

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

Chapter 171

3rd Person's POV

Two days later, Lancel made his move, prompted by Soren's complaint.

0:00

Finished

Clark Grimwood hadn't allowed work-related visitors in his private home for years. Yet here they were- an insolent wolf and his mate-pushing their way in simply because he had once graduated from Lunar Grace's Healing Department.

It was morning. Grimwood was absorbed in his reading when Lancel of the Blackfang Pack and his mate arrived.

Reluctantly, Grimwood let them pour out the reason for their visit-a reason he neither remembered nor cared about.

When Lancel finished speaking, Grimwood closed his book and leaned back, letting a dry, humorless laugh escape.

"It would be so kind of you to help our daughter, sir," Lancel's mate said, her tone clipped yet sweet, as if rehearsed. "Soren is brilliant-one of the shining students in Blackfang College-

"Save your breath," Grimwood said, eyes narrowing. "I wouldn't be interested even if I listened."

Lancel stepped forward, his jaw tight.

He hadn't come to be dismissed. His daughter's wishes were not something he would let slide.

"You will accept my daughter as your student, won't you?" he demanded. "I graduated from Lunar Grace myself. My record was impeccable-though perhaps you've forgotten."

"I've mentored more talented wolves than I care to remember. Your daughter's talent won't impress me," Grimwood said flatly. "And no, I will not take her."

Lancel's irritation spiked, a low, simmering heat that threatened to spill.

Soren had warned him the professor might refuse, but hearing it now—he could hardly believe it.

“Why?” he pressed, voice sharp.

“Because I’ve already chosen my student,” Grimwood said simply.

Lancel's wolf bristled, his patience thinning. “Who **is** she? Who is **so** worthy that you reject my **daughter?**”

“You don't need to know,” Grimwood replied casually, as if the answer were beneath explanation.

“I have to know, Professor Grimwood. I need to measure her worth. Who is this **someone you've** chosen over my daughter?” Lancel asked, his tone bordering on insolent.

“Just someone from some unknown background, I **bet**,” he added with a scoff.

“My **Soren, on the other** hand, has true healer blood running through her veins. She comes from a **high-ranking family. Taking** her as your student would bring you **many advantages.**”

10:39 pm

Chapter 171

Finished

Grimwood's eyes flashed, irritation flaring at the man's audacity.

But he wasn't surprised. Blackfang Pack had always been full of insufferable wolves.

“Since you insist,” Grimwood said, rising slowly, “I'll show you.”

He walked to his desk and pulled out a portrait—a printed copy of a painting an old acquaintance had sent

him.

It had been sent by the old lord of Moonclaw, who had been overjoyed to receive the finished painting of his grandson and his Luna.

Grimwood had grimaced at the imposing figure of Moonclaw's Alpha—but Lylah's presence in the portrait made him smile, a warmth stirring in him that he hadn't felt in years.

He tossed the print onto the table, sliding it toward Soren's parents.

Lancel and his mate leaned in, their eyes scanning the portrait.

“The woman,” Grimwood said, letting the words land, “is my student. And yes, you recognize the man beside her. That is her mate. My student is his Luna.” He raised his glass of wine in a quiet, almost imperceptible toast.

Lancel’s fingers trembled as they hovered over the photo.

That was the Alpha of Moonclaw.

And the woman on his lap—his Luna.

The realization hit him like a blade to the gut. His daughter hadn’t picked a fight with some ordinary wolf. She had provoked the mate of the most powerful Alpha on the continent.

All the boldness Lancel had arrived with drained away in an instant,

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Ruby Walker

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Chapter 172

3rd Person’s POV

+5 Pearls

The meeting with Clark Grimwood had yielded nothing for Lancel and his mate—nothing but the chilling realization of exactly who their daughter had chosen to challenge.

By the time they returned to their apartment, the air around them felt heavy, thick with defeat. Even their wolves, usually restless beneath their skin, had gone eerily still.

Soren, freshly returned from the treatment center, remained blissfully unaware of the weight pressing down on her parents’ shoulders. Why wouldn’t she be? They had never once failed her before—every desire, every ambition—fulfilled without question.

“Father! Mother!” she called the moment they stepped inside, her eyes bright with anticipation. “When do I officially begin studying under Professor Grimwood?”

Lancel’s chest tightened. His voice, when he spoke, carried a rare note of sorrow.

“Soren...” His hand lifted, brushing gently through her hair, though the gesture lacked its usual strength. “You won’t be studying under that old wolf.”

Her smile shattered. “What? Why?!”

“We’ve tried. But there are things,” Lancel said carefully, “that cannot be forced, no matter our will.”

He straightened, attempting to reclaim some authority. “That does not mean you will fall behind. Lunar Grace is filled with capable mentors. I will compensate one handsomely to guide you. I’ll arrange for you to study under Corvin Vale.”

“No!” Soren’s voice broke into a sharp, disbelieving wail.

This was not the outcome she had prepared for. Not from them.

What had happened to the parents who could bend circumstances to her will? Who could command outcomes as easily as breathing?

For the first time in her life... they had failed her.

But Lancel and his mate could not tell her the truth.

They could not repeat the warning Clark Grimwood had delivered with cold finality—that if the truth of Lylah’s identity came to light, the Alpha of Moonclaw Pack would not hesitate to make them pay.

Even the memory of it made their wolves recoil.

“I’m so disappointed in you!” Soren spat before turning and storming to her room, the door slamming hard enough to rattle the walls.

Silence followed.

Lancel sank onto the couch, the weight of it all finally settling into his bones.

Chapter 172

0:0

+5 Pearls

“Her anger will pass,” he muttered, more to himself than to his mate. “What matters is that we’ve steered her away from the Luna of Alpha Ezra.”

His mate nodded, though unease flickered in her eyes. “I still don’t understand how Soren managed to make an enemy of that girl. It would have been far wiser to make Lylah an ally.”

Lancel exhaled slowly, his gaze distant.

One question refused to leave him-circling, relentless.

“How did she do it?” he murmured. “How did Lylah earn the attention of someone like Alpha Ezra? Make him claim her?”

His jaw tightened.

“Back then in Blackfang, she was nothing. Even as Alpha Rowan’s lover, she was drowned out by every she-wolf baring her fangs for his attention. So once they parted... she should have been faded completely.”

His mate’s thoughts mirrored his own, her expression darkening.

“Exactly, my love...” she said quietly, “Alpha Ezra is someone who stands at the very peak-dominance etched into his very bloodline. Even high-born she-wolves can barely draw a flicker of his attention, let alone hold it.”

A pause lingered between them, heavy with disbelief.

“So how,” she whispered, “did a girl as ordinary as Lylah manage to catch-and keep-the notice of an Alpha like him?”

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2/2

11:26 am

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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Chapter 173

Lylah's POV

040

+5 Pearls

Today, I returned to my routine at Lunar Grace-but nothing felt quite the same.

Breakfast was quiet. Too quiet. No Iris sitting across from me, no animated chatter spilling from her lips between bites, no laughter bright enough to turn heads. The absence of her presence left a hollow space that even the morning bustle couldn't fill.

She'd been taken back home. The fall had left her leg dislocated. Thankfully, there were no deeper injuries —but the memory of it still made my wolf stir uneasily beneath my skin, a low, restless tension I couldn't quite shake.

I was grateful the injury was minor-nothing permanent, nothing devastating.

But it did nothing to dull the anger simmering beneath my skin.

By the time I arrived at the Modern Healing building for the MDT project, the laboratory was already crowded.

At the center stood Corvin Vale, his presence as sharp and controlled as ever.

"I called you all here to introduce a new member to the project," He said, his voice easily cutting through the noise. "Her record speaks for itself-and I've decided that she's earned her place here without needing to go through the usual tests."

A subtle shift passed through the room-curiosity, tension, restrained challenge.

He gestured.

And then she stepped forward.

Soren.

Bandages wrapped around her shoulder, her arm secured, yet she carried herself with practiced poise as she came to stand beside him.

“Everyone, meet your new family,” Vale continued, “Lady Soren of the Blackfang Pack.”

The reaction was immediate.

Low murmurs slithered through the room like a nest of snakes, sharp and venom-laced.

“All of us had to pass multiple trials and interviews under Vale’s team...” someone muttered. “How could she get in so easily?”

“I heard her father’s a council member of Alpha Rowan...”

“And she’s close to Cora too, right? That explains enough.”

“I’m honored to join this project and work alongside all of you,” Soren said smoothly, her smile polished.

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11:27 am M M

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her gaze sweeping across the room,

And then it found mine.

Her cycs surface.

+5 Pearls

narrowed ever so slightly, a flicker of recognition-and something colder-flashing beneath the

Inside me, Selestine bristled, a low, silent snarl coiling through my veins at the memory of what she’d done to Iris-of how she’d hurt my friend.

And yet... here she stood. Untouched.

A bitter taste settled at the back of my throat.

Wealth. Status. Bloodline. They could bury rot so deep no one dared to unearth it-then dress it in power and raise it high for all to admire.

Around us, the crowd began to disperse, conversations dissolving into smaller clusters.

I turned to leave, unwilling to linger any longer in the same space as her.

“Lylah wait!”

I paused and looked back.

A girl approached me quickly, her smile light, her posture respectful.

“I’m Dahlia,” she introduced. “A junior assistant from the Modern Healing class. You’re the junior assistant from Traditional Class, right? Along with Iris Grey?”

“That’s right.”

“Good,” she said with a nod. “I’ll need both of you to meet me after your classes. The Dean assigned us to help prepare for an upcoming meeting—we’ll be hosting some... very important guests. Highly respected figures.”

“I’ll be there,” I replied, then hesitated. “But what’s the meeting about? Who’s coming? I haven’t heard anything.”

Dahlia blinked at me, visibly surprised.

“You haven’t?”

She leaned in slightly, lowering her voice.

“It’s Alpha Rowan Blackfang and Logan Silver—one of Lunaris’ most renowned tech masters.”

My breath stilled.

“I heard,” she continued, “that the Research Center rejected their proposal. And now they’re turning to collaborate with our academy instead.”

2/3

11:27 am MM

The Betrayed Princess Rising

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## Chapter 174

### Lylah's POV

A low, instinctive growl stirred in my chest at the sound of his name.

Rowan.

++5 Pearls

Just hearing it left a bitter taste on my tongue, like I'd swallowed something rotten and couldn't spit it out. And now-an alliance with Lunar Grace?

It meant his presence would also spread here. Slowly. Inevitably. Like a shadow creeping across sacred ground.

The one place that had remained untouched by him... wouldn't stay that way for long.

"Has the academy already accepted?" I asked, keeping my voice level despite the tension coiling inside me.

Dahlia nodded without hesitation. "Of course. It's not like they'd turn down figures like them." She lowered her voice slightly, as if sharing something important. "The Dean has wanted a collaboration with an Alpha for years. Alpha Ezra was always his first choice, but... we were never enough to catch his interest."

Her tone carried a hint of reluctant admiration.

"He commands the Lunaris Research Center, Lylah. If Alpha Rowan failed to secure a partnership with them..." she shrugged lightly, "it's because Alpha Ezra-refused."

My thoughts drifted-unbidden-to that evening.

When Rowan had come to me seething with fury after his meeting with Ezra.

What had happened between them?

I knew one thing with certainty-Rowan wouldn't dare cross Ezra. Not truly. Not when Ezra stood leagues above him in strength and authority now.

And yet...

A possessive instinct I hadn't known existed rose with a quiet, dangerous growl, bristling at the mere thought of Rowan standing in Ezra's space.

Rowan.

That insufferable creature.

How many times does he need to be put in his place before he leaves Ezra alone?

Evening settled swiftly over Lunar Grace, shadows stretching long as the private meeting hall was meticulously prepared-every detail set in place to receive wolves of power and rank.

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11:27 am

Chapter 174

I sat among the participants beside Dahlia, posture composed, senses alert.

When the visiting party began their presentation, my attention sharpened.

+5 Pearls

The speaker was the man I'd seen on the billboard-Logan Silver. Standing beside him were Gavriel and Cora.

Rowan himself was nowhere to be seen.

Logan began outlining the proposal, his voice smooth and precise. It didn't take long before the officials were nodding, clearly impressed.

"...and with that," Logan Silver concluded, "on behalf of Alpha Rowan, I present our newest initiative in the field of healing-CORAVIA."

A murmur stirred through the hall.

"The name sounds familiar," one of the officials remarked politely.

Gavriel stepped forward, a faint, knowing smile curving his lips. "It should. Alpha Rowan named it after the woman he loves most in this world, sir-Lady Coraline, his future Luna."

And just like that, the room shifted.

Cameras swung in unison.

All eyes landed on Cora.

“The woman who stood at Alpha Rowan’s side through every storm,” Gavriel continued, his voice smooth as it carried across the hall, “the one who wiped his blood and sweat long before Corlis Prime ever existed -long before he rose to the power he holds today.”

Cora’s smile was flawless. “Beta Gavriel, you’re too kind.”

Applause erupted across the hall, loud and unwavering.

“Lady Cora, that’s incredible!”

“No wonder Alpha Rowan loves you so much and honors you this way!”

“Next time you must tell us how the two of you raised Blackfang Pack from ashes into glory!”

The praise kept coming, wave after wave.

I sat still through it all.

Strangely... I didn’t feel anger.

Not anymore.

Only a quiet numbness settling deep in my bones.

A hollow kind of amusement flickered within me. Because this... this was almost laughable.

2/3

11:27 am M M

Chapter 174

+5 Pearls

And yet-

something else bloomed beneath it.

Pity.

Was my very presence still that much of a threat-even now? That even Rowan had chosen to bury the truth? To erase every trace of what I had given-what I had sacrificed-for him and his pack.

All of it erased.

Wiped clean like tracks beneath fresh snow.

All so he could place Cora in the light.

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3/2

The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

Chapter 175

Ezra's POV

940

+5 Pearls

I had known with absolute certainty that the moment I rejected Rowan's alliance, he would scheme something else.

What I hadn't expected was that he would set his sights on Lunar Grace. He had dared to step his claws into the very place my Luna studied.

The audacity of it ignited something dark and coiled within me.

"Alpha, please calm down for now," Damon said, voice steady, careful.

The other engineers were close enough to hear the tension, yet far enough to remain oblivious to the storm simmering in me. I could feel it, sharp and coiled, ready to strike.

"If he's reckless enough to touch Luna... then we will move." He continues.

But I couldn't wait.

The idea that Rowan Blackfang might come near her, touch her, leave even the smallest mark, was unbearable.

The beast inside me coiled tight in response to the sudden wind of danger. Every instinct screamed, every nerve burned with the need to protect our mate.

Damon began again, but I didn't hear it.

stormed from the room. My pulse pounded, heavy, relentless.

My teeth clenched as if holding back the roar that wanted to tear the world apart.

Then my phone rang.

Lylah.

I snatched it up as if it were a lifeline thrown into a raging river.

'Ezra,' her voice came soft, light as wind brushing my skin.

And for a fleeting moment, I stilled-my fury stuttering, caught off guard by the calm power in that single

word.

"Lylah," I breathed, my voice low, urgent. "Wait there. I'm coming for you."

A pause.

Then, "There's no need at all. I just finished class and I'll return home after this."

Unlike what I had expected, her voice was light, almost impossibly so. Calm. Untouched by the chaos that had set my blood alight.

11:27 am MM

Chapter 175

+5 Pearls

"How are you? Are you alright? Did something happen? Are you hurt?" I asked, my words spilling out faster than I could control.

"Ezra?" Her voice cut through the storm in my chest.

I could imagine her eyes widening in confusion.

"Yeah. I'm completely fine. Why are you suddenly asking that?"

'No, you don't, I thought, my fists clenching.

'I feel your worry, gnawing at you like a shadow. That feeling-it twists in me. Lylah. I can barely restrain myself from hunting down anyone who dares make you feel like this, anyone who would cause even the smallest tremor of fear in your chest, and ending them myself.

But I remembered.

That day at the boutique how my control had shattered. How her eyes had filled with fear at the sight of my violence, at the sight of Ragnar surging through me.

How she had flinched because she had never been a fan of that.

My gentle, soft-hearted princess.

"I miss you," she suddenly said.

The words hit me like fire and ice all at once.

The world around me slowed, the air thickened, and for a single suspended heartbeat, nothing existed but the sound of her voice and the storm raging inside me.

Rage drained from me, slowly, leaving behind a chill that settled deep in my chest, a snow-like calm that soothed the beast but did nothing to quench the longing.

"Say it again," I murmured, voice low, trembling just slightly with need.

"Okay... just don't judge me," she said softly, her voice fragile and hesitant. "I had this sudden feeling... a mixture of unease and anxiety."

She paused, and I could almost hear her heartbeat through the line.

"And my first instinct-my first thought-was to contact you. So I did. And the moment I heard your voice, everything felt better. You don't need to come here at all. Hearing your voice is enough."

I swallowed hard at her words.

Relief unfurled inside me like a storm breaking, loosening the tight coil of tension I hadn't realized had. wrapped around my chest.

My eyes burned hot, and my heart thudded with something fierce and raw-because I was the one she turned to when the world threatened to shake her. She trusted her instincts, and she trusted me.

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11:27 am MM

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Even with other options, other people she could have reached for... she chose me.

Once again, my Lysara had given me the greatest gift I could ever hope for.

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📖 1

+5 Pearls

3/3

11:27 am MM

The Betrayed Princess Rising

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3rd Person's POV

0191

+5 Pearls

Lylah had foolishly believed that once the meeting adjourned, she would be free to leave. Free to return home, to Ezra, to the quiet safety of his presence.

She was wrong.

Dean Peter of Blackmaw Pack had other plans. Attendance at the dinner was not optional, not with Alpha Rowan Blackfang and Logan Silver in the room. It was an order wrapped in politeness, and every wolf there understood the weight behind it.

Dahlia's hand tightened around Lylah's arm, silently urging her to follow-because the consequences of refusing wouldn't be light. As if the night couldn't sour any further, Lylah's phone buzzed.

A message from Damon.

'Alpha Ezra would be at the Research Center tonight. He wouldn't return home until late!

The small flicker of hope she'd been holding onto dimmed instantly.

Swallowing her disappointment, Lylah forced herself to remain.

"Attention, Alpha Rowan of Blackfang Pack."

The announcer's voice cut cleanly through the hall as the doors slid open.

Unlike earlier at the meeting, Rowan showed up this time. At his side was Cora, already changed into a lowing white dress that swayed with each step.

Her smile was proud, almost triumphant-as she walked beside him, her hand looped possessively around

his arm.

Lylah's stomach churned.

'Dahlia," she murmured, "I'll ask Dean Peter for permission to leave after the welcoming speech. I don't feel well."

But that wasn't her true reason.

Rowan had already noticed her in the crowd-and the moment his gaze found hers, a quiet dread stirred beneath Lylah's skin, her wolf restless with the certainty that something bad was coming.

'Alright," Dahlia replied under her breath. "I might do the same."

The evening unfolded with rigid formality.

One figure after another stepped onto the podium, voices blending into a meaningless hum. Plates were set, wine poured, and the scent of rich food filling the air-but Lylah had no appetite for any of it.

The moment she could, she rose from her seat.

1/3

11:27 am MM

Chapter 176

018

+5 Pearls

But before she could take more than a step-

Cora blocked her path.

“Where are you going, Lylah?” Cora asked, her voice soft and lilting, yet perfectly pitched to carry across the nearby tables. “Alpha Rowan is speaking, and you’re leaving already? That’s a little discourteous, don’t you think?”

Lylah’s gaze hardened, her wolf bristling beneath her skin.

“Don’t lecture me about discourteous,” she hissed. “Move.”

“No.” Cora folded her arms, smugness curling at her lips.

Behind them, Dahlia was still gathering her things, too far to intervene.

Cora leaned closer, her breath brushing against Lylah’s ear.

“Running won’t save you,” Cora whispered, venom sweet in her tone. “You can’t stand seeing Rowan and me together like that, can you? So close... so affectionate.” A soft, mocking laugh slipped from her lips. “Don’t worry. I’ll make sure you see everything tonight. Every moment. Until it’s carved into your mind- until you remember how I stand in the light while you fade into nothing.”

For a second, Lylah said nothing.

Then she smiled.

“The light?” Lylah’s gaze steadied on her. “You mean the one I put you in?”

Cora blinked, “What do you mean-”

“Don’t fool yourself, Cora” Lylah cut in.

She didn’t have the patience for this-not tonight, not anymore. “If it weren’t for me, Rowan would have died from the infection in his leg back then. Corlis Prime wouldn’t exist. And this project he named after you? It would be nothing but an idea buried with him.”

Her smile deepened. “All these exist now because I chose to save him. Not because you were ever worth it.”

Cora’s composure cracked.

Lylah didn't wait for a response, she stepped past her.

Enough of this. Enough of them.

All she wanted now was to leave-to return to the comfort of home, to Ezra. To his presence that brought her peace, his voice soothing away the tight knot of worry... the way everything within her calmed at the mere thought of him.

She had just reached the threshold when-

"Wait."

11:27 am M M

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+5 Pearls

A hand closed around her arm.

Lylah turned sharply.

It was Isaac Grey. Iris' brother.

Of course. Rowan and Logan's inner circle was here-Thane Blackridge, Isaac, and all of them were invited.

"Stay," Isaac said, his tone gentler than she expected-jarringly so, considering what he'd done to her the last time.

His grip on her arm remained firm, leaving no room for refusal. "There's something I need to tell you."

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3/3

11:27 am MM

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3rd Person's POV

“Please,” Isaac said, almost pleading now.

+5 Pearls

Lylah forced down the instinct to walk away. Being rude to Iris's brother would only create more trouble, and the tension humming through the ballroom already made Selestine restless beneath her skin.

So she nodded once, allowing him to lead.

Isaac guided her toward a quieter corner of the ballroom, away from the music and the other guests.

“What is it, Sir Grey?” Lylah asked calmly. “What did you want to speak about?”

Isaac released a slow breath, as though gathering the courage to face her.

“It's about yesterday... when I slapped you.” His jaw tightened with visible regret. “I'm deeply sorry, Lylah. When I heard my sister had fallen, rage clouded my mind. I couldn't think straight. I let my anger take control.”

Regret was always the last to arrive, trailing behind the damage people left in the wake of their anger. Only when the fury faded did their conscience begin its lonely howl.

Lylah inclined her head slightly. The memory barely stirred anything inside her now.

“I accept your apology.”

Isaac blinked, clearly stunned. His brows shot upward. “Really? That's... that's all? But I hurt you. You should demand something from me. Punish me. Even if you asked me to kneel and beg, I would do it.”

Lylah studied him quietly. Her wolf sensed the weight of his guilt, sharp and bitter in the air.

“You feel guilty,” she said. “That’s enough.”

His lips parted, unsure how to respond.

“Keep that feeling,” Lylah continued, her voice calm but firm. “Let it remind you to think before acting next time. So no one else becomes the victim of your recklessness.”

A faint flush crept up Isaac’s neck as he nodded, embarrassment softening his proud features.

For a moment, his gaze lingered on her.

If he were honest, Isaac had never truly noticed his sister’s friend before. But standing before her now, he found it impossible not to look.

She was so beautiful. Her eyes were mesmerizing-gentle at first glance, calm as a moonlit lake. Yet beneath that softness lived something far more powerful. Wild. The unmistakable presence of a she-wolf

who would never submit.

It stirred something within him-something curious, something he couldn’t quite name.

Chapter 177

+5 +5 Pearls

“How’s Iris doing?” Lylah asked.

Isaac’s expression brightened slightly. “Much better. I’ve hired a healer to visit every day and help her regain her strength. They say it won’t be long before she’s fully healed.”

Relief loosened the tight knot in Lylah’s chest “That’s good,”

Isaac still seemed baffled by her lack of anger.

“If you ever have time,” he added quickly, “you’re welcome to visit.”

Before Lylah could reply, another voice cut through the air.

“Isaac.”

Both of them turned as Rowan Blackfang approached. Though his expression appeared composed, the tension beneath it was unmistakable.

Rowan clasped Isaac’s shoulder in a gesture that looked friendly-yet something about it felt like a warning.

“You know Lylah?” Rowan asked.

Isaac nodded. "She's my sister's friend."

"The one who was injured?" Rowan said, glancing toward Lylah. "I'm so sorry that happened. I hope she

recovers soon."

The conversation continued between the two men, and Lylah seized the moment.

This was her chance to leave.

She turned toward the ballroom doors-

Only to find them firmly closed.

That was when a breath ghosted across the shell of her ear.

"You're not going anywhere, little moon." Rowan's voice was low, dangerously close behind her.

"My guards are outside," he added smoothly. "They won't let you slip away."

Fury flashed through Lylah's eyes as she turned toward him.

"Stay," Rowan said casually, as if the word alone should settle the matter. "You're one of my meeting participants tonight. Remain here-not for me, but to honor your Dean and Logan Silver as well." His gaze held hers, "Surely you can manage that."

Lylah stared at him, her wolf bristling with restrained anger.

She exhaled slowly.

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Chapter 177

One breath.

Then another.

Just a little longer,' she told herself.

Without another word, she turned her back on him and returned to her seat.

She didn't see the faint, sinister curve that touched Rowan's lips.

6:01

++5 Pearls

Across the table, Dahlia was happily devouring the food, seemingly having forgotten their earlier plan to

escape.

Lylah had no appetite. The heavy atmosphere in the ballroom made her stomach twist.

Instead, she reached for a drink.

A servant had just finished pouring a glass of wine.

At least this is safe, she thought.

The cool liquid slid down her throat, smooth and effortless.

But lost beneath the heavy swirl of fragrance, liquor, and dozens of wolf scents filling the air, Lylah failed to notice the truth.

That the entire bottle had already been tainted.

Drugged.

A trap carefully laid to drag her down.

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 178

3rd Person's POV

+5 Pearls

They never made it to the penthouse. Halfway through the drive, Ezra abruptly ordered Damon to stop the car. The command came sharp, instinctive—like a thread had snapped taut inside him.

Before the engine fully stilled, the Alpha was already outside.

He stood motionless for a beat, the city's restless energy humming around him. Then his gaze swept the surroundings, predatory, searching.

"Lylah..." he called, his voice low but carrying.

Behind him, Damon stepped out cautiously, unease prickling across his skin. "Alpha, Luna has likely waited for you in the penthouse now," he said. "Maybe she also just returned since she had an event at Lunar Grace."

Ezra didn't respond.

Silence fell-heavy, unnatural.

Slowly, he lifted his head and inhaled.

The air was thick with humidity, charged with the metallic tension of an approaching storm. Beneath it, faint and fractured, were scents-too many, too muddled.

But hers...

Gone.

"She isn't close," Ezra muttered.

Damon frowned. "What do you mean, Alpha?"

The answer came not in words, but in a deep, thunderous rumble that tore from Ezra's chest.

When Ezra turned, his eyes had already begun to change-silver bleeding through the dark, luminous and feral. His control was slipping, his wolf clawing toward the surface.

The shift was imminent.

The Alpha dropped to his knees.

Damon stepped back immediately, lowering his gaze as instinct demanded, giving space for the Alpha's

beast to rise.

Power erupted.

It pressed against the air, ancient and suffocating, forcing Damon down onto one knee as if gravity itself had doubled. The presence that emerged was no ordinary wolf.

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Chapter 178

Ragnar.

+5 Pearls

The great beast surged forward, claiming Ezra's body with brutal grace. Night-dark fur rippled over massive muscle, his form towering, majestic. Eyes flashing like lightning, claws gleaming like forged steel.

This was no ordinary beast. But something ancient-older than Verdanth itself drawing its first breath. The first generation, forged in blood and war. A Lycan not born, but made for conquest. A god, wearing the shape of a wolf.

'She is gone!'

Ezra's voice echoed through the mind link.

'Someone took her.'

A pause. Then, a promise wrapped in violence:

'I will find her tonight. Shift, and follow me.'

Damon swallowed hard, bowing his head.

'Yes, Alpha.'

Rowan's POV

I had already set the trap in motion. Gavriel and ten of my guards were stationed along the route Ezra would most likely take. They will block, delay, and mislead him. It wouldn't stop him forever.

But it would buy me enough time.

Enough for tonight.

Lylah lay in my arms, her body limp, her breathing soft and steady against my chest.

Gavriel's gaze flickered to her, unease shadowing his features. "Where are you taking her, Alpha?"

"To where she belongs," I answered, my voice calm. "With me. Beside me."

He hesitated. "And if Lady Cora asks where you are?"

“Tell her I had important matters to attend to.” My tone dropped, turning sharp and dangerous. “And make sure she doesn’t come looking for me.”

Gavriel stiffened.

“Tonight,” I continued, my eyes darkening as I looked down at Lylah, “nothing interrupts what I’ve planned.”

Gavriel nodded quickly. “Understood, Alpha.”

I turned away without another word and carried her to my car. Carefully, I settled her into the passenger

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Chapter 178

seat. For a brief second, I watched her.

Even unconscious, she was... radiant.

0:0

+5 Pearls

Then I moved around to the driver’s side and started the engine. The city blurred past as I drove.

Beside me, she stirred faintly—just enough to make my pulse spike-but she didn’t wake.

“Shhh...” I murmured, my voice softening despite myself. My hand drifted to rest against her thigh. “You’re safe, little moon. I’ll take care of you tonight.”

Her scent filled the car.

Floral and herbs. Soft-but laced with something intoxicating that curled through my senses and sank deep into my blood. A low growl slipped from my throat before I could stop it.

Distance suddenly felt unbearable.

I tightened my grip on the wheel, forcing control back into my hands.

Just a little longer.

Just until we arrived.

After that...

I exhaled slowly, my eyes darkening.

I wasn't sure I'd be able to hold myself back at all.

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11:27 am

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

Chapter 179

Ezra's POV

++5 Pearls

The world became nothing but wind and scent as I tore through the night at full speed. The ground barely registered beneath my claws as I followed the faint, fading trace of Lylah.

Her scent lingered like a ghost—just enough to drive me forward, not enough to ease the rising panic clawing at my chest.

By the time I reached the hotel, it stood hollow and still, its towering structure dark against the storm-heavy sky.

Empty, but not untouched.

Outside, the truth revealed itself. Blackfang Pack vehicles stood in a silent line, flanked by Rowan's guards—and his Beta.

My mate had been here.

From the shadows, Ragnar emerged into the dim light, his massive form cutting through the darkness like something born of it. The air itself seemed to recoil, thickening under the weight of his presence.

The guards stiffened-then instinctively stepped back.

“Beta!” the guard barked, urgency cutting through his voice.

Gavriel stepped forward. His eyes widened, but to his credit, he held his ground.

“Alpha Ezra of Moonclaw,” he said, his voice tight, strained under the crushing force of my aura. “You won’t find her here. Leave.”

No denial. No lies.

Just a command.

To abandon my Luna.

The audacity burned.

“She belongs to Alpha Rowan now,” Gavriel continued, more firmly this time. “He’s taken her back. Whatever bond you believe exists between you-it isn’t valid.”

A low, lethal silence followed.

‘Rowan placed you here to stop me,’ I spoke into his mind, my voice cold as steel.

I stepped forward, slow and deliberate, drawing in a deep breath.

Fear.

It rolled off them in waves-sharp, metallic, intoxicating.

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Chapter 179

D

0481

+5 Pearls

Gavriel swallowed. "Yes. And I give you options. But if you choose violence... we won't hesitate to answer."

Violence.

The word settled deep in my bones.

It had been so long.

Too long.

I flexed, claws extending, fangs pressing against my lips as something wild and ancient surged to the surface. I had buried this part of myself for years-locked it down, restrained it, denied it.

The hunger to tear. To destroy. To kill.

Restraint had never silenced it.

It had only made it stronger.

"You won't leave?" Gavriel said, his expression hardening. "Then so be it."

His body twisted-bones snapping, brown fur bursting through skin as he shifted. One by one, the guards followed.

A slow smile curved my lips.

Tonight, they were giving my beast exactly what it had been starved of.

And I would savor every second of it.

Rowan's POV

I didn't make it far before I stopped the car.

The road stretched empty ahead, hemmed in by dense forest on both sides, shadows swallowing what little light remained. The silence pressed in but it wasn't enough to quiet the storm inside me.

I had to get out. Because trapped in that enclosed space, with Lylah's scent wrapping around me-soft, intoxicating, mine-my control was already slipping.

I moved around the car and pulled Lylah into my arms. Her body rested against me, limp and unguarded. her warmth bleeding into mine.

Dangerous.

Too dangerous.

I drew a slow breath as I brushed her hair aside, exposing the delicate line of her neck. A low growl rumbled through me at the sight-soft, bare, untouched by any mark.

040

Chapter 179

+5 Peads

“How is this possible...” I muttered, disbelief sharpening every word. “He took you from me. Kept you under his roof. Bound you to him under the mating law. And yet he never marked you? What was he waiting for?”

How had he endured the desire?

The question gnawed at something dark inside me.

My gaze lingered on her exposed skin, something fierce and possessive igniting deep within my chest.

‘But it means she’s untouched. Unclaimed. Still free of another male’s mark.’

An amused, almost disbelieving laugh escaped me.

“You ran so far from me, little moon,” I murmured, my touch turning almost tender as I threaded my fingers through her hair. “And still...” My voice lowered, edged with quiet inevitability. “Selene herself dragged you back to me. You were always meant to be mine.”

I tilted her head slightly, exposing more of her throat, my breath ghosting over her skin.

“Tonight I’ll mark you.” I breathed, my voice low, “I’ll claim you in a way no one can deny. Every male, every Alpha, even him, will see exactly who you belong to.”

My hand braced against her shoulder as I lowered my head, fangs poised to strike.

When suddenly,

An explosive bang tore through the night from where I had parked the car.

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1:27 am

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

Chapter 180

3rd Person's POV

+5 Pearls

Ezra came down like a falling god-his massive wolf form crashing onto the roof of the sleek Blackfang Maybach. Metal shrieked beneath his weight, the luxury car caving in with a violent dent as if it were nothing more than paper.

Rowan froze.

Slowly, instinctively, he rose to his feet, Lylah still cradled in his arms.

But the moment his eyes met the monstrous beast before him-silver eyes burning, fur bristling with raw, ancient power-his body betrayed him.

He stepped back.

Then again.

A low growl rumbled from Ezra as he descended fully, each step deliberate.

Rowan took a third step and stilled.

Hot breath ghosted against the back of his neck. Another presence.

Damon.

Ezra's Beta had already circled behind him, cutting off his escape.

Rowan's jaw tightened, his hold on Lylah instinctively tightening

"You assume I would surrender her?" Rowan snarled. "You overestimate your power. I do not yield what is mine. She is my Luna."

'She isn't. The voice didn't come from Ezra's mouth.

It slammed directly into Rowan's mind-deep, resonant, threaded with a dominance only the strongest Alphas possessed.

Rowan's breath hitched.

"Theft has always been your specialty, hasn't it?"

"Theft?!" Rowan's voice broke into a snarl. "You're the one who took her from me, twisted her mind, drove her out of my pack! Before you ever set foot into her life, she was mine. She swore she would stand by my side, no matter what!"

His grip tightened possessively around Lylah's body.

"I love her," Rowan howled, raw and desperate. "And she loves me!"

Ezra did not answer.

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Chapter 180

140

+5 Pearls

For a long moment, he simply stood there-vast, unmoving, terrifying in his stillness.

Because his attention... was no longer on Rowan.

It was on her.

Unconscious. Pale. Too still.

And in the space of a heartbeat, the present fractured-Replaced by a memory carved in blood.

Another night.

Another life.

His mate... lying broken, crimson staining her skin.

The silence turned suffocating.

“Those are the very same lies you dared to spit back then. Ezra’s voice slid straight into Rowan’s mind again, laced with something far more dangerous than anger. You claimed it was love.”

A pause.

“Tell me, Rowan... what manner of ‘love’ drives a man to poison his woman’s people? What kind of love compels you to turn her subordinates against her, and then stand idle as they tear her apart with their own

hands?’

Rowan went still.

Completely still.

“What you felt was never love. It was possession. Obsession. An illusion you clung to because you could not bear to be denied. You never deserved Lysara.’

A beat.

And you don’t deserve Lylah. Not in your past life. Not now. Not even in whatever hell waits for you after this.’

Something in Rowan shattered.

His body locked in place as if the words had rooted him to the earth itself. It didn’t feel like another Alpha speaking to him, It felt like judgment. Like truth.

Like fate.

And then the visions came. Flashes of a past he had never seen-yet somehow knew. A woman struggling. Voices raised in betrayal.

Blood.

So much blood.

2/3

11:27 am M

Chapter 180

1:0

+5 Pearls

“No...” Rowan staggered back, his grip faltering. “No, that’s not-“The images burned through him, too real to deny, too vivid to escape.

His arms went slack.

Lylah slipped from his hold and hit the ground.

“AAARGH!!” Rowan’s scream tore through the night as his body convulsed, bones snapping and reshaping with brutal violence. The shift ripped through him like punishment itself—far more painful than anything he had ever endured.

‘I didn’t finish you back then. Ezra’s voice followed him into the agony, relentless. “You ran and hid. Died somewhere far from my reach like a coward.

Fur burst through Rowan’s skin. Claws tore into the ground as his wolf forced its way out, ragged and unsteady.

‘But this time...’ Ezra advanced, each step heavy with promise-of ruin, of vengeance long overdue. ‘I will tear your body and your soul apart until not even the air remembers you ever existed.’”

Rowan’s transformation was completed at last.

But what stood in his place was pitiful.

A shadow before Ezra’s towering, ancient beast.

On the ground, Lylah stirred.

A faint breath slipped past her lips.

“...Ezra...”

The sound was barely there. But it was enough.

Rowan’s ears twitched.

And for a fleeting second—fear eclipsed everything else. Instinct took over.

Without another thought, he ran.

He fled into the darkness, abandoning pride, abandoning the fight, choosing survival over certain destruction.

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1:27 am

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