

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

Chapter 31

Lylah's POV

Before I could force the thought away, the door opened. Alpha Ezra stood there.

A gasp escaped me before I could stop it.

“Alpha 1—I’m sorry-”

10

Finished

He said nothing as he walked past me, unhurried, unbothered. My heart hammered painfully against my

ribs.

He couldn't see me. He didn't know I was standing there.

Right?

Either way, this was my fault.

“Alpha, I didn't mean to eavesdrop-

“I'll make breakfast,” he cut in calmly, his tone warm, nothing like the cold edge I'd heard moments ago. “What would you like to eat?”

“No. Alpha. Let me take care of it for both of us.”

“Really?” A faint amusement touched his voice. “I thought cooking wasn't your strength.”

He was already dressed, impeccably elegant, tinted glasses perched flawlessly in place. His scent-soap layered with the unmistakable pull of his pheromones—slid over me, awakening Selistine beneath my

skin.

“Maybe it won’t be as refined as what your maids prepare.” I said, “but let me try.”

“Alright.”

He guided me into the kitchen. Like the rest of the penthouse, it was pristine–sleek, advanced, almost unreal. Machines hummed softly, designed to clean, cook, and prepare meals with mechanical precision.

“You usually handle meals yourself?” I asked.

Damon wasn’t staying here, and no attendants were lingering in the shadows as I’d expected from an Alpha of his rank.

“Yes.” Alpha Ezra retrieved ingredients from the refrigerator with practiced ease. “I moved out of Moonclaw’s territory and my family’s estate without bringing maids. I didn’t want them. Bambi and my other inventions manage the daily necessities. Damon comes by occasionally to restock supplies when I don’t have the time.”

I hesitated. “Then what about your pack? Who governs in your absence?”

“I still return regularly.” His voice was steady. “The council handles routine matters. Trade and business

1:20 pm

Chapter 31

046

Finished

remain under my family’s supervision and are monitored remotely. Moonclaw thrives on stability, but after a while, it became dull for me.”

He paused briefly, as if weighing the truth.

“I wanted a challenge. It’s been three years since I stepped away and tried something new.”

My jaw nearly dropped. Thank the Moon he couldn’t see my expression.

This Alpha was far more restless, far more daring than I had imagined.

When he reached for the pan. I instinctively stopped him “Let me do it.”

His hand closed over mine, large, warm, and steady. Power rolled through the contact, sharp and electric. Selestine bristled, responding instantly to his touch.

“Don’t,” he said quietly. “I brought you here as my mate. Let me take care of you.”

Heat rushed to my face.

Alpha Ezra moved with ease, cooking as though this, too, was something he had mastered through discipline rather than habit.

A question gnawed at me, refusing to stay silent.

“Alpha... your grandfather.” I began carefully. “Why didn’t you show him our mating license? Why not tell him you have a Luna now? Even if this bond is temporary, even if it isn’t what they expected, it might have eased things.”

“I didn’t make you my Luna to appease them.”

My hands continued slicing butter, but his words failed to sink in at first.

“I’m sorry,” I said softly. “What did you say?”

“Our bond isn’t a tool to quiet my family. Don’t think like that.”

“Then this mating benefits me more than you,” I said, unable to stop myself. “That isn’t fair, Alpha. If you have another purpose, another reason, just tell me. I’ll help you.”

He turned toward me fully.

“Calling me Alpha,” he said, voice low, “when you are my Luna now, is inappropriate. Use my name.”

My breath hitched. “E-Ezra.

“Good.” The word rumbled with approval. “Breakfast is ready, Lylah. Let’s eat together.”

The way my name rolled from his tongue sent a shiver crawling down my spine.

Two more years... could I ever get used to this?

After we sat down, Ezra spoke again.

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Chapter 31

Finished

“My family is fussy and demanding, they’ve always been so. It’s one of the reasons I chose to step away and rule from a distance. I’m telling you now so you won’t be caught off guard later.”

He paused, letting the words settle.

“You’re right,” he continued, a faint edge of amusement in his voice. “Perhaps showing them our photo. will quiet their complaints.”

214

1:20 pm

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.

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

Chapter 32

0191

Finished

3rd Person’s POV

At Ironcrest Pack, within the Moonrow family estate, a private family dinner unfolded beneath the soft glow of moonfire sconces. Alpha Eldric and Luna Daia had extended a personal invitation to Alpha Rowan, and he had accepted without hesitation.

So after the Accord Gathering concluded and the visiting Alphas returned to their respective territories, they traveled onward to Ironcrest for this intimate banquet.

“I’m so sad,” Luna Daia murmured after their discussion drifted away from pack affairs. “I raised my dear Cora for five short years, and now she must leave us again.”

Cora reached across the table, her fingers curling around her mother’s hand. “Mother, Lunar is isn’t far. And you know I chose Lunar Grace to pursue my dream. Please don’t be sad.”

Daia sighed, eyes shimmering. “Even so, I doubt I’ll sleep peacefully.”

“Daia, you’re worrying too much.” Eldric said gently, “Cora is no longer our little daughter. When Orion takes his place as Ironcrest’s Alpha, she will carry our family’s name beyond these borders. We have always wanted her to be known throughout Verdanth. This path is vital to her future.”

“We’ll visit whenever we can,” Daia added, squeezing Cora’s hand as if memorizing its warmth.

“Thank you, Mother, Father,” Cora said softly. “I’m so blessed to have parents like you.”

“You are our only daughter,” Daia replied, smiling “Of course we’ll do anything for you.”

Quiet laughter rippled around the table.

Even Orion chuckled—until he let out a playful grunt, “You’re so focused on Cora you’ve forgotten you still have a son. Besides, she won’t be alone. Alpha Rowan won’t allow anything bad to happen to her.”

Rowan inclined his head, offering a polite smile.

“You’ll only ruin their intimacy if you visit too often,” Orion added, grinning.

“Orion!” Cora snapped, heat rushing to her cheeks. “Mind your inappropriate words!”

Laughter rippled through the air, lighter this time, and Cora’s blush only deepened.

From the outside, they looked like the perfect family—whole, with no one missing.

“I’m only stating facts,” Orion said, unrepentant. “Alpha Rowan is expanding Corlis Prime’s project with Lunaris’s most renowned engineers. Of course you two will be staying in the same house.”

“Enough,” Eldric interrupted smoothly, turning his attention to Rowan. “I’ve heard rumors of a young tech engineer who appeared in Lamaris two years ago. Already dominating the market. No one knows his pack, rank, or bloodline—but his talent is said to be extraordinary. His name is Riven.”

“I’m aware,” Rowan replied calmly. “I’ve studied this person.”

1:20 pm

Chapter 32

649

Finished

He had done so quietly, without drawing attention.

Rowan had always been confident in his field. Engineers with obscure origins or unnamed packs had never once made him feel threatened.

Yet this was the first time he found himself genuinely awed by another mind.

Rowan felt an overwhelming urge to collaborate with him. Somewhere along the way, admiration took root. Without noticing it, he had become an admirer of Riven's work.

Many wolves shared the same name. Rowan knew better than to confuse him with the one who had tried -more than once- to reach Lylah.

"When I meet him I'll invite him to collaborate on the project," Rowan said, voice sure, "With my pack's reputation, I doubt he'll refuse. It will help elevate his name from the shadows."

Eldric nodded approvingly. "Then I pray Corlis Prime and your pack continue to rise in prominence."

They lifted their glasses together.

Crystal clinks echoed through the chamber.

"You don't need to worry," Rowan added, turning to Luna Daia. "While Cora is in Lunar, she will be under my protection."

Daia smiled, "Thank you, Alpha Rowan."

Suddenly, Orion spoke again. One sentence was all it took to freeze the room.

"That jinx," he said coldly, his voice edged with restrained hostility. "She isn't planning to follow Cora to Lunar and stir up trouble again, is she?"

214

1:20 pm

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

0191

Finished

Rowan's POV

The table fell into a brittle stillness, but inside me, anger burned-hot and alive-rekindled by the memory of Lylah's defiance at the boutique yesterday.

Cora laughed softly. "Don't worry, Orion. Lylah has always liked to plan. I'm sure she's already spun some little scheme of her own. Whatever path she's chosen, let's pray she's content enough so she doesn't feel compelled to bare her fangs for attention."

"Plans?" Orion scoffed, lifting a brow. "She's never stood on her own a day in her life. As a pup, she was coddled by our Father and Mother, fed from the pack's hand. After that, she clung to Alpha Rowan's shadow like a leech. There's no way she's capable of making plans."

"If she continues roaming like a rogue, she'll disgrace the Pack's name," Daia said coolly. "Better to give her a purse of gold and exile her from Verdanth entirely."

I said nothing.

But my wolf, Nightborne, stirred violently, his growl coiling through my veins, bristling at every insult thrown in Lylah's name.

"All right, enough," Cora said gently, taking control of the table as if it belonged to her. "There's something more important I want to discuss."

"Go on, darling," Eldric replied.

"About Lylah and me being switched at birth," Cora continued, her voice lowering. "Only Ironcrest and a handful of outsiders know the truth. If Lylah has truly fled and carries this tale into Lunaris, it could turn against us both. I don't want *to* become a target of mockery again."

Eldric leaned back, fingers steepled, considering.

"I'll handle it. I'll see that such gutter gossip never takes root." After a brief pause, he continued, voice hardening. "An official declaration will be made that Lylah was only ever an adopted pup. No one will dare harass you again."

Something snapped.

I rose abruptly, my chair scraping harshly against the stone floor.

"Excuse me," I said, my voice clipped and cold. "I need to return to Blackfang immediately. There's **an** urgent meeting with the Corlis Prime team."

“Oh,” Eldric said mildly. “That’s unfortunate. Thank you for coming, Alpha Rowan.”

“I’ll stay here a bit longer with Mother and Father,” Cora added. “I’ll see you later.”

I nodded once and left before the room could suffocate me further.

Outside, the night air did little to cool the rage vibrating beneath my skin. Before returning to Blackfang, I

1/3

1:20 pm

Chapter 33

made a detour.

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Finished

I stopped an Omega passing through the grounds and pressed far more gold into his palm than necessary.

“Flowers,” I ordered. “And something sweet.”

I leaned against my car as I waited, Nightborne pacing restlessly inside me.

When the Omega returned, arms full, I took the items without comment.

I was reaching for the car door when a familiar, irritating voice stopped me.

“You bought gifts for Lylah, Alpha?” Orion asked incredulously. “After she disgraced herself at the boutique, snapping like a feral thing?”

The growl tore from my chest before I could stop it.

“Watch your tongue.”

He took a step back, startled, but pushed on. “Why are you defending her now? She’s nothing but a parasite who stole Cora’s-”

“She is your sister,” I cut in sharply, my eyes flaring with gold light. “Before Cora ever set foot here, you clung to her. You begged her to knit your winter coats when the cold moons came. Speak of her that way again and you will regret it.”

I didn’t wait for his reply. I got into the car and left.

By the time I reached Blackfang, midnight had already claimed the sky. I headed straight for my estate and then for Lylah's wing.

The door to her room was still sealed.

"Lylah," I called, keeping my voice measured. "I brought you something."

Gifts—no matter how small—always softened her. Always earned me at least a smile.

"Open the door."

Nothing.

No scent. No heartbeat brushing against my awareness.

Unease crawled up my spine.

"Lylah!" I snapped, patience fraying. I set the flowers on the nightstand and drew on Nightborne's strength, the power surging through my muscles.

I slammed my shoulder into the door.

Wood cracked. The lock gave way.

"Lylah!" I burst inside. "You think this is funny? Playing silent games with me? You've grown damned

1:20 pm

Chapter 33

petty—"

The words died in my throat.

The room was empty. Hollow.

As if her presence had been torn from it—gone not minutes or hours ago, but long before tonight.

214

1

Finished

Ruby Walker

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

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 34

Lylah's POV

Finished

After breakfast, I handed Alpha Ezra one of the photos we'd taken at City Hall yesterday. I hope that it might soften the strain between him and his grandfather, if only a little.

I found him reclining in the living room, his long legs stretched out, Bambi stationed obediently before him like a loyal sentinel.

'Ezra,' I said, steadying myself. 'I'm going to City Hall today to finish processing my transfer documents.'

He turned his head slightly in my direction, his posture relaxed but attentive. 'Alright. Bambi,' he called.

'Yes, Daddy?!'

'Call Damon. Tell him to be here in five minutes. Immediately.'

Without hesitation, Bambi whirred away to carry out the command.

I frowned. 'I don't think that's necessary. I can go on my own.'

It felt wrong to trouble him over something so trivial.

'Are you sure?' Ezra said calmly. 'The transfer procedures here aren't the same as Blackfang's. And you don't know the wolves in Lunaris yet. You'll be uncomfortable, like yesterday.'

There was no mockery in his voice, no judgment. And yet heat crept up my cheeks all the same.

‘Alright, Ezra.’

Still, I made a quiet vow to myself. I would learn the customs here. Learn the paths, the faces, the inspooken rules of this land,

Five minutes later, Damon drove me toward Lunaris City Hall, a short distance from the residence. The moment the car door opened, I froze.

‘Welcome, Luna! We’re honored to have you again!’

Is there anything I can assist you with, Luna?’

“She’s here to finalize her document transfer—how could you forget?”

So many voices. So many smiles. The staff greeted me with radiant expressions and bowed heads. Their warmth felt genuine but unfamiliar. I wasn’t used to being treated as someone... revered.

They ushered me inside, guiding me through the halls as the process began.

Damon stayed close, explaining procedures in a low voice, his presence grounding me. Alpha Ezra had been right. I was still learning how to stand firmly in a new territory,

My records from Blackfang arrived almost instantly. Thanks to Ezra’s reach, the transfer was swift.

1:20 **pm**

Chapter 34

*Finished

When we stepped back outside, I turned to Damon. “Thank you for helping me.”

“You don’t need to thank me, Luna. It’s my duty.”

I hesitated, then stopped walking. “There’s something I want to ask about my mate.” I met his gaze. “And don’t try to hide anything. As Alpha Ezra’s mate in the law’s eyes, I have the right to know.”

Damon studied me for a moment before nodding. “Very well, if you really wish to understand.”

“Since we arrived, the wolves of Lunaris have treated us with immense respect.” I said slowly, “Is it only because of Alpha Ezra’s power? And how has his identity remained hidden from other Packs?”

“It isn’t solely because he is the Alpha of Moonclaw,” Damon replied. “Alpha Ezra is respected here for who he is—his mind, his innovations, his mastery over technology. His skills as a tech engineer have transformed this region. The elders and influential figures of Lunaris have honored him long before you arrived.”

My breath caught.

centuries.

“And as for his anonymity,” Damon continued, “the bond between Moonclaw and Lunaris spans Since his ascension, Alpha Ezra has strengthened Lunaris through security, infrastructure, and financial support. He elevated this land without demanding submission.”

So that was it.

Lunaris existed outside the rule of any Pack. Their obedience was not forged by fear of Moonclaw’s power, but by obligation and gratitude. Respect freely given, not enforced.

“They ensure Alpha Ezra’s true identity remains hidden, so the other Packs know him only as Riven,” Damon added quietly.

One final question burned in my chest.

“Then... when did Alpha Ezra’s vision become impaired?”

Damon’s expression darkened, just slightly.

“...Only a few months ago.”

214

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

Chapter 35

040

Finished

3rd Person’s POV

Within the Alpha's grand estate of Moonclaw Pack, a surge of raw, jubilant energy filled one of the council chambers. Spiced wine was raised high, its rich aroma curling through the air as it mingled with the crackle of the great hearth fire.

"It's true!" Vargan bellowed, his voice booming as he held up the glowing tablet for the assembled council to see. "He didn't lie! My stone-hearted grandson finally has a Luna!"

Gasps rippled through the room.

"After twenty-eight full-moon cycles of his life," Vargan continued, pride blazing in his eyes, "Ezra has finally found his mate!"

The council erupted at once, excitement rolling through them like a shared pulse.

"Show her to us, Master Vargan!" one elder demanded eagerly. "Let us see our Luna!"

Vargan tapped the screen, muttering under his breath.

He had cursed Ezra's obsession with technology ever since the boy was barely grown, insisting he focus on dominance, territory, and trade like a proper Alpha. And yet, Ezra's innovations had reshaped Moonclaw.

Distance meant nothing now; communication flowed as swiftly as a mind-link.

The screen flickered to life—Ezra's broad shoulders filled the frame.

Ezra, you insolent!" Vargan roared. "Why is your Luna's face cut from the image you sent? We don't care about you—we want *to* see her!"

"I did it intentionally," Ezra replied coolly. "My Luna is not a spectacle for the council."

Vargan turned the volume up so every elder could hear.

"Bah. Protective already," he chuckled, a teasing smirk tugging at his lips.

"I'll present her when the time is right."

"The right time?" Vargan barked. "You've hidden her from all of us and you're still waiting?"

"I didn't hide her. We bound ourselves the moment we met." Ezra's gaze sharpened. "But don't romanticize it. This is not some fated love story you've been fantasizing about. My Luna and I entered a mating contract for two years."

Silence crashed down.

Vargan's jaw slackened. The future he'd already envisioned—pups filling the halls, grand ceremonies—shattered in an instant.

“So she can leave you when it ends?” Vargan snapped. “You truly are useless, Ezra.”

1/2

1:20 pm

Chapter 35

Finished

Yet even as he scoffed, Vargan knew better. He had raised the boy himself. Ezra was ruthless in his standards, unforgiving in his choices.

If he had accepted this woman—even under contract—then she had already pierced his iron discipline.

“At least now you’ll stop parading females in front of me,” Ezra said coldly. “And don’t interfere. My Luna **is** shy. She’s easily overwhelmed.”

“Shy?” Vargan scoffed. “Or perhaps she’s intimidated by an Alpha with the emotional range of a glacier.” He laughed. “You spend your life buried in ledgers and code. I will teach you how to court a woman—”

The screen went dark.

Ezra had ended the call.

“This arrogant whelp!” Vargan growled.

Only then did the council release the breath they hadn’t realized they were holding.

Despite everything, smiles lingered on their faces.

“Master Vargan,” one elder ventured carefully, “are you suggesting Alpha Ezra should seduce his Luna?”

“Am I wrong?” Vargan snorted. “They are mates! His face may buy him patience for now, but if he keeps acting like a cold-blooded tyrant, that girl will flee before the two years are up.” His eyes gleamed. “He needs pressure.”

“But Alpha warned you not to interfere,” another councilor said nervously. “If you anger him, you may frighten the Luna away.”

Vargan stroked his beard, eyes narrowing thoughtfully.

“I’ve dealt with Ezra’s temper his entire life,” he said at last. “This **is** nothing.”

He leaned back, a slow, cunning smile spreading across his face.

“Of course, she would recoil if I approached her as the Alpha’s elder,” he mused. “But who said I’d go **as** myself?”

214

212

1:20 pm

6:0

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

My office was thick with the stench of fear-submissive pheromones leaking from every member of the Corlis Prime team. Their bowed heads and darting gazes scraped against my temper until it burned like hot coals under my skin.

Nightborne stirred, urging me to bare my fangs, to let my Alpha voice tear through the room once more.

Before I could unleash it, Gavriel stepped closer,

“Alpha,” he said carefully, “have some mercy. The first draft was flawless, there are no revisions needed. They surpassed the target. Do you really need to put them through another round?”

He hesitated, then lowered his voice. “You’re angry. Is this about Lylah again?”

The mention of her name made my chest tighten.

Last night, I’d nearly sent my warriors to tear through every corner of Blackfang—inside the territory and beyond it—just to drag her back.

Gavriel had stopped me, warning that chasing her now would only feed her defiance. He'd said she was likely hiding at a friend's den.

"This is the first time she's sulking for this long," I growled. "The first time she's pushed me this far."

"Alpha... if this **is** truly troubling you," Gavriel said slowly, "then go straight to her hiding place. Tiara, the girl she's close to. I can give you the address. She lives in the Packhouse."

My gaze snapped to him. "You're certain Lylah is there?"

"Yes. Since Lylah stepped into Blackfang territory, she's had very few allies. That girl is the closest thing she has to family."

He's right. Where else would Lylah run, if not to Tiara's den?

"Fine," I said coldly. "I'll go."

I grabbed my keys and strode out. The moment the door closed behind me, I heard a collective exhale- prayers muttered in my wake.

I slid into my car and was about to start the engine when my phone rang.

"Rowan," Cora's voice chimed sweetly, "I'll be in your office shortly. Wait for me."

"What-" I barely had time to react before the passenger door opened and someone slipped inside.

"Cora?"

"Surprise," she said brightly, her eyes twinkling beneath a radiant smile. "I told you I'd be here soon. You look like you're in a hurry. Going somewhere?"

1:20 pm

Chapter 36

"No." I said, too quickly.

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Finished

"Then drive me to Mr. Stone's office at Blackfang College, please." Her voice softened deliberately. "He helped smooth my admission to Lunar Grace. I just need to collect a few files."

She paused, glancing at me from beneath her lashes. “I don’t like meeting another man without your knowledge.”

The tension in my chest eased instantly. My wolf settled.

Cora’s consideration was soothing. Rare. I was fortunate to have a woman who respected boundaries, who never challenged my authority or the bond between us. If only all women understood their place as clearly **as** she did.

“Alright,” I said. “Let’s go.”

She leaned over and kissed my cheek. “Rowan, I love you.”

I smiled as I started the car.

Blackfang College was unusually quiet when we arrived—classes must have been on break. Cora asked me to wait while she ran upstairs.

I leaned against the car, my senses expanding, scanning the area.

Then the whispers started.

“What is Alpha Rowan doing here?”

“I don’t know. I never see him away from his company.”

“Right? He’s been ruling from the shadows for years. We’re lucky to even glimpse him.”

Three

young students passed by, their scents spiking with excitement, faces flushed crimson.

And then,

My gaze locked onto a familiar glint.

A bracelet.

I moved before thought could catch up—faster than sight, faster than breath.

“A—Alpha?” the girl gasped as I seized her wrist, her body trembling under my grip.

I lifted her hand, the glint of gemstone catching the light.

My wolf surged, fury roaring through my veins.

“How dare you?” My fingers tightened. “This bracelet belongs to Lylah. And you thought you could steal

from what is mine?”

1:20 pm

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 37

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 37

Rowan’s POV

Finished

“Stole?” she whispered, pain flashing through her eyes. “I didn’t steal anything. I bought it at the pack flea

market.”

The lie hit me like an insult to my blood.

“Liar. This bracelet is one of a kind,” I growled, my alpha power rippling outward, forcing the weaker wolves nearby to stiffen. “Custom-crafted by Blackfang’s finest jeweler. I gave it to Lylah for her birthday.” My voice dropped, lethal. “How does something like that end up on a flea table?”

It didn’t make sense. I wouldn’t allow it to.

I had never seen Lylah wear it after the day I gave it to her—but I knew she treasured it. I knew she kept it in her jewelry box, taking it out at night, admiring it in quiet moments she thought I didn’t notice.

“Alpha, you’re mistaken,” another student said carefully, stepping forward under the weight of my aura. “There’s no way that piece is the same as Lady Lylah’s. We bought these at the market nearly

three weeks ago.” She lifted her emerald necklace. “They sell cheaply for students like us who can’t afford luxury. There’s no way something belonging to the Alpha’s woman would be priced so low.”

Her words barely reached me.

Because I recognized the necklace.

I had given that to Lylah too. Long before the bracelet. A gift chosen during a rare moment when I believed she would keep it forever.

Cold realization crept through my veins.

Something was very, very wrong.

“What’s going on here?” Cora demanded as she pushed through the crowd, her scent sharp with alarm. “Why is everyone gathered around Alpha Rowan?”

I didn’t answer.

I turned and walked straight past them, my strides long, unforgiving.

“Rowan! Wait! What happened?” Cora called, struggling to keep up.

I didn’t slow down. I got into my car, the engine roaring in response to my agitation.

I drove like a wolf chasing prey.

The estate greeted me with unbearable stillness.

I climbed the stairs. Lylah’s room was exactly as it had been the day before—the bed perfectly made, the vanity untouched.

1:20 pm

Chapter 37

I opened the wardrobe.

Half of her clothes were gone.

Finished

Only the costly pieces were left behind—the ones I had bought for her. Coats and gowns worth fortunes. Nothing she had ever chosen on her own.

I went straight to her jewelry box.

Empty.

“Lylah!” I snarled into the silence. “You sold everything I gave you? For scraps? For nothing?”

I pulled out my phone. Message after message unread. I hit the call button.

The line didn’t even ring. She had blocked me.

A sharp unease cut through my chest.

The surveillance.

I strode into the monitoring room and pulled up the recording for her bedroom.

Dark.

She had disabled it.

“Lylah,” I muttered, fury and something dangerously close to panic threading my voice, “this isn’t funny. I don’t like your games.”

Outside, I cornered one of the maids and demanded the address of Lylah’s part-time job. I had never asked before, had never wanted to know. The idea of my woman working a menial job when I could provide her with everything had always scraped against my pride.

It wounded my alpha ego more than I cared to admit.

The restaurant was crowded when I arrived.

I stormed inside.

“Alpha!” Gavriel looked up in surprise. The Corlis Prima team sat with him, halfway through their meal. “Alpha what happened?”

“Where is Lylah?” I barked at the nearest waitress.

“S–she quit a long time ago, Alpha.”

My jaw tightened.

“She’s still missing?” Gavriel asked quietly.

“Call her,” I said coldly. “She won’t answer my confidants or me, but she worked with you. **Make** the call.

Now.”

1:20 pm

Chapter 37

10

Finished

With shaking hands, she dialed.

It rang once.

“Maia? Is that you?” Lylah’s voice came through the phone.

I snatched it..

“Where the hell are you?”

Silence—then the line went dead. Lylah hung up the moment she heard me.

The phone creaked in my grip.

“By Selene,” Gavriel muttered. “She’s pushing this too far.”

“Gavriel,” I said, my patience snapping like a frayed leash. “I have a job for you.”

He straightened immediately.

“Lylah sold every gift I gave her,” I growled. “Dumped them into the flea market like they meant nothing.” My eyes burned with fury and something darker beneath it. “I want them all back. Every single item. I’ll send you the list. Buy them all, whatever the cost.”

214

目 1

3/3

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 38

Lylah's POV

D

Finished

The penthouse lay quiet in the pale hush of early morning. I moved soundlessly toward the kitchen, already planning breakfast, only to halt when I saw Alpha Ezra seated at the table.

The spread before him was excessive. Plates, bowls, covered trays, and far too much food for two people.

“Alpha-” I corrected myself quickly. “I mean, Ezra. Good morning.”

“Good morning, Lylah.” His gaze lifted to me, “Sit.”

I obeyed without thinking.

“How did the document process go?” he asked.

“It went smoothly. Thank you for everything

My eyes drifted back to the food. The aroma was rich, almost intoxicating, and the presentation flawless. Too flawless. Each dish looked identical to something out of a luxury catalogue.

“You woke up early just to make all of them?” I frowned. “Please don’t do that again. I told you I’ll handle our meals.”

A faint crease appeared between his brows. “Who said I woke up early?”

I blinked.

“With their assistance,” he continued calmly, “all I needed to do was give an order.”

Bambi. And his other creations.

Ah. I remembered then, he'd mentioned they had been managing his meals all this time. His inventions had quietly replaced what should have been Omega's care, Pack's care.

"You should try it," Ezra said.

I nodded, a strange flutter of curiosity stirring inside me. I had never eaten food prepared entirely by machines before.

I ladled soup into my bowl and raised the spoon to my lips.

The moment it touched my tongue, my body went still.

"Well?" Ezra asked. "How does it taste?"

The silence stretches.

"Lylah? Are you still here?"

I forced myself to swallow. "Y-yes." I reached for a tissue, wiping my mouth too quickly.

1/3

1:20 pm

Chapter 38

Finished

"The food displeased you," he said quietly. It wasn't a question.

I shook my head at once. "No, it's good. Really."

His gaze hardened, Alpha pressure pressing against my chest. "You're lying."

I hesitated, fingers tightening around the napkin. "It's just a little too salty for me. That's all."

"Then try the steak. And the pasta."

I nodded and did as he asked, giving the other two dishes another chance.

It made no difference.

One was bland to the point of emptiness, the other so heavily seasoned it burned my tongue. Beautifully plated and utterly lifeless. The kind of perfection that lacked warmth. And it struck me then that food made by hand, with care, could not be imitated.

How long had Alpha Ezra been eating like this?

The answer came suddenly, painfully clear.

This was all he knew.

He had never allowed maids into his home, never permitted anyone close enough to tend even to his needs. For three years, perhaps longer, these artificial creations had been his only comfort

My chest tightened.

You don't have to eat this," Alpha Ezra said abruptly, standing. "I'll have Damon bring something suitable. I'll also hire professional chefs. There are plenty here in Lunaris."

No need, Ezra." I rose as well, instinctively stepping closer. "I know how much you value your space, letting outsiders into your home would only disturb you."

His aura spiked. The air thickened.

'Give me a few days," I continued quickly. "Let me learn properly. Once I get used to it, it'll be fine."

Silence.

His fists clenched at his sides, knuckles whitening. The power rolling off him turned sharp, volatile. And [ear slid coldly down my spine.

'Sorry, this is my fault," he said at last, voice low and strained. "I'll deal with it"

"Please don't apologize," I said, forcing a light laugh that sounded wrong even to me. "**This** is nothing. I should get better at cooking anyway, when we eventually end this mating contract and **go** our separate **ways**, I'll have to manage on my own."

I looked at him, hoping for even the smallest smile.

273

1:20 pm

Chapter 38

Instead, the temperature in the room seemed to drop.

白

Finished

Ezra pushed his chair back roughly. The scrape echoed like a challenge. His expression was carved from

ice.

"Damon will arrive shortly with proper food," he said. "Excuse me."

Without another word, he turned and retreated to his room.

I remained where I was, heart pounding.

Selene have mercy. Had I said something wrong?

214

1

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

Chapter 39

Lylah’s POV

Finished

“Bambi, did I say something that offended Alpha Ezra?” I asked softly as the little robot rolled closer, its sensors blinking,

He paused—processing, before answering in its clear tone. “Daddy is angry. But he will not stay angry with you for long.”

I exhaled, my shoulders easing slightly. I hoped that was true.

The moment I mentioned ending the mating contract, something in Alpha Ezra had snapped—raw power flaring beneath his calm exterior, his control stretched thin. Perhaps it wasn’t the idea itself that angered him, but the fact that I dared to voice it. An Alpha did not like decisions being taken out of his hands especially not ones tied to bonds, fate, and dominance.

I would tread more carefully from now on.

“Alright, Bambi,” I said, forcing brightness into my voice. “Please show me video tutorials for simple meals.”

The holographic interface flickered to life, displaying step-by-step recipes.

I memorized one quickly, then slipped into the kitchen to try it, only to discover the cupboards were painfully empty.

“Bambi, show me the nearest grocery store.”

Then, I returned to my room, pulled on my coat, and headed for the door. The store wasn’t far. I’d be back before Alpha Ezra even noticed I was gone.

My fingers were just about to press the exit panel when,

“Lylah.”

I turned.

Ezra stood behind me, already dressed in a dark coat, his presence filling the space like a silent command. His eyes studied me with unsettling sharpness.

“Are you going somewhere?”

“To buy groceries,” I answered. “I’ll be quick.”

His gaze lingered for a second longer before he said, “I’ll go with you.”

“With me?”

“You’re still unfamiliar with the territory,” he replied evenly. “I won’t have you wandering alone.”

His voice was calm. Whatever storm I’d stirred earlier had settled, at least for now. Relief warmed my

173

1:20 pm

Chapter 39

chest, and I smiled.

Finished

Ezra summoned Damon to drive us. Unfortunately, I’d chosen the worst possible timing.

The grocery store was crowded—wolves mingling shoulder to shoulder, scents overlapping and clashing in thick waves. Voices echoed, heat rose, and the air buzzed with restless energy.

It **was** everything an Alpha like Ezra hated.

Damon had mentioned it yesterday—Ezra avoided crowds. He always traveled with private convoys, entered through exclusive access points. Being surrounded like this, boxed in by noise and unfamiliar scents, set his nerves on edge and made his temper sharp.

I saw it immediately. The tightening of his jaw. The subtle flare of power beneath his skin each time someone brushed past him. His wolf prowled close to the surface.

I hurried through the aisles, then gently caught his sleeve and tugged him aside.

“Where are you taking me?” he asked.

“Relax,” I murmured. “I’ve got you. We’re in the lifestyle section. It’s much less crowded and more spacious.”

His shoulders eased a fraction. He nodded once, trusting me to lead.

That was when I noticed them.

Hamsters. Fish. Small animals are tucked into glass enclosures.

“Ezra,” I said carefully, “how about getting a pet for the penthouse?”

“A pet?” His brow furrowed.

“Have you ever had one?”

For a moment, I expected dismissal. Instead, he said quietly, “In Moonclaw. A black panther.”

A chill slid down my spine. “That’s... not exactly common.”

“No,” he agreed.

I smiled softly. “Then maybe something smaller this time. Something gentle. It will make the penthouse feel more alive.”

He didn’t argue, just nodded.

My gaze landed on the turtles.

“We’re getting turtles!”

He stared at me. “Lylah. **Are** you serious?”

I laughed softly. “They’re small, quiet, easy **to** care for. They won’t interfere **with** your productivity.”

1:20 pm

Chapter 39

白

Finished

He studied me for a moment. “I’m aware of that,” he said, tone measured. “But are you truly this excited about having turtles?”

I had already reached into the enclosure, lifting one carefully—a small green creature, cool and calm in my hands.

“Palms up, Ezra.”

He hesitated, then obeyed.

I placed the turtle in his hands.

The sight stole my breath.

Alpha Ezra—power incarnate, ruler of the mighty Moonclaw Pack, dressed in tailored luxury—stood frozen, staring down at the fragile creature cradled in his palms.

“I feel it moving,” he murmured.

I couldn’t help it. A laugh burst from me, warm and unrestrained. “They do move,” I said between giggles.

He frowned. “You’re laughing at me.”

“No,” I said quickly, shaking my head. “I’m admiring a rare sight. An Alpha holding something **so** small. You look **so...**”

I swallowed, then smiled.

“Cute.”

214

目 1

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

Chapter 40

Lylah’s POV

“Did you just call me cute?”

Alpha Ezra’s voice dropped, the air around us subtly shifting as his aura unfurled—low, controlled, dangerous in a way that made my pulse skip.

Damn it.

6:0

Finished

The rush of adrenaline made me nod before my brain could intervene. “Everyone would agree with me.”

For a heartbeat, he simply stared. Then—there it was.

That rare, fleeting smile curved his lips, softening the sharp, godlike angles of his face. Warmth chased away the perpetual storm that clung to him, making him look almost approachable.

Foolishly, I stepped closer, closing the space. “Ezra, did you know that smile suits you? You should smile more often.”

“There isn’t much to smile about at the Penthouse,” he replied quietly. Then his gaze flicked to mine, something unreadable stirring in its depths. “If you want me to smile more, maybe you should take me out more often.”

“Yes!” Selestine surged with sudden approval, nudging me forward.

Realizing how ridiculous I sounded, I cleared my throat. “I mean of course. I promise I’ll take you out more often.”

Because seeing him like this—lighter, unburdened, even for a moment—made something warm bloom in my chest. Watching the shadows retreat from him filled me with a strange joy. The warmth of that moment lingered between us long after we left.

By the time we returned to the Penthouse, dusk had settled over Lunaris.

We put the recipe we’d learned that afternoon into practice: butter-roasted beef. Nothing extravagant like the dishes served at Pack banquets—just something simple.

Still, when the meat hit the **plate**, the aroma of spices filled the room, rich and inviting.

“You should taste it first,” I said.

“It would be my honor.”

Alpha Ezra took a bite.

“Well?” I asked, holding my breath.

“It’s **so** delicious.”

I giggled. “Right? I told you yesterday you should let me handle our meals.”

1/3

1:20 pm

Chapter 40

Finished

I tried it too. The seasoning was bold and flavorful, but the meat resisted my teeth, far too tough.

“The beef isn’t tender enough,” I muttered, disappointed.

“Let me make another,” Ezra said immediately.

“No-”

“Guide me,” he interrupted gently. “It’ll be fine.”

An Alpha like him, tending the stove for my sake? If his pack ever found out, I’d be shredded by their resentment alone.

“You said it yourself,” he continued, voice calm but firm. “that in two years we’ll go our separate ways. You need to learn. So do I.”

“Y-yes, Ezra.”

I had said it. But hearing it from him sent an uncomfortable twist through my chest. Selestine stirred inside me, a low growl vibrating with disagreement.

When this mating contract ends, will Alpha Ezra return to the lonely, rigid, storm-wrapped Alpha he once was? I wasn’t ready to imagine that yet.

Ezra moved through the kitchen with effortless precision, a rhythm his body remembered, guided by memory more than sight.

It didn’t take long before another slice of beef rested on the plate.

“All done,” he said. “Want to try?”

I cut into it and took a bite.

Goddess.

“This **is so** amazing,” I laughed. “I think you could even open a restaurant,”

On impulse, I lifted my fork and fed him a bite.

The moment he ate it, realization crashed over me.

I choked.

“What’s wrong?” Ezra was instantly at my side, concern tightening his voice. “Lylah, are you alright?”

“I-i used the same fork,” I stammered. “I’m sorry, Ezra. Please spit it out. I’ll get water to rinse your mouth.”

“Why?” he asked, clearly confused.

“I wanted to understand you better,” I said softly. “That’s why I asked Beta Damon yesterday. He mentioned you’ve carried some strict cleanliness habits since you were young.”

2/3

1:20 pm

Chapter 40

Not just habits. Tendencies. Alpha Ezra did not tolerate anyone invading his personal space.

Shame burned my cheeks. He must be disgusted.

But if he was, he didn't show it.

Instead, he stepped closer.

Finished

"You're my mate." His fingers closed gently around my wrist. "We're bound now. We'll share space—far more than that in the future. And you think I'd mind sharing a fork with you?"

214

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