

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

Chapter 251

3rd Person's POV

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The next day, Lylah woke engulfed in Ezra's scent-deep, grounding, unmistakably his. It clung to the sheets, to her skin, wrapping around her like an invisible embrace. For a fleeting moment, her wolf stirred in quiet contentment.

But the warmth beside her was gone. Ezra had already left. The realization settled gently, though it left a faint emptiness in its wake.

With a quiet breath, Lylah pushed herself upright.

Today, she had duties at the academy. No time to linger in softness. She bathed quickly, letting the cool water sharpen her senses, then dressed with practiced ease. By the time she stepped out, breakfast awaited her in the dining room.

Ezra already sat there. They ate together in calm silence, the kind that wasn't uncomfortable, but heavy with unspoken things.

"Ezra," Lylah began softly, setting down her utensils. "Do you know anyone in the Starfall Pack? Any contacts?"

His gaze lifted to hers, sharp but attentive. "My Pack doesn't share any alliances with them," he said. "But I know a few. Why?"

She hesitated, her fingers tightening slightly against the table. "Um... about Mina's mother. Nyx. My old horse. Eldric sold her to Starfall Pack years ago. I was wondering... could you help me find out how she is now? Whether she's still alive or not."

There was a brief pause.

Then Ezra's gaze softened completely. "I'll find out."

"Thank you, Ezra." Gratitude spread warmly through Lylah's chest.

Later, Damon drove her to the Academy of Lunar Grace.

The grounds were already crowded with students when Lylah arrived. Conversations buzzed, and laughter echoed through the open space, while beneath it all, instincts brushed against one another in an invisible dance of curiosity and quiet awareness.

It wasn't even five steps before her path was blocked.

*Lylah!"

She looked up, surprised.

"Gerald?" Recognition lit her features. Beside him stood another man-Luca, the warrior she had met during the banquet in Gerald's estate a few days ago. "What are you doing here?"

Gerald chuckled, the sound easy and familiar. "My daughter works here, so I visit often." His grin widened,

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eyes crinkling. "But now I've got another reason. Besides seeing my Gwyn, I'll be keeping an eye on you,

too."

Luca let out a quiet huff beside him. "I've been asking him to bring me here for days."

Lylah blinked, caught off guard. Her lips parted slightly, amusement flickering across her face at their unexpected protectiveness.

"Lady Lylah," Luca said, his tone turning abruptly serious, "have you eaten?"

She let out a soft laugh, warmth slipping into her voice. "I have."

'Good. Because if you haven't, I would've had words with that mate of yours," Luca added with a faint huff. 'Back when we were all still in Whitepine training camp, your mother-Lady Vala-always made sure every one of us ate until we were full."

They continued walking down the corridor as he spoke, his voice softening with memory.

Lylah's expression gentled. "Please... tell me more."

There was something about hearing her mother's name-something warm and grounding-that settled deep within her chest.

Luca smiled faintly. “We used to roast the deer we caught the night before, all of us gathered around the fire.” He let out a quiet breath, almost a laugh. “And if we didn’t manage to hunt anything...” His gaze turned fond, distant. “Lady Vala would cook for us herself. To her, we were just a bunch of half-starved pups.”

Gerald nodded. “Those were good days.”

Luca’s expression softened. “So now, I intend to return the favor. I’ll make sure her daughter lacks nothing.”

Lylah’s smile came softly, almost unconsciously. A warmth spread through her chest. She had never truly known her mother. And yet, through them, she could almost feel her.

They turned into another corridor when Lylah heard sharp laughter cut through the air.

A group of students stood ahead-watching. And among them was Soren.

Her friends laughed openly, their voices edged with something condescending. But Soren didn’t laugh. She only stared at Lylah.

“Gwyn mentioned you’re working two roles here, Lady Lylah.” Luca continued casually. “Junior assistant and Healing student at the same time?”

“Yes.”

They moved past the group, the laughter trailing behind them like something unpleasant.

Just as they reached the foot of the stairs-

“Stop!”

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Soren’s voice cut through the corridor, clean and commanding.

Lylah turned.

Soren was already walking toward her.

“We need to talk. Now.” Her tone left no room for refusal. “It’s urgent.”

“About what—”

But before Lylah could finish, Soren caught her wrist and pulled her aside, away from Gerald and Luca

When they reach a secluded corner, Soren let go, but her gaze didn't loosen-pinning Lylah in place like prey caught in a predator's focus.

"What the hell is going on inside your head, Lylah?" she snapped, her voice dropping into a harsh whisper. "Is everything Cora did to bring you down not enough? Now you're happily doing the job for her?"

Lylah frowned, caught off guard. "I don't understand what you mean, Soren."

"No?" Soren's jaw tightened, irritation flashing like a warning growl beneath her skin.

"Parading around with two males twice your age, right in front of these shallow, backstabbing wolves?" She jerked her chin toward the corridor behind them, where the whispers still slithered through the air like smoke.

Her voice dropped even lower, razor-edged now, but laced with something raw and fiercely protective.

"You're not just feeding their gossip little instincts. You just gave them exactly what they've been salivating for a fresh reason to tear you apart. And trust me... they're already circling."

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 252

Lylah's POV

Soren's presence pressed in on me-thick, suffocating, like smoke curling through the air.

Finished

It wasn't unfamiliar. I had seen this side of her before when she stood over Crystal after she lost her pup, guarding her like a predator ready to tear apart anything that came too close.

Still...

I hadn't expected that same protective instinct to turn toward me.

"You know how these students are," Soren pressed, her voice low, edged with restrained irritation. "Immature. Petty. They can't stand it when someone rises even a little above them." Her gaze sharpened. "Do you really think they're not constantly looking for your weakness? A single crack to drag your name through the mud?"

"Maybe they are."

The calmness in my own voice seemed to catch her off guard.

Soren blinked.

I tried to hold it in-I really did-but a small smile still slipped onto my lips. "I really appreciate your concern, Soren," I said softly. "But you misunderstand."

Her brows furrowed.

'Gerald and Luca were my mother's students," I continued. "To them im closer to a family. It's not like anything you think."

"What?"

I let out a chuckle. "Yes, Soren. Think about it. One of them is Gwyn's father."

I watched the shift happen.

Her composure cracked just for a second. Something flickered in her eyes.

Realization.

And then... shame.

She took a small step back.

"Hey," I said gently, "don't feel bad. I really do appreciate you warning me-"

“No.”

The word came out quickly. Too quickly.

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Soren swallowed, and just like that, the steel mask slid back into place-cold, composed, distant.

“Don’t thank me, Lylah,” she said, her tone flattening. “I’m not worried about your reputation.”

I raised a brow.

Finished

“It’s Professor Grimwood’s name I’m concerned about,” she added, lifting her chin slightly. “If you get dragged into a scandal, his name will be dragged with you.”

“Is that so?” I teased lightly.

A low, irritated growl slipped from her throat.

“Don’t twist my words,” she snapped, though there was something almost childish in the way her lips pressed together afterward. “I don’t care about you.”

“Alright alright,” I said, the smile lingering. “I won’t misunderstand.”

Her gaze narrowed, clearly unconvinced.

‘I dreamed of becoming Professor Clark Grimwood’s student my whole life,” she went on, her voice tightening. “And yet, you’re the one who has that chance.” Her eyes locked onto mine. “So use it properly. Stay out of trouble. Rumors spread like wildfire here... and the forest is already dry.”

‘I understand,” I said, nodding.

She held my gaze for another moment, before turning and walking away without another word.

I exhaled slowly. The faint smile never quite left my lips.

For all her sharp edges, Soren cared more than she would ever admit.

Turning back, I made my way toward where Gerald and Luca had been waiting. But when I arrived-

They were gone.

I blinked, scanning the area instinctively.

“Hey,” I called, stopping a nearby student. “Did you see two men here earlier? Where did they go?”

The student nodded quickly. “I think they headed toward the Treatment Center. They were asking about Professor Clark Grimwood. Someone told them he might be practicing there.”

“Thank you.”

Without another word, I turned and hurried off, my steps quickening.

A flicker of unease stirred in my chest, my wolf shifting faintly beneath my skin.

Why would Gerald and Luca want to see Professor Grimwood?

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

Chapter 253

3rd Person’s POV

Finished

Corvin Vale had just finished examining a line of ill wolves, the sharp scent of herbs and blood still lingering in the air. He stepped out of the wards, rolled his shoulders slightly, preparing to take a rare moment of rest when two unfamiliar presences approached.

Whitepine wolves.

He could tell from their scent alone-clean, steady, carrying the quiet discipline of a well-ordered pack.

They didn’t hesitate.

‘Professor Clark Grimwood.’

The name landed between them with certainty.

Vale's gaze lifted slowly.

They had mistaken him.

They were calling him by the name of his former mentor, his rival now. But he did not correct them.

You're the legendary Healing Master, aren't you?" Luca continued, his tone respectful, almost eager. "It's in honor to meet you finally. We've been searching for you."

Vale remained still, unreadable. His wolf stirred beneath his skin, alert, listening.

'Sir," Luca went on, "we heard Lady Lylah is under your guidance here. That you've been mentoring her."

A pause.

'And we're her family."

That caught his attention. Vale's eyes flickered, something colder surfacing beneath the calm. His wolf pushed forward, instincts sharpening as it assessed them-measuring strength, status, truth.

They weren't the highest ranking in the Pack. Not powerful enough to command attention through dominance alone. But there was something steady in them. Something honorable.

But, family?

Impossible.

Eldric had told him how he found Lylah as a pup and dragged her from the filth of Ironcrest's lower alleys. No lineage. No name worth claiming.

So how could these Whitepine wolves stand here now and call themselves her family?

Yet Vale said nothing.

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He had seen this before.

Relatives. Connections. Opportunists.

The intention was clear as daylight.

A bribe.

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Finished

Old habits offering tribute to secure favor, to ensure a student's name was written where it mattered. To carve a path forward with gold instead of merit.

Pathetic.

"Lady Lylah said that because of you, her time here has been... easier," Luca continued carefully. "That you've been a very good mentor to her. She's truly grateful."

Vale's expression did not change-but something in his gaze sharpened. "That girl said that?" he asked.

"Yes," Luca replied without hesitation.

'So she thinks highly of him,' Vale thought, a flicker of irritation stirring. 'Of Grimwood!'

His jaw tightened almost imperceptibly.

The first time he saw Lylah, he dismissed her outright. A stray. Forgettable. Another student who would amount to nothing.

But he had been wrong.

Her skill, her precision, the instinct in her hands surpassed most of his finest pupils. And the thought had come to him more than once-

'What if she had been mine?'

'What if it were her instead of Cora?'

The idea lingered like a thorn beneath his skin.

"And for that," Luca continued, breaking the silence, "we are deeply grateful. We owe you more than we can repay, sir." He reached into his pocket. "We came to offer our thanks. Please accept this."

He drew out a small relic-a golden wolf with ruby-set eyes, a piece steeped in the Pack's old tradition and carrying the weight of respect between those who honored one another. But stripped of sentiment, it was worth almost nothing.

The moment Vale saw it, something dark snapped.

His wolf surged forward-offended.

Insulted.

“You think you can bribe me with that trinket after I’ve mentored your kin?”

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Finished

Gerald and Luca froze. “What-?”

“You believe that the years I spent honing my mind in the Healing Arts, knowledge no book could ever contain, skill no gold can buy...” Vale’s gaze turned cold and cutting. “Can be repaid with something no more valuable than a stone?”

The air thickened.

“You insult me.”

The two men stood stunned, caught between confusion and the crushing weight of his presence.

“Gerald! Luca!”

Lylah’s voice cut through the tension like a blade, breaking the moment.

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Chapter 254

3rd Person's POV

"You were looking for Professor Grimwood, weren't you?"

Lylah said gently, stepping forward. "He isn't here. This is Professor Corvin Vale, the mentor of the Modern Healing class."

Gerald blinked, his brows knitting together. "What?"

Finished

Heat crept up his neck, embarrassment settling in. The academy was vast, he couldn't possibly remember every mentor by name.

Before anyone could recover, another presence approached. The scent came first-crushed herbs and bitter tinctures, still clinging to him from freshly treated patients, sharp and medicinal in the air.

Then the man himself stepped into view.

Clark Grimwood

So you've been pretending to be me when I'm not around," Grimwood drawled, his voice thick with arcasm. "And you didn't think to correct them when Lylah's family mistook you?" His lips curled faintly. I must have more admirers than I realized, Vale."

Corvin Vale's fist clenched at his side. The air around him tightened, his wolf stirring beneath his skin. Humiliation burns hot and sharp.

At that moment, two more figures approached.

Thane Blackridge and Cora had been passing by, only to pause at the charged tension. Their instincts lared instantly-something was wrong.

I had no intention of claiming your name," Vale said coldly, recovering quickly, his tone turning alculated. "But the moment I saw what these Whitepine wolves offered..." His gaze flicked toward Gerald ind Luca, disdain sharpening his expression. "I chose not to correct them."

A faint, cruel smile tugged at his lips.

So these are your beloved student's kin?" Vale continued, his voice laced with cold disdain. "It seems shamelessness runs thick in their blood. They tried to bribe their way into securing her standing here." His lip curled faintly, eyes glinting with scorn. "How utterly disgraceful to Whitepine's name."

Grimwood's eyes narrowed, the shift subtle-but dangerous.

"That's not true," Lylah cut in immediately.

Her voice was calm, but something steeled beneath it.

"I know Gerald and Luca. They would never do that." Her gaze lifted to Vale, unwavering. "And I know my mentor. Everyone in Lunar Grace does. No one would dare approach Professor Grimwood with such an

intention."

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A low murmur rippled through the air, instincts brushing, tension rising.

Vale's expression darkened.

"Are you so certain?" he mocked softly. "You may know your mentor... but it seems you lack the discernment to know your own blood."

His movement was sudden.

He snatched the relic from Luca's grasp.

"This," Vale said, raising it for all to see.

The small golden wolf caught the light, its ruby eyes glinting faintly-yet for all the weight in his voice, it looked so ordinary, almost unimpressive in his hand, as though it refused to become the scandal he was trying to make of it.

"This is what they offered me," he declared, voice ringing with accusation. "In exchange for ensuring your name shines within this academy, Lylah. This is your family's intention."

Silence followed.

Grimwood's gaze fixed on the relic.

For a moment, he said nothing.

Then-

He laughed.

Not light or polite. A sharp, cutting laugh like a blade drawn across silence.

‘An old token,’ he murmured, stepping closer. “A normal symbol of honor or respect.” His eyes lifted, locking onto Vale. “And you call it a bribe?”

A slow smile spread across his face.

*If your mind is so thoroughly stained that you mistake tradition for corruption, then by all means-hand it to me. I’ll gladly keep it in my study and laugh whenever I remember there’s someone foolish enough to misjudge honor.”

The shift in the air was immediate. Then Grimwood’s expression sharpened.

“Though,” he added, almost lazily, “your assumption does raise an interesting question. One does not see bribery in everything... unless one is accustomed to accepting it, Vale.”

The words landed like a strike.

Behind him, Cora’s face drained of color.

Lylah stood still, watching it all unfold.

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Something hot and sharp curled in her chest. Her wolf stirred, restless beneath her skin.

Then she stepped forward.

Finished

“Professor Vale,” she said, her voice edged with unmistakable irritation, “you’ve accused Gerald and Luca- my elders. And I don’t take that lightly.”

Her gaze locked onto his, burning with quiet rage.

“I want an apology.”

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

Chapter 255

Cora's POV

"I want an apology."

The demand cut clean through the air.

I stood frozen.

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Finished

No one spoke to Professor Vale like that. No one dared. And yet Lylah did. Her voice steady, her gaze steel as she placed herself between him and those two Whitepine wolves she so boldly claimed as family.

"Me?" Professor Vale drawled, the sound low, dangerous. "Apologize to them?"

"You were in the wrong this time," Lylah replied without hesitation. "What you just did doesn't reflect the honor expected of a Lunar Grace mentor. I asked only for an apology before this matter is forced into the hands of the academy officials."

"You've grown so insolent," Vale said, his eyes narrowing. "And now Grimwood shields you, makes you believe you're untouchable."

‘I’m not joking, Professor Vale,” she returned, her voice dropping, quieter but sharper-like a blade drawn cross bone. “If you push this further, the consequences will reach the MDT project and every one of us. One apology is all that’s needed.”

Something flickered in Professor Vale’s eyes as he stared at Lylah-but it wasn’t anger. A man like him. Iways kept his admiration leashed. And yet... the glint I saw now felt dangerously close to it.

Quickly, Vale,” Professor Grimwood cut in.

Silence stretched. The tension coiled thick, primal, pressing against skin and instinct alike.

Then,

That was my mistake.” My mentor’s voice was heavy, as though the words themselves resisted him. “It was careless of me to make such an accusation. I apologize to both of you.”

The two Whitepine wolves seemed satisfied, their tension easing.

Professor Vale’s expression darkened like a gathering storm. Without another word, he turned to leave.

‘Vale.”

But Grimwood’s voice stopped him cold.

“And don’t you dare turn today into quiet revenge,” he added, each word deliberate. “You will judge Lylah’s MDT project score with objectivity. Nothing less.”

There was something almost protective in his tone. Not the distant concern of a mentor, but something closer. Like family.

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“We’ll see.”

And then my mentor was gone.

Only then did I move.

I seized Thane's arm and pulled him with me, eager to put distance between us and the suffocating weight of what had just unfolded.

The moment we crossed into the Modern Healing building, the tension shifted-but not enough.

Thane slowed.

"Cora," he murmured, glancing back toward the lawn, his senses clearly still tethered to the scene we'd left behind. "Do you know those two Whitepine wolves Lylah claimed as her family?"

My pulse spiked.

"No." I answered, too quickly.

His frown deepened, suspicion threading his scent. "Are you sure? One of them feels familiar. I swear I've seen him before."

Cold sweat slid down my temple, but I forced my expression into calm indifference, every instinct drilled into control.

"Maybe they're just companions she's grown very close to," I said lightly. "Back in Ironcrest and Blackfang, she didn't know anyone from Whitepine. I'm sure she only met them here."

I tugged him forward before he could linger on the thought. "Come on. We're already late to meet Professor Vale."

After a moment, he relented.

But my steps faltered once we were out of sight. My pulse thundered in my ears-loud, frantic, betraying the fear clawing up my spine.

Whitepine.

The same pack as Jax and Vala Stillward. A place I would never want to set foot in again. Too many risks. Too many ghosts with teeth. If someone from my past started digging-if they unearthed the truth I had buried so deep...

A chill sank deep into my bones.

'Have they already found out?'

'Do they know who Lylah really is?'

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

Chapter 256

3rd Person's POV

The moment Thane Blackridge pushed open the door to Vale's study, the scent of fury hit him.

Finished

Broken glass littered the floor, catching the dim light like shards of ice. A once-carefully prepared vial lay shattered, its contents seeping into the cracks of the wooden boards, releasing the bitter, herbal tang of a ruined potion. Deep claw marks gouged across the surface of the desk, as though something feral had fought to break free from within the man himself.

Behind it stood Professor Vale, his aura still simmering after the confrontation with Gerald and Luca earlier.

"Apologize. We have come at a poor time, sir," Thane said quietly, though he stepped inside regardless, subtly guiding Cora in behind him.

Vale turned.

"No," he said. "Come in. I've been expecting you."

Cora felt that familiar bitter twist in her chest. The difference in Vale's tone, his restraint, it was never like this with others especially when he was mad. But with Thane, he always measured.

Even now, there was something in Vale's gaze as it settled on him—approval, sharp and gleaming. As if Thane remained what he had always been in the old wolf's eyes:

His best student.

Vale exhaled slowly, tension still coiled in his frame. "I've been irritated after that insolent girl, Grimwood's student, dared to humiliate me before those Whitepine wolves."

A faint snarl edged his words before he forced them down.

‘But that’s not our concern right now. We have something far more important to discuss, right? About the selection of this year’s best student.’

It was more than a simple award. The chosen student would gain undeniable advantages: a smoother path into their future, and a name that would spread far beyond Lunar Grace’s wall’s

“Yes, sir,” Thane replied evenly.

Vale studied him for a moment, then gave a short, humorless scoff. “Surely you already know my decision. The process hasn’t changed.” His eyes narrowed slightly. “And I trust you won’t disappoint me this year either.”

Thane blinked, just once. “Sir, are you saying you’ve already chosen me?”

Vale’s lips thinned.

“Do I have better options?” The words landed with quiet cruelty. “The quality of students under me has declined, I mentored so many fools lately.” A flicker of disdain crossed his expression. “Your cousin might

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have been worth consideration, but I dismissed him. I will not take him back.”

A brief silence followed.

Finished

Thane’s jaw tightened almost imperceptibly at the mention of Alexander. A wasted talent-undone by

arrogance.

Cora, however, felt as though the ground had shifted beneath her feet.

“Professor Vale...” she began, her voice unsteady despite her effort to steady it. “You still have options.” She stepped forward, something desperate flickering behind her eyes. “You have me. Have you forgotten that?”

Vale’s gaze snapped to her.

“You?” he echoed, the word laced with open scorn. “You’re not even better than Lylah.”

Cora’s breath caught, her eyes widening in disbelief.

Never had he spoken to her like this before.

Not with such open contempt.

A thought flashed inside Cora's head. Was it because the influence of Eldric-the bribes that had shielded her-had finally worn thin?

Still, she refused to back down.

'I am better than her,' Cora insisted, though the desperation in her voice betrayed her. "I can prove it. I was the top student at Ironcrest College. You only need to give me a chance!"

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

Chapter 257

3rd Person's POV

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Finished

Rage burned inside Cora like live embers, searing through her veins. Hearing Professor Vale speak of Lylah with such approval felt like claws dragging across an old wound-one that had never truly healed- only to be split open again and salted without mercy.

Nothing stoked her fury more than comparison.

Especially to someone she had always dismissed as a flawed, insignificant thing.

“Just one chance,” Cora said, her voice tight. “That’s all I need. I won’t disappoint you. I will become your best student and finest Healer in the future. My name will be known across Verdanth, and you will be proud of me.”

For a brief moment, silence settled.

A flicker of pity stirred within Thane Blackridge.

He stepped closer, placing a steadying hand on her arm.

“Cora is right, Professor,” He said calmly. “She’s still new compared to the others. You haven’t seen the extent of her skills yet. She deserves a chance to prove herself.”

Vale’s expression hardened, irritation still lingering like a storm refusing to pass.

A long pause stretched between them before Vale finally exhaled.

‘One chance,” he said at last. “Fine. I will give you that. But if you fail to meet even a fraction of my expectations-”

‘I won’t.” Cora cut him off. “I will prove it,” she swore. “I won’t fall short.”

But the fire driving her resolve was not ambition. Not growth. Not even the desire to master her craft.

It was something far more dangerous.

Validation.

The need to stand above Lylah-to eclipse her completely, until her name cast no shadow at all.

And Cora would not rest until it was done.

Along corridors of the Traditional Healing wing, the air carried the faint scent of dried herbs. Two wolves moved through the dimming light-Gerald and Luca.

Luca’s steps were quick, restless with intent as he reached out and tugged lightly at Gerald’s arm. “That pup, the Blackridge heir. The one Jax saved years ago,” he said in a low voice. “He studies here too. I’ve been wanting to speak with him. Come, we should find him and tell him about Lady Lylah.”

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Finished

Gerald stopped.

“No.”

The single word was firm enough to halt Luca mid-step.

“I don’t agree with your plan,” Gerald continued.

Luca frowned. “What? He should know Jax’s real daughter is here!”

“He’s not a pup anymore,” Gerald said, turning to face him fully. “Thane Blackridge is far from insignificant now. He’s the heir of Blackridge and from what Gwyn told me, one of the top students under that dipshit Vale.”

His gaze sharpened.

“If we approach him and throw Lylah’s name in his face, what do you think he’ll assume?” Gerald asked. “He’ll think we’re trying to use his influence to raise her standing here.”

Luca hesitated.

“Are you stupid? That would affect Lylah’s name among her friends as well.” Gerald added quickly. “Don’t forget our priority is to protect her-not make things harder for her.”

The truth of it settled heavily between them.

After a moment, Luca exhaled and gave a reluctant nod.

“...You’re right.”

The sun dipped low in the western sky, spilling molten amber across the academy grounds.

A chill settled into the air, laced with the crisp scent of pine and earth. As Lylah stepped beyond the gates, the evening wind brushed against her skin,

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2/2

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 258

Lylah's POV

Finished

I told Damon not to pick me up today. I needed the quiet-the kind that only came when I walked alone, with nothing but the wind and my own thoughts for company. Ahead, a small bazaar had sprung to life. Lanterns glowed in warm hues, and the air carried a mix of scents: polished wood, metal, herbs and something faintly enchanted.

I drifted toward it without thinking.

Stalls lined the narrow road near Lunar Grace, filled with delicate trinkets that shimmered under flickering light. My gaze moved over them, curious, until it settled on one particular table.

Bracelets.

My steps slowed.

That day, before our quiet mating vows, Ezra had given me a bracelet along with our mating ring. And now, I wanted to give him something in return.

After a while of searching, running my fingers over each piece, I finally found the one that felt right. I paid for it, holding it close for a brief moment, as if sealing the choice, before tucking it away carefully.

I was just about to leave when my phone rang.

I answered without checking.

‘Lylah!’

I winced, pulling the phone slightly away from my ear. “You nearly deafened me, Tiara. What is it?” I sighed. “New gossip from Blackfang?”

‘No. This is much better!’ Her voice burst through the line, bright and unrestrained. “You won’t believe it. You’re about to see your most beautiful best friend in person very soon!”

I blinked. “Wait... you’re coming here?”

“Yes!” she laughed. “Which means we’re spending the night of renewal together. I couldn’t take that suffocating pack anymore, so I came to Lunar. I’ll see you soon!”

A smile broke across my face before I could stop it. “Then I’ll pick you up when you arrive.”

Her excitement lingered even after the call ended, warming something inside me.

Even when Rowan was there, Blackfang’s system had always been steeped in chaos. His council was nothing more than a circle of power-hungry wolves, caring for nothing but gold and influence, blind to the suffering beneath their rule. Now that their Alpha had been gone for so long, I could only imagine how much worse it had become for the pack members.

At least Tiara had found a way out.

1/2

12:54 pm Pppp.

Chapter 258

Finished

I made my way back to the penthouse, Lunar felt quieter now, the night settling in like a living thing.

When I stepped inside, Ezra was just emerging from his study, phone still in hand.

White shirt clung to his frame, outlining the strength beneath.

“Ezra!” I called, unable to hide my excitement as I moved toward him. “I have news. Tiara’s coming here.”

“Really?” A small, genuine smile touched his lips. “When does she arrive? I’ll have Damon pick her up and arrange for someone to prepare the unit below ours for her stay.”

I paused, surprised.

“She can stay here?” I asked, warmth tightening in my chest. “I thought you didn’t allow strangers into your space.”

His gaze softened slightly. “Strangers, no. But Tiara Ashcroft isn’t a stranger, is she?” he said. “She’s your closest friend. She stood by you in Blackfang and even before that. She’s always been good to you.”

There was something deeper beneath his words.

“As your mate, I owe her my thanks.”

I smiled at that.

But then, a faint crease formed between my brows.

Always? Before?

Did he mean back when I was still at Ironcrest?

“But I only met Tiara after I moved to Blackfang, Ezra,” I correct him gently, studying him more closely. “What do you mean by ‘before’?”

For a fraction of a second-

Something shifted.

A flicker in his eyes. Subtle, but unmistakable. Like a wolf caught off guard, instincts faltering where they never should.

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2/2

12:54 pm P p p p.

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

Chapter 259

3rd Person’s POV

Damn it. The curse echoed sharply through Ezra’s mind.

5" |

Finished

He had slipped. Words shaped by memories that did not belong to this life had nearly surfaced, fragments of a past granted by Selene... a past that had been stripped from Lylah's memory.

Now she was looking at him with confusion.

"I mean..." Ezra recovered quickly, smoothing his tone. "Yes. I assumed you knew Tiara before you moved to Blackfang."

The lie came easily.

"I hope so too," Lylah sighed softly. "Having someone like Tiara is a blessing. When I first met her, she was like a star that never dimmed." A faint smile touched her lips. "Her light made my early days in Blackfang more bearable."

Ezra returned the smile, though something deeper stirred behind it.

He knew that well.

In another lifetime, when Tiara had been Tatiana, she was the most loyal companion to Lysara. Even when the treacherous Carmen had poisoned the heart of the Lunareth Kingdom against her, Tatiana had stood firm, refusing to abandon her.

And then there was Dorian... now Damon. His Beta.

Ezra's thoughts darkened with quiet amusement.

Dorian and Tatiana had been like fire and steel-clashing, relentless. They could barely stand each other, yet neither could walk away.

Now Selene crossed their paths again in this life. Ezra wondered what chaos would follow.

Midnight draped over Lunaris like black velvet when Tiara stepped out of the station, fatigue still clung to her bones-but the moment her feet touched the city streets, something inside her awakened.

The air pulsed.

Alive.

Even at this hour, Lunaris thrummed with energy.

"I won't call Lylah and bother her," Tiara murmured to herself. "I already booked a hotel after all."

She hailed a taxi, and before long, Tiara arrived at her hotel.

12:54 pm

Chapter 259

But rest did not claim her.

Finished

Even after washing away the dust of travel, she stood before the mirror, eyes glinting with something untamed. She slipped into a low-cut dress that shimmered like black moon silk.

A smile curved her lips.

“If nana saw me like this,” she mused, “she’d have my head on a spike.” A soft laugh followed. “Sorry, Nana... this is who I’ve always been. Blackfang just kept it caged for too long.”

Stepping back into the night, Tiara let her instincts guide her.

The city answered. Blackfang was a big Pack-but lifeless. Its wealth was all funneled into Rowan’s ambitions, leaving little behind for its members.

Lunaris, however...

This was a dream.

Light spilled from every corner, music pulsed through the streets, and the air itself carried the intoxicating blend of desire, pheromones, and the low, instinctive hum of wolves unrestrained.

Drawn by it, Tiara stepped into one of the bars, confidence draped over her like armor.

Her reddish-brown hair fell in soft waves, catching the dim light as she moved.

“Gorgeous lady,” a server greeted smoothly, his gaze lingering. “I haven’t seen you before. Are you new in Lunaris?”

“I am,” Tiara replied, idly twirling a strand of her hair.

“And which pack do you belong to?”

She gave a soft, dismissive smile. “Somewhere far too dull for your interest, darling. Luckily, I’m free of it now.” Her eyes gleamed. “Let’s celebrate that. Menu, please?”\

“Right away!”

As she waited, her gaze wandered.

The space was dim, saturated with heat and tension. Soft growls threaded through laughter, bodies moved too close, and the air itself felt thick with feral instinct barely held in check.

Then...

Her eyes caught on someone.

In the shadowed corner, a figure lounged against the couch, a glass resting loosely in his hand.
Recognition

flickered.

Tiara's eyes narrowed slightly.

"Isn't that the irritating male who showed up at my house that day? The Beta of Moonclaw?"

12:54 pm P PPP.

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

Chapter 260

Tiara's POV

Finished

I had only seen him once-barely enough to form any real impression. And yet for reasons I couldn't explain, my wolf had taken notice. More than notice. It lingered on him. Drawn in a way that unsettled

We weren't the type to be easily captivated by looks or status. Males like that were everywhere, predictable in their charm, forgettable in the end. But Damon... he was different. A discovery I hadn't expected in the twenty-fourth moon cycle of my life.

"Careful, lady," a drunken voice slurred beside me, followed by a low, knowing chuckle. "You're staring like you want to drag him somewhere private and devour him whole."

I didn't bother looking at him.

“He’s handsome, isn’t he?” the man continued. “Beta blood. From a noble family in Moonclaw. That alone makes him a prize in the eyes of many females. But don’t be fooled-he plays your kind like dolls.”

He leaned closer, his breath sour against my ear. “And they say his strength rivals most Alphas. With the leadership in the Moonclaw Pack growing... uncertain lately, he might claim the Alpha’s crown himself.”

I scoffed softly.

Damon? Alpha? That’s ridiculous.

Aloud, I said, “What about Alpha Ezra? Everyone knows he’s irreplaceable.”

The man snorted. “Ah, that’s the interesting part. A friend of mine from Moonclaw says their Alpha has all but abandoned the pack. Plenty of wolves aren’t happy about it.”

A low, displeased growl stirred in my chest.

I hated people who spoke like they knew everything.

“Ruling from afar doesn’t mean abandonment,” I shot back sharply, turning to fix him with a cold glare. “And I know someone far closer to Alpha Ezra than your so-called friend. He’s fine. And his pack isn’t looking to replace him.”

Without waiting for a response, I turned and walked away, ignoring the scoff that followed behind me.

I took a seat at the bar instead, resting my elbows lightly against the counter.

My gaze drifted-unwillingly, instinctively-back toward the shadowed corner where Damon sat.

Still.

Quiet.

Dangerously composed.

1/2

Chapter 260

“A long night, huh?” a woman’s voice slipped in beside me.

I glanced over.

Finished

She was striking. With sand blonde hair and a dress cut low enough to draw attention without asking for it.

“Is my order ready?” she asked the bartender casually. “I need it now.”

The bartender didn’t argue. He slid a glass toward her.

She took it and as she turned, something caught my eye. A small vial, drawn swiftly from her pocket. With subtle motion, she slipped a few drops into the drink.

For a moment, I thought I had imagined it.

Then she glanced at me-and smirked.

“Bold stare,” she said coolly. “Confused, are you, pup?” Her tone hardened just enough to bite. “This place is mine. Best keep that mouth of yours shut.”

And just like that, she walked away.

I blinked, watching her go.

“People just do that out in the open now?” I murmured.

The bartender sighed under his breath. “That’s Beatrix, she’s one of the biggest investors in this place. No one here is going to stop her.”

I followed her with my eyes.

The sway of her hips was deliberate, confident. The glass remained steady in her hand as she crossed the dim-lit floor, weaving through bodies and shadows with purpose.

Straight toward-

My breath stilled slightly.

Toward Beta Damon.

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12:54 pm p p pp.

pppp

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