

## CHAPTER 162

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162 Ava: Mom (II) As we enter the hospital, the sterile scent of disinfectant and the hushed whispers of staff and visitors envelop us. Selene, ever attuned to my emotions, presses against my leg, offering her silent support. I reach down and run my fingers through her fur, drawing strength from her presence. A few steps in, a security guard takes notice of Selene and frowns. "I'm sorry, but dogs aren't allowed inside the hospital premises." Vanessa steps forward, her voice calm and authoritative. "This is a service dog. She's with us." The guard glances at me, then at our bodyguards—dressed in suits, with sunglasses, and essentially a walking cliché. His expression turns guarded and he waves us on. "Of course, my apologies. Please go ahead." Relieved, I glance down at Selene, only to find her prancing alongside me, head high. Hey, you know service dogs aren't supposed to strut like show dogs, right? She huffs, but stops her front-leg flicking prance. Vanessa seems to know where to go as she navigates the maze of corridors and several random sets of elevators. With each step, the knot in my stomach tightens, anticipation and dread intertwined. Grateful for Vanessa's presence, I follow behind, digging my fingers into Selene's fur for comfort. Remember, she can't do anything to you, Selene whispers in my head. 17:36 – 1 G 182 Ava Momin The door to my mother's room is as mundane as any other. Brown. Silver handle. A note on the door asking to contact the nurse before drawing labs. Nothing that says a terrible person resides within and to beware of your heart. My hand hovers over the handle as my heart beats loudly in my ears. Vanessa places a reassuring hand on my shoulder. "Remember, Ava," she murmurs into my ear, "you are in control now. Your mother's power over you exists only in the past. You are stronger than you know." Inod without glancing at her, closing my eyes and drawing in a deep, slow breath.. My lungs hurt and ache from the amount of oxygen I take in and I hold it for ten seconds before letting it go in a soft exhale. I can do this. With a final glance at Selene and Vanessa, I push open the door and step inside. The room is dimly lit, the beeping of machines and a faint hiss coming from somewhere behind her bed. My mother lies motionless, her once-vibrant features pale and drawn. The sight of her, so vulnerable and fragile, sends a pang of unexpected emotion through me. Her blue eyes, which can be as warm as a summer lake or as frigid as a winter sky, watch me with little emotion. It's like she's dead inside. 2/6 The Mom 1 approach the bed slowly, my footsteps echoing in the stillness. Selene follows close behind, her presence a constant comfort. I reach out and take my mother's hand in mine, surprised by how cold and lifeless it feels. "Mom," I whisper, my voice cracking with emotion. "It's me, Ava." There is no response, no flicker of recognition. I swallow hard, fighting back the tears that threaten to spill. I hate her. I hate this woman. And yet I love her with the fierceness of a child. Seeing her like this hurts, and I wonder if it would hurt this much. had I been informed she had died. Ignoring her existence, ignoring the fact that she was fighting for her life from the wolfsbane, was so much easier than this. You're okay, Ava. It's okay to hurt. I take a deep breath, steadying myself as I pull a chair up to the side of my mother's hospital bed. Plastic scr@pes against the linoleum floor, harsh in the stillness of the room. Settling into it, I clasp my hands tightly in my lap, trying to calm the tremors within. Being here is like being home again. Waiting to see how far her anger goes. My mother's eyes follow me, tracking my movements with an unsettling intensity. Despite the dullness in her gaze, there's a flicker of something there—a spark of recognition, perhaps, or a 17-34 316

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glimmer of the fierce woman I once knew. Why did you want me to come? 1sk, my voice barely above a whisper. The question hangs in the air between us, heavy with the weight of our fractured relationship. For a long moment, my mother says nothing. She simply stares at me, her expression unreadable. Then, slowly, she lifts a hand from the bed, the movement labored and weak. My heart flinches in my chest as her emaciated hand reaches out towards my face. It's a surreal moment, one that seems to stretch on for an eternity. A A part of me wants to recoil, to pull away from her touch, but another part—the part that still yearns for a mother's love- remains still, waiting. Her fingers draw closer. Is this it? Is this the moment I've craved for so long? Emotions run rampant—hope, fear, longing, and a desperate, aching need for acceptance. For a single, shining moment, I allow myself to believe that this is it. That my mother is finally going to show me the affection I've always needed. That the past is left in the past, and in the future lies hope. Her fingertips brush against my cheek, and I lean into the touch, my eyes fluttering closed. But then, in a sudden, jarring motion, she slaps me. It's a weak slap, lacking the force and power of a healthy person, but the impact is no less devastating. My eyes fly open, and I stare 17.56 at her in shock, my check stinging more from the emotional blow than the physical one. I reel back, my chair scraping against the floor as I instinctively try to put distance between us. The hope that blossomed in my chest withers and dies, replaced by a cold, hollow ache. A familiar pain. Ava... Selene's presence is warm in my mind, a reminder that I'm not alone. But even her presence can't ease the pain that cleaves my heart in two. It's a pain I know all too well—the pain of rejection, of being unloved and unwanted by the one person who should love me unconditionally. Tears blur my vision, and I blink them away furiously, refusing to let them fall. I won't give her the satisfaction of seeing me cry. Not again. "Why?" I choke out, my voice raw with emotion. "Why did you do that?" My mother's hand falls back to the bed, her fingers curling into the sheets. She doesn't answer, but the look in her eyes says it all. There's no remorse there, no regret. Only a cold, hard anger that I've seen countless times before. Something dark and bitter passes over her features. "You ruined everything," she rasps, her voice weak but laced with venom. "The one to bring downfall, Your father's weakness. You should have been perfect. We did nothing wrong. We loved you. Cared for you. And yet you have no wolf." 17:35 526 16 Ava. Mom () Her face twists in familiar disdain. You never should have existed. Do you know how hard your father your brother, had to work to erase the blight of your existence?" Comentario: Ver todos > Deja el primer comentario para este capitulo Vote 1 FANDOM Deslizar a la izquierda para continuar > ENVIAR REGALO Ww.novelworm.com

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