

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

Chapter 161

3rd Person's POV

O401

Finished

Cora had been searching for every possible opportunity to strengthen her position in Lunaris.

So when she heard that the daughter of one of Rowan's council members had come to study at Lunar Grace, she seized the chance immediately.

Soren was an easy ally to cultivate. After all, everyone already assumed Cora would soon become the future Luna of the Blackfang Pack.

Tonight's dinner had been arranged with that purpose in mind.

Gavriel brought the sleek Maybach to a smooth stop in front of the restaurant entrance. As Cora stepped out, the evening air brushed coolly across her skin.

Then she saw her.

Lylah.

"Lylah," Cora called, surprise slipping into her voice.

Three heads turned toward her.

Soren's gaze shifted between them—and then settled fully on Lylah.

Recognition flickered across her face.

Ah..

Now she remembered.

They had crossed paths once before, back in Blackfang.

The girl standing before her had been the stray that Rowan had taken in. The one who lingered quietly at his side when the Blackfang Pack had nearly collapsed.

Soren studied her more closely.

And a sharp pang of irritation twisted in her chest.

Lylah had always been beautiful—she could admit that much.

But now?

Now the girl seemed radiant. Her presence carried a strange magnetism that hadn't existed before..

“Ah, I remember you now,” Soren said slowly, her lips curling. Her eyes glinted with thinly veiled mockery “There were no whispers about you anymore in Blackfang. I assumed you'd died somewhere.”

Soren tilted her head before she continued.

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“But it turns out you simply wandered all the way here to Lunaris. To Lunar Grace. And somehow, you even managed to become one of Professor Clark Grimwood's future students?”

Lylah remained silent.

Her calm only seemed to irritate Soren further.

Because earlier that morning she had heard the same news—the prestigious professor had personally chosen a new student.

And jealousy had flared instantly when she learned it wasn't her.

“I know there's no way you could thrive here based on your own abilities,” Soren continued coolly. “So tell me, Lylah... whose influence are you using? A Lunaris official perhaps?”

Her lips curved into a cruel smile.

“Or did you sell yourself to some old wolf willing to fund your entire life here?”

Cora froze.

For a brief second, she was stunned by the blunt accusation.

But beneath that surprise... something darker bloomed.

Satisfaction.

Because she had been wondering the exact same thing.

About Lylah's mysterious mate. The one whose identity Cora still hadn't uncovered. The one who clearly held power within Lunaris.

"You ugly bitch!" Iris suddenly exploded.

Several wolves nearby startled at the sudden outburst.

"Lylah already has a mate!" Iris snapped furiously. "Their bond is legally recognized under both Lunaris and Verdanth law! Don't you dare accuse her of something like that!"

Soren looked completely unimpressed.

"Oh," she said flatly. "So it's her mate's influence then."

"And if it is?" Iris shot back. Her chin lifted proudly. "Her mate is someone extremely powerful. You'd probably faint if you heard his name, Soren."

Iris leaned forward slightly, her voice dropping into a warning. "And you'd better hope people around don't repeat what you just said. Because if those words reach Lylah's mate's ears, he'll wipe out you and your entire bloodline in the blink of an eye."

Soren's eyes narrowed dangerously.

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"You foolish girl," she scoffed, her lips curling with open disdain. "My father sits on the council of Alpha Rowan of the Blackfang Pack. You clearly have no idea who you're speaking to."

The declaration was meant to intimidate.

Instead-

Iris almost burst out laughing.

Just a council member?’

‘Compared to Alpha Ezra, that was barely more threatening than a flea.

“Iris, enough.”

Lylah gently caught her wrist before she could say something truly explosive.

“Remember,” she murmured, “we came here to eat.”

Neither Iris nor Soren realized their raised voices had already drawn attention.

Several wolves in the line had begun watching the confrontation with interest.

Even the restaurant manager had stepped outside, concern etched across his face as he approached the growing commotion.

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Ruby Walker

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3rd Person’s POV

**0:91**

Finished

The man who stepped outside the restaurant looked to be in his mid-forties, his posture straight, his expression calm despite the rising tension in front of his establishment.

He adjusted the knot of his tie before speaking, his voice firm but controlled.

“Please,” he said evenly, sweeping his gaze across the gathered wolves, “if anyone here intends to start violence, you can leave now.”

Soren smirked.

“Perfect,” she said coolly, gesturing toward Lylah and Iris. “Then those two should be the ones leaving. They don’t belong among us anyway.”

Before the manager could respond, a voice suddenly rose from the waiting line.

“Hey! Wasn’t it you who started insulting her?”

Another woman nodded in agreement. “**Yes.** I heard it too. The black-haired one accused the other lady of selling herself to some old wolf in Lunaris.”

A low murmur rippled through the crowd.

“Unbelievable,” someone muttered. “Pups these days really have poison in their mouths.”

Soren’s lips parted in shock.

Her gaze darted around the line.

She hadn’t expected anyone to speak up. Much less defend Lylah.

Lylah had **just** opened her mouth to respond when she felt the manager’s attention settle on her.

His eyes lingered, studying her more closely than the others.

“Please don’t **ask** us to leave,” Iris blurted quickly. “We didn’t start this.”

“No, no,” the manager replied calmly.

Then he smiled. And the smile was directed squarely at Lylah.

“Ah,” he said warmly. “You two.” He gestured toward the entrance. “You’re both welcome to have dinner inside. **Please**—come in, ladies.”

Lylah blinked. “What?”

Iris, **however**, didn’t question it **at all**.

Her **face** lit up with delight, and before Lylah could stop her, she had already grabbed Lylah’s arm and

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marched toward the entrance.

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“But why us?” Lylah asked the manager hesitantly as she followed. Her instincts rarely trusted kindness offered too easily. “Did someone tell you to prioritize us, sir?”

“Ah, nothing like that,” he replied smoothly. “I simply heard that you were insulted while waiting in line.” He spread his hands politely.

“So I thought... why not offer you a table to make up for the unpleasant experience?”

The explanation still felt... slightly suspicious.

But Iris was practically glowing with excitement, and Lylah decided not to press further.

If nothing else, the night had made her friend happy.

And that was enough.

Much later that evening, Lylah returned to the penthouse.

The moment she stepped inside, something felt wrong. The entire penthouse was cloaked in darkness. Usually, the soft ambient lights activated automatically the moment she entered.

Her senses sharpened instinctively.

Then the scent hit her.

Blood.

Her heart lurched violently.

“Ezra?” Panic flooded her voice as she hurried deeper inside. “Ezra, where are-”

The bedroom door opened.

And he stepped out.

The Alpha still wore his white work shirt, the sleeves rolled carelessly to his forearms, the top buttons undone.

But on his cheek-

A streak of red.

“Ezra!” Lylah rushed toward him immediately, her chest tightening. “What happened?”

The smart system was finally activated, bathing the penthouse in soft light.

And in that light, she could see clearly. He wasn’t injured. Not a single wound.

“Relax,” Ezra said gently.

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His hand lifted, brushing a strand of hair away from her face. “I just went for a run after returning from the research center. His lips curved faintly. “And ended up hunting.”

The casual explanation didn’t calm her racing heart immediately.

“How was dinner with your friend?” Ezra asked.

Lylah swallowed, still shaken by the smell of blood.

“It went well,” she murmured. Then she looked up at him again, worry lingering in her eyes  
“Ezra... everything is alright, isn’t it?”

“Yes,”

He lowered his forehead to hers, his voice soft.

“Everything is perfectly alright.”

But inside-

Guilt twisted sharply in his chest.

Because he had just lied to his Luna.

The blood on his skin had not come from prey. It had belonged to another wolf.

Hunter from Victor Ross’s restaurant, the server who had dared to insult Lylah. Now that man lay deep in the forest beyond Lunar territory—Unconscious. His arm was severed.

Only one other wolf knew the truth.

Damon.

Ezra would bury this secret as deeply as possible.

His Luna did not need to see that side of him. The darker instincts of an Alpha. The brutality he was capable of when someone **dared** to humiliate what belonged to him.

As long as Lylah remained happy, that was enough. She would never need to step into Victor Ross's restaurant again.

Because Ezra had already ensured she wouldn't.

**The** new restaurant she visited tonight?

He **was** the one who had opened it.

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 163

3rd Person's POV

Meanwhile at Cora's apartment, the atmosphere was anything but calm.

Finished

Glass shattered across the marble floor. A bottle of expensive fragrance burst apart against the vanity, its scent flooding the air in a sharp, cloying cloud as Soren sent it crashing down with a snarl.

Her wolf was close to the surface.

Too close.

Her eyes glimmered faintly gold, fury rolling off her in restless waves.

‘Soren, stop it!’ Cora snapped, stepping forward and shoving her away from the vanity before another bottle could meet the same fate. ‘This is Lylah’s fault. Why are you taking it out on me?’

Soren turned slowly.

The glow in her eyes deepened. ‘My fault?’

‘Yes,’ Cora replied without hesitation. ‘You couldn’t even defend yourself when they fought back. And now you’re throwing a tantrum because they humiliated you in front of everyone?’

The words landed like claws.

Soren’s lips curled, and she took a deliberate step closer.

‘And what about you, Coraline?’ she asked coldly. ‘You stood there like a statue the entire time. You’re the one who asked me *to* be your ally. Your friend. Yet when I was being humiliated, you said nothing.’

A sharp scoff escaped Soren’s lips, ‘Perhaps I made a mistake accepting your request in the first place.’

She turned toward the door.

But Cora caught her wrist.

‘Wait,’ Cora said quickly. ‘It’s not like that.’ Her voice softened, carefully measured. ‘I stayed quiet because

I didn’t want the situation to spiral further. Many wolves were already watching.’

Soren jerked her hand free.

Earlier that night, when the restaurant manager had invited Lylah and Iris inside, she and Cora had been

forced to leave.

The memory burned like acid in her pride. Even worse, the wolves waiting in line had openly mocked her **as** she walked away.

‘The truth is,’ Soren said flatly, ‘you were afraid of them, Cora.’

Cora’s hands curled into fists.

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Finished

For a split second, raw fury surged through her chest. If she didn't need Soren's connections right now, she would have already put the arrogant girl in her place. And the punishment would be something Soren would never forget.

But Cora swallowed the anger down.

She drew a breath and forced a pleasant smile onto her face.

"Soren... I'm so sorry."

"Whatever." Soren rolled her eyes. Her expression darkened as the earlier humiliation replayed in her mind. "What Lylah did tonight was a declaration of war." Her jaw tightened. "And I will make sure she regrets it."

Cora nodded sympathetically.

Inside, however, she scoffed.

Soren was impulsive. Hot-headed. Easily provoked.

She was someone who attacked blindly without thinking three steps ahead.

Still, Cora kept her expression supportive.

"Don't worry," she said smoothly. "I'll help you."

"I will not allow Lylah to become Professor Grimwood's student," Soren said. "That place belongs to me only."

Cora inclined her head in agreement. "Then we should start moving before it's too late."

Soren's gaze sharpened suddenly. "And about what that friend of hers said earlier... about Lylah's mate," Her eyes narrowed. "Lylah only got this far because of his influence. If we want to destroy her, we destroy

him first."

Cora went still for a moment.

Then she nodded slowly.

On that point, she fully agreed.

Lylah's strength came from the mysterious figure standing behind her.

Take him down, and she would collapse with him.

"Don't worry. I've already spoken with Alpha Rowan about that. Lylah's mate is his to handle," Cora said softly, a calculating smile spreading across her lips. "And I'm certain my mate won't disappoint us."

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

Chapter 164

Iris' POV

Since this morning I hadn't seen Lylah anywhere.

Not even once.

Where was that busy girl?

Finished

Lylah always seemed to have a dozen responsibilities tangled around her schedule. And once the afternoon arrived, her endless projects would surely steal her away again. Which meant if I wanted to see her today, it had to be now.

I wanted to thank her for last night, for agreeing to have dinner with me.

The memory made me smile despite myself. The food at that new restaurant had been incredible.

And if Cora and that insufferable witch Soren hadn't shown up, the night would have been perfect for us.

I decided to wait outside Lylah's office. If she returned, she'd see me immediately.

But just as I turned the corner,

"Iris Grey!"

I stopped and looked over my shoulder. A girl hurried toward me, her dark curls bouncing around her face. The badge pinned to her coat caught the light.

Modern Healing Department.

"I'm really sorry to bother you," she said breathlessly. "I'm Gretta."

She fidgeted nervously with the strap of her bag.

"I heard you're a teaching assistant, right? So you're probably familiar with the study materials here." She hesitated before adding, "Could you help me find a book in the library?"

I smiled politely,

"Of course," I said. "But aren't you in the Modern Healing department? I'm actually an assistant in Traditional-"

"I just transferred," she interrupted quickly. "From Traditional to Modern. And... well... I don't really have any friends in the new department yet."

Something about the way she said it tugged at my chest.

That made sense.

Students in the Modern Healing field were known for their fierce independence. They rarely collaborated, even among themselves.

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Finished

This poor girl must have been struggling.

“Alright,” I said warmly. “Let’s go find your book.”

Gretta led the way toward the academy library.

The moment we stepped inside, I couldn’t help staring around. It was far greater than the library used by the Traditional students.

Rows upon rows of towering shelves stretched across the vast hall, packed with neatly organized volumes. Polished wood floors gleamed beneath the tall windows, and the air carried the comforting scent of parchment and ink.

“Over there,” Gretta said, pointing toward a tall shelf near the back. “I think it’s on the seventh row.”

I followed her gaze.

The shelf was lined with thick textbooks on muscular anatomy and healing structures.

“Alright,” I said, scanning the titles. “Which one do you need?”

“The one with the blue cover, I think.” She pointed higher. “Do you see it?”

I squinted upward.

“But to reach it we’ll need the ladder,” she added quickly. “And that’s actually the problem. I’m terrified of heights, Iris.”

I set my books down on the nearby table.

“Don’t worry,” I said. “I’ll get it.”

Gretta’s face brightened instantly.

I dragged the wooden ladder over and positioned it carefully against the shelf, making sure it lined up with the book she’d pointed out.

Then I started climbing.

The higher I went, the stronger the faint scent of old paper became.

Just as I reached the row-

“Wait, Iris!” Gretta suddenly called from below.

I paused halfway up the ladder. “What?”

“I think it’s the other one!”

“Which one?”

“The one at the far end!”

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I leaned sideways, balancing carefully as I scanned the titles. “This red one?”

“Yes! That one!”

1400

Finished

Reaching it was awkward.

The book sat farther along the shelf than I’d expected, forcing me to stretch dangerously to the side. My fingers brushed the spine once... twice-

Finally, I managed to pull it free.

At the same moment,

The soft click of the library door echoed behind me.

“This one, right?” I asked, glancing down as I started to descend.

But the moment my eyes reached the floor, my breath caught.

Gretta was gone. Standing in her place was someone else.

Soren.

Soren?” I frowned. “What are you doing here? When did you come in?”

‘Oh?’ She tilted her head slightly, a mocking smile tugging at her lips. “So you do remember my name now, Iris Grey.”

Her eyes gleamed with cold amusement.

“That’s surprising, considering how you just called me an ‘ugly bitch’ yesterday.”

A chill crept down my spine as she walked closer.

Closer.

Straight toward the ladder.

My wolf stirred uneasily inside me.

Then Soren's hand closed around the ladder's side.

Instant panic shot through my body.

My heart began hammering violently, though I forced myself not to show it.

\*S-Soren," I said sharply, my voice trembling despite my effort to steady it. "What are you doing?"

She looked up at me.

"I truly don't understand how your tiny brain works, Iris Grey," Soren said, her voice dripping with scorn. "But I can assure you—no one has **ever** called me ugly in my entire life."

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Her eyes gleamed faintly, the gold of her wolf flashing beneath the surface.

945

Finisher

"Isn't ugliness something subjective? I thought we all knew that." Her smile turned cruel. "But if someone were to fall from up there...and smash that pretty little face against the floor—"

Her gaze locked onto mine.

"That wouldn't be subjective anymore."

Before I could react,

Soren shoved the ladder.

The world tipped sideways—

And I fell.

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

Chapter 165

Lylah's POV

Finished

Today's teaching had been relentless. By the time I finished teaching, my head throbbed and my throat felt raw from talking for hours. And I still had to meet with Professor Grimwood afterward. But before that, Iris and I were supposed to have lunch together.

Except it was already past three in the afternoon.

Far too late for lunch.

A pang of guilt twisted in my chest. I hoped Iris wasn't angry with me.

Strangely, my phone showed no missed calls from her.

That was odd.

I frowned and dialed her number **as** I walked down the stone corridor. The call rang... and rang... until it ended unanswered.

I pressed call again for the fourth time, anxiety beginning to creep under my skin.

This time, the line connected.

\*Iris? Where are you? Did you already go home? I'm so sorry—today's classes were packed, and I had to cover extra material for the students..."

"This **is** the Lunar Grace ward assistant speaking. Rowena." The unfamiliar voice froze the breath in my lungs.

My fingers tightened around the phone. "W-what?"

"You're calling Lady Iris Grey's phone. Yes, she **is** currently receiving treatment here. Room five. If you

want to-”

The line cut off abruptly.

Silence swallowed everything.

For a moment I just stood there, heart pounding.

Then Selestine surged inside me.

I didn't think. I didn't hesitate.

I ran.

Lunar **Grace** had its own treatment building, a place where injured students could be treated immediately before being sent to the Healing Center outside if necessary.

But Iris...?

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Why would she be there?

My heart slammed wildly against my ribs as I sprinted across the courtyard, shoes striking stone.

Room five.

I raced through the corridor until the symbol for the ward came into view.

When I reached it, my heart slammed painfully against my ribs seeing that a crowd had gathered outside the room.

Students. Healers. Onlookers.

Iris wasn't among them.

Which could only mean one thing.

She was inside.

“Iris!”

I tried to push through the door, but someone suddenly grabbed my arm.

“Not now,” a deep voice said firmly. “The Healer is still examining her.”

I turned sharply.

Thane Blackridge stood beside me, his grip firm but controlled.

My stomach dropped.

“You only came now after what happened to your friend?” Cora’s voice chimed in beside him.

Her tone dripped with false concern, her *eyes* shimmering with unshed tears.

“How could you, Lylah?” she continued softly. “Oh, I just hope Selene saves Iris...”

“What happened to her?” I demanded. My voice had already turned into a snarl. “Answer me. What happened?!”

Then-

“She fell from a ladder in the Modern Healing library,”

The answer came from behind me,

I turned slowly.

A man stood there, his expression carved from ice. I had seen him once before when Iris brought me to her home.

Her brother.

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Finished

Isaac Grey.

In two long strides, he closed the distance between us. His hand shot forward, grabbing a fistful of my hair and jerking my head back.

“You’re nothing but a curse,” he growled. The sound was low and animalistic, barely restrained beneath human skin. “Aren’t you the one who’s been associating with that department lately?” His grip tightened. “My little sister wouldn’t stop talking about you—about how you joined their project.”

I couldn’t answer.

My chest tightened painfully.

Not because of his grip.

But because of what I had just heard about Iris.

“Why was my sister there in the first place?” he snarled, his breath hot against my face. “Why wasn’t it you?”

His eyes burned with fury.

“Why weren’t YOU the one who fell?!” Isaac shoved me away roughly.

I barely had time to steady myself—

Before his hand lashed out.

The crack of the slap echoed down the hallway.

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

Lylah’s POV

The blow snapped my head to the side.

0:01

Finished

For a heartbeat, there was nothing—only the ringing in my ears. Then the pain followed, blooming across my cheek in a hot, searing wave that spread through my skin like fire.

Sestine stirred beneath my ribs, restless, offended.

But I stayed still.

‘**Isaac**, enough.’ Thane Blackridge stepped forward and caught Isaac’s arm before another strike could fall.

Isaac jerked his arm back, glaring. “Why are you defending her now?”

‘I’m not defending her,’ Thane replied evenly. “But if you keep attacking her and she spills blood, they’ll drag you out of here. And you won’t be present when Iris wakes up.”

The taste of copper filled my mouth.

Blood.

swallowed it quickly before anyone could **see**.

Isaac Grey...” My voice came out rough, but steady. “I will trace it. I’ll find out how the incident with Iris happened.”

His gaze snapped to me, sharp as a blade.

Before he could speak, another voice cut through the room.

Cold. Mocking.

‘Is that really all you’re capable of doing? Something useless?’

My head turned.

Soren stood beside Cora, arms crossed, her expression dripping with contempt. I hadn’t even noticed when **she** arrived.

‘Oh, Lylah,’ she continued sweetly. “And how would we know you wouldn’t simply fake the results?”

Cora suddenly hissed under her breath, her voice tight with alarm. “Soren—how are you even here? Who

Iris was being treated here?”

told

you

My eyes narrowed.

That meant Cora hadn't told her.

So how did Soren know?

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Chapter 166

M

**019**

Finished

Unless... she already knew Iris had fallen.

The realization struck like lightning.

Memories from last night surged back—the restaurant, the sharp tension in the air, and the dark, ugly flash that had crossed Soren's eyes when Iris had spoken up for me. Iris's words had wounded her pride, and a grudge had ignited in her heart right then and there.

My wolf reacted before my mind fully caught up.

I moved.

In a blink, I closed the distance between us. Before Soren could even gasp, I was behind her, wrenching her arms back and locking them tightly against her spine.

"What are you doing? Release me!" Soren snapped, thrashing against my hold.

I leaned close to her ear, my voice dropping into a low, dangerous hiss.

"How did you know Iris fell?" I demanded. "You're not even an official student here yet. How did the news reach you this fast?" My grip tightened. "Unless you were there when it happened. Speak. And don't you dare lie to me."

"I—"

The word collapsed on her tongue.

In front of us, Thane and Isaac had both gone still, their brows furrowed as they waited for her answer.

But it was Cora who looked the most shaken.

Her face had drained of all color.

“What is this...?” Soren forced out, her voice rising defensively. But beneath the anger, I caught the tremor. “Are you accusing me? This **is** ridiculous! How could you accuse me of pushing Iris?”

The word echoed between us.

Push.

I went still.

“Push,” I repeated it slowly. A cold smile curved faintly at my lips. “So that’s it. That’s what you did to her.”

“I didn’t!”

My gaze sharpened. “I never even said what happened to Iris,” I replied calmly, “You did.”

Silence dropped like a stone.

“People don’t name the crime unless they’re afraid it’s already been discovered, Soren,” I continued. “Instinct betrays liars first. Guilt leaks out before the mind can stop it. A single word, a slip of the tongue,

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Chapter 166

0191

Finished

and the truth shows its teeth.”

Her breathing hitched.

I leaned closer, my grip tightening slightly around her wrists. “You just did exactly that.”

A lesson I learned back in Blackfang College.

And right now, Soren had walked straight into the trap.

She froze in my grasp.

Not another word left her mouth. There’s no denial nor an excuse. Just silence.

That was all the confirmation I needed.

My wolf stirred, satisfied.

In one swift motion, I twisted her arm sharply in the opposite direction of the joint.

“Argh!” Soren’s scream tore through the air.

I released her and drove my foot into the back of her leg.

She collapsed forward, crumpling onto the floor in a miserable heap.

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Chapter 167

Cora’s POV

The sharp crack of bone sliding out of place was sickening.

Soren’s scream tore out of her like a wounded animal’s howl as she crumpled to the floor.

Finished

“My shoulder!” she shrieked, clutching her arm, her face twisted in agony. “You dislocated my shoulder!” Her trembling finger shot toward Lylah. “How dare you!”

I froze.

Part of me wanted to rush to her side—to help her, to pull her up, to defend her.

But something colder held me back.

The moment I saw what Lylah had done, a chill crept down my spine, spreading through my body like frost. There had been no hesitation in her movement. No mercy. Just pure, predatory precision.

And deep down, I knew one thing with terrifying clarity.

did not want to become the next target of her anger.

“What are you doing?” Thane asked, his voice steady but edged with warning as he looked at Lylah.

Lylah barely glanced at him.

“Ask her,” she said coldly, nodding toward the girl writhing on the floor. “Ask her what she told Iris to do. I’m certain it involved some kind of trick. Iris would never have followed her willingly otherwise.”

Thane’s brows furrowed, confusion flashing across his face. “But what makes you so sure Soren would do something like that to Iris? Did they even know each other?”

“They didn’t,” Lylah replied. “But Soren was holding a grudge.”

Her voice remained calm, but the words cut cleanly through the tension in the air.

“Last night, Iris and I went out for dinner. We ran into her. Iris said something by accident that bruised her pride.” Her **gaze** flicked briefly toward Soren. “And today, she chose to repay it.”

Silence followed.

Thane still looked uncertain, as if the pieces hadn’t fully fallen into place yet. But Isaac Grey...

**Isaac’s** expression changed.

Understanding dawned across his face like a gathering storm.

“Iris did go out to dinner with you last night,” he murmured slowly.

Lylah met his gaze. Then her eyes lowered to the floor. “I’m sorry I couldn’t stop what happened,” she said

1/3

**3:36 pm**

Chapter 167

quietly. “If you want to hold me responsible for Iris’s condition... I’ll accept it.”

Isaac didn’t answer.

His silence was heavier than anger.

And suddenly, a terrible realization sank into my stomach.

Damn.

Oh, damn it.

This was bad.

**0191**

Finished

If this reached the Dean... If Isaac decided to bring the matter before the Lunar Grace officials—or worse, the law—Everything could collapse.

My thoughts were spiraling when I suddenly felt it.

Soren's gaze.

She was staring straight at me. The message in her eyes was unmistakable.

'Move. Defend me. Or I'll drag you down with me!

My heart lurched.

Damn that idiot.

She had caused this entire disaster—and now she expected me to clean it up.

Grinding my teeth, I forced myself to act.

"But Lylah just dislocated Soren's shoulder," I said quickly as I knelt beside her. "That can't be ignored. Our priority should be getting Soren treated first."

Isaac's **gaze** dropped to us, cold and unyielding.

"The fall dislocated my sister's leg," he replied flatly. "She won't be able to walk properly for weeks, Cora." His eyes hardened. "If it's true that Soren pushed her, then this is the least she deserves. I'll check the hidden surveillance in the library."

The words sent an icy shiver racing down my spine.

"Cora." Thane's voice pulled my attention back. He was watching me carefully now. "We don't know the truth yet, so it would be wiser if you didn't take anyone's side. Including Soren's"

His tone wasn't harsh. But the quiet disappointment behind it stung.

Still-

Soren's glare was still burning into me like claws against my back.

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Chapter 167

If I stepped away now...

She would destroy everything.

My teeth clenched.

Her reckless actions had created this mess—and now I was the one trapped in it.

649

Finisher

“T-Thane...” I said, forcing the words out. “Soren is the daughter of one of Alpha Rowan’s councilmen. And I am the future Luna of Blackfang Pack. Indirectly... I am expected to stand on her side.”

The moment the words left my mouth, I felt the weight of them.

Isaac looked at me. His voice dropped, low and heavy with disappointment. “Even if she’s proven guilty later?”

His eyes hardened.

“You choose pack politics even now? I thought you were better than that.”

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

## Chapter 168

3rd Person's POV

Finished

Soft lanternlight flickered against the pale walls of the ward. The air carried the faint, calming scent of crushed herbs—lavender, wolfroot, and something bitter the healers used to dull pain.

On the bed, Iris Grey had regained consciousness barely half an hour ago. Her leg was bound in thick splints, her body still weak from the fall, but her eyes were clear—and blazing with stubbornness,

Across the room stood two wolves who should have brought her comfort.

Her brother. And beside him, the heir of the Blackridge Pack.

Yet the moment she opened her eyes, she hadn't asked for either of them.

'When is Lylah coming?' Iris demanded again, shifting slightly against the pillows despite the healer's warning. "Where is she? I want to see her. I want to talk to my friend."

Lylah.

That name had been the very first thing out of her mouth when she woke.

'Iris,' Isaac exhaled slowly and reached out, brushing a hand gently through his sister's hair. "You can speak to her once you've fully recovered. For now, I'll be the one staying here with you."

Iris let out a bitter scoff. "As if either of you actually cared about me."

[saac stiffened. "What do you mean by that?"

Her gaze sharpened.

'I told you to drive that woman out of my room,' Iris said coldly.

Her finger lifted—pointing straight across the ward.

At Cora.

Cora stood near the wall beside Thane Blackridge, her posture quiet and composed.

But Iris's eyes burned with open hostility.

"How many times do I have to say it?" she continued. "I don't want to see her face here."

The room grew tense.

Sensing the hostility thickening in the air, Thane stepped forward, trying to smooth the situation.

"Iris," he said carefully, "this is Coraline. She's one of my juniors--"

"I know who she is." Iris cut him off without hesitation. Her stare never left Cora. "She's Soren's friend. And she's also the one who's always trying to make things difficult for my dear friend."

Chapter 146

...

Finished

Contoured her gaze tightly arranging her expression into something, wounded and restrained.

How is won't loaded.

"Seven rushed the ladder when I was climbing it, she said firmly. "And I'm sure she's the one who paid Greta trick me in helping her?"

Her fingers tightened again the Marker,

"It was they who hurt me

Then Iris turned her gaze toward her brother. The disappointment in her eyes was far more painful than

"And it anyone here dares to blame Lylah for what happened to me..." she said slowly, "I won't forgive it."

The room fell dead

Even without Lylah present, Iris could already sense it.

Someone had tried to place the blame on her friend.

And deep down, she suspected exactly who

Isaac's shoulders sagged under the weight of that silent accusation.

Shame flickered across his face.

Till apologize to her he said quietly. "Properly. I promise, Iris. I

I promise.”

His voice lowered,

I was overwhelmed with anger earlier. I wasn't thinking clearly. The only thing in my head was your condition, Isaac admitted, his jaw tightening with guilt. “I shouldn't have jumped to such a shameless conclusion”

Tris studied him for a long moment.

Then her voice dropped, cold with disappointment.

“You'd better, Ivane Her honey-brown eyes hardened. “Because if you don't apologize to Lylah...”

She took a slow breath.

“I swear in Selene's name that I will never speak to you again.”

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

10:38 pm

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 169

3rd Person's POV

The tension inside Iris's hospital ward had been suffocating.

Finished

Again and again, Iris had cornered Cora with quiet, cutting remarks—each one sharper than the last. Normally, Cora only needed to lower her gaze and wear that fragile, wounded expression to win sympathy from the room.

It had always worked before.

But not today.

Not a single person stepped in to defend her. Not even Thane.

So when Iris casually threw another barb about her “loyal friendship with Soren,” Cora finally turned and left the ward.

Her fury simmered beneath her skin as she stormed down the hallway, her wolf pacing restlessly inside

her chest.

By the time she reached the treatment center where Soren was recovering, the anger had become a living thing inside her veins. She shoved the door open and stepped inside, carrying that storm with her.

The air in the room instantly grew heavy.

“Cora?” Soren lay propped against the bed pillows, her injured arm secured in a sling.

Despite her condition, a faint, mocking smile curved her lips.

“So you finally decided *to* show up,” Soren said lazily. “What happened—did you finish performing your sweet little innocent act for Thane Blackridge first?”

“Shut your mouth.” Cora’s patience snapped.

She crossed the room in long, sharp strides, every movement tight with restrained aggression. If Soren hadn’t been injured, Cora would have dragged her off that bed and challenged her to a duel right there.

“Do you ever stop to think before you act?” Cora demanded, her voice low with fury. “You think you’re some brilliant mastermind, but everything you’ve done has only destroyed the plans I spent weeks setting in place.” Her eyes burned. “Your only job was to stay quiet and let me handle things. But that **was** apparently too difficult for you.”

On the bed, Soren’s gaze turned icy.

“So I was supposed to sit quietly and wait for you to act?” she scoffed. “We’re not the same, Cora.” She **tilted** her head, studying her. “It takes you forever to move because you’re afraid of Lylah. I acted because **I’m**

not.”

“What did you say?” Cora’s **eyes** flashed with raw fury.

10: pm

Chapter 169

0:40

Finished

“You heard me.” Soren’s voice was calm, almost amused. “You can pretend all you like, but I can smell fear. And yours is very obvious.”

Her gaze slid over Cora slowly.

“You’ve always been intimidated by Lylah’s courage, haven’t you?” Soren said softly. “Even with Alpha Rowan backing you, she still makes you hesitate. Funny how a wolf with no title can still make the future Luna shrink.”

Cora’s teeth ground together so hard her jaw ached.

“You’re insolent,” she snapped. “If that’s how you want to play it, then fine. I won’t help you anymore-”

“I don’t need your help.” Soren cut her off smoothly. “I don’t need your plan either.”

Cora froze.

Soren’s smile widened slightly. “Word about my injuries has already spread to Blackfang Pack... to my father.”

A chill crawled down Cora’s spine.

“And now he’s on his way here.” Soren finished lightly.

“Soren,” Cora hissed under her breath, panic creeping into her voice. “You shouldn’t have done that. There was no reason to involve Alpha Rowan’s council. If this escalates any further... if it reaches my mate’s ears

“Oh?” Soren’s eyes gleamed with wicked amusement. She clearly relished the sight of Cora losing her composure. “Let’s see what happens then. I have no intention of letting this end quietly after all. Not until I’ve repaid Lylah for what she did to me.”

That was the last straw.

The fury that had been clawing inside Cora finally snapped loose.

In two strides, she reached the side of the bed.

Her body leaned forward, muscles tightening instinctively—her wolf ready to lunge, to wrap her hands around Soren’s throat and silence her.

But before she could move—

The door burst open with a violent slam.

“My daughter!”

A broad-shouldered male with a thick mustache stormed into the room.

Lancel.

Soren’s father.

2/3

0:38 pm M M

Chapter 169

Cora’s stomach dropped.

Soren had truly dragged outsiders into this mess.

And just like that, the situation slipped completely out of Cora’s control.

282

0:1

Finished

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

Chapter 170

Lylah's POV

Finished

Isaac's slap had left a faint reddish imprint along my cheekbone. So before heading home, I stopped by a small store to buy foundation and applied it in the restroom, carefully layering it over my cheek.

My wolf's healing was already working beneath my skin, but the mark hadn't faded quickly enough for my liking.

By morning, it should be gone.

At least, that was what I was counting on.

"Luna," Damon greeted the moment I stepped through the door.

I offered him a smile. It wasn't like him to be here this late.

Before I could ask why, a different scent reached me.

Oil paint and fresh canvas.

My gaze drifted past Damon to the stranger seated behind a large, blank canvas propped on a wooden easel.

"Damon, who is that?" I asked, gesturing toward the man.

"Luna, meet Jace," Damon said. "The best painter in Lunaris. Alpha Ezra personally called for him."

The painter stood and dipped into a respectful bow.

'And he's here to paint you, Luna.'

I blinked. "Me?"

Surely I had misheard.

But before Damon could explain further, a deep, familiar voice cut through the room.

“To paint us together.”

My head turned instantly toward the sound.

Ezra stepped into view—and for a moment, my heart forgot how to beat.

I had never seen him like this before.

He wore his Alpha’s formal attire, dark and commanding, with the ceremonial cloak of **his Pack draped** over his broad shoulders. The silver embroidery caught the light like moonbeams woven into **fabric. The** raw authority of an Alpha clung to him, heavy enough to press against my wolf’s **instincts**.

Warmth crept into my cheeks **as** he approached.

1/3

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 170

Lylah’s POV

Finished

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1/3

10:38 pm M M

Chapter 170

Finished

“Go change,” he said calmly. “Your Luna cloak and gown are waiting in your room. Jace will paint us wearing them.”

“Ezra...” I frowned slightly. “What is all this for?”

Not that I minded. I simply wanted to understand.

His expression softened just a fraction.

‘It’s a tradition in Moonclaw,’ he explained. ‘Every Alpha who rules has a portrait with his Luna. It must be a painting done by hand. And the painting will be hung in my family estate and in the Pack’s central hall.’

A quiet breath left me as I absorbed that.

‘My ancestors have kept that tradition for generations,’ he added, his voice steady. ‘Sorry, I didn’t mention

it sooner. Vargan suddenly demanded ours. Seems my council is getting impatient.’

A laugh slipped out of me.

‘Alright,’ I said. ‘Give me a moment. I’ll change.’

I didn’t want to keep Ezra’s grandfather—or the council—waiting. I slipped into my room and dressed quickly.

The gown waiting for me was breathtaking.

White silk draped over *my* body in elegant lines, the fabric trimmed with delicate embroidery that shimmered softly with every movement.

My Luna cloak was midnight black, the same shade as Ezra’s. The inside was lined with pale silver fur that brushed against my skin like moonlight.

I gathered my hair half-up, leaving the rest to fall freely down my back.

When I stepped out again, Ezra was already seated before the canvas, composed and powerful in a way that seemed entirely natural to him.

His face adjusted the brushes in his hand, studying us with a thoughtful eye. ‘Alpha, Luna, please choose a comfortable position so I may begin.’

Ezra lifted a hand, beckoning me closer.

I walked toward him, the soft fur lining of my cloak whispering against the floor.

‘Wait,’ I started. ‘I’ll grab a chair-’

My words never finished.

His arm slid around my waist.

Before I could react, he pulled me down in one smooth, effortless motion.

2/3

you are lower y no lo p

yer been to

Beebe, Tyneth dy my lo

Why mutex me

My boyptonexin APR des ad I'm angry af

10:39 pm

The Betrayed Princess Rising

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