

## CHAPTER 167

67 Ava: Mom's Stronger? "Mom?" I ask in disbelief. It can't be. How can Mom be stronger than the pack beta? In another pack, your mother would have been a strong Luna candidate. Wow. I'd always known Mom had a strong presence, but I would have never guessed—never, in a million years, ever—that her wolf is stronger than Dad's. I wonder how that worked out. Did Mom force her wolf to submit? It is likely that the alpha did. "Alpha Renard?" Correct. An alpha's bond can force submission in any wolf, and change dynamics as he wishes. I'd heard about things like that, of course. I knew we all had to submit, and I knew he had the power to force submission—but I don't think I've ever heard of him forcing wolves to submit to other wolves. It happens. "Wow." Despite my visit with Mom yesterday, I feel a little sorry for her. A woman like her? With a strong wolf? She must have felt so stifled in this pack. 17:38 152 Ava Mom's Strompra? Your mother is strong in wolf, but weak in human, she explains. Not all souls are well matched. "You said she would be a strong Lupa candidate. Why can't strong female wolves be alphas?" They can be. They used to be. Selene sounds frustrated. But today's wolves don't recognize it. An alpha today would have been King in my era. My mind jiggles. A Lycan King. Wait a second. "Sister Miriam called you—" Yes. I was Queen, in my time. I stare at Selene, my mouth hanging open. "Wait, you were a queen? Like, an actual queen?" Yes, Selene says primly, sitting straight with her head high. "When she called you Lycan Queen, I figured it was because you're so..." Trailing off before I can finish the sentence, I try to think of a way to end it without offending her. Because I'm so what? Selene tilts her head, those ice-blue eyes staring deep into my soul. In her dog form, it's adorable. But that mental voice of hers is almost purring with danger. "Um. You know. Finicky?" Finicky?! Selene's fur bristles as she curls her lip over her teeth in a silent snarl. I am not finicky. Vampires are finicky creatures. "Not finicky. Discerning. Yes. Discerning [WWW.NoVeLwOrM.cOm](#)

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tastes. That's what I meant. I try to keep a straight fac Selene continues to bare her teet Grateful for the reprieve, I scratch before returning to the packing pi Mom has a strong wolf. That's crazy talk. A vague idea forms in my mind. Grabbing my half-packed suitcase tucking them inside, trying to focu We need to tell Vanessa about me, cutting through my thoughts. "What? Why?" I pause, a shirt dang we're trying to keep you a secret." about Selene, the more I feel like sl Most wolves don't take kindly to th I have no interest in spreading that Some secrets need to be shared. It freedom outside of these guards. I stuff the shirt into the suitcase, n I do so. "I don't know, Selene. What Vanessa might feel betrayed that I Vanessa's been so warm and kind. 1 One of my few allies in Westwood; me with weighted stares and judgm A tror firend will understandd avut nd and avoyut you Ava hist like Els doek na like Lacas dore now that he knee the truth Staring at the Butcher without really seeing them, I pick it all apart in my head. Tell her Don't tell her Keep secrets. But why? If I like her. I should want to tell her my secrets. But I'm always so afraid. I guess that's a weakness of mine. "You're right. Lisa never judged me for being a shifter or for my past. And Lucas... was angry at first, but he's been nothing but supportive." Exactly. Vanessa cares about you, Ava. She deserves to know the truth, and we could use her help. I nod slowly, my decision made. "Okay. We'll tell her." Vanessa won't be afraid to buck Lucas' rules if she agrees with me. The caveat being that she needs to agree with me, of course. And she holds significant sway over her mate, Vester. This should help. My movements are more purposeful when I resume packing as my idea roots into my brain with insistence. "We'll talk to her when we get back from the hospital. The hospital? She sounds startled. Vanessa isn't at the hospital. "I know that. That's not what I mean. I have an idea." An idea? "An idea to get some information out of Mom." www 167 Ava: Mom's Stronger? She watches me for a long moment. You want me to talk to her wolf. I nod. "Exactly." I can attempt to do so, but if I do, your mother will know what I am. She still has an alpha bond with Renard. This is not something to take lightly. The purpose that fueled my veins disappears abruptly. "Oh. Shit." You can be assured they already know you're here. This is why Lucas wants you to return. Now I get it. The guards. The safety. The worries about Blackwood sympathizers. The pack link isn't something I think about often, as I never had the ability to talk to other wolves in my mind. "So they're sitting here, working for the betterment of everyone, while they keep reporting every move to Renard?" Of course. Seriously. No wonder it's been such a headache. "They should force everyone to renounce the pack." Some consider it barbaric. It's a delicate situation. Selene doesn't sound like she agrees. Another idea glimmers in my mind. "Selene, you're an alpha, aren't you?" We didn't use the designation then. But yes. What I'm considering sounds a little evil, even to me. Part of me 167 Am Mom's Stronger rebels against the idea. But the part of me that wants to save Lisa urges me on. "Can you force Mom to renounce her pack?" Selene goes silent and still, only the tip of her tail swishing as she thinks. Comentario Ver todos >[WWW.NoVeLwOrM.cOm](#)