

The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

Chapter 131

3rd Person's POV

“What exactly are you talking about, boy?” Vargan barked, his patience thinning.

Finished

Halvar straightened instinctively, even though the elder wolf was miles away on the other end of the line.

“Lately, Alpha Ezra hasn't been present at the Research Center,” he explained. “He's also been increasingly difficult to reach, and just this morning he canceled an important meeting at the last minute.”

Silence fell.

That didn't sound like Ezra.

Not the Ezra Vargan knew.

His grandson had once abandoned the comfort and power of Moonclaw's territory—leaving the Pack in the capable hands of his council—just to pursue his passion in Lunaris. The man had always burned with relentless drive.

And now... he was losing interest?

A prick of unease crept through Vargan's chest.

Perhaps Halvar is right, he thought grimly. ‘Perhaps this has something to do with Lylah.’

In all his long life, there had only been one time Vargan had ever seen Ezra truly shaken.

And it had been because of that woman.

‘I'm leaving for Lunaris immediately,’ Vargan said at last, his voice turning firm. “But you will keep this matter quiet.”

‘Of course, Master,’ Halvar replied.

The **call** ended.

Vargan wasted no time preparing to depart.

The last time he had returned from Lunaris, his heart had been light. Ezra and his Luna had seemed well, their bond strong. Vargan had even boasted shamelessly to the council that Moonclaw would surely welcome a new heir soon.

Now unease gnawed at him.

‘If that stubborn boy has managed to ruin things...’

“That lad,” Vargan muttered with a low growl, “blessed with everything except sense when it comes to

love.”

Ezra had rejected every match Vargan had ever arranged—daughters of powerful generals, high-ranked

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3:32 pm

Chapter 131

Finished

families, alliances that would have strengthened the Pack. One by one, Ezra had torn through those arrangements without a second thought.

So when he finally found his Luna, Vargan had been overwhelmingly grateful.

And to his surprise, he had come to genuinely like the woman Ezra chose.

‘She’s different,’ Vargan thought as he shifted into his wolf. ‘Not like those others who only coveted the power my grandson carries.’

In his massive wolf form, Vargan tore across the land, covering miles of forest and mountain with relentless speed.

By the time the sun dipped toward the horizon, he had reached Lunaris—and Ezra’s penthouse.

He slipped inside using the code Ezra had given him long ago. Fortunately, it still worked.

The door slid open.

“Ezra!” Vargan’s voice thundered through the penthouse like a storm. “Ezra! Get out! Where are you hiding?”

A door opened down the hall.

“What are you doing here?” The Alpha answered.

He stepped out—but not from his own room. He emerged from his Luna’s chamber.

Vargan blinked, momentarily unsure where to begin.

“I don’t recall inviting you,” Ezra added calmly.

Vargan barked out a laugh.

“Now I need an invitation to visit my own family?” he scoffed. “I came to make sure you haven’t managed to destroy your relationship with your Luna yet. Mind you, I’ve already told the council they can expect Moonclaw’s heir soon.”

A grin spread across his **face**.

“So tell me, Ezra—you haven’t ruined things with Lylah, have you?”

He paused, then added casually, “Because if you have, I’ll simply take her to Moonclaw myself. The **Pack** members and the council would be more than happy to welcome their Luna into the estate.”

The moment the words left his mouth, Ezra’s eyes flashed.

A low sound rumbled from deep within his chest.

A deep, primal, bone-chilling growl—raw and instinctive—vibrated through the room like the warning of a predator guarding what was his.

The sound alone forced Vargan to take **an** instinctive **step back**.

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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Before Vargan could react, Ezra lunged.

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The impact slammed the older wolf against the wall so hard the structure itself shuddered. A dull crack echoed through the penthouse as Vargan's back hit the surface.

In the next second, he was pinned.

Ezra's hand gripped the front of his collar while sharp claws pressed against the skin of Vargan's throat. The Alpha had allowed them to lengthen, the dark talons resting directly over the pulse beneath Vargan's jaw.

One slash.

That was all it would take to end him.

"You..." Vargan's eyes widened.

But there was no anger in them. No fear.

Only shock.

"What are you doing?" he rasped. "Ezra, have you lost your mind?"

The man standing before him no longer looked entirely human.

This wasn't **Ezra**.

It was his wolf.

Ragnar.

The beast rarely surfaced, but when it did, every wolf in Moonclaw felt their instincts tremble. Power radiated from him like a storm barely contained. Ezra's wolf was massive, with dark gray fur rippling along its form, the color of jagged mountain peaks under moonlight. His eyes glowed a fierce silver-blue- ancient, cold, and commanding.

Less like a wolf.

More like something carved from legend.

Ezra leaned closer, claws pressing just slightly deeper against Vargan's throat.

"Don't... you... dare..." his voice came out rough, every word dragged from somewhere primal.
"Take... her..."

from... me."

A chill crawled down Vargan's spine.

Slowly, carefully, he swallowed.

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Finished

Then he nodded.

"Don't you ever dare mention it again," Ezra growled.

"I won't," Vargan said immediately.

Only then did he dare breathe again.

"I'm not taking your Luna away," he continued cautiously. "That was only a threat. I received reports that you've been withdrawing from everything lately. So I thought something might have gone wrong between you and Lylah... that it was affecting your behavior."

For a moment, the claws remained where they were.

Then Ezra lifted them an inch from Vargan's neck.

His eyes blinked once.

Twice.

The silver glow dimmed as the beast receded, his human consciousness slowly returning.

Finally, he stepped back.

Vargan let out a long breath he hadn't realized he was holding.

"Well," the elder wolf muttered, rubbing his throat, "now I understand why you never seemed capable of Falling in love before." He let out a breathy laugh. "Because, Selene above... you're absolutely terrifying when you do."

Ezra walked toward the counter, grabbing a bottle of wine.

He poured himself a glass, hoping the familiar burn would steady the restless power still humming in his

veins.

"You threatened to take her away," Ezra said coolly. "As if she wouldn't be furious **if** she discovered you had faked your identity and pretended to be a wanderer just to get close to her. Lylah hates liars."

"And what about you?" Vargan shot back immediately. "You told her you were blind! You think she won't hate you the moment she finds out?"

Ezra shot him a sharp look. "I told you—that was for her own good."

He silently hoped Vargan wouldn't push the subject further.

Because he wasn't entirely sure Ragnar would remain quiet a second time.

"You came all the way here just to make sure Lylah and I are fine?" Ezra asked after a moment. "Thank you. But you worried for nothing. Nothing is wrong between us- I won't allow it to be."

Vargan scoffed.

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Finished

"Thanking me after nearly killing me," he grumbled. "What a touching gratitude, son."

Ezra shrugged lightly.

"Just don't test me again, Grandpa. I don't joke when it comes to her."

The word made Vargan freeze.

His eyes widened slightly.

Ezra hadn't called him that since he was a pup.

"You..." Vargan studied him carefully. "You really do love that woman."

But instead of concern, warmth slowly spread through his chest.

"At least after all this time, you've finally found the one," he said quietly. "For that, I'm grateful."

Ezra nodded.

A flicker of guilt stirred inside him when he remembered how close he had come to losing control.

After his parents died while he was still a pup, Vargan had been the only family he had left. The old wolf had become everything—his guardian, mentor, teacher, and, in many ways, the father Ezra had lost.

Their relationship had never been easy. Both of them were stubborn, proud, and far too alike for their own good.

Yet beneath the endless arguments and the constant clash of egos, there had always been one quiet, unshakable truth between them.

No matter how fiercely they fought, they had always cared for each other.

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

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Vargan's POV

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Ezra not throwing me out immediately was surprising enough. What shocked me even more was the apology. He had nearly torn my throat open moments ago—and yet he'd managed to force out a sorry.

Hearing that word fall from Ezra's arrogant tongue felt more surreal than laying eyes on Selene herself.

The lad had changed.

And I knew exactly who was responsible.

Only one person could soften Ezra's iron temper like that—his Luna, Lylah.

I made a mental note to hug that girl the moment I saw her and thank her properly later. Unfortunately, she still had a class at the moment. She had called earlier to say she'd be returning late tonight.

Halvar called again to convince Ezra to attend the meeting after all. Eventually, Ezra relented, deciding there was no harm in stopping by the Research Center to give a brief appearance.

The moment we arrived, Damon muttered a curse under his breath.

“Selene save us...”

“What is it, boy?” I asked just before we stepped inside.

Damon gestured toward the parking area. “Master... do you see that car? Do you recognize the pack sigil on it?”

My gaze followed his hand to a sleek white Maybach parked a short distance away. A luxurious machine— but nothing that immediately caught my interest.

“Yes,” I said after a moment. “That belongs to the Blackfang Pack.”

“Exactly,” Damon replied grimly. “Which means Alpha Rowan Blackfang and Logan Silver must already be here.”

I frowned.

Rowan Blackfang.

I knew of him. One of the younger Alphas rising in Verdanth—a man who had dragged his crumbling pack back from the brink by plunging headfirst into the technology field.

“Several months ago, he arrived in Lunaris,” Damon continued as we walked toward the entrance. “His goal was to expand his influence here as well. He even proposed a collaboration with Alpha Ezra....”

“And?” I asked, mildly amused. “How did Ezra respond? My grandson has never been interested in cooperating with anyone he doesn’t like—and Rowan Blackfang has never been someone who earned his respect.”

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“That’s the problem, Master,” Damon said, worry threading his voice. “Alpha Ezra rejected him outright. Since then Rowan has tried everything—forming alliances with our rivals, launching aggressive advertising campaigns, and developing competing research projects.

He’s determined to surpass Lunaris Research Center.”

“Hm,” I murmured. “Interesting.”

What intrigued me more was Ezra’s silence.

Not once had he mentioned Rowan or any of his attempts to challenge us. Which left only two possibilities: either Ezra truly didn’t care...

—or he had been planning something quietly in the shadows.

The glass doors slid open with a soft hiss.

The scent of wolves—sharp, metallic, and electric—washed over my senses immediately.

And there he was.

Rowan Blackfang.

Inside the conference room, engineers and researchers rose to their feet the moment Ezra stepped in. Respect rolled through the air like a wave.

Everyone stood.

Everyone except Rowan.

My brow lifted.

‘Such boldness.

“Alpha Ezra of Moonclaw,” Halvar announced formally, his voice cutting through the tension. “High Leader, founder, and owner of Lunar Research Center.”

The man beside Rowan—Logan Silver—immediately bowed his head in proper respect.

Rowan rose more slowly.

But there was no deference in it.

His posture was relaxed, almost predatory, as if he were measuring prey rather than greeting a fellow Alpha. His eyes narrowed slightly while he inhaled the air.

Then his gaze locked onto Ezra.

A flicker of something sharp flashed across his face.

“...This scent,” Rowan murmured.

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Chapter 134

Rowan’s POV

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Finished

The moment the door slid open and Ezra stepped inside, a coil of satisfaction tightened in my chest.

So he finally showed himself.

Not hiding. Not avoiding me.

Good.

Today, I came to the Research Center under the guise of proposing an alliance. But this time, I didn't come empty-handed. I came with leverage.

Logan Silver—one of Lunaris's finest tech engineers—now stood on my side.

With Logan backing me, Ezra would finally understand that I wasn't someone he could dismiss so easily. Perhaps he would even feel a flicker of fear.

And that would be good.

Because it was about time Ezra realized exactly who he had been provoking all this time.

Halvar announced his name with almost ceremonial reverence, as though Ezra deserved every ounce of

respect in the room.

I didn't move.

I wouldn't give him that satisfaction.

Ezra walked closer.

And then-

I smelled it.

My lungs froze.

Lylah.

Her perfume clung to him. I still remember her scent clearly—the very same scent that lingered on the handkerchief I kept, the one I breathed in every night.

My chair scraped against the floor as I shot to my feet.

"This scent..." The words tore from my throat before I could stop them.

Memories surged like a violent tide, dragging me back to a time when Lylah still belonged to me—before the man standing across the room had stolen her away.

My wolf stirred violently beneath my skin, claws raking against my ribs.

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Finished

He didn't like it.

He didn't like Lylah's scent lingering on another male!

"This is her scent..." My voice dropped into a low growl.

"Alpha Rowan?" Archer West's voice cut in cautiously. "Is everything alright?"

I blinked.

Once.

Twice.

Forcing myself back into control.

Every pair of eyes in the room had turned toward me, watching as if I had just lost my mind.

"Pardon me, gentlemen," Ezra said lightly, a quiet chuckle slipping from his lips. "I think I understand what Alpha Rowan is referring to."

His

gaze slid toward me—sharp, knowing.

"He must be sensing my Luna's perfume on my suit."

A murmur rippled through the room.

My jaw tightened.

Ezra's eyes remained locked on mine as he continued, "We did have a rather... intimate moment before I left."

His tone sounded harmless enough to anyone else.

But I knew exactly what he was doing.

He was flaunting it.

Shoving it directly under my nose.

A silent declaration of how close **he** and Lylah had become.

“Ah, I nearly forgot you already have a Luna, Alpha,” Archer West said with a chuckle. “Then this sort of thing is perfectly normal.”

Ezra gave **a** calm nod.

“Alpha Rowan,” Archer continued, turning toward me. “I’m sure you understand. Since we were the ones who begged Alpha Ezra **to** attend, it would hardly be appropriate for us to complain, would it?”

My hands had already curled into fists.

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Finished

Slowly, I lowered myself back into my chair.

The motion felt like surrender.

“I won’t stay long,” Ezra said casually as he circled the table and took his seat at the head. “I still need to pick up my Luna afterward.”

Each word scraped against my nerves.

“Of course, Alpha,” Logan Silver said politely. “We’ll begin the presentation immediately. We’ll be introducing the project Alpha Rowan and I have developed—one that we believe aligns perfectly with the Research Center. Afterward, we hope you’ll consider our proposal.”

The screen flickered to life.

Logan began explaining the project, his voice steady as graphs and data filled the display.

Everyone listened and watched.

Except me.

Because I could no longer focus on any of it.

My thoughts had become a restless storm, circling the same unbearable question again and again.

Lylah.

How could her scent cling so strongly to Ezra's clothes?

What had they been doing before he arrived?

Had he touched her? kissed her? Had he buried his face against her neck and breathed her in the way I used to?

Had they... mated?

A low, possessive snarl rumbled inside my chest.

She was mine only.

How dare Ezra lay his hands on my little moon?

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

Chapter 135

3rd Person's POV

Silence settled over the meeting room after Logan Silver finished his presentation.

It wasn't the comfortable silence of thoughtful consideration. It was heavy-tense-thick with the unspoken awareness of the Alpha seated at the head of the table.

For several seconds, no one moved.

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Finished

Then the engineers began clapping politely. The applause was hesitant, uncertain, but it echoed through the sleek conference room nonetheless.

As the sound faded, every gaze slowly turned toward one man.

Ezra.

The Alpha of Moonclaw Pack had listened to the entire presentation without interruption. He sat at the end of the long table, one arm resting casually against the chair, his posture relaxed.

Too relaxed.

His eyes held little interest, as though he had just watched a mildly entertaining show rather than a proposal meant to reshape Lunaris's future.

"What you and Alpha Rowan have developed is certainly impressive," Halvar said finally, attempting to break the suffocating tension. "If implemented, it could bring significant benefits to Lunaris."

Logan inclined his head politely. "We hope you'll consider accepting this collaboration. The project was originally Alpha Rowan's idea."

"Yes, of course," Halvar added with a small nod. "But **as** always, the final decision rests with Alpha Ezra."

Across the table, Rowan straightened slightly.

His shoulders stiffened, his **gaze** sharpening as it fixed on Ezra,

A faint unease had already begun creeping beneath his skin.

"Alpha?" Halvar prompted. "Do you have any thoughts?"

Ezra leaned back slightly in his chair.

“So...” he said slowly, his voice calm. “You’re proposing a smart security system.”

“Yes, Alpha,” Logan replied quickly. “With the recent increase in rogue sightings around Lunaris, we believe-”

“-that it would help,” Ezra finished smoothly.

Logan nodded. “Exactly.”

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Ezra gave a small, thoughtful hum.

“Indeed,” he said. “Helpful.”

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Finished

Relief flickered across Logan’s face. The corner of his mouth almost lifted in a smile-

Until Ezra spoke again. “But what’s new?”

The room stilled.

Ezra’s gaze drifted lazily across the screen displaying Logan’s presentation before returning to the two

men.

“It’s merely a reworked version of a system we already use,” he continued evenly. “In fact, I’ve developed something similar years ago, Logan.”

His voice remained polite. “And frankly, I don’t see anything particularly impressive about your proposal.”

He paused.

‘So no,’ Ezra concluded simply. “I decline this cooperation.”

The words dropped into the room like stones into still water.

The silence that followed was suffocating.

Then-

A chair scraped harshly against the floor.

Rowan shot to his feet.

His chest rose and fell sharply. His eyes burned with fury as he jabbed a finger toward Ezra.

“I knew it,” Rowan snarled. “I knew you’d refuse.”

A low rumble stirred beneath his voice—his wolf pushing dangerously close to the surface.

“But don’t think I’m a fool,” he continued, his voice rising. “You’re not rejecting this because of logic. You’re threatened by me, aren’t you?”

Gavriel moved closer cautiously. “Alpha-”

“Not now!” Rowan roared. The sound reverberated through the room, sharp and feral

“Today I’m going to expose what’s really going on in that coward’s mind!” Rowan shouted. “He stole my woman—and now he’s trying to crush me as well! He’s afraid of me. Always has been!”

Confused murmurs rippled across the room.

Several of the engineers exchanged uneasy glances.

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“Alpha Rowan,” someone asked hesitantly, “what exactly are you saying?”

Rowan barked out a harsh laugh.

“What am I saying?” he scoffed. “I’m saying this man is a coward!”

He pointed accusingly at Ezra again.

“The Luna he just claimed—the one none of you have even met yet—was mine first! Lylah belongs to me!”

Shock spread through the room like wildfire.

“But Ezra poisoned her against me!” Rowan’s voice was cracking with rage. “He turned her against me and locked her away where I couldn’t reach her!” His face had flushed deep red, veins standing out along his neck.

The wildness in his eyes made it painfully clear that reason had abandoned him.

“So no,” Rowan snarled. “I won’t let him make any decisions today. He’s lost his mind! Remove him from his position!”

Through all of it-

Ezra hadn’t moved.

He remained seated at the head of the table, watching Rowan’s outburst with calm, unreadable eyes.

Around them, murmurs grew louder as confusion and uncertainty spread through the room. No one quite knew what to believe—but one fact was undeniable.

Rowan Blackfang had just crossed a line.

“Alpha Rowan,” Halvar said firmly, his tone sharp with authority. “You’re bringing personal matters into a business meeting. That is completely unacceptable.”

At his signal, two security guards stepped forward.

Their movements were swift and silent.

They seized Rowan by the arms before he could react.

“Apologies,” Halvar continues stiffly. “But we’ll have to exclude you from the rest of this meeting. You can return when you’re capable of conducting yourself with basic dignity.”

Rowan struggled, fury blazing in his eyes—but the guards dragged him toward the door regardless.

The doors slid open.

And moments **later**, Rowan Blackfang was hauled out of the meeting room, his anger echoing faintly down the corridor **as** the doors shut behind him.

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

Chapter 136

Lylah's POV

Today's lecture ended without any trouble.

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Finished

As I stepped out of the classroom, a lightness settled across my shoulders. The crisp air of the academy grounds brushed against my face, carrying the distant hum of students scattered across the lawns.

Iris had just called, asking me to meet her for lunch. I was heading toward the courtyard where we usually met when-

Suddenly, a pair of strong hands clamped down on my arms.

Another covered my mouth.

'No-'

My cry was swallowed before it could escape.

In one swift motion, my body was lifted from the path and dragged across the lawn toward the quiet corner beside one of the stone buildings. My mind snapped into alarm immediately.

Attack.

Selestine stirred beneath my skin, claws scraping against my nerves.

Who-

Only one name flashed across my mind.

Alexander Blackridge.

Rage surged through me. I twisted sharply, preparing to strike and see his face. But the moment I turned, my body froze.

...Rowan?" The name left my teeth in a tight hiss **as** disbelief washed over me, "You're insane."

His

eyes burned as he stepped closer.

"Not nearly as insane **as** you, darling."

In a blink, he closed the distance between us, forcing me backward until my spine hit the cold stone wall

behind me.

My wolf growled low in my chest.

"This **is** academy ground," I said coldly. "I don't know if you've completely lost your sense of dignity, but I haven't. I'm not about to let my friends see me trapped alone with you."

My gaze hardened. "Step away, Rowan Blackfang... unless you want the entire building watching guards drag you out."

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Finished

His eyebrow lifted slowly.

"You can't stand being near me," he said. "Yet you had no problem sleeping with that bastard from Moonclaw... letting him touch you until your scent clung to him?"

"What...?" The words caught in my throat.

This man had truly lost his mind.

"What are you talking about-"

“Don’t play dumb!” Rowan roared.

The force of his voice carried a sharp edge of Alpha command, his wolf pushing dangerously close to the surface.

“All that time we were together, I never touched you!” he continued, his chest rising and falling rapidly. “I respected you I protected your purity. And yet with him—you gave it away! You gave your body to him!”

His voice dropped into something uglier.

“What a cheap little whore you turned out to be.”

My fingers curled slightly at my sides.

“And then you made sure I knew,” he went on bitterly. “You let your scent cling to him when he walked into that meeting. Let everyone in the room smell it.”

Realization slowly settled over me.

Had Ezra attended a meeting with Rowan?

I hadn’t known that.

I also had no idea how my scent had ended up on him.

But honestly? I didn’t care. I didn’t mind.

“Whatever Ezra and I were doing before he left for that meeting,” I said calmly, “is perfectly natural between mates,” My gaze met his without flinching. “Ezra and I are together now. Surely you don’t expect me to pretend nothing has happened between us.”

The fury that flashed across his face was immediate.

Sharp.

Unrestrained.

“And it doesn’t even require a mate bond,” I continued coolly. “Two people don’t need some sacred tie just **to** sleep together.”

My eyes hardened **as** the words struck him.

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Chapter 136

Finished

“Just like you and Cora did.”

“You-” Rowan’s breathing turned rough. “You still drag Cora into this?” he snapped. “Are you really that vengeful toward her?”

I shook my head slowly. “No. I was reminding you that you already have someone to comfort you’re angry.”

you

when

My voice dropped colder.

“So remember this clearly, Rowan Blackfang. You don’t get to come running back to me whenever you feel like it.”

A muscle jumped in his jaw.

“I don’t love Cora,” he said.

I stared at him.

“After everything you’ve done with her?” I scoffed softly. “After you went so far as to betray me?” A hollow laugh left my lips. “How ironic.”

“Lylah, listen,” he said urgently, taking a step closer. “I don’t love her.”

His voice softened slightly.

“I only stayed with her because... she doesn’t have much time left.”

My brow furrowed.

“The healer confirmed it,” Rowan continued quietly. “Cora has malignant cancer. And they said that she won’t live longer than three years.”

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

Chapter 137

Lylah's POV

0191

Finished

“All I want is to give her peace during the little time she has left. Is that so wrong in your eyes?” Rowan asked.

For a moment, I said nothing.

His words hung heavily in the air.

Cancer?

Cora had cancer?

And three years was all the time she had left?

“Only three years, Lylah,” Rowan continued quietly. “That isn't so long. And after she's gone, died...” He reached for my hand, gripping it tightly. “...we can be together again.”

My stomach twisted.

“I don't care what you ask of me,” he went on, his voice almost desperate now. “Say it. Anything. As long as you come back to Blackfang and stand beside me as my Luna-”

I ripped my hand out of his grasp.

A low growl rumbled from deep in my throat.

I had never thought it possible for someone to sound so utterly repulsive.

How could he say something like that?

He had cheated on me with Cora—and now he spoke of her death as if it were nothing more than an inconvenience?

“How can you speak about Cora’s death **so** casually?” I said coldly. “You disgust me.”

Even I—who despised her so much—had never once imagined her dying, let alone built plans around it.

“Because I’ll say anything if it convinces you that you’re the only woman I love,” Rowan replied without hesitation. “You already think the worst of me, don’t you? Why should I bother choosing my words carefully now?”

But I wasn’t truly listening anymore. My thoughts drifted back to what he’d said about Cora. About her illness.

Cora had lied too many times, making it difficult to believe Rowan’s claim.

Was it even true?

I blinked—and suddenly Rowan was too close.

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Chapter 137

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Finished

He **was** leaning toward me.

Trying to kiss me.

Instinct took over.

In the blink of an eye, my leg snapped upward. I drove my heel straight into his leg—the one that had once been crippled by injury.

I didn’t hold back.

“Argh!” Rowan’s scream tore through the air as he collapsed forward, clutching his knee.

“Lylah—” His head snapped up, eyes blazing with shock and pain. “How could you...” He hissed through clenched teeth. “You kicked me? You knew that was my weak spot!”

His voice trembled with disbelief.

“You used my weakness against me?”

I lifted my chin calmly. “I suppose being the only one who remained at your side while everyone else spat on you for your disability has its advantages now.”

While he was still stunned, I stepped forward and drove my fist into his face.

The impact snapped his head sideways.

Blood blossomed along the corner of his lips, crimson against his skin.

“Lylah-”

“Monster!” A shrill voice suddenly cut through the air.

Cora.

She rushed toward us, seemingly appearing from nowhere. The moment she saw Rowan bent over in pain, she hurried to his side, wrapping an arm around him and helping him straighten.

Her eyes then turned on me. “You’re a monster!”

Furious.

“What did you do to him?!” she shouted. “You rotten bitch! You tried to kill my mate?!”

Her voice shook with fierce devotion—the rage of someone defending the person they loved.

And somehow... that only made my chest tighten bitterly.

‘You’re such a fool, I thought silently. ‘Blind and foolish. He doesn’t love you. He was just speaking about your death like it meant nothing.’

The words burned on my tongue.

2/3

3:32 pm

Chapter 137

But I didn’t say them.

Cora suddenly raised her hand, aiming straight for my face.

Before it could land, I caught her wrist.

Twisting it sharply, I dragged her closer-

-and slapped her across the face with all the force I had.

214

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Finished

Ruby Walker

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

Chapter 138

Cora's POV

019

Finished

I was supposed to be heading to lunch when my phone rang. Gavriel's name flashed across the screen, and the moment I answered, his voice came through urgently.

“Alpha Rowan is at Lunar Grace.”

The words made my stomach tighten.

Rowan hadn't told me he was coming—not a message, not even a call. And the moment I heard where he was, I knew exactly who he had come for.

Lylah.

I abandoned my lunch plans immediately. Luck seemed to be on my side today, because the moment I crossed the academy lawn in search of him, I spotted them. The two of them stood in a quiet corner near the stone walls.

But what I saw next made my blood boil.

Rowan was bent over, clutching his leg in pain. Lylah stood in front of him.

Rage exploded through my chest.

I'll kill her!

But before I could move-

Smack!

The sound echoed sharply through the air.

Pain exploded across my face.

Before I could even react-

Smack!

A second slap landed on the same cheek.

My head snapped to the side as the metallic taste of blood filled my mouth.

For a moment, I could only stare at her.

"You... you slapped me?" I whispered, blinking in disbelief.

Lylah had never dared to do something like this before. Eldrid and Daia would have torn her apart if **she** had ever raised a hand against me.

And yet now-

1/3

3:32 pm

Chapter 138

0171

Finished

She had struck me twice without the slightest hesitation.

“To knock some sense into that empty head of yours,” Lylah replied coldly.

My wolf stirred angrily beneath my skin.

I spat the blood pooling in my mouth onto the ground.

“What are you talking about?” I demanded, fury blazing in my chest.

“Oh, forget it,” she said dismissively. “You’d never believe me anyway.” Her gaze flicked briefly toward Rowan, who was still groaning in pain. “Go tend to him,” she added flatly. “You were terrified I might kill your mate, didn’t you?”

Her finger pointed toward Rowan like he was nothing more than an inconvenience. “So go on. Take that Blackfang scumbag away from my sight.”

My nails dug into my palms.

“Lylah... you’ll pay for this,” I said through clenched teeth. “I’ll come for you.”

She looked at me with nothing but cold indifference.

“I’ll be waiting,” she replied calmly. “You’ve been coming after me all this time anyway. That’s nothing

new.”

And with that, she turned and walked away without a second glance.

I stood there, stunned, staring after her retreating figure.

My mind struggled to process what had just happened.

Then Rowan groaned beside me.

“What are you doing?” he muttered harshly. “You’re an idiot, Cora. You only made her angrier.”

His words snapped my attention back to him.

I hurried to his side, reaching out to help him stand.

But the moment I touched him, Rowan shoved me away.

The force of it made my chest tighten painfully.

“Rowan?” I said, stunned. “I’m only trying to help you-

“I don’t need it,” he cut in coldly. He straightened slowly, adjusting his clothes with indifferent movements. “I’m fine. Worry about yourself. Didn’t she just slap you?”

My eyes stung.

“So you did see her slap me,” I said, my voice trembling. “And yet you’re still treating me like this?”

3:32 pm

Chapter 138

Tears burned behind my eyes.

0191

Finished

“Rowan, I don’t understand what’s happening to you lately,” I continued. “You’ve changed. The way you treat me... **It’s** like I’m not your mate anymore. It’s like I’m nothing but trash to you.”

Rowan looked at me.

His gaze was cold.

“I’ve wronged Lylah too much, Cora,” he said quietly.

A chill crept down my spine.

“And don’t pretend you’ve forgotten,” he continued. “Some of that happened because of you.”

“M-me?” I blinked.

I couldn’t believe what I was hearing.

Rowan blaming me?

But his next words struck like a blade driven straight into my chest.

“So whatever Lylah does to you now... endure it,” he said flatly, his expression unchanged. “Because you deserve every bit of it.”

o

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

Chapter 139

648

Finished

3rd Person's POV

The slap Lylah had delivered had already darkened into an ugly purplish bruise on Cora's pale cheek. The mark ruined her carefully maintained beauty, impossible to hide no matter how she turned her face.

But the bruise itself wasn't what unsettled her the most. It was the realization beneath it.

'Lylah has grown stronger, far stronger than the last time we met.'

Cora touched the tender skin of her cheek lightly, her thoughts racing.

'And she hasn't even trained seriously in years. Just how much potential does she actually have?'

Cora had shifted early, but her wolf had never been anything special. Even with her naturally strong physique, years without proper training had dulled her strength. Now, she was barely stronger than an Omega.

But Lylah...

Lylah had shifted late.

And yet the strength behind that slap had told a very different story.

'Her wolf has grown stronger,' Cora realized uneasily. 'I could feel it the moment she struck me.'

The memory made her jaw tighten.

Pushing the thoughts aside, Cora stepped into the laboratory. Her hand instinctively rose to cover the bruise.

Unfortunately, she wasn't fast enough.

"Cora, are you alright?" Thane Blackridge stopped in front of her, his eyes immediately narrowing as he noticed the mark. "What happened to your face?"

"I-it's nothing," Cora replied quickly, forcing a smile, "Just an allergy flare-up. I've already put some ointment on it."

"Are you sure?" Thane frowned, clearly unconvinced. "That looks more like someone hit you."

His gaze sharpened.

"Cora, be honest. Did someone hurt you? If you're not feeling well, we can cancel dinner with Isaac tonight."

"No!" Cora blurted quickly.

Her hand moved instinctively, gripping Thane's arm.

"Please don't cancel it," she said softly. "Thane, I'm fine. Really. It's nothing."

1/3

3:32 pm

Chapter 139

She had no choice but to lie.

There was no way she could admit the truth.

No way she would tell anyone that Lylah had been the one to leave that bruise on her face.

That she had lost.

0491

Finished

Later that evening, after the final **class** ended, Lylah slipped into the back seat of the car waiting outside the academy gates.

Damon sat behind the wheel, as he often did when picking her up.

“Damon,” she said after fastening her seatbelt. “Alpha Ezra had a meeting with Rowan today, didn’t he?”

“Yes, Luna,” Damon replied. “It was rather sudden. Halvar and the other engineers insisted that Alpha Ezra attend. And after some persuasion, he agreed to make an appearance.”

Lylah nodded thoughtfully.

Just then, her phone rang.

Tiara’s name flashed across the screen.

She answered immediately.

“Yes, Tiara?”

“You diva!” her best friend’s voice exploded through the phone. “How dare you not tell me you’ve become the new role model for every she-wolf in Lunaris?!”

Lylah blinked in confusion.

“Tiara, are you drunk?” **she** asked cautiously. “What are you talking about?”

“Don’t tell me you haven’t checked today’s news!” Tiara practically screamed.

Lylah winced, quickly pulling the phone away from her ear.

She ended the call for a moment and opened the link Tiara had sent.

From the driver’s seat, Damon stifled a chuckle.

“Was that your friend, Luna?”

“Yes,” Lylah muttered. “**She’s** talking nonsense again. I have no idea what she means this time.”

The news page loaded.

Every headline looked strangely similar.

2/3

3:32 pm

Chapter 139

0191

Finished

Curious, Lylah tapped one of them.

‘Sales of “Twilight Kiss” fragrance surge dramatically across Lunaris. Manufacturers forced to import its key ingredient—night-blooming jasmine—from multiple packs in Verdanth.

Lylah frowned.

“That’s the perfume I usually wear,” she murmured. “Why would the sales suddenly spike like this?”

She had been using the fragrance since she was a teenager, mainly because it was one of the few perfumes she could easily afford

Scrolling further, Lylah continued reading.

Then she froze.

“Demand skyrocketed after Alpha Ezra of the Moonclaw Pack was reportedly seen today carrying the distinct scent of this fragrance.”

◦

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3/3

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The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's)

3rd Person’s POV

The moment Lylah stepped into the penthouse, a pair of powerful arms wrapped around her waist.

Finished

She barely had time to react before Ezra pulled her flush against his broad chest. His palm slid up to cradle the back of her head, fingers stroking slowly through her hair as he buried his face in the soft strands.

The familiar warmth of him settled around her like a home, and was comforting in a way that made her chest loosen. Lylah might have stayed there longer, melting into the embrace, if she didn't have something important to ask.

"Ezra," she said, nudging lightly against his chest, "I really need to ask you something."

"Hmm," The sound was little more than a rumble against her hair. He didn't move, only inhaled slowly, as if savoring her scent.

"What are you doing?" she demanded, trying to lean back enough to look at him. "Don't tell me you've decided you like my shampoo too. Are you planning to start using it and make the shampoo manufacturer flood with orders as well?"

That finally made him pull back.

Ezra loosened his hold just enough to look down at her, one brow lifting as he took in her slightly pouty expression.

Then he laughed.

It was a warm, unguarded sound—deep and genuine. The kind of laughter that rarely escaped him, one Lylah suspected the world hadn't heard from him in a very long time.

"What are you talking about?" The Alpha asked, reaching up to gently cup her cheek.

"Don't pretend you don't know," Lylah said, "You wore my perfume today, and now everyone in Lunaris wants the exact same one. Ezra, the manufacturer is practically exploding with orders!"

His thumb brushed slowly across her cheekbone.

"And?" he said calmly. "Am I not allowed to use my mate's fragrance when I miss her?"

His fingers slid along the line of her jaw, the touch slow and deliberate.

"I used it because it was the closest thing to your natural scent," he murmured. "It makes me feel like you're near me... even when you're not."

Lylah blinked. "Really?"

To her own nose, the fragrance had always smelled so pleasant.

Did Ezra truly find her scent that captivating too?

1/3

3:32 pm

Chapter 140

白

Finished

“Yes,” he said softly. “Though it still falls short compared to you.” A faint, almost sheepish smile tugged at his lips. “I should apologize, though. I stole a few sprays from your room. Imagining you around me, it helps keep me calm.”

Lylah studied him for a moment before sighing.

“Well, I’m not angry,” she admitted. “I only got a complaint from someone.”

Ezra’s expression sharpened instantly.

“Rowan?” he asked. His tone darkened slightly. “He came to see you today?”

His wolf stirred beneath the surface, protective instincts snapping awake.

“What did he do?” Ezra continued, his voice dropping. “Did he bother you? Did he hurt you?”

Lylah quickly shook her head.

“No. It’s the opposite, I’m the one who hurt him. I kicked his knee,” she confessed. “And slapped Cora too.”

She glanced up nervously, expecting disapproval.

Instead, the Alpha looked unmistakably proud.

A slow grin tugged at the corner of his mouth.

“That’s my woman,” Ezra said, admiration threading his voice. He brushed a loose strand of hair behind her ear. “Next time, though, call me. I’ll deal with them properly for daring to bother you.”

“There’s no need for that,” Lylah replied quickly.

But then Rowan’s earlier words resurfaced in her mind.

Her expression softened slightly.

“Rowan said something today,” she said slowly. “He claimed Cora is suffering from cancer and that she only has three years left to live.”

She hesitated.

“I don’t know if it’s true. My relationship with her is already beyond repair, but hearing that still made me **feel** a little sad...”

Ezra’s expression hardened instantly.

“Don’t.”

The word was cold. Firm.

Memories flickered through his mind—dark, bitter fragments of another lifetime.

He remembered Cora all too **well**.

2/3

1:33 pm

Chapter 140

Finished

Whether in this life or the one before, she had always been the same: Cruel. Manipulative. Vile to the core.

She had been the one who turned the wolves of Lunareth against their princess, Lysara. The one who spread lies and venom until they tore Ezra’s mate apart.

The memory of it still burned like fire in his chest.

214

B

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