

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

Chapter 381

3rd Person's POV

Night had settled over Whitepine Pack in a mantle of silver mist and biting cold. The forest surrounding Ivar's residence breathed with quiet life. Inside his study, Ivar sat comfortably behind a heavy oak desk littered with reports, old records, and half-opened books. Retirement suited him.

Then, a sharp knock interrupted the silence.

Rune stepped inside moments later, bowing his head respectfully.

"Sir," he said carefully, "someone from Lunaris has come to see you."

Ivar's irritation surfaced instantly.

For years, the former war Commander had made one thing painfully clear to everyone across Verdanth—he accepted no visitors after his retirement. No nobles. No Alphas. No ambitious young wolves hoping to bask in old glory.

Anyone who still dared approach his door either possessed extraordinary courage...

Or extraordinary stupidity.

"Who is it?" Ivar asked flatly.

"I don't think I've seen him before. He only said he was a close friend of someone you care about."

A low growl stirred in Ivar's chest.

"Persistent little fool," he muttered before rising from his chair.

Downstairs, the atmosphere inside the parlor was tense enough to suffocate.

The moment Ivar entered, the young wolf waiting near the fireplace straightened immediately. Excitement flashed openly across his face.

"Commander Ivar," Fenrir greeted with a respectful bow. "It's truly an honor to finally stand before you."

Ivar studied him with cold, unreadable eyes.

“Do I know you, youngling?” he asked bluntly.

The young Gamma smiled quickly. “My name is Fenrir, sir. My father served Blackfang as a warrior. When I was a child, he brought me here to meet his legendary mentor.” His eyes brightened with admiration. “That mentor was you.”

Ivar remembered countless warriors. Too many battlefields. Too many students.

One overeager pup from years ago meant nothing.

“Hm.” His sharp gaze narrowed slightly. “If that were enough, boy, then you would also know I no longer receive guests.” His voice turned colder. “So tell me honestly, who sent you to my door?”

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Invisible pressure rolled through the room as Ivar’s wolf lifted its head beneath his skin.

Fenrir, however, seemed oblivious to the danger.

If anything, he looked even more eager.

“It was Lady Cora, sir,” he admitted proudly. “The future Luna of Blackfang. We’re rather close. She told me I could visit you anytime.”

The room fell still.

Dangerously still.

Fenrir continued, entirely unaware of the storm he had just unleashed. “She said you treasured her like your own daughter. Your golden child.” His voice lowered with awe. “Even Alpha Eldric of Ironcrest is apparently close to you as well. Right?”

Silence.

Then,

Crack.

The armrest beneath Ivar’s hand splintered instantly.

Fenrir’s face paled.

For the first time since arriving, instinct screamed at him.

Run.

Ivar rose slowly to his feet.

Silver blazed through his eyes. Not the polished gleam of nobility or prestige, but the savage light of an ancient war god standing one breath away from violence. “Close to me? Cora truly has no shame!”

Fenrir’s pulse stumbled.

Something was wrong.

Terribly wrong.

“Commander...” he said carefully, suddenly uncertain. “You and Lady Cora aren’t—”

“She is not my golden child.” Ivar cut in sharply. “That sly vixen stabbed me in the back. And no, I have nothing to do with the Alpha of Ironcrest. Those fools fed you lies they created themselves. After everything she’s done...” Ivar snarled, fury roughening his voice. “She still dares claim we’re close?”

“I knew Cora when she was still a pup. She came to me years ago during a storm claiming she was Jax Stillward’s, my best student’s, daughter.” Bitterness entered his voice. “She spoke of betrayal. Of being mistreated and wronged by everyone around her. And because she carried Jax’s name...” His eyes hardened with old regret. “I protected her.”

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The memories clearly enraged him even now.

“I used my influence to clear paths for her. Open doors for her. Shield her from consequences.” His lip curled faintly. “I gave her privileges few wolves would ever receive.”

Fenrir stood frozen.

Everything Eldric had told him was collapsing by the second. A cold realization crept down his spine.

‘Did Eldric lie to me?’

“Then she grew older. She left Whitepine and resurfaced in Lunaris. I allowed it. Trusted her enough to let her keep everything I’d given.” Ivar’s voice darkened dangerously. “Until the truth finally reached me.”

The air turned suffocating.

“She was never Jax’s daughter.”

Fenrir's eyes widened.

"She lied to me. The real child had been switched, and that manipulative girl spent years wearing another wolf's bloodline like stolen skin!"

For a moment, Fenrir genuinely thought the old Commander might shift.

Might tear the entire room apart.

Instead, Ivar inhaled slowly through his nose, forcing control over the beast raging beneath his flesh.

The disappointment lingered in his eyes. Heavy enough to silence the fearsome war commander who had once shaken countless battlefields.

Before Fenrir could even process everything he had heard, hurried footsteps echoed from the hallway.

Rune entered swiftly.

"Sir," the assistant said at once, urgency sharpening his voice, "I found one of Jax Stillward's former comrades. He claims to have information regarding Jax's real daughter."

Ivar went utterly still.

Then his wolf surged. "Where is he?"

"At the lower eastern district of Whitepine."

Ivar was already moving. "I'll go there myself."

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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 382

Lylah's POV

Since Tiara insisted she didn't need an escort to Moonclaw, I forced myself to respect her decision. But the moment my classes ended this evening, I went straight to Moonclaw anyway.

Not with Ezra.

With Zyrelle.

Mostly because I had already sent Ezra ahead of me hours ago-begged him, actually-to make sure Tiara was treated properly once she arrived. The elders wouldn't dare cross the line if the Alpha himself were there.

The drive through Moonclaw territory felt quieter than usual beneath the rising night. Damon's family manor stood illuminated beneath the moonlight like something carved from old legends. Tall stone building rose beyond the iron gates, wrapped in climbing ivy and silver lantern fire.

Zyrelle dropped me near the front steps before the doors opened almost immediately.

"Luna Lylah, welcome." Lady Juniper greeted me personally, and warmth softened her entire expression the moment she saw me. "You may go inside. Lady Tiara is resting in her room."

I nodded quickly and headed in, my pulse already quickening with anticipation.

The manor was strangely peaceful tonight. No elders in sight.

Relief loosened something tight inside my chest.

When I reached the room and pushed the door open, silence met me for half a second.

Then I blinked.

Tiara lounged comfortably across an expensive velvet couch, one leg tucked beneath her while a maid peeled clementines beside her with almost ceremonial care.

My eyes narrowed slightly as another scent brushed against my senses.

Male.

Damon.

This wasn't just any guest chamber. This was Damon's room.

"Lylah!" Tiara shot upright the second she saw me.

My heart nearly stopped.

“Tiara! Be careful-you’re carrying a baby now.”

She froze midway before laughing softly at herself. “Right. I completely forgot.”

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I exhaled slowly once I saw she truly looked well.

“You seem much better than I expected,” I admitted as I sat beside her. “Was everything alright? Did anyone give you trouble?”

Tiara snorted. “Trouble? Lylah, they’re practically worshipping me.”

Amusement danced through her eyes. “But I know exactly why.” She pointed lazily toward me. “Alpha Ezra arrived here this morning. You sent him ahead, didn’t you?”

“My best friend worries too much.” Her expression softened afterward, sincerity slipping beneath her teasing tone. “Still... Moonclaw

is lucky to have a considerate Luna like you.”

“But I hope Alpha Ezra isn’t upset,” Tiara continued. “I’m sure he’d rather spend his time with you than babysit me.” She tilted her head slightly. “Have you seen him yet?”

I shook my head.

Not yet.

And suddenly guilt pressed harder against me.

I still hadn’t properly thanked Ezra.

After this, I promised myself, I would,

Another thought surfaced in my mind. “There’s still one problem left, Tiara. Your family in Blackfang.” My voice lowered. “Your Nana. Your aunt and uncle. We can’t hide this from them forever.”

“Ah.”

Tiara leaned back against the couch, completely unbothered.

“Lady Juniper already offered to handle it.” A small smile curved her lips. “She and Lord Oberon plan to travel to Blackfang personally and explain everything to my family themselves. Apparently

it's 'a matter of proper respect. But regarding Damon and me, I already gave them an explanation that made things easier."

I narrowed my eyes slightly.

"What explanation?"

Her grin widened. "I told them Damon and I met during my visit to Lunaris last month when I came to see you."

I blinked once.

"That's it?"

"That's it." Tiara laughed softly. "They accepted it immediately."

Then amusement sparkled brighter in her expression.

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"Though Nana nearly lost consciousness when she learned who Damon actually was." Tiara mimicked her grandmother's horrified tone perfectly. "She said 'I spent years worrying you'd fall for some useless rogue mutt... and instead you ended up pregnant by Moonclaw's Beta heir?'"

Despite everything, laughter escaped both of us at once.

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3rd Person's POV

Laughter drifted down from the upper floor, soft and bright against the quiet stillness of the Manor.

Damon slowed near the foot of the staircase the moment he heard it.

Her laugh.

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Tiara's voice had already become something dangerously familiar to him in only a matter of days-a haunting melody his wolf recognized far too quickly. Smooth as silk. Sweet enough to lure a predator closer before sinking claws beneath its ribs.

And that was exactly the problem.

His gaze lifted toward the second floor.

Toward his room.

No, their room now.

A low curse left him.

"Two years," Damon muttered under his breath. "Two damn years under the same roof with that woman." His hand dragged through his dark hair roughly. "What if she decides to kill me in my sleep one night?"

Honestly, it didn't even sound impossible.

When Tiara arrived this morning, one of the guest chambers had immediately been prepared for her. Damon had almost felt relieved-until Juniper calmly destroyed that hope.

"You'll be mates soon," his mother had said with effortless authority. "What kind of mated pair sleeps separately?"

Damon had nearly choked on air.

Now, standing beneath the glow of the manor lights, he shut his eyes briefly and imagined the coming weeks ahead.

Tiara Ashcroft in his family home.

At his table.

In his bed.

His wolf stirred darkly beneath his skin at the thought, restless with a pleasure that unsettled him.

Then suddenly-

A crushing pressure rolled across the corridor behind him.

Damon stiffened instantly.

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Every instinct inside him snapped to attention before he even turned around. The Alpha aura hit like a violent storm swallowing the air whole.

“Alpha?” Surprise flashed across Damon’s face when he saw Ezra standing there.

The Moonclaw Alpha rarely returned to the territory now that he lived in Lunaris. Yet he had come back this morning-for Tiara.

Or more specifically...

For Lylah’s peace of mind.

Damon exhaled sharply, sensing an opportunity to finally vent his frustration to someone who might actually understand.

“Did you hear that?” he said, jerking his chin toward the upper floor where the faint sound of laughter still echoed. “She’s been here less than a day and already everyone’s obsessed with her.” His mouth twisted. “Give it a week and Tiara Ashcroft will have this entire household wrapped around her finger.”

His wolf growled low with suspicion.

“She has that kind of power. I’m starting to think she has witch blood somewhere in her bloodline.”

The words spilled faster after that.

“I still don’t even know what kind of deal she made with my parents.” Damon raked both hands through his hair now, visibly unraveling. “They just informed me she’d be living here like it was already decided. I don’t love her. I swear. We barely know each other.” Though even saying the words aloud sounded less convincing than he wanted.

“I don’t even know what I feel yet,” he admitted roughly. “About her. About the baby. About any of this.”

Unfortunately for Damon, he had made one fatal mistake.

He thought Ezra was there to sympathize with him.

The Alpha's expression darkened instantly.

A dangerous growl vibrated through the corridor-deep enough that Damon's wolf flattened instinctively beneath the sheer dominance pouring off him.

"I don't give a fuck whether you love her or not." Ezra stepped forward. "But you put your pup in her womb." His eyes sharpened. "That makes her your responsibility now."

Damon swallowed.

Then Ezra's gaze flicked once toward the upper floor where Lylah remained with Tiara.

Possessiveness surged violently through his scent.

"Now go entertain Tiara Ashcroft," Ezra snarled, each word edged with jealousy sharp enough to cut flesh, "so she'll return my Luna to me."

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Damon blinked.

Ah.

Lylah had apparently spent too much time with her best friend, and now her mate was moments away from going feral over it.

"Before I lose patience inside my own Beta's home," Ezra added.

Damon straightened instantly.

"Yes, Alpha."

Without another word, he bolted upstairs as if his life depended on it.

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3rd Person's POV

The moment Damon stepped into the room, he delivered Ezra's command without hesitation.

Tiara understood the danger immediately.

Her eyes widened for half a second before she turned toward Lylah with exaggerated urgency.

"Alright, darling," she said quickly, already ushering her friend toward the door. "Thank you for coming all the way here, but you should absolutely return to your mate before he decides to tear this entire building apart looking for you."

Lylah blinked in surprise. "Tiara—"

"No arguments." Tiara shoved her gently toward the hallway, barely containing her laughter.

Lylah's expression softened before she finally relented and disappeared down the corridor.

The second she was gone, Tiara's curiosity exploded. Giggling under her breath, she immediately leaned toward the doorway, trying to peek outside just in time to witness whatever affection the terrifyingly possessive Alpha might show his Luna.

And she succeeded.

For exactly one second.

Just long enough to see Ezra pull Lylah against his broad chest with a force that looked almost primal, his large hand settling possessively against the back of her head as though his wolf had finally reclaimed something precious.

Then suddenly-

A hand caught Tiara's wrist. Hard.

Before she could react, Damon yanked her backward into the room and slammed the door shut behind them.

Tiara stumbled slightly before glaring up at him, cheeks flushed bright red from both embarrassment and outrage.

"Don't even think about peeking again," Damon warned darkly. "If Alpha catches us spying on him with his mate, he'll rip our eyes out."

Tiara scoffed immediately, folding her arms across her chest.

"That doesn't even sound like Alpha Ezra," she argued. "He's kind." Her eyes narrowed suspiciously. "Why are you even here anyway?"

Damon's brows lifted. "Why? Am I suddenly forbidden from entering my own room?"

The words hit Tiara like a thrown dagger.

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Right.

This was Damon's room.

For the next two years.

Her soul nearly left her body.

Still, Tiara refused to surrender first.

Lifting her chin stubbornly, she pointed toward the door. "Lady Juniper said I can stay wherever I want. I was here first." Her eyes flashed. "So if anyone should leave, it's you. Go find another room, Damon."

"Tiara Ashcroft." Her name cracked through the air in a low warning growl. The Beta stepped closer. "You're becoming more irritating by the second."

Tiara's heartbeat stumbled once.

Not from fear.

From the sheer overwhelming force of him.

“You had plenty of courage before,” Damon continued softly, each word edged with provocation. “You walked into my life carrying my heir, stole my family’s attention in less than a day, and turned my own mother against me.”

His gaze dragged deliberately over her face.

“And now suddenly you’re afraid to sleep beside me?”

Tiara blinked.

The insult landed instantly.

Her temper ignited so fast that even her wolf snapped awake beneath her skin. Especially when she caught the amusement in his expression.

He was enjoying this.

“Oh, absolutely not.” Her lips flattened into a dangerous line. “Fine,” she snapped. “Stay.”

She stepped closer too, refusing to retreat even an inch. “I’m not afraid of you. I never will be. Let’s see who gives up first, after being trapped in each other’s presence every single day.”

For a long moment, neither moved.

Two wolves. Two storms. Neither is willing to kneel.

And somewhere beneath all that fury, tension coiled tighter.

The night passed beneath Moonclaw’s sky with both of them stubbornly refusing to surrender a single inch of territory.

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By morning, silver dawnlight filtered through the forests bordering Ironcrest Pack territory, casting pale beams across the endless sea of trees. The woods were quiet. Even the wind seemed hesitant to move there

Isaac Grey stood alone beneath the towering pines, having shifted back into human form moments earlier. His clothes hung loosely from one hand while the other gripped a bundle of old records tightly enough to crumple the edges.

“This is the place...” Isaac muttered quietly.

Before him stretched a forgotten section of forest long abandoned by most packs. Only a few rogue settlements remained scattered through the area now-small, tame groups that kept to themselves beneath Ironcrest's shadow.

Further ahead, half-swallowed by vines and time itself, stood the remains of an old healing house.

"So this is where Lylah and Cora were supposedly born," he murmured. "And where they may have been switched."

The words settled heavily in the cold morning air.

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3rd Person's POV

By the time Ivar reached Whitepine's lower eastern district, dawn had long since bled into a cold gray morning.

Mist curled through the narrow streets like restless spirits, weaving between worn stone paths and crooked buildings weathered by age. The district sat far from the polished heart of the Pack, carrying the scent of old iron, wet earth, and forgotten history.

Rune followed silently beside him. Neither spoke.

Beneath an ancient oak tree at the edge of the district stood the wolf they had come to meet.

A deep slash carved across the left side of the man's face, disappearing beneath a worn leather eyepatch. Gray streaked through his dark hair, but the heavy aura surrounding him still carried traces of the fighter he once had been.

The moment Ivar approached, the old warrior straightened slowly. "My name is Morrin," he said, voice roughened by age and battle alike. "And yes, I fought beside Jax Stillward through more wars than I care to

count."

Though respectful, suspicion still lingered heavily in his remaining eye.

"Hm. I came here to ask something," Ivar folded his arms behind his back. "Jax had a mate. She's also a warrior." His sharp gaze narrowed slightly. "What was her name again?"

Morrin studied him carefully. "Why the sudden interest, Commander?"

A silence followed.

Then Ivar answered coldly, "Because I need to know whether she truly gave birth in that place... and whether her child actually died."

He lifted one hand, pointing toward the abandoned eastern healing house looming through the mist-covered trees nearby.

"I was told a story," Ivar continued, his voice darkening. "A story fed to me by the girl Jax raised. The same girl who spent years pretending to be his blood daughter while using his name to manipulate everyone

around her."

At once, Morrin's expression shifted.

"Jax's mate's name was Lady Vala Stillward," he said quietly.

"And no," Morrin continued, "she didn't give birth there,"

Something sharp flickered through Ivar's silver eyes.

Morrin looked toward the distant forest as though staring into memories decades old.

"Even while pregnant, Lady Vala refused to remain behind Whitepine walls. She was stubborn as hell." A

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faint breath of amusement escaped him before fading again. "That night, she and Jax were traveling near Ironcrest territory during a storm when her labor began."

“Ironcrest...” Ivar repeated softly. Something inside him turned violent.

Like claws suddenly raking beneath old wounds.

His wolf surged so hard beneath his skin that Rune instinctively stiffened beside him.

Every piece was beginning to align.

Too perfectly.

“Rune.” Ivar ordered sharply. “We leave immediately.”

His assistant blinked. “Sir, you haven’t rested at all. And the Lunaris business venture begins in only a few days-”

“I don’t care.” Ivar’s voice cracked through the air like a blade. “I won’t rest until I find Jax’s real daughter!”

The sheer force behind the words silenced the forest itself.

Not another argument followed.

By the time they reached the territory near Ironcrest, dusk had already fallen across the wilderness.

The dying sunlight stained the forest in deep amber and blood-orange hues while long shadows stretched endlessly between the trees.

Ivar stepped toward the abandoned healing house slowly, silver eyes sweeping over the crumbling structure.

Time had nearly erased it.

But not completely.

His instincts sharpened the moment he crossed the threshold.

The scent of old herbs still lingered faintly beneath layers of dust and decay.

Ghosts of the past clung stubbornly to the walls.

“It hasn’t operated for many years now.” The sudden voice came from the corner of the ruined hall.

An elderly rogue wolf emerged slowly from the shadows, wrapped in worn blankets and carrying the scent of smoke and rain.

“The healers all left for a better place long ago,” the old rogue continued. “Most of this place was abandoned

after that.”

“None of them remained?” Ivar pressed immediately. “At least a healer from twenty years ago?” His voice had lowered now.

But beneath it, his wolf prowled restlessly.

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“This isn’t about treatment.” Ivar added grimly. “I need information. Someone’s life depends on it.

The old rogue hesitated before nodding slowly.

“One stayed behind,” she admitted. “But she’s ancient now. Barely remembers yesterday, let alone twenty years ago.”

Even so, she gestured toward the forest beyond the abandoned building. “There’s a small hut deeper in the woods. Ivy-covered roof. You’ll find her there.”

Without wasting another second, Ivar turned immediately.

Rune followed close behind.

The deeper they walked into the forest, the colder the air became.

The trees stood unnaturally still.

As though instinct itself recognized they were approaching the edge of something fate had hidden for decades.

Then finally-

The hut appeared.

Nearly swallowed whole by creeping ivy and tangled roots.

And standing outside it already...

Isaac Grey.

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3rd Person's POV

The moment Isaac saw Ivar approaching through the trees, his entire body went rigid.

Even without the title attached to his name, the wolf standing before him radiated something ancient and terrifying. Power rolled off Ivar in crushing waves, merciless dominance sharpened by decades of war and bloodshed.

Isaac's wolf stirred uneasily beneath his skin.

Meanwhile, Ivar barely spared Isaac a glance.

The young wolf looked caught between fleeing and staying rooted in place, but Ivar walked past him without pause, silver eyes fixed solely on the ivy-covered door ahead.

"I already tried speaking to her," Isaac said quickly, following after him. "But Myriah... she's not in her right mind anymore. She doesn't-"

The rest of the sentence was never finished.

Ivar slammed the hut door open with one violent shove.

The entire structure shook.

Dust rained from the ceiling beams as the scent of old herbs, mold, and fear flooded the air.

Inside, an elderly woman recoiled violently.

She looked as fragile as dried leaves caught beneath winter frost-small and trembling, nearly swallowed by layers of worn blankets. But it was her eyes that revealed the truth.

Horror lived there.

Old horror.

The kind that never truly left.

“You,” Ivar said, striding toward her with terrifying purpose. “You were the healer who assisted the births twenty years ago. During the storm.” His voice lowered, rough as distant thunder. “There were two women that night.”

Myriah immediately shook her head in panic.

“I don’t know anything!” she cried, stumbling backward until her spine hit the wall. “I don’t know anything! Don’t kill me! I begged you!”

But Ivar did not stop.

His wolf prowled beneath his skin now, restless and vicious, sensing the truth circling closer.

“I know you helped them.” he said, voice quieter this time. More dangerous because of it. “That’s why I

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came to you.” His silver gaze locked onto hers. “You’re the last person still alive who carries the truth about that night.”

Myriah trembled harder.

“I’m not here to harm you,” Ivar continued. “I only want the truth. So the lies buried twenty years ago can finally die.”

Something in his tone shifted then.

Not softer exactly. But controlled, disciplined.

Like a predator leashing its claws by force alone.

Myriah blinked up at him in shock.

Five years ago, an Alpha had come searching for answers.

That encounter had clearly left scars on her soul time never healed.

“You remember them,” Ivar pressed carefully. “A healer blessed by the Moon Goddess does not simply forget the lives placed in her hands.” His silver eyes softened. “The warrior lady from Whitepine... and the other one who gave birth that same night.”

Myriah’s breathing turned uneven.

“I-I helped them deliver safely,” she whispered shakily. “The pups lived. I swear by Selene’s name, they were breathing...” Panic flooded her scent. “I didn’t make a mistake.”

“What was the warrior’s name?” Ivar asked.

Though she had been blessed with rare healing abilities, Myriah had still been born a rogue-poor, overlooked, surviving however she could. Wolves with wealth, power, and status were not patients she easily forgot, especially those who had treated her with unusual kindness and paid generously for her help.

“Vala,” Myriah answered immediately, almost instinctively. A faint flicker of memory crossed her aged face. “Lady Vala...”

Ivar’s pulse sharpened.

“And the second woman?” he asked at once.

The air inside the hut seemed to tighten.

His wolf surged violently beneath his ribs now, every instinct screaming the same possibility.

“The babies were switched,” Ivar said quietly.

The words landed like a curse.

Myriah suddenly broke into tears.

“It wasn’t my fault!” she sobbed. “The storm destroyed part of the hut. The wind was howling, everyone was panicking, there was blood, screaming...” Her breathing hitched harder. “I was trying to save the mothers. I

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didn’t watch the infants closely enough. I didn’t know...”

Isaac Grey stiffened beside the doorway.

Outside, the forest itself seemed to fall deathly silent.

Ivar stepped closer slowly.

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For the first time in years, his voice lost every trace of cruelty. “I’m not blaming you, I only need the truth. Tell me the second woman’s name.”

Myriah’s face drained of color.

Terror entered her scent so sharply. As though speaking that name aloud could summon death itself.

Ivar noticed.

“I’ll stand between you and anyone who tries to silence you,” he said coldly.

A long silence followed.

Then finally,

Myriah whispered the name.

“Luna Daia of Ironcrest Pack.”

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3rd Person's POV

The revelation struck like lightning splitting through a dead forest.

For one suspended moment, the air inside the hut turned unbearably still.

Then Ivar's silver eyes blazed.

Everything had finally aligned. Every lie. Every missing piece of the puzzle. Jax Stillward's true daughter had never died.

She had been switched beneath the chaos of that storm-torn night and raised under Ironcrest Alpha's roof.

And now, that lost baby stood as Luna of Moonclaw.

The very woman Ivar had encountered again and again without realizing who she truly was.

"It was Lylah!" Isaac Grey breathed hoarsely.

Then rage exploded through him.

"She's Jax Stillward's real daughter." His voice cracked against the walls of the hut as his fists clenched violently at his sides. "Goddess..."

Memories slammed into him without mercy.

Isaac suddenly remembered the day he struck her across the face after Iris fell from the ladder and dislocated her leg. He had blamed Lylah instantly back then, convinced her fierce nature would one day drag Iris into trouble.

The guilt hit like silver shoved through his ribs.

"I should've known," Isaac growled, dragging a hand through his hair viciously. "Damn it... I should've seen it."

His wolf snarled beneath his skin in self-loathing.

"She's exactly like him," he said bitterly. "She has the same courage. The same spirit..She was Jax's daughter all along, not Cora!"

Ivar turned toward him sharply. "You know Lylah?"

Isaac gave a stiff nod.

“I was one of the five pups Jax Stillward saved during the bear attack near the Blackridge-Whitepine border.” Isaac’s throat tightened with emotion. “My sister works at Lunar Grace, I know Lylah from her. And I failed to see the truth standing right in front of me. I let Cora manipulate me like an idiot.”

At the mention of Cora, something cold and lethal passed through Ivar’s gaze.

“We were all deceived by that sly vixen,” he said quietly.

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But beneath the calmness, his wolf was already baring its fangs.

Ivar slowly turned back toward Myriah.

Earlier, the old healer had begged for her life with terror carved deep into her soul.

Now he understood why. “You begged for your life earlier” Ivar said quietly, his eyes narrowing. “Did someone from Ironcrest threaten you?”

Myriah immediately began trembling again.

“Yes...” Tears welled in her clouded eyes. “Five years ago... Alpha Eldric came here himself.”

Even speaking the name seemed to suffocate her.

“He was furious,” she whispered. “He said he had finally found his true daughter-Lady Cora.” Her frail hands shook violently beneath her blankets. “He blamed me for the switched infants. Said I made him waste years... waste resources... waste affection on the wrong child.”

Myriah’s breathing turned ragged as old trauma resurfaced.

“I knelt before him,” she sobbed. “I begged his forgiveness. It was pure accident... the birth was chaos... I never realized the babies had been switched...” Tears slid down the old healer’s face. “But he wanted payment.”

Myriah broke completely.

“He ordered his guards to kill my dear son.”

Isaac stiffened violently.

Rune’s expression darkened.

And Ivar,

Ivar's wolf surged so hard beneath his skin that the wooden floorboards creaked under the pressure of his aura alone. Murderous power flooded the tiny hut like a living storm.

Myriah flinched instinctively.

"He threatened me after that," she said softly. "Told me to keep my mouth shut forever. All I know after that. Lady Cora remained in Ironcrest...and the other girl disappeared."

Something savage flashed through Isaac's eyes.

"Even after finding Cora, Eldric still cast Lylah aside?" Revulsion rolled off him in thick waves. "That bastard is a monster."

"No," Ivar muttered.

The Commander's eyes had gone glacial.

"He thought casting Lylah out of his pack, branding her as nothing more than an adopted stray, and cutting

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her away from his family would erase the truth forever." Ivar's lips curved slowly. "But the fool chose the wrong wolf to destroy. Because some bloodlines don't break, they only learn the shape of the blade."

His old eyes gleamed with savage fury beneath the dim light.

"I will make Ironcrest pay for these crimes. Every last one of them."

Meanwhile, from the rotting secrets buried in the forest, warmth and laughter filled Rowan's residence in

Lunaris.

Golden chandelier light spilled across polished marble floors while servants moved quietly through the estate carrying silks and jewels prepared for the upcoming event.

Cora stood before the tall mirror with a radiant smile, untouched by the storm gathering beyond her sight.

She turned slowly, the new gown from Jude's boutique flowing effortlessly around her. Her fingers smoothed over the expensive fabric with satisfied elegance before she glanced back at Rowan.

“What do you think?” she asked playfully. “Do I look beautiful? I’m thinking of wearing this to the business

venture.”

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Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 388

3rd Person’s POV

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Cora was practically glowing with excitement. Anticipation fizzed inside her like sparkling wine, impossible to contain.

Tonight would be their first public appearance since the engagement-her and Rowan standing side by side before the most powerful wolves in Lunaris.

Commanders. Nobles. Business elites whose names carried weight across Verdanth.

And every single one of them would finally see who Rowan Arden intended to make his Luna.

“This is our first official event together after the engagement, Rowan.” Her lashes fluttered as she smiled at

him through the reflection. “Your allies, your rivals, all the high-ranking wolves in Lunaris will be there tonight.” She smoothed a hand over the elegant gown hugging her figure.

“I need to look perfect.”

Rowan stood near the balcony doors, one hand resting loosely in his pocket. Unlike Cora, however, his thoughts were nowhere inside the room.

The Lunaris Business Venture.

The event would gather the most influential wolves. Including him. Ezra.

And if Ezra came...

Then Lylah would come too.

Rowan's jaw tightened faintly. Something dark and restless stirred beneath his ribs at the thought.

Would she look at him tonight?

Would she regret leaving him?

Would jealousy finally appear in those stubborn eyes if she saw him standing beside another woman?

"Rowan?"

Cora's voice snapped him back.

He blinked once before crossing the room toward her. His hand lifted automatically, fingers brushing against her cheek in practiced affection. But even as he touched her, his mind remained trapped elsewhere.

"Yes," Rowan murmured smoothly. "I'm excited too." A small smile curved his lips. "I can't wait for tomorrow."

The following day passed quickly.

As dusk crept closer, Moonclaw's skies darkened beneath gathering clouds while preparations for departure filled the estate.

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Finlhed

Lylah and Ezra would need to return to Lunaris before evening for the business venture.

Before leaving, however, Lylah made one final stop at the Beta family estate to see Tiara.

She found her seated beneath a sprawling canopy woven with flowering vines and heavy clusters of pale grapes. Sunlight filtered softly through the leaves above, scattering gold across the elegant meals spread before her.

Tiara looked unexpectedly peaceful.

The moment Lylah sat beside her, Tiara leaned slightly closer and lowered her voice. "I need to tell you something interesting."

Concern flickered across Lylah's face instantly. "What happened?"

Tiara hesitated before exhaling quietly.

"I thought everyone was exaggerating before." Her fingers toyed absently with the rim of her teacup. "But now I realize something really is wrong with Damon."

Lylah blinked.

Tiara glanced around once before whispering, "He truly has trauma connected to sex."

A pause followed.

Then Lylah stared at her. "Wait... did you try to seduce him?"

"Not exactly," Tiara defended immediately, though guilt flashed briefly across her expression. "But I wore lingerie." She shrugged one shoulder lightly. "And considering Damon's strong drive and instincts, I assumed he would..." Her cheeks flushed faintly. "You know."

But then her expression shifted into visible disbelief. "But he didn't."

Tiara leaned back against her chair, still looking mildly stunned by it herself.

"He let me sleep in the bed while he took the couch, Lylah. And the strange part was..." Her voice softened. "He looked miserable the entire night. Like he was fighting himself every second."

The morning breeze stirred through the vineyard garden, carrying the scent of grapes, earth, and distant pine.

Tiara's hand drifted unconsciously toward her stomach.

Still flat.

Still hiding the life growing quietly inside her.

"No wonder his family reacted the way they did when they found out about my pregnancy," she murmured.

For a brief moment, something gentler flickered across her face.

Something dangerously close to attachment.

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Forbed

Lylah noticed immediately. And relief loosened something deep inside her chest.

Maybe this was the beginning.

Perhaps Tiara would gradually stop seeing the child as merely a means to an end or a means of survival.

Perhaps, little by little, she would begin accepting the pup fully.

By the time Lylah returned to Lunaris that evening, exhaustion had already settled heavily into her bones.

The moment she stepped into the penthouse, sleep claimed her almost instantly.

When she finally woke again, darkness had already swallowed the city skyline beyond the towering glass windows. Moonlight and neon bled together across Lunaris like silver fire.

Lylah sat upright suddenly.

The venture!

Her pulse jumped.

She was alone. Ezra had already gone ahead.

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Wed, May

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

Chapter 389

3rd Person's POV

She shot upright so fast the blankets tangled around her legs.

“Damn it,” Lylah muttered, panic instantly surging through her veins. Guilt clawed at her chest as she shoved a hand through her hair. “I overslept. Ezra must’ve already gone ahead...”

The bedroom door opened before she could spiral further.

“So the sleeping Luna finally awakens.”

Lylah turned sharply to find Zyrelle leaning against the doorway with folded arms, amusement dancing in her sharp eyes.

“Ezra already left,” she said casually. “He didn’t want to wake you.

Lylah groaned softly and pressed both hands over her face. “I’m an idiot. I should’ve gotten up earlier.”

“You’re overreacting.” Zyrelle pushed off the doorway and walked inside. “The event hasn’t officially started yet.” Her lips curved faintly. “But your mate is the head of Lunar Research Center. Ezra had to arrive early unless he wanted Archer and the others breathing down his neck all night.”

At that, some of the panic loosened inside Lylah’s chest.

“Ezra already arranged everything,” Zyrelle continued. “Your seat, your escort, all of it. Someone will guide you once you arrive.” She lifted a brow. “So stop looking like the world is ending. Get dressed. I’ll drive you there.”

Relief hit Lylah hard enough to make her knees weak.

“Thank you, Zyrelle.”

After a rushed bath, Lylah prepared herself quickly.

By the time she finished dressing, her exhaustion had vanished beneath sharpened instinct. She stared at her reflection one last time before leaving. Then she and Zyrelle departed for the city hall.

Lunaris' grand central hall blazed beneath the night like a palace forged from gold and moonlight.

Towering marble pillars lined the entrance while enchanted lanterns cast warm amber light across the sprawling courtyard. Luxury vehicles arrived one after another, releasing wolves wrapped in velvet, jewels, and expensive scents into the crisp evening air.

Zyrelle pulled to a stop near the entrance steps.

"I'll spend my evening somewhere less suffocating," she muttered dryly.

Lylah huffed a quiet laugh before stepping out.

The moment her heels touched the marble ground, countless scents flooded her senses at once—perfume, wine, polished cedar, expensive leather.

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Chapter 389

"Luna Lylah?"

May

A young woman approached quickly through the crowd with a polite smile.

"I'm Vanessa," she introduced warmly. "Zephyr's mate. He works under Alpha Ezra at the Research Center."

Recognition flickered faintly through Lylah's mind.

Vanessa dipped her head respectfully. "Alpha Ezra asked me to stay by your side tonight since he'll be busy handling matters for the venture."

Lylah relaxed slightly.

At least she wouldn't have to walk into an event this massive alone.

"Thank you, Vanessa."

Together, they started toward the grand entrance.

The closer they drew, the thicker the atmosphere became. Conversations drifted through the air in elegant murmurs while crystal chandeliers gleamed beyond the massive open doors.

Lylah barely recognized half the faces around her.

Then,

“Lylah?” The familiar voice carried surprise more than hostility.

She halted instantly.

Turning, she found Orion standing several feet away, dressed sharply in formal navy attire. His eyes widened slightly upon seeing her.

“Orion?”

Before either of them could say more, another voice cracked through the air like a whip.

“You foolish boy!”

The pressure of Alpha dominance slammed outward a second later.

“How many times have I warned you not to approach her?”

Eldric.

The Alpha of Ironcrest descended the marble steps beside Daia, both dressed in luxurious velvet finery befitting high-ranking guests. Lylah’s eyes narrowed faintly.

What was he even doing here?

This event was exclusive to Lunar’s circles. Eldric had no established business standing within the city.

So how had he secured entry?

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“Father.” Orion said carefully, tension immediately entering his scent, “I was only surprised to see Lylah

here.”

“And what she’s doing here is none of our concern,” Eldric sneered.

His cold eyes swept over Lylah from head to toe with open contempt.

“Perhaps she came searching for another powerful male to cling to.” His lips curled. “That does seem to be what she’s best at.”

Vanessa stiffened beside her.

Eldric continued mercilessly, “Or maybe she simply followed behind that troublesome mate of hers like a stray begging for shelter.”

A dangerous silence settled.

Lylah felt her wolf stir beneath her skin-not wounded.

Her chin lifted slightly. “It’s strange hearing that from you,” she replied evenly. “Considering you’re the one who doesn’t belong here.”

“This venture isn’t open to every pack,” Lylah continued calmly. “And Ironcrest has no business roots in

Lunaris.”

Eldric’s eyes flashed gold.

The beast beneath his skin surged violently enough for his aura to ripple outward in sharp waves.

“So you wish to compare status with me?” he said darkly. “The Alpha of Ironcrest versus a discarded nobody like you?” His voice lowered into a threatening growl. “Very well. Let’s see who truly has the right to stand here tonight.”

Vanessa’s anger spiked instantly beside her.

But before Vanessa could speak, Lylah reached over and gently caught her wrist.

“It’s fine,” she murmured. “Let’s go.”

Then, without another glance toward Eldric, Lylah turned and walked toward the entrance.

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

Chapter 390

3rd Person's POV

Finished

Eldric stared at Lylah's retreating figure as she disappeared beyond the golden-lit entrance of the grand hall.

A dark scoff left him.

"Look at that," he muttered coldly. "The stray actually dares challenge me now."

The muscles beneath his tailored coat tightened as his wolf bristled with wounded pride. Beside him, Daia's expression pinched with unease while Orion remained tense and silent.

Eldric turned sharply.

"Come," he ordered. "It's time she remembered her place."

The three of them ascended the marble steps toward the main entrance where several officials stood greeting arriving guests beneath the glow of enchanted chandeliers. The scent of wealth, power, and dominant wolves saturated the air.

One of the attendants immediately stepped forward with practiced politeness.

"I don't believe we've met before, sir."

Eldric lifted his chin arrogantly. "I am the Alpha of Ironcrest Pack."

Recognition flickered across the man's face at once.

"Ah, an Alpha." His posture straightened respectfully. "Then you must possess an exclusive silver invitation card." He smiled courteously. "Since this is Ironcrest's first appearance at the Lunaris Venture, I'll need to verify your invitation before allowing entry."

The words struck like a slap.

Eldric stiffened.

For half a second, something ugly flashed across his face.

Silver card?

Fenrir never mentioned any damned card.

Irritation instantly surged through his wolf.

“Are you blind?” Eldric snapped. “I already passed the outer security. That alone should tell you my status is worthy enough to enter freely. Open the doors and let us in.”

The attendant didn’t flinch, though several nearby wolves subtly straightened beneath the pressure. “My apologies, Alpha Eldric, but these protocols exist for the safety and comfort of all honored guests tonight.”

Eldric stepped back slowly.

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Humiliation burned hot beneath his skin.

Finished

Around him, elegant nobles and powerful wolves drifted through the entrance effortlessly while he remained halted outside like some unwanted outsider.

His jaw clenched hard enough to ache.

Then suddenly,

His eyes caught two familiar figures approaching through the courtyard.

Cora and Rowan.

They moved side by side beneath the lantern glow like Lunaris royalty itself. Rowan’s presence drew attention effortlessly, while Cora, his daughter, walked beside him radiant in her gown, her smile proud and dazzling beneath the moonlight.

The sight immediately soothed Eldric’s temper.

Everything could still be salvaged now.

“Cora!”

Her steps faltered instantly.

“Father?” Shock widened her eyes as she took in not only Eldric, but Daia and Orion standing beside him. “What are all of you doing here?”

Eldric frowned at her reaction.

“What kind of greeting is that?” he said sharply. “You see your own family and speak as though we’re strangers.”

Cora exhaled carefully, already sensing trouble.

“No, I just...” Her gaze flicked uneasily toward the guarded entrance. “This venture is extremely exclusive. It’s mainly for Lunar is elites and their allies.” Suspicion crept into her voice. “How did you even get access?”

A bad feeling immediately coiled inside her.

If Eldric had forced his way in somehow...

“You didn’t sneak in, did you?” Cora asked quickly. “Because if something goes wrong here, it won’t just affect you. My reputation could be dragged into it as well.”

“I received an invitation through an acquaintance,” Eldric replied dismissively. His irritation quickly resurfaced as he jerked his chin toward the attendant nearby. “But apparently this fool claims I need some ridiculous silver invitation card simply because I’m an Alpha.”

Then his expression softened into calculated expectation.

“But my dear daughter, with your standing in Lunar is now, surely getting your family inside won’t be difficult.”

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Beside Cora, Rowan’s lips twitched faintly.

He had expected this from the beginning.

Cora hesitated. “I’m not sure it works that way.”

The shift in Eldric’s scent turned immediate.

Finished

“What do you mean you’re not sure?” he growled. “I came here so I can meet Ivar of Whitepine. Do you understand that?” His eyes gleamed feverishly. “He’s attending tonight. This is my chance!”

Cora’s stomach tightened.

“I’m not some access card you can wave around whenever you want.” She countered.

Eldric's expression darkened further.

"But you can help. So why refuse?" Rage flickered beneath his skin before he spat bitterly, "That stray Lylah walked in without a single issue. And I can't even cross the threshold? Where is my pride in this?"

The question hit like claws scraping across Cora's nerves.

'Because Lylah didn't need anyone's name.

'She was Luna of Moonclaw now.'

'Alpha Ezra's mate.'

But she would never say those words aloud.

Because admitting it would mean acknowledging something she refused to accept: that Lylah had risen into

a fate brighter, stronger, and more untouchable than anything Cora had ever been able to control.

So she buried it.

Deep.

After a long pause, Cora finally forced herself to speak.

"I'll check first."

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