

Owned by the Alphas 2: Claimed by the Alphas |

The Betrayal

LORELAI

"Take me back!" I demanded, but Cain shook his head.

"I can't, I'm tapped out, Lorelai. I'm sorry." He looked at the alphas and frowned, his nose leaking blood before he wiped it away with a cloth from Beenie.

"Mom said the creature isn't a concern, it will only hunt for Adrenna, but she did confirm it is her, the rogue witch.

"The mountain witches won't help until we fail though," he recited, then looked at me, and I couldn't help letting the tears fall.

"She held my stomach," I whispered through my tears, my alphas tensing. "She was terrified, but I didn't get to find out why."

Brax snarled and stood up, pulling me with him. He turned me to face him, but I couldn't focus.

My mind was racing, hopelessness and fear depleting my energy, my faith, everything I'd held so tightly to keep me pushing through. But it was gone with one look in Tabitha's eyes.

It had all been for nothing. We were not going to survive Adrenna, not all of us.

"No, stop it. She could have been scared for any reason. You do not get to check out," Brax snapped.

I just let him see that I already had, staring at him with the emptiness vast and wide, spreading through me.

"Snap out of it, Lorelai. Listen," he demanded, and he fell silent with me before eyeing me.

I didn't get it.

“Listen properly, Lorelai. There is a heartbeat. There is a live little werewolf in there, and you will not check out while that is still the case. We will not let you.”

His words bit through my numbness, and I took a deep, shuddering breath in. I couldn't let it win; the darkness could not take me like that. He was right. I had to keep fighting.

My magic sparked back up and filled me with the hope that I clung to with everything I had.

I didn't say anything, just curled into Brax, wiping my tears on him before taking deep breaths to calm my racing heart. Derik was behind me then, kissing the back of my head before whispering in my ear.

“We're going to beat this, beautiful, and you are going to bring our baby into this world, safe and loved,” he said, and the insinuation that it was waiting until it was safe gave me even more hope.

I turned to him and smiled, both of them bringing me back from the desolate brink, reminding me that there was no way I would lose when I had them.

“We can leave now, right?” Beenie interrupted, heading to the door. She pulled it open without waiting for an answer, and the second she did, my stomach dropped.

There was yelling, screaming, more fighting. The wolves were howling, roaring, and Kai finally pierced our link.

“Stay there, Lorelai! Shut the door and don't come out. Cain can stay with you, protect you.

“Derik, Brax, get the fuck out here now!” Kai demanded down the links, and I sucked in a breath at the magic pouring out of me, letting the wolves shift and fight with my strength.

“What's going on?” I demanded as I ignored Kai's message and left the room, the others following.

“The humans. Earlier was a test, to see how we were going to stop them. They're all here, Lorelai.

"The shield on the city is gone, and your father is at the gates, ordering his army to slaughter us and find you," Kai answered before cutting us off and taking out another human who swung a poison sword at him.

"Who is staying with her?" Brax demanded, looking at me, but I shook my head.

"We're all in this fight," I said before Derik could answer, then took off down to the lobby of the mansion, my mom and Galen there waiting.

"Oh, Lorelai! I couldn't find you," she sobbed, wrapping her arms around me.

"I'm okay, I'm safe, but Father is here. You need to stay away," I warned, and she nodded.

"Galen has already given me the speech. I'm going to take the humans here to the safe space underground. We'll wait there and only fight if we have to, like we discussed," she said.

"I love you," I said, and she kissed my cheek.

"Love you too. Now go," she said, and I nodded before spinning back.

"Wait, what about Rye?"

Mom winced, and I frowned at her reaction.

"She was gone when I got back, Lorelai. I went to go take her with the others, but she's missing. I have to get the others to safety," Mom urged.

I nodded, refusing to let the tears in my eyes fall. I would find Ryleigh and I'd start with Vaughn, but I had to stop the humans first.

"Lorelai. Kai needs us," Derik said gently.

"I'll make sure they get to safety, protect them if they need it," Beenie said quietly, eyeing Cain, and I'm sure they were talking through their link.

He nodded to her, pulling her back in for a desperate kiss before his tattoo snake slithered on his arm, sliding over to rest on Beenie's arm, slithering there until it settled in.

I watched in awe as she kissed him back.

“Keep her with you. Use her if you need to,” he said, and Beenie scowled.

“And what about you? You just drained your magic,” she asked, but he shook his head.

“I’ve got enough. Go.”

She looked hesitant, but the mansion shook, groaning beneath us as roars and howls broke the dark sky.

Beenie ran off with the humans and my mom while I left the mansion with my alphas, Cain, and Galen.

We stepped out into chaos. Debris fell from the mansion as it was hit with boulders. Humans shouted, wolves roared, and swords clashed in the night.

“Fucking hell,” Brax breathed before his shadows left him, tearing through the city, breaking humans.

I followed his lead and sent my magic where his shadows didn’t reach, but it was more hesitant this time. I wasn’t sure why, but it was holding back more than normal.

I ignored it and headed toward the gates where I knew my father was.

Kai caught up then, his sword dripping red, his shirt gone, his body covered in blackening slices oozing with black blood, sweat covering him as he puffed and yanked me into him, kissing me harshly.

He put me back down before breathing hard and spinning to cut through an arrow that headed for me.

When he spun back around Cain stepped forward and healed him. He nodded in thanks.

“No problem,” Cain said, but he looked like it kinda was. His face was paler than normal, but he said nothing, so neither did I.

“I’m heading to my father.”

“So am I,” Galen said, and I looked up at his incredible height to see the anger on his face.

“He’s waiting for you. He’s prepared; make sure you keep your magic ready,” Kai said as all my alphas kept every human that came for me away.

My magic wasn’t letting me do what I had done just hours ago, but I was guessing that had something to do with the tiredness that was weighing me down.

I was exhausted, and with the wolves using my magic to turn, I was pretty sure there was only enough of it left to stop me from doing myself any harm, but it was keeping my body strong.

I kept my leftover magic close, feeding the wolves what I could, trusting my alphas to keep me safe through the city, and they did.

They killed anything that came close, not letting a single thing past as I walked alongside Galen, Cain behind us.

Brax’s shadows were like lethal, invisible vines that the humans had no defense against.

He used that advantage, keeping the wolves safe, stopping the things they couldn’t see coming from stabbing them in the back as Kai and Derik dealt with the immediate danger.

Kai chucked his sword to Derik, who swiped and stabbed until he was puffing and sweating as Kai got his black talons out, ripping through the humans that came at us.

It was a bloodbath, a messy, terrifying bloodbath that all led back to my father. He was on a horse, sitting high as he held his chin straight, a smirk coming to his lips as he saw me coming.

“Ahh, my little mistake.” He grinned and trotted forward.

I glared at him, my magic turning septic in his presence. “Stop this. Enough of both our kinds have been killed already,” I said, but he chuckled.

“No, they haven’t, not until you and your pets are dead,” he said, then looked over his shoulder.

“She is here. End them,” he called right before another army of humans burst through the gate, rushing us.

“Brax, shadows!” Derik called, and Brax’s shadows yanked me back behind them, snagging humans and throwing them away as Kai and Derik kept them from me.

Galen fought too, having to because the horde was too much.

Cain grabbed me from Kai, pulling me back as the humans came at us. I was not running though.

I tugged my magic and poured it out, suffocating the humans with it as Cain tried to join, but he coughed hard, then collapsed.

“Cain,” I snapped, but he was on his hands and knees, breathing hard until he fell to the cobblestones, his nose bleeding, his eyes closed.

“Fuck. Derik!” I called, and he tried to get to me, but the humans were not letting them through.

I covered Cain in my magic, trying to feed it to him as my alphas defended me with Galen, but there was only so much they could cover.

“Lorelai!”

My brother’s voice screamed, and I turned to it just as he sped in front of me, protecting me from a human with his sword raised.

Lucas tore his throat out with his teeth, sucking him dry until he slumped to the ground. I stood up, blinking hard at what Lucas really was.

He grabbed a napkin from his pocket and wiped the blood from his lip.
“Apologies.”

“No, don’t be sorry. Thank you,” I said, standing up as Brax reached me finally.

He was breathing hard, blood spatter over his face and chest. He looked between me, Lucas, and the dead guy before giving Lucas a begrudging nod.

“What happened?” he asked, looking at Cain.

“He collapsed. Used too much,” I said, and he nodded.

"I'll get my shadows to take him back to the mansion. Are you okay?" he asked, his shadows already holding Cain up and taking his body away.

I nodded, my stomach a little tight and aching, but that was usual, so I turned to the others.

"There's too many of them," I whispered, my magic taking out one at a time, the hesitation of it growing tighter.

It wanted to stay inside me this time, and I couldn't coerce more out of it. It was stretched, so I wasn't going to be much help.

"Then we go for the head of the snake," Kai growled over the fighting as Brax shoved humans back, swiping and blading them until they were warded back.

"My father," I said, and met Lucas's eyes, anger coiling through me as he grinned.

"Our father," he said, holding my hand.

I looked up at him and nodded. "We have to get to him."

"Then let's show these humans that their poison cannot take us down."

We grinned at each other before we did everything we could.

I took out one after the other with my magic, Lucas sucked them dry, Derik, Kai, and Brax ripped through them.

But we were only making small dents at a time. They were still coming, and I was getting more and more tired, my magic collapsing as I tried to use it.

Galen grabbed a head and ripped it off a set of shoulders, and I winced away. He was still aloof, but his eyes were stern. Like usual.

My stomach tightened, aching and piercing my concentration, and I grabbed at it, sucking in a breath.

I had to get my heart rate under control or the baby was going to turn inside me, I had to get it together, but the pain was harsh as I breathed and clenched my eyes shut, leaning on Galen.

He frowned down at me, tugging me behind my alphas for protection. "You shouldn't be here," he said, looking between me and my stomach.

"I'm starting to think the same thing," I breathed, clutching his shoulder tightly.

His eyes flickered, and I gasped, stepping back.

"My control is very tentative, and it is slipping. You need to go," he muttered, and I nodded. "Go to your mother. I have shown her everything, she will help get those under control until we can be there."

I frowned. "No, I'm not in labor, I'm just in pain. I—"

Another stab of pain in my stomach hit me, and I clenched my jaw shut, the ache bringing tears to my eyes. "I just need to control my emotions so he doesn't turn."

Galen shook his head. "Go, little luna, our heir is ready," he said, then straightened slowly.

"I'll take her," my brother said, and Galen stared at him for a long second before his eyes switched to bright orange, yellow, and red in a vibrant mix that looked...hungry.

Lucas tugged me back, and I sucked in a breath as Galen shook. He grew taller, his body breaking through the confines of his fitted clothes.

"Kai!" I called, getting him out of the way of Galen, who roared as he broke into his wolf.

Or beast. He was huge, the biggest wolf I had ever seen, his coat a stunning silvery color that looked as threatening as it was beautiful.

"Fuck, get out of his way, go for her father!" Derik ordered, and they moved, opening up.

The humans went to attack, take the opening, but Galen bellowed out a roar that felt like an earthquake beneath my feet before taking them out like they were nothing.

He chomped and howled, snarling and bashing like a teething toddler that couldn't find something it wanted to soothe the ache.

I watched in fascination when another ache rolled over me, and my knees almost gave in, the pain intensifying.

Derik's head snapped to me at the same moment as Brax's did, their eyes filling with worry. I broke from Lucas and went to Derik, who kissed me, holding my face.

"Galen will clear the way, we will end your father, and then we will be there, understand?" he said, but I shook my head.

"No, I don't want to go, I want to be here with you when it happens, then we do this together. I can hold it off until then," I said, not sure if that was true.

"What's going on? Was she hurt?" Kai said, puffing, looking over me.

"It's started. He's ready," Derik said, eyeing my stomach, and I shook my head.

"No, I'm fine, I'm not ready." I panicked, but Kai pulled me into him.

"Be back in a sec, Little Human, I've got a granddaddy to kill and then we'll do this together," he said, then eyed my father.

He was still on his horse, glowering at Galen, who was turning his people into chew toys with little to no effort, watching as the pack moved our way to cover our flanks.

Kai aimed his sword at my father, the tip pointed at him. My father eyed the sword, then grinned and beckoned Kai forward in a challenge.

Kai roared before charging. My father drew his sword too, but Kai was quicker, landing on the horse behind my father, who sucked in a breath.

Kai knelt down behind him, yanking his head back, the sword at his throat.

"Last words?" Kai taunted, and I let go of Derik's and Brax's hands to hold my stomach, refusing to wince or react to another contraction assaulting my body.

It hurt like hell, but I had to handle it. He couldn't see what was happening.

But my mistake was letting go of my alphas' hands because within a second, I was being yanked backward by a scent I recognized and a blade was being pressed against my stomach.

Kai snarled, his eyes meeting mine as a tear slipped down my cheek. Derik and Brax turned, both of them going to step forward.

“Ah, ah, ah. Another step and you can say goodbye to your heir.” Vaughn grinned like a crazy person.

My alphas froze and Galen stormed over, huffing and clawing the ground, his muzzle covered in blood.

“Vaughn. My little spy.” My father grinned.

I clenched my jaw. No. Vaughn couldn’t be the spy because I would’ve sensed the lie. Something was off, wrong. It didn’t make sense.

“My king. Now Nikolai, you are going to take that blade off his throat, get down, and step back,” he said, and Kai hesitated before doing exactly that, glaring the entire time.

My father jumped down from his horse, not caring that the blood of his army splattered his leather boots, bodies covering the space between his side and mine.

“Bring her here,” he ordered, and Vaughn shoved me toward my father, who was grinning, holding his sword in his sheath like he had all the power.

Maybe he did, but he was not going to make it out of the city alive. He could not have my life threatened and leave. My alphas wouldn’t allow it.

I tried to push some magic out so I could get myself away, but the second I did, another contraction had me arching against Vaughn’s hold on me.

I let a wince loose and clenched my jaw against the pain tightening across my stomach.

“Oh, I see. We’re about to have the little demon, are we?” my father taunted as Vaughn held me, the knife still threatening.

“I don’t get it. Vaughn, why are you doing this? Ryleigh is going to have your baby. You’re her mate!” I demanded, and Vaughn laughed in my ear.

The sound was hollow, almost an echo, and I frowned. It didn’t sound like Vaughn, or even feel like him. Something still wasn’t right, but I had no more magic left to investigate, only an instinct.

“Shhh, enough. Turn your beast back or I gut you.” My father nodded toward Galen, and I smirked.

“Nobody controls him. The only person who has a hope of getting him back now is the woman you threw away,” I spat, and my father scowled.

“He can have the whore. She was no good to me outside of the bedroom anyway,” he bit, and Galen roared, charging, but my father pulled out his sword and held it at my throat.

“She won’t appreciate you getting her daughter killed, beast. If there is one thing I know about that woman, she cares about her daughter more than anything in this world,” he said.

It was the truth. Even Galen’s beast knew that. He stepped back, and my father dropped his sword.

I breathed hard against the tightness that kept going before my knees gave out.

“Let her go!” Derik demanded.

“Or what?” My father laughed as Vaughn hauled me back up, but his grip loosened, and I took the only opportunity I had.

I stomped on his heel before grabbing the blade and twisting it out of his hand. I spun, about to shove it through his stomach when he grabbed it back and put it against my throat.

My father laughed again. “Okay, I have had my fun. We need to get this over with so I can take over the mansion and retrieve my wife for the dungeons.

“Along with the spawn that we can cut from your loins once your throat is slit,” my father said, then looked to Vaughn as my alphas roared at him.

“Don’t you fucking dare.”

“The second that blade cuts her is the second you lose your life.”

“I’m really going to enjoy picking your flesh from my teeth with your own bones.”

They all yelled threats in frustration, but my father just laughed.

“Do it. Kill the bitch.”

He gave the order, and I thought I was done for. I waited for the moment the warm blood would seep down my chest a moment before it went black.

But it never came.

Instead, Vaughn stepped back, a creepy chuckle falling from his lips that sounded so distorted.

“Vaughn. Kill her,” my father bit, glaring at him, but I was already backing up.

Brax’s shadows met my fingers, and I was quiet as I let him pull me back slowly, discreetly.

“No.” Vaughn grinned, his smile stretching up his face.

His head lolled to the side, and he crept toward my father, his fingers growing talons that were black, long, and pointed.

“Silly little human,” Vaughn said, but his voice was no longer there. It was an echo, a creepy, raspy voice that fell from his face.

My father looked horrified as Vaughn slowly turned into the very witch we had been guessing was behind everything.

She ran her fingernails over my father’s shoulder ridge. “A little whisper here,” she said by his ear, then switched to the other shoulder, “a little nudge there.”

She chuckled, then stepped in front of him. “And you were the perfect little human to do my dirty work.”

“What? What’s going on?” he demanded.

I curled into Brax, and Derik stepped slightly in front of me, holding my wrist as Kai got ready to fight, but I had a feeling that was not her goal here.

She had already gotten what she wanted.

My magic was tapped out, Cain’s healing and magic were out of commission, the humans were slaughtered, and now that I was in labor, the wolves were going to be very distracted.

"You thought I manipulated you into uttering the forbidden word because I thought it would make you equal, but really, I wanted out of my cage, and now you have done everything I wanted."

She cackled, her skin flaking a little as she did, like she was withering, but her fair skin kept her together.

Her white hair was piled high on her head, and a fancy dress in black silk and lace covered her slight body. Her pointed boots made her even scarier, but it was the sharp teeth that drew my attention.

"I... But we had a deal," Father sputtered, and she laughed.

"I don't make deals with vermin. Now, thank you for your services. Send my regards to the reaper; I have no more use for you."

She grinned maliciously, then pulled out magic, black sand-looking stuff that was about to attack my father when Kai ran at him.

He went to attack when the witch snapped her head to him, her eyes black catching Kai with her sand, freezing him in place.

"Uh-uh, pup. Stay," she ordered, and shoved Kai to the ground, pinning him with her boot. It looked like nothing, but it had Kai sputtering and coughing.

"Stop it! Let him go," I said, stepping forward. That drew her attention.

"I will, but he wants my kill, and I am a little territorial. Everyone just be patient, and I will get to taking your souls in a moment," she said, then turned to my father, who looked like he was going to cry.

He didn't get a chance because in the next second, all that magic sand was pouring into his mouth and he was choking on it, blood pouring out his eyes, his nose, his ears until he collapsed onto the ground.

His clothes crumpled, his body turning to dust. No, to sand, black sand that swirled out and joined the rest of her magic.

I sucked in a breath, my eyes wide as I looked down at Kai beneath her boot. She turned to us, her magic swirling, threatening, her grin sliding up her face.

"Your turn, little winter born."

