

Banished With His Heir - Chapter 1: Hell Everyday

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“You pathetic whore!” One slap across the right side of my face.

I pursed my lips as I stopped myself from shedding any tears. Not again. Not anymore.

“How dare you show your vile face in front of me? Seeing you disgusts me, Keina!” Another slap, this time on the left side.

My cheeks begin to feel numb and at the same time, I feel it starting to get swollen. I already know this will make me look awful in the next coming minutes as it bruises on my face.

My life has been like this for a while now. Whenever Ivy sees me alone, she uses this as an opportunity to hurt me. She makes sure that I know my place and that it is at the bottom with the dirt.

“Please, Ivy, tha- that’s enough. I- I didn’t even know that y- you would be here. I am just coming back from cleaning the rooms.” I managed to croak out as I lifted my hands up to my cheek. I wince from the pain. They felt so warm, it was almost like touching fire.

“Excuse me? Are you talking back at your Luna? You’re nothing but a lowly peasant in this place, Keina. You may have been Alpha River’s ex-girlfriend, but those days are long gone since I became his real Luna.” Her words are venomous, each syllable piercing through my heart like a sword and being twisted so it hurts even more.

Keina, she calls me again and again. From the very first time she approached me, she called me that even when I told her it was wrong and my name was Keira. She laughed it off and turned to River, her mate and our Alpha.

Alpha River just laughed, too. He was so smitten by her. Every word that came out of her mouth, he ate it all up. Every laugh she made, he smiled and blushed at her. I think she would fart and he would inhale all of it.

Before I could see what she was going to do next, it was too late and her hands pushed me onto the floor with one big flop. I dropped on the ground like a sack of potatoes and a small whimper escaped my lips.

I used to scream in pain, used to beg for her to stop, but I soon quickly realized that all of it was useless. In fact, it just fuelled her ego more thus making her hurt me worse, so I stopped.

I bite my lip or my tongue, clench my fists, or pinch myself whenever I feel myself about to explode.

Don't do it, Keira. Don't do anything. It's not worth it. She's not worth it.

That's what I told myself and still do keep telling up to now.

“Ugly skank. River never has and never will love you and if I see you trying to seduce him again, you won't just be cleaning the toilets, you'll be drinking from it too.” She spat on my hair and all I could do was just stand there and take in the abuse.

“I- I wasn't trying to seduce him, Luna Ivy. I promise I was only talking to him as my best friend. I wanted to ask him about a new fighting technique he showed before. It wasn't about getting closer to him or anything.” I tried to reason out with her, but it was clear she was not having any of it.

Her eyes stared straight into me with so much anger. “Shut up! I don't care nor does River! I told you to never speak to him or breathe anywhere near him again! You may think that he still loves you because of your relationship with him for years, but that's before I showed up, his *real* mate.”

I shake my head, the tears starting to come out as she kept saying awful things to me, but no matter how awful it is, I know that she is right. That's the worst part about all of this.

Just a week ago, Alpha River loved me like his mate. He treated me like he was going to make me his Luna someday. We had spent years as each other's best friend and then two more of being in a relationship.

But then she came. Ivy Quinn, the most beautiful ice queen amongst us, and I was pushed aside by River like I was nothing to him. Everything we had, every kiss and every night we spent with each other – erased and gone.

“N- no, you're wrong. Y- you're wrong! He- he still cares about me! Alpha River would never be so mean to me!” I shouted out to her with conviction, but deep down inside, I wasn't convinced by my own words.

She laughed. Ivy merely looked at me before letting out a mocking laughter. She then took two steps closer to me and my heart beat like crazy from nervousness.

Before I could say or do anything else, she stomped her foot hard on my chest and I stumbled backwards, hitting my head against the floor. I squirm from the sudden pain.

“Stay away from my mate. He's mine!” She shouted with a growl that sent shivers all over my body before walking away with her hips swaying and her long silver hair flowing effortlessly up to her hips.

When I know she's no longer in the corridor and she can't hear me, I break down into tears. All of my pent up sadness and anger just bursts out of me like a volcano that had longed to get out.

I crawled over to the side of the corridor where a big enough plant vase covered me in case others passed by, but luckily at this time, not a lot did since most were either busy at training or doing patrol.

The only reason I was here was because I was put into the cleaning roster for the whole week. That never happened, and I have a feeling it only did because Ivy made it so. One week of her in our Pack and she already has me scrubbing floors and cleaning toilets.

I knew my entire life was going to change when she showed up that day. I just didn't know it would become like living in Hell and she was the Devil making sure I was as miserable as possible.

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“Keira?” I heard seven rhythmic knocks on the door and immediately knew that it was Zane. He was the only one that knocked like that. “Can I come in?”

“What? No, wait, just a second!” I almost slipped on the bathroom floor as I rushed to put on clothes since I had just come out of the shower.

Hurriedly, I put on a hoodie and sweatpants. Back then I used to wear much more colorful and elegant clothes, but ever since she arrived, I never wanted to stand out.

Besides, I know she would throw whatever she could on me again and humiliate me if she saw me do that. She's done it before so I know she wouldn't have a problem doing it again.

“Okay, you can come in.” I announced and seconds later, Zane appeared in front of me.

Zane Frost is my closest friend here and one of the few I could say that I trusted with my life. Evidently, he was also the first Pack member that approached me the day I was cleared to go out after I was found almost dying in a snowstorm.

We were only kids, but he played with me and made me feel like I belonged there when I obviously didn't. Ever since then, I knew I will never forget that day.

“What? Is there something on my face?” I asked, flustered and confused.

I quickly ran back inside the bathroom to check, but when I got there, there was nothing.

Still the same olive skin and golden eyes. My hair was darker than usual since it was still wet from the shower, but even dry, it was still painstakingly different from the silver, gray, and white hairs of this Pack.

In the White Howlers, I was the only raven-haired and golden-eyed girl. Something I have struggled with for years and still continue to try and live with as best as I can.

I turned back around to face Zane. “If you’re going to just tell me I have ‘ugly’ on my face, zip it.” I said jokingly before chuckling softly.

Zane was the only one who could say something like that but I would know instantly he didn’t mean it. We just loved messing with each other ever since we were little.

“Zane?” I said as I looked at him with furrowed brows. He was *still* staring at me, but this time I noticed that his jaw was clenched as if he was... angry.

Why in the world would he be angry?

He let out a defeated sigh before looking away from me. “I always hated seeing you like this.”

Fuck. He knows. Even when I’ve healed and the swollen of my cheeks are long gone, he can still tell.

Somehow, he always could.

When Ivy left claw marks on my arms after she bumped into me, Zane stared at my arms a few seconds longer than usual the next day.

When Ivy had given me a black eye after she shoved me away and I hit the cabinet in the kitchen, Zane passed me an ointment even though I was sure I was more than ninety percent healed and covered what remained visible with makeup.

Those were just some of the instances that he knew, but I never figured out why, nor did I dare to ask.

Frankly, I was entirely grateful he never said anything about it or mentioned anything remotely close to it.

Up until now, it seems.

“I- I don’t know what you’re talking about. We should go down to the White Banquet and eat.” I told him, brushing away the topic, and just as I was walking over to the door, he took my hand and stopped me.

“Za—”

“You have no idea how hard it was for me having to see you hurt everyday. You’re my *best friend*, Keira, and I had to pretend that you were okay when you’re clearly not.” His words take me by complete surprise, but I try not to give in.

Because I know if I do, I will end up telling him everything and I didn’t want anyone to know how much I’ve been suffering at the hands of our own Luna.

“You need to tell River. He has a right to know about how you are being mistreated. Please, tell him so he can put an end to all this.” Zane seems like he is hurting as he says it, his gray eyes piercing into mine with so much emotions in them.

I know because as much as Zane wants to help, he can't. Ivy does these things to me, and maybe to many others in the Pack, because she can get away with it. She knows that whatever she does, at the end of the day, we had to follow her because her mate was our Alpha.

Doing so otherwise would give you a bigger punishment, or worse, you would be banished from the Pack forever.

I shake my head. “He doesn't care. He never will.” I tell Zane coldly before yanking my hand away.

Just as I was stepping out of my room, I glanced my head sideways and said in a low voice.

“Please don't tell anyone. I... I can take care of myself.”

Then I walked out of the room, not bothering to wait for him.

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“I *love* your hairstyle today. Can you do it for me later, too?” Elura asked as she admired my hair, feeling it with her hand as her gray-blue eyes glistened.

Just like her name, which was a variation of the Basque word Elurra meaning snow, she literally looked like snow herself. Her hair and skin was as white as a snowflake and she moved as gracefully as a snowflake fell down from above.

I felt my hair with my hands and smiled at her comment. It was something so small, but to me, it meant a lot.

Since I could no longer wear my usual clothes, sometimes I do something different to my hair in order to channel that feeling of creativity. This time, I went for a messy and loose mermaid braid since my hair was still slightly damp.

“Sure, Elsa.” I said and she giggled at me.

I gave her that nickname after we saw Frozen and we concluded that she was a complete replica of her and Wynter, her twin.

“Are you excited for dinner? I heard Luna Ivy got some special seafood chef flown over from Japan.” Elura says it casually, but hearing Ivy's name makes me internally squirm.

The thing is, nobody knows what I've been going through with her these past seven days, that she had been abusing me physically and emotionally since the day she got here. At least, except for Zane.

And even with him, I don't know up to what extent he actually knew.

I shrugged my shoulders at Elura. "As long as the food is edible then I'm happy with it."

"Always a simple gal," she responded just as we were entering the White banquet which is what we call the humongous dining room where all White Howlers ate.

When the door opened, organized chaos greeted us.

Think high school cafeteria where there are different cliques and they sit at designated tables except here, nobody really makes anyone feel out of place. We just prefer to sit with whom we're closest with.

In my case, I was closest with Alpha River's group or better known as the Alpha crew. We've been friends since we were kids since Zane was best friends with River so he introduced me to everyone.

Fortunately, ever since Ivy arrived, she dragged River out of that table and forced them to sit alone together.

Because of this, the times we ate here had somewhat become my kind of solace. She never approached me while everyone was around and so I enjoyed my time with my friends.

Wynter smiled brightly and waved her hands the second she saw us approaching, whilst next to her, the big jock-looking guy stuffed spoonfuls of food into his mouth without taking a breather. That was Aspen, her mate.

Nas, on the other side, gave us a timid smile (mostly towards Elura as they were mates), before going back to reading his book and occasionally taking bites of his food.

"Are you ready to get your ass kicked at skiing later?" Aspen shot me a smirk while wiggling his eyebrows.

"I should be asking you that question." I stuck my tongue out at him and he gasped exaggeratedly.

I've kicked his ass at skiing ever since we were little kids. Later wasn't going to be any different.

"Please stop embarrassing yourself," Wynter said to him before shaking her head and mouthing me a 'sorry'.

I told her it was completely fine and I was used to her goofball mate.

Just then, Zane arrived. He got here much faster than we did as he was already holding his plate filled with seafood.

“Sit with me,” he mindlinked and at first I was a little hesitant thinking he might bring up the topic earlier again, but he gave me a small smile and I knew I couldn’t reject him now.

I made my way to him and as soon as I sat down, he put his plate in between us.

“Try the salmon. Apparently it’s called the King and for good reason.” He said with a wink.

“Oh, wow,” was all I could say when it hit my taste buds.

The taste was so... buttery and silky. You could tell it was obviously salmon, but with flavors reminiscent of perch and Chilean sea bass. Oh my gosh, I could eat five plates of this.

Zane let out a small laugh. “Easy there, fishy. There’s a lot more where that came from.”

I nudged him on the side with a soft chuckle before stabbing another piece of the salmon with my fork.

Times like these, living wasn’t so bad. Times like these, I remember why I take the abuse I experience and hide it far far away, as far as I could where no one could see. I tell myself that I’d take the pain and the suffering so long as at the end of the day, I had my friends and we could all laugh together.

“Hey, Aspen, can you pass me the salt I—”

Oh my god.

The second I saw her appear in front of our table my lips pursed together tightly and my body stiffened up.

Ivy was standing with a wide smile on her face as River hugged her from behind. He had his arms wrapped around her waist and she looked like she was showing off how sweet he was towards her.

I tried not to make any sudden movements or changes in my expression that would indicate their presence bothered me, but it was so hard, especially when she turned to me with the fakest smile.

“You wanted the salt, right, Keira?” She said with a glimmer in her eyes as she grabbed the salt and walked over to me

My eyes widened when I heard it. She said my name *right*. This whole time, she *never* got it right when it was just the two of us, but now because there were other people she was acting so kindly towards me? What the fuck? She was so fake!

She put her hand out with the one holding the salt and blinked innocently at me. “Here you go.”

I cleared my throat as I shifted uncomfortably on my seat.

Act calm, Keira. Act calm. Just be normal. Take the salt and pretend everything’s alright.

“Th- thank y—”

I wasn’t able to finish my words. The next thing I knew, Ivy had flipped open the cap of the salt in a millisecond and ‘accidentally’ spilled its contents on my hair.

Gasps echoed all over the room as curious heads turned to me. Their eyes bored into the back of my skull and I was just there, sitting still and frozen.

What the hell just happened?

“Oh, I’m so sorry. I’m such a klutz. I was meant to just open it for you, but it spilled. Maybe it thought you needed some salt, little mermaid.” Ivy said before giggling.

All I could do was sit there as the salt kept getting into my hoodie and in my eyes, but I just blinked it away, even if it stung.

Don’t cry, Keira. Don’t cry, please. She’s not worth it.

But I couldn’t control it any longer. Tears were starting to prick the back of my eyes.

She never humiliated me in public. She never made me feel shitty when others were around me, but now everyone has just seen that and I’m sure they won’t forget it either.

My reputation is ruined and there’s nothing that I can do about it.

When the tears start to come out, I look up at River. He’s still standing there on the side of the table, face expressionless.

He’s looking at me, but he’s not *really* looking. It’s like he doesn’t even care.

“Make it stop,” I mindlinked him as my eyes blurred with the tears.

I’ve never asked him for anything ever since that day, but I felt so broken and so betrayed right now that I couldn’t help but do it.

“Please, River. Please make her stop.” I begged again, feeling even more ashamed of myself for resorting to this.

But just when I thought there was a hint of remorse or any type of guilt in his eyes, I thought wrong because the next thing River does is look away.

Ivy leaned closer to my ear and whispered words that pierced through my heart like a dagger. “I told you he will never love you. Save yourself what little dignity you have left and just leave, you pathetic slut.”

She backs up, but before turning away, she grabs the plate of salmon and drops it all on my head.

“Oops,” she says it like it’s a joke, that *I’m* a joke. “Little mermaid can’t be complete without her fish friend.”

At that moment, I just wanted to die.

