

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

Chapter 291

3rd Person's POV

"For me?" Lylah blinked, momentarily at a loss.

Finished

Zyrelle's parents... had sent her a gift? More astonishing, they knew of her existence? A quiet warmth spread through her chest, equal parts disbelief and honor.

Within the tangled hierarchy of Ezra's bloodlines, Zyrelle's parents were among the few who could truly be called family. Unlike the other elders, who circled power like predators scenting blood, they had never sought to ingratiate themselves with Ezra-nor to undermine him for the Alpha crown. Since Vargan's retirement, they had carried much of Moonclaw's affairs upon their shoulders, moving tirelessly between packs, their loyalty spoken more through action than presence.

"Are you not pleased?" Vargan's voice cut gently through her thoughts.

"No-no, it's not that!" Lylah shook her head. "I'm truly happy, Grandpa. Please send them my thanks. I feel so grateful."

Vargan's sharp, age-lined gaze softened. "They are not like the others you saw yesterday, my dear. Zyrelle's father is a man of unwavering loyalty to Ezra's father, and now to Ezra himself. There is no hidden weight behind this offering."

He paused, glancing briefly at the box resting on his desk.

"Their duties keep them moving from one Pack to another. They cannot always return for gatherings, but they have never failed to remember us."

"Actually," a smooth voice interjected, laced with quiet amusement, "this time, they did."

Both Lylah and Vargan turned.

Zyrelle stood framed in the doorway. There was something different in her expression today-a playful glint, subtle yet unmistakable, like a black fox hiding mischief behind elegance.

"I reminded them," she continued, stepping inside. "Last night, I told them it would be improper not to send something for Ezra and for the new Luna of Moonclaw."

Vargan's brows lifted in clear surprise before a deep, pleased chuckle rumbled in his chest.

He beckoned her closer and pressed a firm kiss to the crown of her head.

"Well then, what am I to say, if not that I'm proud of you?" he said warmly. "You have truly outgrown pouting over your cousin getting all the gifts."

"Grandpa!"

A faint flush rose to Zyrelle's cheeks, her composure cracking just enough to reveal the girl she once had

been.

The sight drew a soft laugh from Lylah.

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Finished

So this poised, graceful lady-this refined princess of Moonclaw-had once been a sulking pup, bristling with jealousy over Ezra?

The image lingered, oddly endearing.

By evening, Moonclaw estate had transformed. Lanterns burned low and golden across the sprawling lawn, their light swaying in the cool night air. The scent of pine, earth, and distant wildlands lingered beneath the surface. Wolves moved through the gathering in quiet currents, their instincts sharper, their senses alive.

When night fully settled, Ezra's family gathered beneath the open sky.

It was then that Lylah's phone rang.

Tiara.

A flicker of hesitation crossed her face. Zyrelle and Damon stood nearby. Accepting the call felt oddly intrusive.

"Just answer it," Ezra murmured, his voice low but firm.

Lylah nodded and lifted the phone to her ear.

"Tiara? Where are you?" she asked, wincing slightly. "I can barely hear you."

"Lylah!" Tiara's voice burst through, loud and breathless, layered with distant music and chaos. "Sorry! I just called to wish you a happy new moon!"

Lylah blinked, "It's not even midnight yet..."

“I know, I know!” Tiara rushed on. “But what if I forget later? I’m really busy right now.”

“Busy?” Lylah frowned faintly. “Are you out somewhere? Partying?”

Around her, most faces remained composed-unbothered, indifferent. All except one.

Damon.

The moment Tiara’s voice carried through the speaker, something in him stilled. Recognition struck instantly, sharp as a scent caught on the wind. Beneath the laughter and clamor, he heard it clearly-the untamed edge in her tone, the reckless pulse of a she-wolf loose in a crowded bar.

His jaw tightened.

“That is dangerous.”

His low voice cut through the air, drawing startled glances from those nearby.

“It is the night of the new moon,” he continued, his gaze darkening. “Instincts run wild. For a she-wolf to be out alone celebrating, no less...”

He exhaled sharply, something dangerously close to possessiveness threading his tone.

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13:01 Thu, Apr 16 MOD.

Chapter 291

“She should know better!”

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Finished

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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3rd Person's POV

"What?" Lylah turned sharply toward Damon just as the call with Tiara ended.

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Finished

The words she'd heard hadn't been imagined-Ezra's Beta had spoken loudly enough to draw the attention of those nearby. "You're talking about Tiara?"

"Who else?" Damon's voice carried a rough edge now, something instinctive beneath the surface. "She's old enough to think for herself. She chose to be out alone tonight..." His jaw tightened. "It isn't safe. But I know she won't listen. She's stubborn as hell."

"Damon," Lylah said slowly, studying him, "you don't even know her. How can you say that with such certainty?"

"I-

He faltered.

For a fleeting moment, the sharp, sea-blue clarity in his eyes fractured. Something uncertain flickered there -unease, or perhaps something deeper. He broke eye contact first.

"I don't know," he muttered. "Excuse me. I should... check on the fireworks."

Before anyone could stop him, he rose and strode off, too quickly to be casual, too abruptly to be anything but retreat. Like prey slipping from a hunter's gaze, or a wolf fleeing a truth it wasn't ready to face.

Lylah frowned after him, suspicion curling quietly in her chest.

Beside her, Zyrelle lifted her glass, amusement dancing like moonlight across her expression as she took a slow sip of wine. "Interesting."

"What was that about?" Lylah asked, turning to Ezra.

Ezra's gaze lingered briefly in the direction Damon had gone, his expression unreadable. "No idea," he said at last. "But if you're curious, I can have someone look into it."

“I volunteer,” Zyrelle chimed lightly, a playful glint flashing in her eyes.

Lylah blinked. “You’re going to have your Beta followed? What if he gets angry?”

Ezra’s lips curved faintly, something wolfish in the gesture. “He might,” he admitted. “But satisfying my mate’s curiosity matters more.”

Zyrelle rolled her eyes, though the corner of her mouth twitched.

There it was again-that change in Ezra.

Once, he had been iron and frost.

Now he spoke with a softness no one had ever heard before, his voice gentled, his edges tempered. They said the right flame could bend even the hardest steel. Watching him now, Zyrelle found herself almost

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convinced.

It seemed Ezra had finally met his flame.

The celebration carried on, swelling into the night.

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Finished

From the hilltop estate, Moonclaw Pack stretched beneath them, alive and breathing. Lanterns from the pack house flickered like earthbound stars, and beyond them, the pack members moved in restless currents. The new moon stirred something primal in the air. Even without its light, its pull was undeniable-instincts sharpened, senses heightened, the wolf beneath the skin pacing, alert:

Then the fireworks began.

They burst across the sky in brilliant cascades of gold and crimson, their echoes rolling over the forested lands like distant thunder. Cheers rose from below, wild and unrestrained, carried on the night wind. Lylah’s gaze drifted across the gathering until it settled on a familiar figure.

Vargan.

The old wolf stood among others, there was a rare lightness in him tonight-a quiet joy that softened the lines of age. Draped over his shoulders was the wool shawl Lylah had given him.

“Ezra,” she murmured, a smile blooming, “Grandpa’s wearing my gift.

“Of course he is. Didn’t I tell you? He’d treasure anything you gave him

Lylah’s smile lingered... then slowly faded into thought.

“I just remembered something,” she said. “There’s someone else I wanted to give a gift to. An elder.”

Ezra’s expression darkened, something far more primal slipping beneath the surface. “Who? Eldric?” The name left his lips like something foul, laced with open contempt. “I don’t like the idea of you going all the way to Ironcrest for him-let alone offering him anything of yours.”

A faint growl lingered in his chest, barely restrained.

“That wretched old wolf has taken more than he ever deserved,” he continued, colder now, sharper. “He’s not worthy of your kindness anymore.”

“No,” Lylah said gently, shaking her head. “Not him. But Commander Ivar of Whitepine.”

The name seemed to settle into the air with quiet weight.

“He’s retired now,” she went on. “And he lives alone. I don’t know if he even has anyone to share the new moon celebration with.” Her fingers curled lightly at her side. “Can we visit him tomorrow?”

There it was again-that instinct that defined her.

Always looking outward. Always caring.

Ezra studied her for a moment, something unreadable passing through his gaze. Then it softened.

“Of course,” he said. He took her hand, lifting it to his lips, pressing a kiss against her skin. “Your wish is my command.”

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13:01 Thu, Apr 16 MOD

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 293

Cora's POV

Finished

Whitepine greeted us beneath a heavy, colorless sky, the air sharp with cold that bit through fabric and skin alike. The estate sat hidden deep within the woods, half-swallowed by towering pines and silence, more a relic than a home.

I walked beside Rowan toward the entrance, my senses drawn taut. Beneath my skin, my wolf stirred, its hackles rising with a low, instinctive warning that things might not go the way I planned.

Still... bringing him here was long overdue.

"Whose residence is this?" Rowan's voice cut through the stillness. His expression remained tight, skepticism etched into every line of his face. "Who exactly are you bringing me to meet? Someone who lives like this can't possibly have anything to do with me."

"You'll see," I replied, offering nothing more.

Before he could press further, the front door swung open.

A maid stepped out to greet us, her eyes lighting with immediate recognition. Of course, she knew me-I had walked these halls before, long before I ever found my way back to Ironcrest and my true parents.

"Lady Cora," she said with a respectful bow. "Happy Renewal. Welcome

"I'm here to see Commander Ivar." I placed the box firmly into her hands. "This is for him, a gift for the New Moon celebration. Make sure he receives it immediately. And be careful with it," I added sharply. "It's a very expensive diamond watch."

The maid hesitated.

My patience snapped. "Well? You heard me, didn't you?"

She lowered her gaze. "Forgive me, Lady Cora... but since the Commander retired, he no longer accepts gifts of such value. He avoids anything that could be mistaken for obligation, or worse, bribery. If you wish to offer him something... a simple token, or food, would be more appropriate."

My wolf surged, bristling at the implication.

"You think I'm a fool?" My voice dropped, edged with steel. "The legendary war commander of Whitepine, and you expect me to bring him scraps like some common visitor?" I stepped closer, my

presence pressing against hers. “He may refuse strangers, but I am not one. He raised me under his protection. He cares for me. He loves me.”

I lifted my chin, unyielding. “He would never turn me away and hurt me.”

The maid fell silent.

I didn’t wait for another word. Dismissing her entirely, I brushed past her and stepped inside.

The house feels empty.

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Finished

“So this is Ivar the Fearless’s home?” Rowan’s tone shifted instantly, the tension in him dissolving into something brighter-almost eager. “Cora... you know him?”

He turned to me, disbelief giving way to excitement. “Why would you keep that from me all this time? Do you have any idea who he is? He’s a legend. I’ve spent years trying to earn even a shred of his attention, his respect.”

“If I’d known you had a connection...” he said, voice lowering, more calculated now, “I wouldn’t have wasted my time chasing shadows.”

I gave him a small, controlled smile.

“I knew him long before I found my real parents,” I said. “You’re my mate. Of course, I would bring you to meet him.” I held his gaze. “He’ll be glad to see you.”

The words left my lips easily.

Too easily.

But beneath the surface, my wolf shifted again—restless, uneasy.

Because I remembered.

I remembered the way Commander Ivar had spoken Rowan’s name the last time I stood in this house. And there had been no warmth in it.

No pride.

Only something cold... and dangerously close to disdain.

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

Chapter 294

3rd Person's POV

40

Finished

The same morning unfolded beneath a veil of cold, drifting mist when Lylah and Ezra arrived at Ivar's

estate.

A lone car rested on the frost-bitten lawn-sleek, expensive, yet stripped of any crest or insignia. The sight alone was enough to make Lylah hesitate, her steps slowing as a quiet unease coiled around her chest.

If Commander Ivar already had guests, the last thing she wanted was to intrude upon them.

"Welcome please, don't hesitate." The maid emerged onto the terrace just then, her voice warm despite the chill. Her eyes widened briefly at the sight of Lylah-drawn to her beauty-but the moment her gaze shifted to Ezra, it dropped at once.

His Alpha aura pressed outward, unseen yet undeniable, like a storm held beneath skin. It stirred something primal, an instinct older than thought, and the maid bowed without meaning to.

"Is Commander Ivar receiving guests?" Lylah asked gently. "I came to wish him well for the New Moon celebration. But if this isn't a good time, we can return another day."

“Sadly yes, he is receiving visitors now,” the maid admitted, her voice softening. “And he doesn’t often welcome many at once.”

Relief flickered faintly across Lylah’s face, though it carried a quiet sadness. “That’s fine. We’ll come back another time.”

But the maid noticed the way her smile didn’t quite reach her eyes, the way her fingers curled faintly at her side.

“Please don’t go just yet, lady” she said quickly. “I can ask him first. And...” Her gaze shifted to the box in Lylah’s hands. “You brought something for him, didn’t you?”

Lylah brightened slightly and opened it without hesitation.

Inside lay a shawl. Soft and thickly woven, the kind that promised/warmth even against the harshest winter winds.

“Oh...this is lovely,” the maid murmured, genuinely touched. “So warm. He’ll appreciate this.”

“I hope so,” Lylah said.

The maid nodded and accepted it without pause. Unlike certain extravagant offerings, this carried no weight of obligation, only quiet thoughtfulness. Something the old commander might actually accept. “Please wait here, I’ll bring it to him.”

The study smelled faintly of aged wood and smoke, Ivar stood before the tall window, his back turned, broad shoulders still as stone. Beyond the glass, the mist clung low to the earth, weaving through the towering pines like restless spirits.

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Finished

“Sir,” the maid began carefully, stepping inside. “There are additional guests. Would you like me to invite them in to wait with Lady Cora and Alpha Rowan, or have them remain outside?”

“What did they demand?” Ivar asked, his voice low, edged with quiet curiosity.

“Nothing, sir,” she replied. “The young lady offered to leave if you were busy. They didn’t insist. They’re just waiting.”

There was a pause.

Slowly, Ivar's sharp eyes settled on the pair standing beyond the terrace.

The man stood tall, power coiled beneath his skin like a leashed beast-the unmistakable dominance of an Alpha who did not need to prove his strength for it to be felt. Beside him, the woman adjusted a shawl around his shoulders.

"I think..." Ivar said at last, voice quieter now, "I'll let them wait."

Fifteen minutes passed.

Then thirty.

An hour.

Time stretched thin in the cold, yet not a single ripple of impatience broke the surface: no growls, demands, or restless pacing from them.

Only silence.

Ivar remained by the window, watching.

The wind picked up, threading through the trees with a hollow whistle, carrying the bite of oncoming winter. It tugged at Lylah's strands, at the edges of her coat, but she stayed close to Ezra. At one point, she reached up again, smoothing the shawl more securely around his neck.

The Alpha did not resist.

He simply lowered his head slightly, allowing it-submitting, in that small, intimate way, only a mate could ever draw from a creature built to dominate.

"They're so patient for wolves of such rank," Ivar's assistant murmured from behind, unable to hide the note of awe in his voice. "That's very rare, right?"

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

Chapter 295

3rd Person's POV

Finished

“How many Alphas with power even half of Alpha Ezra of Moonclaw would tolerate being made to wait?” Rune murmured, his gaze fixed beyond the mist-laced window. “Most would’ve torn the gates down by

now.”

But that wasn’t what held Ivar’s attention.

It wasn’t only the quiet intimacy between the pair outside-the gentle way the lady adjusted the shawl around her mate’s shoulders, nor the rare stillness of a dominant Alpha standing obedient beneath her touch.

It was a memory.

He had seen Alpha Ezra before-years ago, during his visits to Vargan, at Moonclaw Estate. He remembered the man’s temper then: sharp, volatile, coiled like a blade forever on the verge of being drawn. Ezra had not been patient. Not then. Not like this.

Which meant only one thing.

His mate was his leash.

“Sir,” Rune continued carefully, stepping closer. “I’ve uncovered more about the matter you asked me to investigate, about Jax and Vala Stillward’s supposed daughter.”

Ivar did not turn. “Speak.”

“Lady Coraline claimed she wasn’t their blood... said the real daughter died shortly after birth. She even named the treatment center where Lady Vala supposedly delivered.” Rune hesitated, then finished quietly, “We searched their archives. There’s no record of it. Vala Stillward never gave birth there. For now, we’ll continue the search for the missing daughter, I’ll report back the moment we find anything.”

Something shifted.

The warmth in Ivar's expression vanished as if extinguished by an unseen hand. In its place, something darker unfurled, his aura leaking into the room like creeping shadows, thick and suffocating, laced with the raw authority of an old war God who had commanded battlefields and buried enemies beneath his heels.

"So Cora has been lying to me... far longer than I thought," Ivar said softly, his voice dropping into something cold enough to frost the air.

"... Yes, sir."

For a moment, the years folded in on themselves.

He saw her again as she had been that storm-torn night-a trembling little girl in a worn dress, standing at his gates with tear-bright blue eyes and a voice that begged for protection. Back then, she had looked like something the world had already tried to break.

And he had trusted her, raised her, loved her.

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App

Finished

Now that same child had turned his affection into a weapon-layering deception upon deception, weaving lies so carefully they had almost passed as truth.

The betrayal cut deeper than any sword.

"I treated her like my own blood," Ivar said, each word edged with steel. "And she repaid me with deceit." He turned at last, his gaze hard as winter ice. "Rune."

"Yes, sir."

"Drive Coraline out of my estate."

Downstairs, the tension in the parlor had already begun to sour.

Rowan Blackfang paced like a caged predator, the air around him trembling under the pressure of his Alpha aura. His teeth clenched hard enough to grind. Cora, by contrast, stood still... but only on the surface. Beneath it, her pulse raced, her wolf restless, unsettled by something she couldn't yet name.

When Rune entered, both of them turned sharply.

"Well?" Rowan demanded.

Cora stepped forward first, lifting her chin. "Can I see him now?"

Rune inclined his head slightly, though his expression remained neutral. "Commander Ivar has declined to meet with you."

The words landed like a slap.

"What kind of game is this?" Rowan snapped, rising to his full height. His aura surged violently, filling the room with the unmistakable threat of dominance. "We've been kept waiting for eternity, and he won't even step out to greet his own guests? Does he take me for a fool-or worse, an insult to my Luna?"

"Apologies, Alpha Rowan," Rune replied evenly. "I am only delivering his command."

Rowan's eyes flashed, feral and electric. "Then he'll learn exactly what it means to dismiss the Alpha of Blackfang Pack."

The temperature in the room seemed to drop as his wolf pushed closer to the surface.

But before it could escalate, Cora seized his arm.

"It's fine," she said quickly, though her voice strained at the edges. "We'll return another time."

Rowan glanced at her, clearly unwilling, but she held firm-fingers digging into his sleeve as if anchoring both of them in place. Then she turned back to Rune, forcing composure over the cracks forming beneath

her calm.

"At least take my gift to him," she said. "You can do that; can't you?"

"I'm sorry. Commander Ivar has also instructed that he will not accept anything from you."

For a heartbeat, the world stilled.

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Cora's breath caught.

No.

That... wasn't possible.

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Commander Ivar never turned her away. Since Jax’s death, she had been the last thread tying him to what remained of that past. He had indulged her, protected her, and allowed her to leave without consequence when she fled to Ironcrest to claim her birthright as the Alpha daughter.

He had never closed his door to her.

Until now.

Something inside her chest cracked-silent, but irreversible.

The final tether had snapped.

And for the first time, Cora realized-

She had lost him.

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

Chapter 296

Lylah’s POV

40

Finished

“Let’s return to Moonclaw and come back another time,” I murmured, cupping Ezra’s cheek. His skin was cold beneath my palm, chilled by the biting air. But as always, his hand rose to cover mine, warm and grounding, as though anchoring me to him.

“I’m not in a hurry, Lylah,” he said softly. “We’ll wait as long as it takes. If we must, we’ll take a room at a nearby inn. But we’re not leaving until you see Commander Ivar and offer him your wishes. You’ve wanted this since last night.”

And he was right.

Still, guilt tugged at me.

We had already been waiting for more than an hour, the cold seeping deeper with every passing minute, and it was because of me that Ezra had to endure it.

“Lylah!”

The shout rang out just as Ezra and I stepped back onto Commander Ivar’s lawn. We wandered the grounds to shake off the restless boredom. The earlier guest’s car was gone now, but in its place stood a far more familiar one.

Grandfather Vargan’s.

“Grandpa!” I hurried toward him, skirts brushing against the frozen grass. “What are you doing here?” I asked, half laughing, half exasperated.

He huffed, his breath fogging thickly in the cold air. “Ezra kept your visit to Ivar’s estate from me. Did he truly think I would let the two of you come all this way without me?” His eyes flicked toward Ezra with mild reproach. “I had them bring me here at once.”

“We just didn’t want you traveling in this weather,” I said, slipping my arm through his.

“And yet here I am,” he replied dryly. Then, more seriously, “Have you seen Ivar?”

I shook my head.

Before another word could be spoken, the heavy doors of the estate slammed open.

Commander Ivar stood framed in the doorway, his presence hitting like a sudden pressure drop. But the moment his gaze found mine-

It softened.

Warmth bloomed in my chest so suddenly it stole my breath, and before I could stop myself, I was already moving-running toward him.

“My assistant said you came to see me, Luna,” he said, his voice deep, carrying that quiet authority that demanded to be obeyed. Yet there was something gentler beneath it now. “What brings the Luna of Moonclaw to the door of an old wolf like me? Surely you are not here out of pity with winter so close at

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hand, are you?"

I shook my head quickly. "No-never that."

Finished

I met his gaze without hesitation. "I only thought no one should celebrate the new moon alone." I hesitated, then smiled softly. "Happy Renewal, Commander Ivar. I hope your home stays warm through the winter."

For a heartbeat, the frost in his eyes held.

Then it melted.

He reached for my hand, his grip firm and steady. "Happy Renewal, Luna Lylah," he said. "May Selene's grace follow you through every cold day to come." His thumb brushed lightly against my knuckles. "And thank you for your gift. I like it so much."

Relief unfurled in my chest, warm and bright.

He wasn't angry.

Behind me, Grandpa Vargan's voice cut in, warm but edged with complaint.

"You've kept my granddaughter waiting in the cold long enough, Ivar, look at her, her cheeks are flushed from the chill. Are you not going to invite us in?" He gave a pointed shiver. "Even I am starting to feel it."

Commander Ivar's gaze flicked past me, a faint smirk tugging at his lips. "Your bones were never stronger than mine, old friend." Then, with a slight incline of his head, he stepped aside. "Come, you are all welcome in my house."

Warmth greeted us the moment we crossed the threshold.

I hadn't expected what awaited inside.

The dining room was already set-candles flickering, the table set in full, the air rich with the scent of hearty dishes and spiced wine.

Commander Ivar had arranged everything-the meals, the feast, the warmth waiting for us.

We dined beneath the quiet glow of firelight, its warmth wrapping around us as laughter drifted through the halls like something long lost finally finding its way home.

After Ironcrest, and the hollow celebrations I endured in Blackfang, moments like this had become a rarity.

And this night...

This was the happiest New Moon celebration I had known in a very long time.

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Chapter 297

Ezra's POV

40

Finished

I had never been a patient man, but that wait had been worth every moment-rewarded in the quiet radiance of Lylah's happiness. The way her smile unfurled in the glow of candlelight settled something restless inside me. Made me feel whole.

By the time we returned to Moonclaw, the first snow had begun to fall, reclaiming the land after years of absence. It settled over the estate roofs in a pale hush, blanketed the earth in soft white, and quieted the pack beneath its embrace.

I left her briefly to see to a few matters, but the pull of her presence drew me back soon enough.

When I entered my chamber, the door closing softly behind me, I found her standing by the window.

She didn't turn at first.

“Ezra, look,” Lylah said, her voice soft with wonder. “It’s already snowing... the lawn’s turning white.” She trailed off, catching herself. “I-I’m so sorry. I forgot you can’t...”

“It’s alright,” I murmured, moving closer. “I remember what it’s like. The stillness, the way the air feels.” I came to stand behind her, close enough to feel her warmth. “Is it beautiful?”

“It is,” she said softly. “I’m glad you still remember how Moonclaw looks in winter. I’ll capture this for you. So maybe in the future... when your vision comes back, I can show you. Or we could shift and run through it together. It has to be freezing.”

A faint smile tugged at my lips.

She had no idea how adorable she looked in that moment,

and how it wasn’t Moonclaw in winter that lingered in my memory.

Lylah carried none of it. None of what we had been before.

It had been winter then, too-the second time we met. Snow fell like feathers over the lands of Lunareth Kingdom as I crossed into her territory by accident, half-dead and bleeding out into the frost. Crimson hot blood soaked my side, staining the white beneath me as I collapsed.

And she found me there.

She knelt in the snow without hesitation, wrapped in a fox fur-lined cloak. Delicate hands, far gentler than anything that world deserved, pressed against my wound, tending to a stranger who had no right to trespass

on her land.

“Ezra?”

“Yes?” I closed the distance between us, pressing into her back, lowering my head until my breath brushed the curve of her neck.

My nose grazed her skin, drawing in her scent.

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Lylah shivered.

“Stay still, beautiful,” I murmured, my voice rougher now. “You can keep watching the snow.”

I had meant to let her.

Truly.

Finished

But the moment I touched her, something deep and unyielding stirred to life. It coursed through my veins like fire, sharpening every sense, every instinct. My wolf roused, restless and drawn to her, a low, possessive warmth blooming beneath my skin.

Her scent alone was enough to unravel me.

“T-there are guards patrolling outside,” she whispered, her breath catching as my hand slipped beneath the soft fabric at her waist, finding the heat of her skin. “Maybe we should move to the bed...”

“It’s snowing,” I said quietly, my voice edged with something more primal. “They won’t notice.”

My hands moved before I could stop them, I lifted her leg with care, resting it against the couch in front of her, holding her there.

“Be good,” I murmured near her ear. “It’ll be fine.”

“You haven’t even changed,” she protested weakly. “Your clothes, they’re still cold from outside...”

“Then they’re in the way.”

Patience had never been my strength-not when it came to her.

Within moments, the barrier of fabric was gone, discarded without care. The chill of winter clung to the air, but it never reached me-not when my blood ran this hot, not when she was pressed against me like this.

Lylah melted into me instead, seeking that warmth, clinging as though she belonged nowhere else.

“Ezra...” My name fell from my mate’s lips in a soft, unsteady, breath.

Her long lashes fluttered down, veiling her eyes as they closed in surrender. We intertwined completely, bodies fused in a seamless dance.

I felt whole.

This was the part of my life I had once lost... now returned to me. And no matter how long I was bound to walk this world, it would be with her beside me. I would trade everything I was, wage endless wars beneath skies just to keep her safe.

Just to ensure that this time...

She would never be taken from me again.

13:02 Thu, Apr 16 MOD.

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 298

3rd Person's POV

They had intended to return to Lunaris the next morning.

But dawn brought a complication no one had foreseen.

49 Finished

When Lylah woke, the world beyond the windows had transformed-snow lay thick across the land, a pristine white shroud softening the sharp edges of Moonclaw's territory. Drawn by its beauty, she turned back to share the moment with Ezra, slipping beneath the covers and curling close against him again.

But her smile faded almost instantly.

His skin burned beneath her touch.

"Ezra..." Her voice sharpened with alarm as she pressed her palm to his forehead. "You're burning. I think you have a fever."

Moving quickly, Lylah slipped from the bed and pulled on a robe, the chill biting at her skin as she stepped into the corridor. The stillness of the estate was shattered the moment the news spread.

The Alpha was ill.

Servants rushed through the halls, their footsteps echoing against stone floors. Guards stiffened at their posts, instincts bristling. Within minutes, the quiet manor stirred into controlled chaos. Vargan wasted no time and summoned the family healer.

The disturbance roused others as well.

Zyrelle appeared soon after, her expression still hazy with sleep as she followed the rising voices-just in time to see Lylah step out of the chamber.

“Well, this is a first,” she said, folding her arms loosely. “I’ve never known Ezra to fall to something as trivial as a fever.” Her eyes narrowed, suspicion threading her tone. “He stayed inside all night, didn’t he? What could have brought this on so suddenly?”

Lylah hesitated only a fraction before answering.

“Maybe from our journey to Whitepine,” she said quietly.

It sounded reasonable. The cold there had been merciless even before the snow began to fall.

But deep down, she knew better.

Her breath left her in a quiet exhale.

He had walked back through the estate with winter still clinging to him-cold woven into his clothes, frost lingering against his skin-and yet the moment he closed the door behind them, Ezra had pulled her in without pause.

Her wolf stirred uneasily, torn between concern and quiet irritation. Lylah made a mental note to scold him

later.

1/3

Chapter 298

Snow had fallen over Lunaris as well, though there, it carried a different kind of weight.

40

Finished

Within Rowan’s residence, warmth pushed back against the cold outside. Firelight danced along stone walls, and servants had laid out a small banquet in honor of the New Moon celebration. Yet tension lingered beneath the surface.

Eldric had arrived the day before and sought Rowan out the following day.

“I could not allow the festival to pass without seeing my daughter myself,” Eldric said, his tone measured but firm. “This is her first celebration away from Ironcrest.” He paused, swirling the wine in his glass. “Her mother insisted I come. Orion has taken ill, or she would have been here as well.”

“Cora is safe here with me,” Rowan replied, his voice controlled. “You have nothing to worry about, Alpha Eldric.”

He offered hospitality-but it remained rigid, lacking warmth.

Eldric noticed.

A faint glint sparked in his eyes as he leaned back slightly, studying Rowan with deliberate intent. “You and my daughter will soon be bound not only as mates, but under Verdanth law, sealed through the mating ceremony. Don’t you think it’s time you began calling me father, Rowan?”

The word landed heavily.

Rowan tightened his grip around his glass, the faint creak of pressure betraying the tension beneath his composed exterior. His wolf bristled at the claim, at the implication of authority.

Father.

And Eldric still addressed him only by name.

Before Rowan could respond, Cora’s voice slipped in, light and almost playful.

“Well, Rowan? Father is right.”

Rowan’s jaw set.

In recent weeks, his relationship with Eldric had frayed. He had severed alliances and cut ties cleanly. He had no desire to bend, no reason to yield again.

But yesterday had shifted something.

Cora had revealed her connection to Ivar of Whitepine-an important figure Rowan himself had long sought to reach. Power recognized power.

And if Cora held a bridge to that...

Then, for now, he would exercise restraint.

The silence stretched just long enough to be noticed.

Then, finally-

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“Yes,” Rowan said. “Father.”

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

Chapter 299

3rd Person's POV

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Finished

Rowan remained with Cora and Eldric longer than he cared to, enduring the strained civility of the gathering. Conversation dragged where warmth never followed, and though he played his part, the effort wore thin fast. At the first acceptable pause, he excused himself.

He retreated to his study, shutting the door on the echoes of forced pleasantries. Inside, the scent of ink, parchment, and polished wood grounded him. Power no longer sufficed.

He needed more.

More wolves. More loyalty. More strength.

A stack of dossiers waited on his desk-applications from wolves across Lunaris seeking a place within his expanding reach, many boasting skills suited to the growing tech sector. Rowan sank into his chair and began to read.

Names. Histories. Strengths. Weaknesses.

Most blurred together.

Until one did not.

His gaze stilled, sharpening as his wolf stirred beneath his skin.

“Raav of the Blackmaw Pack,” Rowan murmured, letting the name roll slowly off his tongue. A faint curl touched his lip-not quite a smile. “Formerly under Ezra of Moonclaw, but no longer.”

“Yes, Alpha,” Azrel confirmed from where he stood nearby.

Rowan tapped the paper once, deliberately. “Bring him to me this afternoon.” His eyes never left the page.

By afternoon, tension had settled over the residence.

Rowan stood near the tall windows of his receiving chamber, hands clasped behind his back as pale winter light filtered through frost-lined glass. His wolf prowled close to the surface, restless-sensing opportunity and something darker.

When the door opened, he did not turn at once.

“Alpha Rowan,” the newcomer said, his voice steady despite the weight pressing down on the room. “Thank you for calling me.”

Only then did Rowan turn, his gaze locking onto the young wolf before him.

Raav.

Young, yes-but not weak. Something in his posture, in the careful stillness of his movements, held Rowan’s

attention.

Interesting.

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Chapter 299

Finished

“You likely know why you’re here,” Rowan said smoothly, his tone polite. Almost inviting. “Something in your history caught my attention.”

He stepped closer.

“You served under Ezra,” he continued, watching him closely. “If I recall correctly, most wolves would claw their way into such a position.” His voice softened, coaxing now. “So tell me what made you walk away so young?”

The shift came subtly, but Rowan caught it.

Raav’s eyes flickered. His shoulders tightened-just slightly.

Beneath it, his wolf bristled.

At the mention of Ezra.

Rowan’s interest sharpened.

“Alpha Ezra cast me out-if not openly, then in every way that mattered,” Raav said, his voice even, though something colder threaded beneath it. “When I no longer served a purpose.” A faint exhale followed. “But I was glad.”

Rowan stilled.

That... he had not expected.

Raav lifted his gaze, steady now, meeting Rowan’s directly. “Tell me, Alpha-would you remain loyal if the work you were given was never meant to be rewarded?”

He continued without waiting.

“He sent me on a task. One that could have cost me my life.” His jaw tightened faintly. “When I returned, he offered no acknowledgment. And when a higher position opened at the Lunar Research Center...” A humorless breath slipped past his lips. “He gave it to someone else. So I left.”

Rowan lifted a brow slightly, though his calm mask held. Beneath it, something dark coiled tighter.

“What task?” Rowan asked, his voice quieter now. “What mission did he consider worth your life?”

Raav did not hesitate.

“Spying. He sent me into another Alpha’s territory,” he said, his gaze unwavering. “To observe and report back. Alpha Ezra sent me to Blackfang.”

The room went still.

“Your pack, Alpha Rowan.”

Something inside Rowan snapped taut.

His wolf surged forward, claws raking against the restraint. Anger flared-fast, violent, demanding release.

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Chapter 299

“Who did he send you to spy on?” Rowan demanded.

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Finished

“A woman. He had me sneak like a coward, risk my life... for a she-wolf. I don’t remember her name, but I kept a record.”

Raav pulled out his phone, tapped the screen, then stepped forward and held it out.

Rowan took it.

The world narrowed.

There, frozen in a single captured moment-

Lylah.

The image burned into him.

Of course.

Of course, it was her.

Something dark and feral uncoiled fully within him, rising like a storm finally unleashed. His grip tightened around the device, his jaw locking as realization hardened into certainty.

Ezra had watched her.

Rowan’s wolf snarled-a low, vicious sound echoing through the depths of his mind. He had known something was wrong.

He had felt it in the way Lylah changed, in the distance that replaced devotion.

Ezra had taken what belonged to him—

And twisted it.

A dangerous, quiet fury settled behind Rowan’s eyes.

Darker than before.

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13:02 Thu, Apr 16 M

The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

Chapter 300

3rd Person's POV

🏁 Finished

Raav had expected anger. An Alpha whose territory had been breached would never respond kindly to such a revelation. That much was instinct-law, even. But what rolled off Rowan was... different.

It wasn't just anger.

It was something deeper. Darker. Possessive in a way that made Raav's wolf shift uneasily beneath his skin.

"Alpha Rowan..." Raav said carefully, studying him. "Do you know the woman Alpha Ezra sent me to watch?"

Rowan's head snapped up.

The air changed-electric, like the moment before a heavy storm breaks.

"You don't know?" Rowan's voice dropped, smooth but edged with something lethal. "Then listen carefully. This she-wolf Ezra had you skulk after like a thief...was mine." His jaw tightened, the word laced with primal claim. "She was meant to stand beside me as my Luna."

Raav stilled. "I thought that was Lady Cora of Ironcrest."

A quiet, humorless breath left Rowan.

“Not everything is as it seems in Lunariss,” he said, voice softening but only on the surface. Beneath it, something beckoned. Like a wolf lowering its guard just enough to draw another closer. “Long before Cora, there was Lylah.”

The name lingered in the air.

“We weren’t some fleeting attachment, we were bound in everything but ceremony. I loved her.” Rowan’s voice roughened, a rare crack in the polished armor. “More than I’ve ever loved anyone.”

For a moment, something almost raw flickered in his expression.

Then it hardened.

“And then one day... she left me.”

Silence stretched.

“She fled here to Lunariss. And before I could even reach her, before I could understand why...” His eyes darkened, the storm returning. “She became the Luna of Moonclaw Pack.”

Raav’s spine stiffened. “Which means...” he started, the realization forming like ice in his veins.

Rowan’s lips curved-but there was no warmth in them “Yes. That cunning bastard orchestrated everything. Piece by piece. He took what was mine-not through strength, not through honor-but through manipulation.”

His eyes dimmed, shadow swallowing whatever light had been there.

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Finished

“He twisted my woman. Turned her against me. Before Ezra ever entered her life, Lylah loved only one man.” His gaze locked onto Raav. “Me.”

Something shifted in Raav then.

His wolf bristled at the image forming in his mind. The missions. The silence. The disregard. All of it, suddenly painted in a different light.

He had believed Ezra to be honorable.

Respected him.

Followed him.

And yet, he had been used.

Sent like a pawn into another Alpha's territory... for this? For another Alpha's woman? For something so underhanded?

Raav's jaw tightened, anger coiling hot in his chest.

Rowan saw it.

"They won't believe me if I speak the truth," Rowan murmured, turning slightly, as if burdened by the weight of it all. "They worship him here." He glanced back at Raav. "But you've seen enough to know better."

He steps closer.

"I know what you're capable of, Raav. I see it." His voice lowered, becoming persuasive and almost magnetic. "You weren't meant to be discarded. Stand with me. Not just as an ally, but as someone I will elevate. And together," he added, voice dropping to a near growl, "we will make Ezra answer for what he's done."

Raav didn't hesitate.

"Yes, Alpha Rowan."

Far from Lunaris, the Moonclaw estate lay wrapped in snow, its towering structure softened beneath a pristine white hush.

Inside, warmth held firm against the winter's bite.

The healer who had just finished Ezra's examination, offered a respectful bow to Vargan. "The Alpha's condition has improved, Master. The fever is breaking."

Relief moved quietly through the space.

Within the chamber, Lylah remained at Ezra's side, carefully helping him sit upright. Her movements were gentle but steady as she guided the cup to his lips, ensuring he drank every drop of the medicine.

Outside the doors, Vargan stood with his hands clasped behind his back. Beside him, Zyrelle leaned casually against a pillar, though her sharp eyes betrayed her curiosity.

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Chapter 300

Finished

“This is such a rarity, right Grandpa?” she said lightly, a teasing lilt in her voice, “I don’t think I’ve ever seen Ezra fall to something as trivial as a fever. I used to think he was immune to illness altogether.”

Vargan exhaled softly, “No. Not immune.”

Zyrelle glanced at him, intrigued by the shift in his tone.

“I’ve seen him fall ill more than once before, Vargan continued, his eyes softened with memory. “He just never allowed anyone to witness it. Never allowed weakness to linger where others could see. Even when I sent healers, he would turn them all away. But this...”

Something in his expression changed.

A quiet realization. Something close to wonder.

“This is the first time that he has allowed someone to stand beside him while he is weak. To care for him.”

Vargan’s eyes lingered there, knowing exactly who was on the other side of that door.

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