to know more about this power. It's putting the people around me in danger. I need to protect myself. I need to get Lisa back. It's something that I need to do." 12 12 153 Ava, A Weight off Her Shoulders He reaches across the table, his hand covering mine. The warmth of his touch is comforting, and I peek at his face through my lowered lashes. Thoughtful. Concerned. Calm. Ever the rational alpha." He's a good man, I tell Selene in relief. She's quiet for a moment. You don't smell anything? Smell? What an odd question. Never mind, then. Yes, he's a good man, Ava. She doesn't sound like she's choking over the words anymore, but there's something there that I can't quite put my finger on. "Ava," he says, his fingers tensing for a moment over my hand. "I need you to promise me something." "Yes?" Lucas hesitates, looking torn. "I need you to stay away from Sister Miriam." "But that's-" "For now," he amends hastily. "For now. Just until Kellan and I can look into this a little more. To keep you safe." Drawing my brows together, I pull my hand from his. "Lucas, I know you understand that Lisa's in danger." "Of course I do, sweetheart. And we're going to do everything in our power to get her back." "I don't have time to sit here while you look into things. I know it's dangerous, but it's a risk I'm willing to take on if I can get even one step closer to bringing her back" He groans. "You're not alone, Ava. We are all in this with you. But I can't just let you—" \* Tm not asking for permission, Lucas "I know, I know. His eyes close as he takes a deep breath, and Selene pipes up in my mind. The scent of his anger has filled this room since you first started talking, and yet he is still trying to see your side. Do not be afraid to speak your mind, Ava. Only communication will get you out of these muddy waters. Selene's cold nose touches my leg, prompting me to reach down and rub her ears. I'm going to watch my shows on the couch. You two can have this fight anywhere, but if clothes come off, I ask that you do it in the bedroom Depositing the remote in my lap, wet with her saliva, she saunters back to the living room, having made her position clear. Lucas glances between us. "What's going on?" "Nothing" I switch the channel—there's a talk show on now—to her second favorite, which is running yet another one of her shows. I've seen this one before, too. It's only then that I realize the effects of the food have worn off. I shouldn't have been able to say that to him. I should have blabbed my entire thought process. 153 Ava, A Weight off Her Shoulders When did the effects fade? "Ava, I don't want you to feel as though you can't talk to me," he says hesitantly, distracting me from that line of thought. "I appreciate you opening up to me, and I want you to understand that." He sounds like he's reciting lines from a book, but Selene's words echo through myWw~~w~~.m~~o~~(v)Eℓ(w)o(r)M~~.~~COM

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mind. He's trying. Like I am. "Lucas, do you think I'm a freak?" The question comes out unbidden, and I can't stare at his face while waiting for his answer. Instead, I pick at the buttons on the remote Selene left with me. "What? Of course not. Ava, why would you think that?" His hands. cover mine, stopping the fidgeting. "Sweetheart, you need to look at me." I don't. "Okay, you don't have to. But really, really listen to my words. Ava, you're not a freak. Wolf or no wolf, I want you by my side. I never should have pushed you away. I've regretted it for so long. When I looked into you, I learned how wrong all my assumptions were. I thought you were nothing but a Blackwood loyalist, like your sister, and I know I hurt you. Then you ran away that night." "I was already running away," I mutter. "It wasn't just because of you." 12.12 1530 153 Ava: A Weight off Her Shoulders His fingers squeeze against my hands, and I turn them palms up, letting our fingers link. "It doesn't matter. I should have been your safe haven. Your fated mate. Your number one choice. I betrayed that without ever having a real conversation with you." My eyes drift to meet his, seeing his honesty. Uncomfortable, I glance away again. "I didn't have a real conversation with you when you came to apologize, either." "But we're here now, right?" he presses, waiting until I nod. "I'll never think of you as a freak, Ava. You're perfect. Even if you were human, you're perfect to me. All of this? Your Sister Miriam, these supposed powers, Selene, even Clayton—it doesn't change you. Doesn't change who you are. Doesn't change the fact that you're my mate. I'm ready to chase you for a thousand years, if I need to." Selene snorts from her side of the room, but refrains from other comment. For a half-second. any Seriously? A thousand years? Even as Lycans, we didn't live that long. My lips twitch, even as my eyes fill. "A thousand years is a little over-exaggerated." "But I would," he insists, with the faintest smile when our eyes meet again. "Even if you run away, I'll find if you run away, I'll find you. Even if you don't want me, I'll watch over you. Even if you hate me, I'll protect you. You're my only choice in this life, Ava. So don't be afraid to come to me, no matter what you have to say." 153 Ava: A Weight off Her Shoulders "Even when it makes you angry?" I ask with a soft laugh. "Sweetheart, I'm furious," he admits, still smiling. Comentario Publica tu primer comentario! Vote FANDOM Deslizar a la izquierda para continuar > Ver todos >(w)©iw.ñóvElw~~o~~rM~~.~~cOm