

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

Chapter 301

Lylah's POV

Relief came in a way I hadn't expected.

Finished

For all his dominance, for all the instinctive authority that made others lower their heads, Ezra did not fight me when sickness dragged him down. I had braced myself for resistance, for the pride of an Alpha who would rather endure pain than admit weakness.

But he didn't.

This morning, he had been subdued. Not weak-never that-but quieter. He took the healer's tonics without argument, even allowing me to guide the cup to his lips.

I fed him, too.

And something soft and tender stirred in my chest.

I lifted my hand, pressing my palm to his forehead, about to check his temperature when the doors slammed open.

"Ezra!"

Zyrelle's voice shattered the quiet. "Why are you lying? You told me you couldn't get sick! Grandpa says you can! you just said that to impress me!"

Grandfather Vargan followed behind her, slower, his presence as steady as ever. "Zyrelle," he said with a sigh, "you've just interrupted Ezra's rest and Lylah's care."

I withdrew my hand, forcing calm into my voice.

"It's alright. I've just finished helping him eat and take his medicine.

Vargan paused.

"He took medicine?" Amusement colored his tone, his brows lifting. A soft chuckle escaped him. "Since when?" He shook his head lightly. "You've done what none of us could. You've changed him." His gaze lingered on me-warm, approving. "Thank you, my dear."

Then he tugged Zyrelle away. "Come on. Let them rest."

The door closed behind them, and silence settled over the room once more.

But the moment it did, my attention snapped back to Ezra and irritation rose, sharp and immediate.

My brows drew together. "What are they talking about?" I demanded. "Is it true? You've been sick before and always refused treatment?"

He blinked, caught off guard, but didn't look away.

"I just..." His voice had lost its usual edge, quieter now. "I didn't want them to worry. And I didn't want to bother anyone."

1/3

Chapter 301

Finished

"Bother?" The word came out sharper than I intended. My wolf stirred, restless, disapproving.

"Ezra, they're your family. Since when is taking care of you a burden?"

His gaze shifted, something distant flickering in his eyes. "Because deep down, I know they expect their Alpha to always be strong. Always fine."

Something inside me tightened painfully.

How many times?

How many times had he endured fever, pain, weakness, alone? How many times had he forced himself to stand, to lead, to be Alpha, even when his body demanded otherwise?

The thought made something fierce rise in my chest.

Before I could stop myself, I leaned in and pressed my lips to his jaw.

His skin was still warm, but at least no longer burning. The contact sent a subtle tension through him, like something restrained just beneath the surface.

"Lylah-"

I silenced him, pressing my fingers gently to his lips.

"From now on," I murmured, my voice low but steady, "you have me."

My thumb brushed across his mouth and that was when I felt it.

Dry.

“You don’t get to hide from me,” I continued softly. “No more pretending you’re always fine. No more carrying everything alone. Not with me.”

My wolf stirred again.

My gaze dropped to his lips.

Something instinctive tightened in my chest.

I leaned closer, drawn by a pull I didn’t question.

But just before I could close the distance, Ezra turned his head.

I froze, confusion flickering through me.

A pout tugged at my lips-

And then, suddenly, his arms came around me, firm and certain, pulling me into him.

And then he kissed me.

Not where I expected.

3/3

13:02 Thu, Apr 16 MO

Chapter 301

Finished

His lips brushed my forehead first, lingering with a warmth that sank deeper than his fading fever. Then my brow. My cheek. My pulse quickened as his touch trailed down to my jaw-unhurried, almost reverent.

Like he was memorizing me.

Like he was holding back something far stronger beneath the surface.

He kissed me everywhere.

Everywhere but my lips.

My breath caught.

And then, close against my skin, his voice came. Threaded with quiet restraint.

“No lips for now. I don’t want to infect you.”

3/3

Ruby Walker

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Chapter 302

Lylah’s POV

“I don’t want to infect you,” Ezra said.

But the hunger in his eyes betrayed him.

Finished

“Ah...” I blinked, caught off guard as always. Even now-especially now-he managed to disarm me with that quiet, unexpected care. “I suppose you’re right. No lips.... for now. At least until you’re fully recovered.”

The moment the words left me, something in him shifted.

Permission.

That was all he needed.

His restraint didn’t lessen the intensity. His lips found my skin again, deliberate, consuming, as though he was starving in a way that had nothing to do with illness. And then, suddenly, I was the one beneath him, the silk sheets cool against my back while his heat hovered above me.

My breath hitched.

My body betrayed me instantly. My pulse thundered, my wolf rising eagerly beneath my skin, craving, answering him. I was ready.

More than ready.

But just as the tension coiled to its breaking point,

Ezra stopped.

The absence of his touch felt almost unbearable.

‘Why did you stop?’ I breathed, my voice unsteady, eyes dark with want.

Ezra exhaled softly, his hand sliding beneath the pillow. ‘It’s empty,’ he muttered. ‘We’ve run out.’

[frowned slightly, still dazed. ‘Run out of...?’

‘Contraception.’ His gaze flickered, still heavy with restraint. ‘But it’s fine. I’ll have the healer prepare something to prevent a pregnancy afterward.’

There was no hesitation in him-only control.

And in me, only trust.

I nodded.

I woke up later that night, my muscles aching in the familiar ways, but my spirit was light, as though something inside me had settled and quieted. Ezra had already taken care of everything. The potion was delivered, and I made sure to drink it before anyone could interrupt.

1/3

3:48 pm P Ppp.

Chapter 302

Finished

Just in time.

Because not long after, Grandfather Vargan and Zyrelle returned.

Thankfully, neither of them suspected a thing.

We informed them of our departure-returning to Lunaris the next day, now that Ezra had nearly recovered.

‘It’s still a celebration moment,’ Vargan said, eyeing us both. ‘What’s the rush, Ezra? You should stay longer than usual. Why are you always so eager to leave your birth house?’

“Lylah needs to return to her academy,” Ezra replied smoothly. “And I have responsibilities waiting. Besides...” His hand brushed lightly against mine. “We haven’t had time to celebrate properly. Alone.”

Vargan huffed, though amusement softened his expression. “If you insist. Though I would’ve liked my granddaughter here a little longer.” His gaze shifted to me. “But I suppose I can’t argue with her mate.”

We returned to Lunaris the following day.

Winter had settled in fully. The snow blanketed the city in silence, the air sharp and biting. It kept us indoors. In the end, we celebrated in the penthouse.

Ezra ordered everything.

At first, I thought he was teasing me-I had pointed at half the items in passing, jokingly-but by evening, every single one of them had been delivered.

I stared at the spread, stunned.

“You took care of me while I was sick,” he said simply when I questioned him. “Why shouldn’t I take care of you now?”

“It was only two days,” I replied, shaking my head. “You’ve done far more for me since we started living together.”

He reached for me then, pulling me gently down beside him.

“That was different,” he murmured. “This... I caused trouble. You had to see me like that.” His jaw tightened slightly. “Did it feel like a burden?”

I froze.

Then my brows drew together, irritation rising fast and sharp.

How could he still think that way?

How many times would he question his place beside me?

“Of course not,” I said firmly, turning to face him fully. “Don’t be ridiculous.” My voice softened, but the conviction only deepened. “Who looks after someone they love and calls it a burden?” My fingers curled lightly into his sleeve. “That’s not how this works, Ezra. That’s not how we work.”

2/3

3:48 pm P P pp.

Chapter 302

Finished

My wolf stirred, restless, insistent-echoing every word.

“Our bond... our vows... they weren’t meant for perfect moments only.” My gaze held his. “They were meant for everything. Strengths and weakness. Every version of you.”

I leaned closer, my voice dropping to something quieter, but no less certain.

“There is nothing you could become, no state you could be in, that would ever make me feel burdened by you.”

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3/3

3:48 pm

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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Chapter 303

3rd Person’s POV

Ezra didn’t answer her.

Finished

But something within him-something that had been restless, sharp-edged, and quietly unraveling-finally stilled. Lylah’s words sank deep, threading through bone and instinct alike. The tension that had lingered for far too long eased at last, replaced by a rare, unfamiliar calm. For the first time in years, perhaps longer, Ezra felt... at peace.

The following morning unfolded with a sense of normalcy.

Lylah returned to her routine. She had plans-Tiara had requested to meet, and Iris had sent word as well, noting how long it had been since they had last seen each other. Rather than choosing between them, Lylah decided to bring them together.

That afternoon, they met at the Lunar Grace Academy Library.

The grand structure stood serene beneath winter's hold, its towering windows veiled with frost. Inside, warmth pooled in golden light, and the faint scent of parchment and ink filled the air.

Despite Tiara and Iris meeting for the first time, conversation flowed with surprising ease. Laughter came naturally, bright and unguarded, weaving through the quiet hum of the library like a melody.

However, elsewhere within the library, behind the closed doors of a private study room, the atmosphere was entirely different.

It was thick with tension.

Unforgiving.

Cora stood stiffly across from Thane Blackridge, her posture rigid, her breath shallow. The air between them felt colder than the winter outside.

Thane sat with composed authority, one leg crossed over the other as he reviewed the papers in his hands -her work. His sharp gaze scanned each page with meticulous precision, his silence far more damning than any immediate critique.

When he finally spoke, his voice was calm-but cutting.

'I can feel the inconsistency, Cora,' he said, setting one page down. 'You wrote your thesis under my supervision. I even provided you with the framework of my previous research...' His eyes lifted to meet hers, 'And yet this feels like none of that mattered.'

Cora's fingers tightened in the fabric of her skirt.

'What do you mean?' she asked, her voice faltering despite her effort to steady it. 'Is it... that bad?'

His gaze sharpened. The warmth that once lingered there was gone, stripped away entirely. In its place was something distant, clinical... as though he were no longer looking at her, but at just another failing junior.

3:48 pm P PPP.

Chapter 303

Finished

“Has something been distracting you?” He said slowly, “Because whatever it is, it’s bled into your work. Entirely.”

Cora’s pulse spiked.

“And what I’m reading,” he added, tapping the pages lightly, “feels as though it was written by someone who has no place being a student under Professor Corvin Vale at all.”

The words struck like a crack of thunder.

For a moment, Cora couldn’t breathe.

“No-Thane, that’s not true!” Panic flared, hot and desperate. She took a step forward, her voice tightening. “I can prove it. I can fix it. There are mistakes, yes, but I can correct them. Please...” Her composure slipped, desperation creeping in. “Don’t say I don’t deserve my place.”

Thane regarded her in silence for a beat, then exhaled lightly.

“Then prove it,” he said at last. “We’re already here. Gather the references you need and revise everything I’ve marked.”

Relief and humiliation twisted together in her chest.

“Yes,” she replied quickly.

She didn’t waste another second.

Cora moved through the library shelves with urgency, though each step felt heavier than the last. Shame burned beneath her skin. Beneath it, something darker coiled-anger, simmering and volatile.

Her wolf stirred uneasily, agitated by the storm of emotion.

Rowan. Eldric.

Their names flickered through her mind like sparks. The tension with them lately, the constant strain, had fractured her focus, splintered her thoughts when she needed them most. And now...

Now she was paying the price.

She turned another corner, scanning titles with unfocused eyes until she froze,

Warm laughter through the silence like a blade.

Cora froze as she saw her.

Lylah.

Seated with two others, relaxed and radiant, her expression light in a way that made something bitter twist inside Cora's chest. Her gaze shifted and there, at the far end of the table, lay Lylah's papers.

An opportunity.

2/3

3:48 pm PPPP

Chapter 303

Finished

Something dark curled at the edges of her thoughts.

'Why does she get to laugh like that?'

Cora's steps softened, quieter now, deliberate. She approached the table slowly. Her eyes flicked over the

pages.

Lylah's thesis.

A slow, bitter smile curved her lips.

"Has Professor Grimwood praised you for this, Lylah?" she murmured under her breath, her voice barely audible. Her fingers brushed the edge of the paper. "I could do much better. I would have... if Rowan hadn't made things so difficult."

Her grip tightened.

"And why did he?" Her voice thinned, bitterness seeping through. "Because of you. You're the reason I couldn't write mine at its best. The reason I—" her breath hitched, anger flaring, "—I failed."

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3:48 pm P PPP.

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Chapter 304

3rd Person's POV

Finished

Cora's fingers clenched around the paper until the upper corner crumpled beneath the pressure. Her gaze dragged over each line as though it might scorch her, envy and anger bleeding together into something raw and unrestrained. She would never admit it—not even to herself—that Lylah might surpass her in something as fundamental as study.

Never.

And so, if she faltered... then Lylah would fall with her.

The page trembled faintly in her grasp, but before it could tear, her eyes narrowed as she read more carefully.

"The topic she chose..." Cora whispered under her breath, pulse quickening. "It's almost identical to mine." Line by line, realization coiled tighter. "This is what Thane wanted."

Understanding settled like a dark seed taking root.

And from it, something colder bloomed.

Cora gathered Lylah's work in swift, practiced motions, her movements precise despite the storm raging beneath her skin.

Her fingers flew across the keyboard, copying, reshaping, weaving Lylah's words into her own. Line after line blurred together until the work no longer resembled its origin—until it looked like hers.

Only then did she return.

"I've finished," Cora said, her voice steadier now, though her heart still beat too fast beneath her ribs. She held out the revised pages. "I've corrected everything you pointed out. Will you read it?"

Thane Blackridge took the paper without a word.

Silence stretched as he read, his sharp gaze moving with quiet precision across every line,
When he finally looked up, something had changed.

Suspicion flickered in his eyes. "You did this yourself?" he asked.

Cora stilled.

"You're aware of the consequences if Professor Corvin Vale discovers you've plagiarized another student's

work." Thane continued.

"I wrote it," she said.

Her heart hardened even as it pounded. He had praised this-praised Lylah without knowing it.

"Why are you still questioning me, Thane?" she pressed. "My first draft and this one aren't that different."

1/3

3:48 pm P PPP.

Chapter 304

Thane's gaze sharpened.

Finished

"They are. Cora," he replied evenly. "In fact, they read as though written by entirely different people. Which is why I'm asking you to be certain. You didn't take someone else's work and claim it as your own. Did you?"

Cora lifted her chin, defiance flashing in her eyes. "I didn't. I told you I'm capable. I've proven that. And you still doubt me?"

But beneath her composure, her wolf paced restlessly, claws scraping against the walls of her control. The lie felt thinner than ice stretched over deep water-ready to fracture with the slightest pressure.

Lylah returned to her table with three books tucked against her chest, her steps unhurried. But the moment her eyes landed on her papers, something in her snapped taut-she closed the distance in quick strides.

They weren't how she had left them.

The neat stack was disturbed, pages slightly askew-as though someone had handled them in haste. And at the top, the corner was crumpled, the crease sharp and careless.

Tiara, Iris... Lylah murmured, setting the books down slowly. Her fingers brushed the edge of the damaged page, her gaze narrowing slightly. “Did anyone come by while we were gone?”

Both girls looked up.

“No,” Tiara said, frowning.

“I felt like someone was reading my works.”

The air seemed to still around her, the quiet of the library deepening in a way that pressed against the

senses.

“I’m worried they might use it for something they shouldn’t.” Lylah continued.

Iris leaned back slightly, thoughtful. “There’s surveillance here, we can check it later if you want.” She gestured lightly around them. “And this is Lunar Grace’s private library, Lylah. Outsiders rarely come in. they’d have to pay for access.”

Lylah exhaled softly, though the unease didn’t fully leave her.

“Maybe I’ll look into it later,” she said.

But her gaze lingered on the papers a moment longer.

If someone had touched them... if someone had taken more than a glance....

Then it wasn’t an outsider.

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

Chapter 305

3rd Person’s POV

Finished

Ezra stood within the sterile quiet of the Moonclaw private treatment center in Lunaris when Lylah's call came through. She told him she might return home late for dinner, that she was still at work on her paper, seated with Tiara and Iris.

For a brief moment, the tension in his chest eased.

When she asked where he was, Ezra didn't hesitate.

"At the research center," he replied smoothly.

A lie. He wouldn't burden her with this. Not yet.

When the call ended, the warmth of her voice lingered only a second before the cold, clinical air pressed back in.

Ezra turned to the healer, his expression sharpening once more.

"Where were we?"

The healer straightened under his gaze, her voice cautious.

"I was explaining the progression of your condition, Alpha. At present, your wolf is compensating by enhancing your vision in all conditions. But when it doesn't surface..." She hesitated. "Your sight will deteriorate completely."

Ezra's jaw tightened.

"I've also discovered a mutation," she continued carefully. "The first of its kind I've ever encountered. It endows you immune to physical pain and shields you from at least ten severe illnesses-conditions that would cripple an ordinary wolf. And it won't remain as it is. It will continue to evolve, growing stronger with each passing year."

A faint crease formed between his brows.

"Your fever yesterday," she added, "was not an illness. It marked a transition. Your body has advanced to another stage."

"But it's costing me my vision," Ezra said, his voice low, edged with something far more dangerous than anger. "I didn't come here for theories. I came for a solution. Fix it."

He took a step forward, his presence pressing, predatory. "I won't wait until the day comes when only my wolf can see-when I have to wear that monstrous form just to look at my mate."

At the doorway, Zyrelle stilled.

She had arrived earlier that morning, the lingering scent of the new moon celebration still clinging faintly to her after her time with Vargan. But now, watching Ezra, something in her shifted.

1/2

48 pm P P

Chapter 305

“Alpha- the healer began, faltering.

Finished

“I don’t care what it costs,” Ezra cut in, his voice dropping into a growl he didn’t bother to restrain. “You’re one of Lunar Grace’s finest graduates. You have connections through Verdanth. Don’t tell me there’s nothing you can do.”

The healer instinctively stepped back, her pulse quickening under the pressure of his aura.

“Y-yes, Alpha Ezra. We will try. But you must understand... this has never been done before. There is no certainty. The process could be... unstable.” She swallowed. “It may not be painless.”

Ezra let out a low, humorless laugh.

“Pain?” he echoed.

His eyes darkened, something feral flickering in their depths.

“What’s pain compared to watching my Luna look at me when I’m breaking?” His voice dropped further. “Keep your pity. Do your job. The pain is mine to bear.”

With that, he straightened his suit-composure snapping back into place like armor-and strode out of the room.

Zyrelle fell into step behind him.

“I have to admit,” she said lightly, though something thoughtful lingered beneath her tone, “I prefer this version of you, cousin. Much more optimistic.”

Ezra didn’t respond.

Zyrelle glanced at him, a faint, knowing smile touching her lips.

“If Lylah had never come into your life, you would have embraced this fate without hesitation-consequences be damned, so long as it forged you into someone terrifyingly powerful.” Her voice softened, laced with quiet pride. “Love suits you, Ezra.”

They moved down the corridor, their footsteps echoing faintly against polished floors.

“And I’ll always stand with you-”

Her words faltered as her gaze locked onto a still figure at the corridor’s end.

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2/2

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Chapter 306

3rd Person’s POV

Finished

“Don’t you think that healer looks like Lylah?”Zyrelle’s gaze lingered on the woman in the sterile white coat as she passed, her wolf stirring beneath her skin, restless and alert.

Both Ezra and Damon turned at once.

“She’s at Lunar Grace’s library,” Ezra replied evenly. His eyes only brushed the figure for a fleeting second -too brief to measure the resemblance truly.

Zyrelle gave a light shrug, as if dismissing it. “Hm. Must’ve been my eyes playing tricks.”

But her wolf did not settle.

She had never mistaken one scent, one presence, for another in her life.

L

By the time dusk bled into the winter sky, Lylah had finally finished revising her draft. Guilt tugged at her as she gathered her things, glancing at Tiara and Iris.

‘I’m sorry for keeping you both waiting,’ she said softly.

Tiara waved it off instantly, already looping her arm through Lylah's. "Then you can make it up to us. Dessert." Before Lylah could protest, she found herself being pulled along.

"We'll take four menus!" Tiara declared brightly as they sat.

Iris blinked. "Shouldn't it be three?"

"My dear, that would be a tragedy," Tiara replied with a dramatic sigh. "Besides-" her grin turned wicked, "the owner of a Verdanth Black Card cannot possibly order something so modest."

Heat rushed to Lylah's cheeks.

Iris laughed, nodding in agreement. "Right. I've witnessed its power myself. We'd be insulting it otherwise."

Their laughter softened the air, dissolving the lingering tension from earlier. Soon, plates arrived, sugar and warmth weaving through their senses as easily as their conversation. They traded stories of the New Moon Celebration, voices rising and falling in easy rhythm.

Then Iris stilled slightly,

"Lylah," she said, reaching into her bag, "my brother asked me to give you something."

Lylah's brows drew together. "Your brother? Isaac Grey?"

Iris pulled it from her bag, and when she opened the box, a Verdanth rare diamond necklace lay inside- its brilliance unmistakable, its value easily equal to three grand estates in Lunaris. The gems caught the light like captured starlight, sharp and cold and breathtaking.

3:48 pm P P P P

Chapter 306

"Isaac Grey sent this to me?" Lylah's voice lowered, edged with disbelief.

Tiara stiffened.

Finished

Over time, through their late-night exchanged calls and shared whispers, she had come to know the names that mattered in Lunaris-the influential figures who circled Lylah not with warmth, but with quiet, veiled hostility.

"Isn't he one of Cora's allies?" she asked carefully. "No offense, Iris, but isn't your brother close to Thane Blackridge? He runs with the same circle as Rowan Blackfang, Cora... and the rest of her devoted allies."

Her gaze sharpened, suspicion flickering like a warning growl beneath the surface.

“Why would he suddenly be kind to Lylah?”

Iris hesitated.

For a moment, even her wolf seemed uncertain-caught between loyalty and truth.

“He was,” she admitted quietly. “But not anymore.”

Both Lylah and Tiara stilled.

Something shifted in the air.

Iris lifted her gaze, more certain now. “It didn’t happen overnight. But my brother started noticing things, small at first. The way Cora changes. Something about her behaviour is wrong,” Iris said, voice dropping. “And he finally stopped ignoring it.”

Silence pressed in around the table, heavier now.

Tiara and Lylah exchanged a look. The idea itself felt unnatural. Someone breaking free from Cora’s influence?

That wasn’t just rare.

It was unheard of.

“Then tell us,” Tiara said, leaning forward, her voice low with intensity. “Everything!”

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3:49 pm

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Chapter 307

Lylah's POV

Finished

Iris didn't hesitate. She told us everything, her voice steady even as the weight of it settled over the table. I listened in silence, my fingers loosely curled around my glass, my wolf pacing beneath my skin.

I had known Cora long enough to understand one simple truth: once she sank her claws into someone, she didn't let go. Wolves who fell under her influence rarely ever broke free. Isaac Grey had been one of them.

That alone explained the quiet hostility he had always carried toward me. Not that it had ever mattered much. As long as I wasn't standing in Cora's path, I had learned not to care how many wolves chose to kneel at her feet.

But this...

"My brother and Thane have known each other since they were pups," Iris said. "They faced a bear attack together. They would've died if Jax Stillward of Whitepine hadn't saved them."

My

wolf stirred at my father's name.

"The same Jax Cora claims as her adoptive father," Iris continued. "And they weren't alone. Logan Silver, Victor Ross, and Jude Knight were there too. Wolves bound by blood, survival, and loyalty."

A low, restrained growl slipped from Tiara at Jude's name. I couldn't blame her. The memory still lingered -sharp and unpleasant. The way he had spoken to her at the boutique that day hadn't just been careless; it had crossed a line no one should.

"Believing Cora to be Jax's cherished pup, they swore to repay that debt. They took her under their protection, shielding her, elevating her, opening doors and forging alliances that served not only her ambitions, but Rowan Blackfang as well." Iris exhaled.

"That's why Logan sided with Rowan so easily in their business ventures," I murmured.

"Yes." Iris nodded. "And Victor? He owns one of the most elite restaurants in Lunaris. Cora has never once paid a coin there."

Of course, she hadn't.

"The shift happened during the night of the Renewal," Iris said, her voice lowering. "Cora invited them all to dinner. That was when Thane and my brother began to notice it... Something was off. She wasn't just accepting their help anymore, she was expecting it."

My wolf bristled.

“And she didn’t feel guilty,” Iris added. “She kept asking for more. More power. More access. More solutions to problems she created or didn’t want to face. Everything had to serve her and her mate, Rowan.”

A silence followed, heavy and suffocating.

Then Iris looked at me.

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Chapter 307

Finished

“My brother truly regrets it,” she said, her voice tightening with urgency. “He regrets believing Cora’s lies about you. He sees clearly now, Lylah. He knows who you truly are.”

There was something raw in her expression. Hope. Fear.

“I know, Iris,” I said quietly. “I believe you. And I forgive him.”

Relief broke across her face like sunlight through storm clouds.

“Then... will you accept his gift?”

For a moment, my chest tightened.

Tiara didn’t bother hiding her displeasure—her wolf flickered sharp and protective beside me—but I gave a small nod anyway.

Iris smiled, soft and grateful.

By the time we stepped out into the cool night air, Lunar is humming softly beneath the rising winter moon, I had already made my decision.

The necklace didn’t stay with me long.

I sold it that very night.

The sum it brought in was excessive. But I didn’t let it linger in my account even for a full breath.

I transferred every coin straight to Iris.

As a gift.

Nothing more.

My phone rang almost immediately.

‘Lylah, what is this?!’ Iris’s voice came through, breathless and frantic,

I leaned lightly against the cold stone wall, “It’s your New Moon gift,” I said simply.

“What? No-Lylah, I can’t-”

“You can,” I cut in gently. “And you will.”

Silence trembled on the other end.

“And also tell Isaac not to trouble himself anymore,” I continued, my voice steady. “I never blamed him for being caught in Cora’s snare. Wolves don’t always see clearly when they’re bound by loyalty and debt. But he sees now,” I added. “And that’s worth more than any jewel he could ever offer.”

2/3

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 308

Lylah’s POV

0440

Finished

Tiara’s irritation still clung to her long after we left the bank, sharp as frost beneath her skin. I could feel it in the restless edge of her wolf, in the way her breath misted too quickly in the cold night air as we moved along the pavement.

“I heard about that restaurant, Lylah,” she muttered, her voice tight with restrained frustration. “It’s been on my list since I arrived in Lunaris! I had no idea it belonged to Victor.” Her lip curled faintly. “I won’t step foot in a place owned by someone who stood with Cora.”

“There are better places,” I said calmly. “I’ll take you somewhere else.”

That seemed to ease her, if only a little.

I led her to the restaurant Iris had taken me to before-the one that lingered strangely in my memory. The food had been exquisite, far beyond expectation... and the prices, impossibly low.’

The moment we stepped inside, warmth wrapped around us, thick with the scent of spices and slow-cooked meat.

We hadn’t even fully settled at the table when a man hurried toward us. The manager, if memory serves.

“Luna!” he greeted brightly. “It’s been too long. Welcome back!”

I stilled.

The word struck something deep, instinctive.

“Luna?” I repeated, my gaze sharpening. “How do you know that?”

His expression faltered instantly. The color drained from his face as if he’d been caught crossing a line he didn’t understand.

“I-” He swallowed hard, forcing a strained, uneasy smile. “I only learned recently that you’re a Luna. Please forgive me if I overstepped, It won’t happen again.”

I held his gaze a moment longer than necessary, my wolf pressing forward, testing him.

He lowered his eyes.

I let it go-but not the suspicion.

Beside me, Tiara had already grabbed the menu, her earlier mood shifting as curiosity took over. Her eyes flicked across the page, then narrowed.

“There are no prices listed,” she said, looking up, confused. “How are we supposed to know what we’re spending?”

The manager straightened quickly. “That’s intentional, lady. In celebration of the New Moon, our owner has decided that all guests dine free of charge.”

Chapter 308

Finished

Tiara blinked.

Then blinked again.

“You’re serious?” she demanded.

“Yes, lady.”

Her eyes lit up instantly, delight overriding caution. “Then I’ll have this, and this, and this.”

She began ordering with enthusiasm, pointing rapidly at the menu.

“Tiara,” I tried to interrupt, a quiet warning threading my voice.

Something wasn’t right.

Last time I visited with Iris, the prices had already been suspiciously low. And now it was free? No business runs like this without a reason. And reasons like this always came with strings.

My instincts sharpened, a low hum building beneath my ribs.

Without hesitation, I reached for my phone and called Ezra.

The line barely rang once.

Before I could speak, his voice came through—calm and smooth as if he’d been expecting me.

“How’s the dinner?”

My breath caught.

“Order whatever you want,” he continued easily. “Make sure Tiara does the same. Yesterday you mentioned craving shrimp soup, right? It’s available tonight. But if it isn’t, just ask. They’ll prepare it for you.”

Silence swallowed me whole.

How did he know where I was?

What was I doing right now?

But I swallowed my questions.

“...Alright,” I said quietly.

Our food arrived soon after, each dish steaming and fragrant, arranged with perfection. The rich aromas curled through the air, enough to make Tiara light up instantly, her earlier frustration melting into bright, unrestrained delight.

But my attention settled elsewhere.

The shrimp soup.

2/3

Chapter 308

Finished

It sat before me, its scent warm and achingly familiar-exactly the way I liked it. The very thing I hadn't ordered. The very thing no one here should have known I wanted.

A quiet pause settled in my chest.

Ezra.

Of course.

A slow exhale slipped past my lips, something between disbelief and reluctant amusement. This too- perfect place suddenly made a different kind of sense. My fingers brushed lightly against the edge of the bowl, warmth seeping into my skin as a faint smile tugged at my lips despite myself.

As if it had reached into my thoughts, and pulled the craving free.

I shook my head, softer now.

No.

Not my thoughts.

An order.

Who else could it have come from... if not my mate?

790

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B

3/3

3:49 pm P P P P

The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

Chapter 309

3rd Person's POV

0:5

Finished

When Lylah returned to the penthouse, a restless energy clung to her, bright and electric beneath her skin. So the moment her gaze landed on Ezra-lounging with infuriating ease in one of the armchairs-she crossed the room without hesitation.

Her fist struck his shoulder, then his chest. Light blows. Harmless.

Ezra laughed, the sound low and warm, catching her wrists with effortless strength before she could land another. "So this is the welcome my Luna gives me after an entire day apart?"

Her eyes flashed, her wolf stirring just beneath the surface. "I figured it out." Her voice came quick, breath uneven with agitation. "That restaurant-the one with the absurdly low prices, the one that doesn't make sense-that's yours. You built it. You run it!"

Ezra said nothing.

"That place runs at a loss," she pressed, stepping closer, her presence pushing against his like a rising tide. "You don't need it. It doesn't even benefit you. So why?" Her voice cracked with something deeper than anger. "Why would you do something like that for my sake?"

Silence stretched between them, thick and deliberate.

Then Ezra exhaled, his gaze settling on her with a quiet intensity.

"To make sure you eat properly."

Lylah faltered. "W-what?"

His voice dropped, deeper now, carrying the weight of something long decided. “Do you remember our agreement?”

Her wolf stilled.

“We said two years,” he continued. “After that, we walk away into our separate lives. Ending our ties.”

The air shifted, colder somehow.

“If that day came,” Ezra went on, his grip tightening ever so slightly around her hands, “you wouldn’t let me come near you again. I know you, Lylah.”

Something sharp flickered through her chest.

“So tell me, how else was I supposed to make sure you took care of yourself?”

Her lips parted, but no words came.

“I can order food,” she said finally, though the argument sounded fragile even to her own ears.

Ezra’s expression didn’t change. “And trust that it’s always prepared properly? Does it meet the standards

1/3

3:49 pm P P pp.

Chapter 309

9431

Finished

your body needs?” His tone was calm, but firm. “Over time, that kind of neglect catches up. I won’t allow

that.”

Understanding dawned slowly-and with it, something far heavier. “And so you built that? A business that will drain your resources for years. Decades, even?”

Ezra’s answer was quiet. “It’s the least I could do.”

The least.

The words lingered between them, heavier than they had any right to be.

Parting. Two years. A contract that was never meant to last.

Back then, Lylah had told herself that when the time came, Ezra would walk away without looking back. That she would fade into nothing more than a distant memory within the Alpha's world.

But now...

Now she saw the truth.

4

That same fear had rooted itself inside him far deeper than she had ever imagined. Deep enough that he had already begun preparing a future for her-taking steps ahead, building something that would outlast their bond... just to care for her from a distance.

The realization twisted painfully in her chest.

All this time, she thought she was the only one quietly bracing for the end.

She was wrong.

"I don't like that plan," Lylah said suddenly, her voice unsteady but firm.

Her hands pressed against him as she climbed onto his lap, closing the distance between them as if she could erase every word they had ever said about parting.

"You're wrong, Ezra. Very wrong. I would never shut you out. I'd still let you come near me whenever you wanted. So whatever plan you had with that restaurant..." her tone gentler now, but no less resolute, "let it go."

Ezra didn't hesitate.

"Of course," he murmured, his arms wrapping around her instantly, pulling her close as though he had been waiting for those words. "It was already meaningless."

His face dipped into her hair, inhaling her scent slowly.

"We're not separating," His hold tightened, protective, certain. "And now I can watch over everything myself and make sure you always have the best."

They stayed like that for a long while, wrapped in shared warmth while the night pressed cold against the glass beyond them.

2/3

:49 pm P PPP.

Chapter 309

Later, the penthouse settled into a quieter rhythm.

Finished

Lylah sat in the living room, papers spread before her as she worked, the soft scratch of pen against page the only sound for a time. Ezra remained beside her.

As she spoke, recounting the events of the day-about Iris' brother, Thane Blackridge, the others, and the web Cora had spun-his expression darkened gradually, shadowed by something colder.

"Loyalty. Repaying a debt. All of it existed only in their minds." A faint scoff left him. "They clung to those ideals so tightly they forgot the most important instinct; the ability to discern truth from deception. And in doing so they gave everything to the wrong person."

3/3

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

Chapter 310

3rd Person's POV

It wasn't quite anger that shadowed Ezra's face.

VPH

46

Finished

This was different. Quieter. Heavier. Something that settled deep in the chest and refused to move.

Sadness,

The realization made something in her chest tighten. Her wolf stirred uneasily, brushing against that emotion as if it, too, could sense the weight behind it. Slowly, she reached for him, her hands sliding up his arms, grounding both of them.

“I told you,” she said softly, searching his gaze. “Whatever Cora received, whatever was supposed to be mine, it doesn’t leave me lacking. I don’t feel like I’ve lost anything.”

She meant it. Or at least, she needed him to believe she did.

Lylah exhaled, then added, quieter still, “Isaac tried to give me something too. A gift.”

Ezra’s expression sharpened at once. “Isaac Grey?” His voice lowered. “What kind of gift?”

“Yes. A necklace,” she admitted. “For the New Moon celebration. I didn’t keep it, though. I gave it to Iris right away.”

He nodded, but she didn’t miss it-the flicker behind his eyes. Calculating. Remembering.

Something in the air shifted.

The next morning came too quickly.

Lylah jolted awake at the first chime of her alarm, her instincts snapping her upright before her thoughts could catch up. Her hand moved automatically across the bed, searching for warmth, but found only cool sheets. Ezra had

gone.

A faint frown touched her lips, but then something else caught her attention.

A glimmer.

Her gaze dropped, and her breath hitched. Spread across the bed was a cascade of diamonds. A full set. Necklace, earrings, bracelet, each piece catching the early light like shards of frozen moonlight. Her wolf stirred sharply, alert, instincts prickling under her skin.

“Ezra...?” she called, still staring. “Why is there a full set of diamonds on our bed?”

1/3

15:46 Mon, Apr 20

Chapter 310

VPN

Finished

He appeared in the doorway as if summoned, leaning casually against the frame, utterly unbothered.

“I forgot,” Ezra said, voice even. “I haven’t given you anything for the New Moon celebration. And I let someone else do it first.”

There it was.

That quiet edge beneath his tone.

“Remind me next year, Lylah,” he added, almost lightly. “I don’t intend to let that happen again.”

Lylah looked back at the diamonds, their brilliance almost blinding. Even without knowing their worth, she could feel it-wealth, power, intent-all woven into every facet, far beyond anything Isaac had offered yesterday.

Slowly, she lifted her gaze to him. “You’re jealous?” Her lips curved faintly, disbelieving. “Because of Iris’ brother?” Her eyes flickered back to the set. “So you answered with something bigger. A full set.”

He didn’t reply.

But he didn’t need to.

The faint curve of his mouth-restrained, almost amused-told her everything.

And despite herself, Lylah felt warmth bloom in her chest.

By afternoon, Lunar Grace grounds thrummed with life. The treatment center carried its usual sterile scent. Voices, footsteps, the hum of werewolves in motion. After finishing her discussion with Clark Grimwood about her draft, Lylah made her way toward her locker, thoughts still tangled in revisions and notes,

When a familiar voice cut through the corridor.

“I heard Professor Vale laughing from inside his office,” Someone said, her tone bright with curiosity. “What happened?”

“What else?” another voice chimed in. “He must’ve loved Cora’s paper. Right, Cora?”

Lylah slowed.

Ahead, Cora stood surrounded by her usual circle, basking in attention like it was her natural state. Cora lifted her hand, fanning herself lightly-but the movement was deliberate.

2/3

15:46 Mon, Apr 20

Chapter 310

The bracelet on her wrist caught the light, shimmering for all to see.

VPN

46

“Three sleepless nights refining it,” she said with a soft laugh. “Even Alpha Rowan got so worried. He brought drinks to my room and even offered to feed me himself.”

A chorus of gasps followed.

Finished

“And don’t tell me,” her friend added, eyes gleaming with excitement, “he gave you that bracelet as a reward? “It’s stunning! Truly, Cora... how many times do I have to say it? I envy you so much. Your mate adores you. You have a brilliant mind. Your life is too perfect.”

Cora smiled, satisfied.

“Professor Vale hasn’t called me in yet,” she said, tilting her chin slightly. “But I already know I didn’t disappoint him. I never do anyway.”

She flicked her pale hair over her shoulder, strands catching the light like fresh snow, and then her gaze shifted.

Locked on Lylah.

◦

820

3/3

15:46 Mon, Apr 20

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