

The Betrayed Princess Rising (Lylah And Rowan Blackfang's) - Secrets Under Moonlight 3[779 words]

Chapter 3

Lylah's POV

I returned to the manor and shut myself inside my room.

The space reeked of Alpha indulgence, luxuries Rowan had claimed for me after Blackwood Pack rose to dominance. Velvet-lined boxes of diamonds and enchanted gems. Robes spun from pure winter fur.

None of it felt like mine anymore.

I dragged my suitcase from beneath the bed and began packing the few simple clothes I'd bought myself over the years.

Just as I folded the last shirt, my phone buzzed to life.

Tiara:

'Lylah, the Mate-market is buzzing! Your profile has drawn more than fifty unmated males already! Mentioning Lunar Grace was a brilliant move, but are you really leaving? How about Alpha Rowan? I never believed he'd allow you that much distance.'

A bitter smile curved my lips.

Once, I would have waited for permission. Once, my feeling for him would have tightened around my ribs at the thought of disobedience.

But that girl was gone.

Suddenly, a knock struck the door.

I sighed. I was too exhausted to face anyone.

"Lylah," Rowan's voice carried through the wood, "Open up. I have something for you."

I crossed the room and slid the door open.

A chorus of voices burst forth at once.

“Surprise! Happy birthday, Lylah!”

Rowan stood at the center, smiling as if nothing in the world was amiss. In his hand rested a small velvet box. Behind him were Gavriel, his Beta, and Rosella—Gavriel’s mate—both wearing practiced smiles.

“What is this?” I asked.

“What else?” Gavriel laughed. “A surprise. Alpha’s been driving us mad preparing this since morning.”

Morning.

The same morning he’d spent with Cora at my mentor’s office.

I smiled anyway.

“Go on, Alpha,” Rosella urged brightly. “Give her the special gift you’ve been planning all week.”

Rowan stepped closer and opened the box.

His scent, and the unmistakable trace of the deep wood, rolled over me. Telling me exactly where he’d been moments ago.

“I’ll put this gift on you,” Rowan said.

Inside lay a tiny bracelet set with a small amethyst. Pretty. Modest.

A diminished echo of the elaborate necklace he’d given Cora.

Rowan fastened it around my wrist.

“Thank you,” I managed.

His brows knit. “You sound distant, little moon. Aren’t you happy? You used to light up whenever I gave you gifts. You’d jump into my arms. Where did that go?”

“I’m just tired, Rowan.”

Rosella tilted her head, her lips curving into a poisonous smile. “Perhaps the bracelet disappointed her, Alpha. Too simple.”

“No,” Rowan said quickly, cupping my cheek. “I know my Lylah. She prefers simple things. Anything extravagant wouldn’t suit her.”

I caught the amused glance Gavriel and Rosella exchanged.

“You smell like the woods,” I said lightly. “Did you just finish a run? I thought you’d stopped doing that.”

He stiffened for half a heartbeat.

“Of course not. I was at my office.” The answer came too fast. “Actually, I just remembered I have unfinished work. I should go.”

Of course.

He kissed my cheek and left, his presence fading down the hall.

The familiar flutter in my chest never came.

Selestine remained silent, the bond unmoved, as if something vital had already snapped.

Night fell.

I stood behind the counter of the small restaurant where I’d been working part-time for six months. Rowan knew I worked, but he’d never once asked where. I’d wanted savings, something that belonged to me alone. Tonight, I was grateful for that foresight.

The door opened.

And whispers rippled through the room like wind through tall grass.

“That’s Alpha Rowan!”

“And Lady Cora.”

“They look like they were paired by Selene herself.”

I froze.

At the far end of the room, Rowan entered with Cora at his side. Gavriel and Rosella followed. Rowan’s hand never left Cora’s waist, his touch openly possessive, his power flaring softly around her in a way he no longer bothered to hide.

“I hope I’m not inconveniencing anyone,” Cora said demurely.

“Of course not, Lady Cora,” Rosella replied warmly, so different from the honeyed venom she used on me. “It’s your birthday. Alpha Rowan wants everything perfect.”

A server placed a cake before them, candles flickering.

“Go on,” Rowan said gently. “Make a wish.”

“A-a wish?”

“Yes. Anything.”

She glanced at him through her lashes. “Would it be all right if I prayed to Selene to bind me to you, Alpha?”

Rowan flushed.

Gavriel sucked in a breath. “Alpha, that’s a signal.”

Rosella clapped her hands softly. “It means you should mark her. Make her your Luna!”

Their table glowed with warmth and laughter, promise thick in the air.

Behind the counter, my wolf finally stirred. Not in pain, but aching rage.

Ruby Walker

Ruby Walker is a rising voice in the world of romance and spicy fiction. With a gift for weaving deep emotions, sizzling chemistry, and unexpected twists, her stories are a blend of passion and drama that captivate readers from start to finish. Ruby’s writing style is bold and irresistible—perfect for those who crave intense, addictive love stories.