

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

Chapter 401

Lylah's POV

The noise of the banquet faded as we moved toward the quieter end of the terrace.

Finished

Moonlight spilled across the marble table while soft music drifted from the distant gardens. Servants moved quietly between the guests, but here, tucked away beneath the warm glow of the chandeliers, it finally felt peaceful.

We ate slowly, exchanging light conversation and the occasional laugh.

Then Grandfather Vargan suddenly glanced toward Commander Ivar, his brows knitting together.

‘I didn’t realize you held such hostility toward Rowan Blackfang.’

Commander Ivar gave a small shrug. “I don’t.”

Vargan snorted softly. “You looked ready to rip his throat out earlier. After your retirement and after your last battle, I haven’t seen your wolf that furious in years.”

At that, something dark shifted in the Commander’s silver eyes.

The atmosphere around the table changed instantly.

The night air seemed to sharpen with the scent of danger as ancient power stirred beneath his skin.

‘It isn’t only Rowan Blackfang I want to tear apart,’ Ivar said quietly.

All of us at the table stiffened.

‘It’s Eldric. His entire bloodline. His precious daughter who now stands beside Rowan.’ His voice lowered into something lethal. “And if I could, I would burn Ironcrest itself to the ground.”

The fury rolling off him was suffocating.

t felt less like anger and more like the restrained wrath of a battle-worn beast finally catching the scent of old blood.

Then his gaze shifted toward me.

And instantly, the violence softened into something far heavier.

Guilt.

“They deserve it,” he said hoarsely. “After everything they’ve done to you, Lylah.”

Grandfather Vargan fell silent, confusion shadowing his expression as he tried to piece together the meaning behind those words.

But I already understood.

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Chapter 401

A strange ache tightened inside my chest.

“You found out....” I said softly. “About my real parents.”

For a moment, Ivar simply stared at me. Then he murmured,

Finished

“I should have discovered the truth long ago, child. Long before tonight.” Regret carved deeply through every word. “The moment Jax died.... It should have been you under my protection. Not her.”

Silence settled over the table.

Even Ezra remained still beside me, though I could feel his wolf listening carefully beneath the calm mask he wore.

Commander Ivar exhaled slowly, as though forcing himself to reopen wounds he had buried.

*After Jax died, Cora came to me claiming she was his daughter.” A bitter shadow crossed his face. “She was terrified. Alone. Nothing more than a fragile little girl abandoned by the world.” His eyes dimmed with disgust toward himself. “And like a fool, I let my grief blind me. That very night, I was already prepared to place everything I had at her feet.”

The shame in his voice made my chest tighten painfully.

‘I pulled strings across Verdanth for her. Called in favors from former students, allies, commanders.” A humorless laugh escaped him. “I told them to treat her like royalty. Like something precious. I made sure her life would always be easy.”

My wolf stirred uneasily beneath my skin.

Rage flickered hot through my veins.

Not only had Cora deceived Thane, Isaac, and countless others,

She had manipulated someone who had genuinely loved and respected my father.

Someone who had mourned him.

‘When I finally learned she wasn’t Jax’s true daughter,” Ivar continued, “she avoided me. Dodged every question. And when I cornered her... she claimed the real child died during birth.”

The words hit like ice against my spine.

“She hid the truth about the switch,” he said roughly. “By then, everything had already gone too far. The damage had already been done.”

His aura trembled faintly.

Not from weakness.

From regret.

“Eldric had already cast you aside. Everyone had already tried to break you piece by piece while I...” His throat tightened. “While I unknowingly protected the wrong girl.”

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hapter 401

PPP

Finished

ain flashed through his silver eyes with startling nakedness.

It was my failure. The consequences of my choices became the chains around your life.” Ivar looked at me

en, guilt written plainly across his face. “Lylah... I truly beg your forgiveness.”

3.3K

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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Chapter 402

3rd Person's POV

‘That was never your fault.’

Fisher

Lylah reached across the table and took Ivar's hands into hers. The old commander's skin was rough with age and battle, yet beneath her touch, the restless fury inside his wolf eased-if only slightly.

‘You were deceived too,’ she said softly. ‘Your intentions were never cruel. How could I blame you for owing someone you believed was my father's child?’

Moonlight glimmered across the silver in Ivar's eyes. His jaw flexed hard, the beast beneath his skin pacing violently.

‘Cora and Eldric will pay for this,’ he growled. ‘I swear it on my wolf.’

Beside him, Vargan's expression darkened as well. The old lord of Moonclaw rarely displayed anger openly, but tonight his aura rolled through the table like distant thunder.

‘I met that girl once at Lunar Grace,’ Vargan said coldly. ‘When I disguised myself as a wanderer. She's horrible.’ His gaze sharpened. ‘And now you're telling me she ruined Lylah's life while living beneath stolen privilege?’

The marble table creaked faintly beneath the pressure of his hand.

Then they should all be destroyed,’ Vargan said flatly. ‘Every last one of them. If you move against Ironcrest, I'll stand beside you, Ivar.’

The former commander gave a grim nod of agreement.

But then Lylah spoke.

‘May I ask for one thing?’

Both men turned toward her immediately.

‘If you plan to expose Cora... please wait until after her official mating ceremony with Rowan.’

Ivar stared at her as though he’d misheard. “Wait?” he repeated roughly. “Why would we allow that sly female more time?”

Vargan frowned deeply. “Don’t tell me you intend to forgive her, Lylah. Someone capable of this much deceit is dangerous left unpunished.”

“I’m not forgiving her.”

The soft glow in Lylah’s eyes sharpened then-beautiful and cold all at once.

“I simply want fate to finish weaving its lesson.”

The two elder wolves watched her carefully.

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“Right now,” Lylah continued, “Rowan still believes Cora is favored by destiny.” A faint smile touched her lips. “That was the entire reason they came tonight. To display their power. Their connections. Their future.”

Her gaze drifted toward the gardens.

“They believe everything will fall into place once they officially mate. So if the truth destroys them after that bond is sealed...” She looked back at them. “Wouldn’t that punishment be far more fitting?”

For a long moment, neither of the elders spoke.

Then realization settled heavily across Ivar’s face.

“You’re right,” he murmured darkly. “If we corner her now, she could still run. Hide herself somewhere beyond Verdanth. But once she becomes Blackfang’s Luna...”

“She’ll be trapped by her own ambition,” Vargan finished. A proud smile slowly spread across his old face as he looked at Lylah. “You truly are clever.”

The night carried on after that.

Eventually, Ezra guided Lylah away from the banquet long before the venture truly ended.

By the time they returned to the penthouse, Lunarix had fallen into deep midnight silence.

Inside their chambers, warmth wrapped around them immediately.

Soft amber lights glowed against the dark marble walls, while the distant city/shimmered beyond the towering windows, like scattered stars beneath the night sky.

Lylah stood before the mirror as Ezra moved behind her. His large hands slid slowly to the back of her gown, grazing lightly against silk as he began undoing the delicate row of buttons one by one.

For a while, neither of them spoke.

Then Lylah glanced at him through the reflection. “I just realized something, Ezra.”

Another button slipped free beneath his careful fingers.

“You’ve never told me how you entered the tech world. Please tell me about it!”

3.3K

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Chapter 403

3rd Person’s POV

Especially after the breathtaking film Ezra had revealed during the venture banquet, Lylah found herself unable to stop thinking about him.

She remembered he had only told her one simple thing-that he left Moonclaw because he wanted to escape the suffocating pressure of his family forcing him toward a political mating.

But now?

She wanted to know everything.

How had the heir of the Moonclaw Bussines Empire abandoned the path prepared for him... only to build an entirely different kingdom with his own hands?

“Hm.” Ezra’s low voice brushed against her ear as he loosened the final clasp of her gown. “I don’t think my story is particularly interesting, my love.”

His lips grazed the sensitive skin beneath her ear, sending warmth racing through her body despite the late hour.

“I still want to hear it,” Lylah insisted softly.

She turned in his arms so quickly the silk around her legs swayed like water.

“If my Luna commands it,” he murmured. “Then tonight’s bedtime story shall be about me.”

A quiet laugh escaped her.

“My study would probably be a better place for this,” Ezra continued. “There are still a few unfinished projects there. You might find them interesting.”

“Yes-”

Lylah barely managed the word before Ezra suddenly swept her into his arms.

A startled laugh left her lips as the Alpha lifted her effortlessly against his chest, as though she weighed no more than snowfall.

“Ezra!”

He ignored her protest entirely.

The deep rumble of amusement in his chest vibrated against her body while he carried her through the penthouse halls.

By the time he pushed open the doors to his private study, Lylah’s cheeks were already warm.

The room itself felt like stepping into another world.

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PPP

Silver-blue holograms flickered faintly in the darkness. Strange mechanical prototypes rested across long obsidian tables, their surfaces glowing with soft pulses of energy. Half-finished robots stood silently along the walls like dormant guardians awaiting commands from their creator.

“There are only a few here,” Ezra said casually behind her. “Most of the important prototypes are already at the research center being developed into something better.”

Lylah slowly turned in place, wonder blooming openly across her face. “You really made all of these...”

Ezra leaned lazily against the edge of his desk, folding his arms across his chest.

“You asked how I entered this field.” His voice lowered thoughtfully. “I once studied healing too. Unfortunately, I was terrible at pretending I enjoyed it.”

Lylah laughed softly. “And you stressed Professor Grimwood.”

‘I tried technology afterward,” he continued. “And somehow... it simply clicked.”

Like instinct.

Like fate.

‘That’s how I ended up here now. Nothing dramatic.”

To Lylah, however, it sounded extraordinary. “How old were you then?”

‘Seventeen. Maybe eighteen.”

Her eyes widened slightly. “So young...”

Ezra only shrugged.

When you first left Moonclaw and came to Lunaris...” she asked carefully, “were you alone?”

At that, something quieter settled into his expression.

‘Damon visited often,” he said. “Though he always had to sneak around behind Vargan’s back to avoid being dragged home.” A low chuckle escaped him. “He just moved here about two years later. The first companion I made in this city was Archer.”

Lylah’s chest tightened unexpectedly.

She tried to imagine him back then.

Young. Isolated. Defiant.

An Alpha born beneath the strongest Pack in Verdanth, yet wandering through a foreign city carrying ambitions no one around him understood.

“You were still so young when all of that happened, Ezra,” she murmured. “You’re truly amazing.”

His wolf reacted instantly to her praise.

2/3

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ppp

The atmosphere in the study thickened subtly, ancient instinct stirring beneath his skin.

“Not nearly as amazing as you.” He said.

Lylah blinked.

Sished

“You always knew what you wanted to become,” he said softly. “Even after everything they put you through, you never lost yourself. Meanwhile, I was just a reckless, disobedient child causing problems wherever and whenever I wanted.”

There was amusement in his voice, but beneath it lingered something older.

Loneliness.

He told her then about the endless battles with Vargan after deciding to abandon the traditional Moonclaw Alpha path. The old lord had lost control with fury. A young Alpha refusing inherited power, territory, and political influence in exchange for machines and experiments?

At the time, it had sounded like madness.

“Vargan swore he would hand Moonclaw over to Damon or Zyrelle instead,” Ezra chuckled. “There were arguments almost every week. Sometimes every day.”

Lylah could almost picture it.

“But then,” she said softly, stepping closer to him, “he eventually realized you chose the right path.”

Ezra’s gaze lowered toward her.

“Because of you,” Lylah continued, “half of Verdanth was able to grow.”

Silence filled the room.

Heavy.

Intimate.

Then suddenly,

Ezra’s hand closed around her chin.

The movement was swift enough to make her breath catch.

Before she could react, he pulled her against him and captured her mouth in a deep, hungry kiss.

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ppp.

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Chapter 404

3rd Person’s POV

“E-Ezra...”

Lylah’s breath caught the moment he finally pulled away from her mouth.

Wide-eyed, she lifted trembling fingers to her swollen lips, still dazed from the force of the kiss.

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Furished

One second they had been talking peacefully in his study, and the next, the Alpha had snapped like a starving wolf finally reaching the edge of his restraint.

Honestly, she should have expected it.

Ezra possessed terrifying self-control in every aspect of his life... except when it came to her.

Now he had her pinned against the edge of his obsidian desk, his large body caging hers effortlessly before he lifted her onto the polished surface.

“Ezra wait,” Lylah protested weakly when his mouth found the sensitive curve of her neck. A shiver ran violently through her body as his teeth grazed her pulse. “We can’t do this here...”

A low growl rumbled deep inside his chest.

‘Why not? We’re on the upper floor. No one will see us, my love.”

His hands slid beneath the silk of her gown with dangerous familiarity, slowly peeling the fabric away from her body.

“The condom is still in our room...” Lylah’s voice faltered when his mouth moved lower.

The sound of a drawer opening interrupted her.

She blinked in surprise.

Ezra reached beside the desk and calmly lifted a small black package between his fingers-new, unopened, prepared.

“Don’t worry,” he said smoothly. “I keep plenty here.”

Lylah stared at him in disbelief.

Then realization struck.

He had planned this!

The doors of the study sealed shut automatically with a quiet mechanical click, locking the room into complete privacy while silver-blue holograms continued flickering softly around the darkened study like

silent stars.

“There’s nowhere left for you to escape now,” Ezra murmured.

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Chapter 404

ppp

Heat rushed into her cheeks.

Finished

Before she could gather another argument, he stepped between her knees and pulled her flush against him, his forehead resting briefly against hers as his control visibly frayed.

“I’ve waited long enough,” he said roughly. “Since before the venture banquet, since in Moonclaw, you’ve barely paid attention to me.”

The accusation carried the unmistakable jealousy.

His wolf had endured it for days.

Tonight, it demanded repayment.

And beneath the quiet midnight glow of his study, Ezra finally claimed his revenge.

The following morning, far from Lunaris, a tense gathering unfolded inside the Ashcroft family estate within Blackfang territory.

The atmosphere felt heavy with unease.

Lord Oberon and Lady Juniper of Moonclaw Beta bloodline had personally come to Blackfang. That alone was enough to shake the entire household.

Tiara’s aunt and uncle sat stiffly on one side of the room, their expressions carefully respectful as Juniper calmly explained the situation-the pregnancy, the upcoming mating ceremony, and Tiara’s eventual move into the Moonclaw Beta manor.

Neither dared object.

Not before wolves whose authority carried enough weight to silence entire territories.

“We understand,” Tiara’s uncle said quickly with a lowered head. “If this is what Damon and Tiara have decided, then our family has no objections.”

Beside him, his wife nodded immediately in agreement.

Across the room, Damon leaned lazily against the wall with folded arms, looking profoundly uninterested in the entire discussion.

But unlike the others, Tiara's grandmother looked close to tears.

Her frail hands trembled in her lap as she struggled to absorb everything she had heard.

"To us, Tiara is still just a reckless girl," the old woman whispered brokenly. "One day she was here with

us... and now suddenly she'll live in another Pack altogether? What if something happens to her there?"

She lifted glistening eyes toward Juniper and Oberon.

"Can you truly promise me she'll be safe?"

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Finished

For the first time since the meeting began, Damon's expression shifted slightly.

Juniper's face softened immediately.

"Yes, Lady Ashcroft," she said gently. "You have my word."

"Tiara and the child will be protected as members of our family." Oberon gave a solemn nod beside her.

Then Juniper's gaze slid deliberately toward her son. "And besides, your granddaughter has a mate now."

Damon immediately sensed danger.

Juniper smiled sweetly.

"Our son would never allow harm to come near her." Her eyes narrowed slightly at him. "Isn't that right, Damon?"

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Chapter 405

3rd Person's POV

Damon's jaw tightened.

For a brief second, it looked as though the words physically pained him to say.

"Yeah." he muttered flatly. "I'll make sure she's safe."

Finisher

Even now, irritation simmered beneath his skin like a restless beast clawing against bone. He still had no idea why his parents insisted on dragging him here after making every major decision behind his back.

The entire arrangement had already been decided before anyone bothered asking what he wanted.

Or whether he wanted it at all.

Beside him, Juniper ignored the darkening mood radiating from her son with practiced ease.

"Tiara told us she wishes to remain here a little longer," she said gracefully. "We think she should spend time with her family before officially moving into Moonclaw territory."

Relief flickered across Diana Ashcroft's face immediately. "Thank you."

Not long after, the meeting finally ended.

The Ashcroft family escorted the visitors outside, all the way to the gates. Cold wind swept across the muddy Blackfang roads as the black Maybach slowly disappeared into the distance, swallowed by fog and pine shadows.

Only after the vehicle vanished completely did Diana quietly shut the front door.

The second the lock clicked into place, she turned sharply toward Tiara.

"Why didn't you tell us you were involved with the Moonclaw Beta family?" Diana demanded in a hushed voice. Anxiety rolled heavily off her wolf. "When did this even happen? Was it during your trip to Lunaris? Tiara, answer me honestly."

Tiara blinked, maintaining an expression of innocent confusion.

“Auntie, what are you talking about? I wasn’t ‘involved’ with them at first. I barely even knew them.”

Diana stared at her in disbelief. “No? Then how did you end up carrying the heir of one of the most powerful bloodlines in Verdanth?”

The room fell quiet.

Even the old house itself seemed to tense around them.

Tiara sighed dramatically before brushing a strand of dark hair behind her ear.

“Because Damon and I are in a relationship,” she said as though the answer should have been obvious.

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Chapter 405

Finished

“Was I supposed to report every detail of my love life too? Some things are embarrassing to share.” Then Tiara smiled.

“But trust me, we love each other. There’s nothing for you to worry about.”

Unfortunately, Diana did not look reassured.

If anything, her concern deepened.

“If this relationship is truly based on love,” she said carefully, “then why do his parents seem far more excited about this pregnancy than Damon himself?”

Tiara’s fingers stilled.

Diana pressed on quietly. “I watched him the entire meeting. That Beta barely spoke. And when he did, it felt forced.” Her voice lowered with unease. “I don’t think he’s accepted that you’ll soon become part of their family, Tiara.”

A painful pause followed.

“I’m not even sure he’s accepted the baby yet.”

Tiara lowered her gaze for the briefest moment.

The memory of Damon at the treatment center flashed through her mind instantly-that terrifying burst of possessiveness when she threatened to get rid of the pup. The violence in his wolf had been real. Ancient. Instinctive.

“They won’t hurt me,” Tiara finally said softly.

And if they ever dared...

She would make sure they lost the heir they coveted so desperately.

The thought vanished as quickly as it came.

“And Damon...” Her voice softened unexpectedly. “He’s just terrible at expressing himself.” A strange warmth spread through her chest despite herself. “But he’s actually kind. A gentleman.”

The words sounded absurd.

Yet somehow they were true.

Her grandmother, who had remained quiet until now, looked at her uncertainly. “Are you sure, silly girl?”

Tiara nodded immediately.

“Of course.” She moved closer to the old woman and sat beside her. “Nana, didn’t you hear him earlier? He promised himself that nothing would happen to me.”

The old woman still looked unconvinced.

Her frail hands folded tightly together in her lap.

2/3

Chapter 405

Finished

“I still cannot believe it,” she murmured. “If the two of you truly love each other....then why would he leave his pregnant mate here alone?”

Tiara nearly choked.

“Call him,” her grandmother ordered firmly. “Tell Damon to come back and stay here tonight.”

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3/3

1:34 pm

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Chapter 406

3rd Person's POV

Damon ended up staying at a hotel not far from Blackfang territory.

At least, that was what he told himself he was doing.

Because despite every rational thought insisting he should leave Tiara behind and return to Moonclaw, something inside him refused to go too far away from her. His wolf had been restless ever since they left the Ashcroft estate, prowling violently beneath his skin like a beast refusing confinement.

And the most infuriating part?

The cause of it all was her.

That woman truly had a talent for turning his life upside down.

Now, as he stood near the hotel window overlooking the dark pine forests surrounding Blackfang territory. Damon found his thoughts drifting back toward the argument he'd had with his parents earlier that evening.

The memory still irritated him.

"What exactly made you trust Tiara so easily?" he had demanded after leaving the Ashcroft estate. "All my life, you warned me about outsiders. Gold diggers. Opportunists. Females willing to use the Moonclaw name for status and money."

Juniper and Oberon had exchanged a glance.

Damon pressed on before either could answer.

"You could've secured the heir without forcing Tiara into the family. She didn't need to become my mate for two years. We barely know her."

Oberon's eyes sharpened dangerously, and the crushing dominance of an elder Beta rolled through the room like a storm.

"Is this truly the son I raised?" Oberon asked coldly. "A coward who plants his seed inside a woman, then refuses to acknowledge her place beside him afterward?"

"That's not what I meant."

"No?" Oberon's voice deepened with warning. "Then explain yourself properly."

Before the confrontation could worsen, Juniper stepped in smoothly.

"Damon," she said quietly, disappointment lingering beneath her calm tone, "Tiara carries your pup. Soon, she will become your mate. Whether you admit it or not, your wolf already cares for her."

Damon's jaw had tightened hard enough to ache.

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Juniper's gaze softened almost sadly. "You simply haven't realized it yet," she murmured. "And I refuse to let my son spend the rest of his life drowning in regret because he pushed away the woman fate placed in his path."

The sharp vibration of his phone suddenly shattered the memory.

Damon blinked once before pulling the device from his pocket.

Tiara.

"What?" he answered flatly.

"I wouldn't have called if it wasn't important," Tiara muttered.

There was no arrogance in her voice tonight. No claws. No fire.

Somehow, that unsettled him more.

"My Nana wants you to stay here tonight," she continued. "Listen, I already know you'll hate the idea. But..."

A quiet exhale brushed through the line. "But this isn't for me, Damon. It's for her. So please."

His wolf reacted violently to that word.

Please.

No challenge. No mockery. Just sincerity.

Damon shut his eyes briefly in irritation. Some part of him almost preferred when she was snarling at

him.

“Damon-”

“Fine,” he cut in roughly. “Fine. I’ll stay.”

Relief immediately flooded her scent even through the phone.

“I knew you would,” she said, sounding almost shocked herself. “Thank you!”

The line disconnected.

Damon stared at the dark screen for several long seconds.

Then he muttered a curse beneath his breath and dragged a hand through his hair.

She was becoming a problem.

A dangerous one

Back at the Ashcroft home, Tiara slipped her phone into her pocket before returning to the family room. The tension that had been lingering inside the old house finally eased when she spoke.

“Okay. Damon agreed to stay.”

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Chapter 406

Relief swept visibly across the room.

Then her uncle cleared his throat awkwardly.

“There’s something else,” he said carefully.

Tiara frowned.

Finwned

“The Moonclaw family left compensation for us before they departed. Gold. Property deeds. Investment assets. More wealth than our family has ever seen.”

“And?” she asked slowly.

Her uncle exchanged another uneasy glance with his wife before speaking again.

“We discussed it already,” he said. “All of it should belong to you.”

Silence.

Tiara blinked once.

Then fury exploded through her veins so fast her wolf nearly surfaced. “What?”

The word cracked through the room sharply enough to make everyone flinch.

“No,” she snapped instantly. “Absolutely not. That wealth was given to this household-not me.” Her eyes narrowed. “Why would you hand it over?”

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Chapter 407

3rd Person’s POV

Futed

“Because we can’t allow you to walk into Moonclaw territory with nothing to your name,” Parker Ashcroft said heavily.

The strain in his voice carried the exhaustion of a wolf who had spent too long surviving on pride alone.

“With Blackfang in this condition... You know how powerful Packs think, Tiara. The Moonclaw nobles already see us as weak. If you go there empty-handed and vulnerable, they’ll look down on

you even more. They'll insult you behind your back." His gaze softened with helpless concern. "Your aunt and I couldn't bear that."

The words struck Tiara harder than she expected.

Heat burned suddenly behind her eyes.

Even now... they were still thinking about her.

Not themselves.

Not the debts strangling the family like chains around their throats.

Not the rogues lurking at the edges of Blackfang territory like scavengers waiting for dying prey.

Not the fear that had driven them to send her away to Lunar is in the first place.

They were vulnerable too.

Yet somehow, they were still trying to protect her.

Tiara swallowed hard against the ache rising inside her chest. "I'm not a child anymore, Uncle," she said, her voice roughening. "I'll be fine."

Her wolf stirred restlessly beneath her skin, emotions running too sharp, too raw.

"You can't keep putting me first. You need to think about yourselves for once. About this family. About yourself, Auntie, Nana."

"But Tiara-"

"Uncle." Her voice cracked like a whip through the room. "If you refuse that money, I might do something reckless that none of you will like."

"Tiara!"

"That's exactly why you should accept the damn wealth Damon's family gave you!" she burst out.

The force of her emotions rolled through the room so suddenly that even the air seemed to tense.

"I don't need it." she said fiercely. "I can earn money myself. But you-" Her throat closed before she could

1/3

:35 pm

Chapter 407

Finished

finish.

Because the truth hurt too much.

Her family had been drowning silently while pretending everything was fine.

Tiara looked away quickly before the tears gathering in her eyes could fall. "With that money, you can finally live comfortably."

Before anyone could stop her, she turned sharply and rushed upstairs.

The second her bedroom door slammed shut above them, silence settled heavily over the house.

Parker blinked in confusion.

"Strange," he muttered. "Why was she so upset?" He looked toward his mate uncertainly. "Diana... did I say something wrong?"

Diana remained quiet for several seconds.

Then suddenly, realization flashed across her face.

"No..." she murmured slowly. "I don't think this is about the money." Diana looked toward the staircase, unease creeping into her expression.

"Parker... do you think she knows?"

His body stiffened instantly.

"About our debt," Diana whispered. "The rogues' attack on our house? What if she overheard us that night? What if that's why she reacted like this? She was angry." Her throat bobbed. "Angry that we were trying to give away the very help she sacrificed herself to bring us."

Parker's eyes widened.

Then another realization struck him just as hard.

"And Tiara..." Parker said slowly, still struggling to make sense of it all. "That girl never wanted to be tied down. She's always chased freedom over responsibility. A pup alone wouldn't suddenly make her agree to move into a foreign Pack, and accept a mating arrangement... no matter how powerful her mate is."

Diana's breath caught softly.

Parker looked toward the staircase again, his chest tightening.

“What if...” he said quietly, “the real reason she accepted the Damon family’s offer... was to help us?”

The front door opened before Diana could answer.

Cold wind swept briefly into the house, carrying the scent of frost, pine, and pheromones powerful enough to press against the walls themselves.

Damon stepped inside.

2/3

Chapter 407

The atmosphere shifted instantly.

Even restrained, the aura radiating from the Moonclaw Beta was overwhelming.

Diana and Parker straightened immediately.

‘Beta Damon,” Diana greeted politely, though tension still lingered in her posture. “Thank you for agreeing to stay the night.”

Damon gave a brief nod, his sharp eyes already scanning the house instinctively.

Searching.

For her.

“Tiara is upstairs,” Diana continued carefully. “You can go to her directly.”

Then she hesitated.

A faint sigh escaped her. “But please be gentle with her. We just had a bit of an argument.”

3.3K

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:35 pm

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Ruby Walker

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

Chapter 408

3rd Person's POV

“An argument?” Damon’s brows drew together slightly.

Tiara had sounded strange on the phone earlier. Too subdued. The usual sharpness in her voice had been missing, like a flame burning low beneath dying embers.

At the time, he hadn’t cared enough to ask.

Now standing inside her home with the lingering scent of her distress still clinging to the air, his wolf stirred uneasily beneath his skin.

What happened?

‘Don’t worry, Lady Ashcroft,’ Damon said calmly to Diana. “I’ll be careful with her.”

The couple looked visibly startled.

Damon ignored their reactions and headed upstairs.

The wooden floorboards creaked faintly beneath his weight as he approached the bedroom Diana had pointed out earlier.

Damon knocked once.

Just come in,” Tiara’s muffled voice called from inside. “It’s not locked.” A brief pause followed before she added dryly, “Though you should lock it once you’re in.”

Despite himself, Damon snorted softly before pushing the door open.

The room was... small. Far smaller than anything he was accustomed to inside his family estate in

Moonclaw.

But strangely warm.

The space felt lived in. Moonlight filtered through thin curtains, casting silver shadows across the cramped bedroom while her scent saturated every inch of the air. Her dress hung carelessly over a chair. Books were stacked unevenly near the bed. Tiny trinkets cluttered the shelves.

Everything in the room screamed her.

And somehow, his wolf liked it far too much.

Tiara lay curled on the bed with her back facing him, clearly pretending not to notice his arrival.

Damon shut the door behind him slowly.

“That’s rude,” he drawled. “You begged me to stay, and now you’re ignoring me?”

No response.

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Chapter 408

Fimited

He clicked his tongue lightly. “How am I supposed to feel welcome?”

Finally, she spoke.

“No need to pretend when we’re alone, Damon.” Her voice was quiet, lacking its usual bite. “I already know you hate staying here. The room’s too cramped. Too small. Your expression says enough.”

That immediately irritated him.

Because she was wrong.

Completely wrong.

Still, before he could speak, Tiara shifted slightly against the mattress. “You can sleep beside me if you want. Or take the couch. I don’t care.”

The bed barely looked big enough for one person to sleep comfortably, much less two wolves sharing the

same space.

Yet Damon crossed the room anyway.

The mattress dipped beneath his weight as he sat at the edge beside her.

‘You really know how to project your bad mood onto other people,’ He remarked lazily. Then his voice lowered slightly. “Though I guess it’s normal. Families fight.”

Tiara remained quiet.

Damon glanced sideways at her. "I figured you and your family never disagreed. You all seem annoyingly close compared to mine."

That finally made her shift.

For a moment, hesitation flickered across her face, as though debating whether she should say anything at all.

Then Tiara sighed softly.

'Uncle and I disagree sometimes," she admitted. "Tonight was one of those times."

Damon stayed silent, allowing her space to continue.

Oddly enough, he found himself listening more carefully than he intended.

"Did you know your family gave compensation to mine because I agreed to keep the baby?"

His wolf stirred faintly at the mention of the pup.

"Hm. Yes."

Tiara stared down at her hands, fingers twisting tightly against the blanket. "Uncle wanted me to keep all of it for myself," frustration bleeding into her voice. "He kept saying I'd need it once I moved into Moonclaw."

2.3

Chapter 408

Into your family."

A bitter smile touched her lips before fading just as quickly.

"But he's wrong."

Damon's eyes narrowed slightly, his wolf listening closely now.

"He doesn't understand they're the ones who need it most. Blackfang's barely surviving now, yet he still worries more about whether I'll be looked down on in Moonclaw than about himself." Her throat tightened faintly. "They've spent their whole lives sacrificing things quietly for me, so how am I supposed to sit there and watch them give away the one thing that could finally make their lives easier?"

3.3K

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:35 pm PPP

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

Chapter 409

3rd Person's POV

For several long seconds, Damon said nothing.

The silence inside the bedroom stretched taut between them, heavy with confusion and the low, restless agitation of his wolf.

Then, slowly, he frowned.

“You... don’t want it?” The question slipped out before he could stop it.

His sharp eyes stayed fixed on her back, trying-and failing-to make sense of her.

This was the same woman who had never hidden the fact that she loved money. The same woman who had once asked him for compensation when she talked about getting rid of the pup. So why now?

Why refuse wealth when it was finally being handed to her willingly?

“I thought money was what mattered most to you,” Damon admitted bluntly. “You never hesitated to ask me for it before. So why reject it now?”

He wasn’t mocking her.

For once, he was genuinely trying to understand.

But the second the words left his mouth, he saw it.

The flash of hurt in Tiara’s green eyes.

Gone almost immediately.

Yet his wolf caught it anyway.

Tiara let out a quiet laugh that sounded far too brittle. “So that’s how you see me?”

Damon stilled.

“That I’d still choose money for myself over my family?”

Something inside his chest twisted unpleasantly.

Her scent changed too-sadness bleeding beneath the soft traces of warm jasmine that always clung to her skin. His wolf shifted restlessly beneath his flesh, increasingly unsettled by emotions it didn’t know how to

handle.

Damon frowned deeper. “But what exactly is your family dealing with?” he asked carefully this time. “What happened that makes you react like this?” His voice lowered awkwardly. “I’m asking because I’m curious, not because I’m trying to offend you.”

The room fell silent again.

3

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Ford

Then Tiara abruptly turned away from him.

Damon blinked. “Tiara,” He reached toward her instinctively, intending to touch her shoulder, but she slapped his hand away before he could make contact.

The rejection hit harder than it should have.

“You don’t need to know,” she said quietly.

Her voice lacked anger now. That somehow sounded worse.

“You grew up in Moonclaw, Damon. Someone like you would never understand struggles like ours.” She curled tighter beneath the blanket, shutting him out completely. “And even if I explained it, you probably still wouldn’t believe me. Just forget it. Think whatever you want about me.”

Then she reached toward the bedside lamp.

Darkness swallowed the room instantly.

“Good night.”

Damon remained seated on the edge of the bed long after the light disappeared.

Confusion churned violently inside him, tangled together with something far more unfamiliar.

Guilt.

And for the first time in a very long while...

Damon felt the sudden, irrational urge to punch himself for saying the wrong thing.

Morning arrived beneath a pale rosy sky.

Far away in Lunaris, Lylah sat curled comfortably across a velvet sofa.

The moment Tiara answered the video call, Lylah brightened instantly.

‘Yesterday should be the day Damon’s parents visited your family, right?’ she asked eagerly. “How did everything go?”

Tiara leaned back against her pillows with a tired sigh.

‘It went fine, I guess.’ Her voice sounded strangely subdued. “Nana forced Damon to stay overnight.”

Lylah’s eyes widened immediately. “In your room?”

“Hm.”

Despite Tiara’s obvious gloom, excitement lit across Lylah’s face almost instantly.

Behind her, Ezra slowly lifted a brow from where he stood. A flicker of amusement crossed the Alpha’s expression.

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:35 pm P PP

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Finished

“I’m with your grandmother on this one,” Lylah declared shamelessly. “You two seriously need to spend more time together.”

Tiara rolled her eyes so hard her wolf practically bristled. “Please, stop sounding so invested in my suffering.”

Lylah laughed softly.

Before she could tease further, Tiara shifted the topic herself. “I heard Lunar’s Business Venture became a huge success.” Her tone finally brightened slightly. “Congratulations. Alpha Ezra’s getting praised everywhere now.”

Ezra glanced up mildly.

But then Tiara snorted.

“Sadly that shit Rowan’s getting praised too.” Disgust sharpened her voice instantly. “Meanwhile, his own Pack keeps getting worse by the day. His pack members are struggling to survive, and he’s still running around playing businessman as none of it matters.”

3.3K

B

3

7:35 pm

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

Chapter 410

3rd Person’s POV

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“He doesn’t realize it yet, but his council is rotten to the core,” Tiara scoffed, fully slipping into gossip now. “Half of them can’t even manage basic pack affairs properly. So when they watched Rowan and Cora standing on that stage while everyone applauded them, they were furious.” She huffed and crossed her arms tighter. “Rowan is an irresponsible bastard.”

Even through the video call, irritation radiated off her like sparks from an unstable flame.

“But...” Tiara grimaced reluctantly. “His presentation still impressed a lot of figures. Some investors are already talking about buying his product.” Her gaze shifted toward Ezra hopefully. “Alpha Ezra... can’t you stop him?”

At that, Lylah turned toward her mate.

Ezra had been standing nearby the entire time, silent and composed beneath the soft glow of the room’s lighting. Judging from the faint look in his steel-gray eyes, he had heard every word.

“You don’t need to worry about Rowan succeeding,” Ezra said calmly. Even through the screen, the weight of it settled heavily into the room. “The product he presented isn’t truly finished yet.”

Tiara blinked. “What do you mean?”

Damon’s sharp gaze narrowed immediately.

“The exhibition only displayed one completed unit,” Ezra continued smoothly. “If mass production were actually possible, Rowan would’ve showcased multiple models to attract large-scale investors.”

Understanding flashed instantly across Damon’s face.

“He’s using the pre-order deposits to fund further development,” Damon muttered darkly. “Trying to rebuild the system while reducing production costs at the same time.”

Ezra inclined his head once.

“Exactly.” A cold hint of amusement touched his expression. “Rowan is gambling everything on the assumption that he can solve the flaws before the foundation collapses beneath him.”

Tiara understood almost none of the technical explanation.

But she trusted Ezra far more than she would ever trust Rowan Blackfang.

And if Ezra believed Rowan’s empire was unstable, then she was more than willing to believe it too.

Night descended over Lunaris once more.

Music pulsed through the walls of one of the city’s private clubs, thick with liquor, perfume, and the restless energy of wolves seeking distraction beneath neon lights.

Rowan Blackfang sat slouched against the leather booth, several empty glasses scattered across the table

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before him. The sharp scent of whiskey clung heavily to him now, mixing with the darker undertone of his

wolf.

His celebration had long since turned ugly.

“Alpha Rowan...” Azrel groaned miserably beside him, looking moments away from collapse. “I can’t drink anymore.”

“Pathetic.” Rowan shoved another glass toward his Beta anyway. “Drink.”

Azrel looked horrified. “Luna Cora is going to kill me if you keep this up.”

Rowan gave a rough laugh, already half drunk enough for his control to fray around the edges.

“And since when did you become afraid of a female?” he mocked lazily. “You’re my Beta. Stop whining like a pathetic lackey.”

Alcohol dulled the edge of his thoughts, but not enough.

Not enough to erase the image of Lylah sitting beneath those ballroom lights.

Not enough to silence the ache she always left behind.

The club suddenly shifted around Rowan.

A new scent drifted through the air.

Soft. Dangerous. Familiar.

His wolf stilled instantly when a woman approached their table and said. “I can help take you to your room, Alpha Rowan.”

The voice slid through Rowan’s haze like moonlight cutting across a lake.

Slowly, he lifted his gaze.

And forgot how to breathe.

Her violet eyes.

Same delicate features.

Pale soft skin beneath the club lights.

“L-Lylah?” The name escaped him hoarsely, Rowan shot abruptly to his feet.

Luén stood before him, watching quietly as recognition and confusion warred inside the drunken Alpha’s

gaze.

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