

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

Chapter 51

Lylah's POV

“So you already knew all this time?”

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Finished

“A little later than I would have liked,” I said calmly. “But at least I’m no longer trapped in the dark while you play me for a fool.”

Rowan stared at me. A storm of emotions crossed his face. Hurt, guilt, regret, as if he were the one betrayed.

“Please. Just let me explain first.” Panic crept into his voice. “Lylah, I will only ever love you. What happened between me and Cora was nothing more than mutual benefit–pack to pack, It meant nothing to me. Nothing in my heart.”

I held his gaze, unmoving. “It meant enough for you to shatter the trust I gave you.”

Whatever bond Rowan and I had once shared was nothing but ashes now–burned beyond repair.

A sleek black Rolls–Royce purred to a stop at the gate, its presence impossible to ignore.

At the same moment, my phone vibrated.

Damon has arrived.

I turned to leave.

Rowan suddenly grabbed my wrist, his grip desperate. “Where are you going?”

“Home,” I said coolly. “Where my husband is waiting for me.”

**Gasps** rippled from where Cora stood.

“So it was true,” Rowan said, his eyes narrowing. “You already have a replacement for me.” His voice turned sharp, bitter. “Is this your revenge, Lylah? For one mistake? You decided to humiliate me just to make me jealous?”

It almost made me laugh.

“Don’t compare me to you. I bound myself to my husband when I was free—when I owed no one anything.” My voice was ice-cold. “And our bond is sacred. Not something built on betrayal. Honorable, recognized by Verdanth law.”

I turned and walked away, leaving Rowan behind.

A crowd had gathered and I didn’t even know when it had formed. Phones were already raised, recording, capturing everything. Behind me, Gavriel rushed to Rowan, shouting my name.

Cora stood frozen, unmoving. I wasn’t even sure her soul was still fully anchored in her body.

“Lylah, come back!” Rowan wailed, his voice breaking as he cursed himself, all composure gone. “I’ll do

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1:21 pm

Chapter 51

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Finished

anything—anything—if you forgive me! We can go back to Blackfang. We can be together again!”

Alpha Rowan Blackfang—founder of the largest tech empire across Verdant; Corlis Prime—begging in public for a woman.

I could already imagine the chaos this would unleash in the mass media.

But I couldn’t bring myself to care.

I didn’t turn around.

I felt nothing. Only a hollow, exhausted numbness, and a strange relief that I had finally thrown all his rot back in his face.

“Luna,” Damon rushed to my side, worry etched into his expression. “Are you alright?”

“I’m fine,” I said quietly. “Let’s go home.”

He hurried to open the passenger door. I slid inside, and moments later the car pulled away.

As my back sank into the fine leather seat, I exhaled for what felt like the first time all day.

Damon dropped me off outside the apartment, and I made my way upstairs. The door camera scanned my face, and the entrance parted smoothly.

Alpha Ezra's scent, blended with the fresh notes of the diffuser, greeted me the moment I crossed the threshold. My racing thoughts slowed, my pulse easing as calm flooded my senses.

"Welcome."

He was already in the living room, Bambi at his side.

He had no idea how the sight of them loosened something tight inside my chest. It **was** as if the earlier storm had never existed. The moment I saw him, it felt like a zephyr sweeping the wreckage away.

Safety.

Serenity.

Everything Rowan could never give me.

"Lylah," Ezra said softly when I didn't respond. "Are you alright?"

I blinked. "Ah, yes. I'm alright, Ezra. Just happy to be home."

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Ruby Walker

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Chapter 52

3rd Person's POV

“All right,” Ezra said, a quiet warmth slipping into his voice. “How about we have lunch before you head back?”

Hearing Lylah say she was happy here—hearing her call the penthouse home—sent an unfamiliar swell of pride through him. He had thought it would take far longer for the space to feel like hers. For her to truly belong.

“A good lunch before my second class sounds good,” Lylah said with a small smile.

“How long is your break?” he asked.

“An hour.”

They moved into the kitchen together. The small robot rolled after them, hovering close like an overprotective pup trailing its parents. Lylah reached into the cupboard and pulled out a fresh apron, checking it before slipping it over her head.

“Ezra, let me help you with yours.”

“Sure.”

He stepped closer.

The height difference forced her to stand on her toes. At the same time, Ezra instinctively lowered his head. Too much. Too close.

Their faces were suddenly only inches apart, the air between them charged, thick with unspoken awareness. Lylah’s hands trembled slightly as she lifted the apron strap.

Then, without realizing it, Ezra straightened.

Lylah still held onto the fabric.

“Ezra!”

He lost his balance, the sudden tug pulling her with him. They went down hard.

Ezra hit the polished floor on his back, his instincts snapping into place before pain could even register. One arm wrapped tightly around Lylah’s waist. The other cradled her head, shielding her without thought.

“Are you hurt?” he asked immediately, his voice rough with concern. “Lylah?”

“I—I’m fine.”

“I’m **so** sorry.”

“It’s okay.”

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The little unit darted closer, lights blinking rapidly like a startled pup.

Finished

“First-level danger detected! Daddy has fallen. Second-level danger: Lylah has fallen on Daddy. Initiating call to Damon for assistance.” Bambi slipped into full alert mode.

“No,” Ezra said firmly. “Stand down. Everything’s fine.”

“Danger neutralized,” the robot chirped after a quick scan. “Situation under control.” With that, it rolled away, satisfied, returning to its post.

Lylah’s heart was pounding so loudly she was sure he could hear it.

The solid heat of Ezra’s chest beneath her, the strength in his arms, the unmistakable dominance of an Alpha’s presence—everything stirred something deep and feral inside her.

Selestine stirred beneath her skin, restless and demanding, urging for more warmth.

She needed distance. Now. Before her wolf chose for her.

“Ezra... your hand.”

He blinked, realizing how tightly he was holding her, and released her at once.

“Are you all right?” Lylah asked softly. “I’m sorry, I fell on you. That must have hurt.”

“Not at all,” Ezra said, though his wolf was far from calm. “Let’s finish cooking.”

He turned away, forcing himself to move—desperate for a distraction before his thoughts could linger too long on her scent.

Because his wolf, the usually rigid and controlled beast, writhed beneath his skin, drawn to her: to the delicate weight of her body pressed against his, to the intoxicating warmth of her feminine scent, sharp and dangerously tempting, pulling at instincts he barely dared acknowledge,

Ezra blinked once, forcing his composure back into place.

He was definitely going to need a cold shower after this.

Lunch was ready soon after. They sat together at the dining table, but after a while, Ezra noticed her fork had gone still.

“Is the food not good?” **he** asked. “You stopped eating.”

Lylah blinked, snapping back to the present. “N-no, it’s not that. It’s just um. Your chest.”

“My chest?” He raised a brow.

She froze, color rising to her cheeks.

Her gaze had been fixed there without her realizing it—on the broad span of him, on the power in his frame, on the memory of how solid he’d felt beneath her.

“They’re good- No! I mean-” Lylah panicked and hurried to correct herself. “Your shirt. The buttons must

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 53

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

Chapter 53

Ezra’s POV

**040**

Finished

I pressed my hand to my chest. A couple of buttons had indeed come loose.

‘I’m sorry, Ezra,’ Lylah murmured again, her voice hesitant.

‘Stop,’ I said, a faint smile tugging at my lips. ‘It’s not your fault. Why do you keep apologizing?’

‘But I fell on you.’

chuckled softly. ‘You didn’t do it on purpose, did you?’

She froze, and I could already imagine her face heating up, turning the shade of a ripe summer apple. Silence stretched between us, but I didn’t push.

Anyway,’ I continued, letting my voice drop into a calmer tone, ‘Damon told me someone came by earlier, someone who disturbed you.’

already had a pretty good idea who it was. But I wanted to hear it from my mate herself.

Lylah’s jaw tightened, and the little wolf inside her stirred.

Alpha Rowan Blackfang,’ she spat the name like venom. ‘My ex. He had the audacity to bother me again.’ Her fangs pressed against her bottom lip as her hands clenched. ‘But I told him, warned him, made him understand that I have a mate now. That my heart has already taken, and I am happy with you.’

stopped, letting her words sink in.

She had always been fiery, always able to defend herself. But hearing her mention me—our mating—before her past, stirred something primal inside me. Something possessive, hot, and intoxicating.

‘You did?’ I asked, my voice low, almost a growl.

‘Yes.’ Her answer came without hesitation. ‘So he knows his place. I don’t want him in my life ever again.’

The heat in my chest deepened.

My Luna was ruthless when she needed to be. And hearing it, feeling her determination, made me smile.

Later, after lunch, Damon arrived to drive Lylah back to Lunar Grace. I instructed him to stop by the

Penthouse afterward,

The bell rang, and soon Damon was at my door.

‘Yes, Alpha?’ His voice held that familiar mix of respect and curiosity as he paused at the threshold, taking in the sight of me rifling through my wardrobe.

I yanked out almost every piece I owned—suits, coats, shirts—all meticulously tailored, formal, and expensive. But now, I wanted more. Softer fabrics, casual cuts, yet still perfectly fitted to the body. Clothes that would complement me, yet captivate her.

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Chapter 53

Finished

“Call every designer in Moonclaw,” I ordered. “Tell them I want new pieces for casual styles, perfectly tailored to fit me. And make sure everything arrives by tomorrow.”

Damon blinked, stepping inside.

‘Right away, Alpha. But what’s with the sudden change of style?’ The smirk tugging at the corner of his lips betrayed his curiosity. “Oh wait, I know. This is called Lylah’s effect.”

He let his smile stretch wider, clearly satisfied with my silence.

‘What the hell was that supposed to mean?’ I demanded.

Damon chuckled, leaning casually against the doorframe. “You lived alone before, and everything you wore was made to match your status. But now, with her around, it’s only natural that you want to be closer and more personal. To impress her.”

I shot him a look.

‘But trust me, she was already impressed from the very start,’ Damon added with a knowing smirk.

So this bastard had been observing the whole time.

I huffed and turned away, refusing to give him the satisfaction of a reaction.

Yet the thought lingered, curling deep in my chest. My little mate had already begun to change me in ways

I hadn’t anticipated. If I were willing to overhaul my entire wardrobe just to please her... then what else would I be willing to give in the future?

The realization was dangerous.

And I didn’t hate it.

“I just remembered something,” Damon said, his tone shifting to business. “Archer West invited you to dinner tonight.”

Archer is the Head of the Lunaris Research Center.

“And Rowan Blackfang arranged it,” I said calmly. “He wants to meet me.”

Damon’s brows lifted. “You already knew?”

Of course I did. Rowan Blackfang—self-crowned king of the Verdanth Tech empire. Lylah’s past. A man who wasn’t used to being challenged. The appearance of the mysterious green tech engineer, Riven, had clearly rattled him.

I had ignored invitations like this before, I’d never seen the point. Until now.

“You can decline if you want, Alpha.” Damon said carefully. “They won’t dare to push.”

A slow smirk curved my lips.

“No. I’ll meet him.”

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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3rd Person’s POV

Inside the hotel suite, Rowan had reduced everything to ruin.

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The walls were shredded with deep claw marks. The bed sheets hung in tatters. Furniture lay overturned and splintered, as if a storm had torn through the room. The air itself felt heavy with Alpha fury and the wild presence of his wolf.

Gavriel stood rigid near the door, fear tightening his chest. He dared not leave. If he turned his back for

even a second, he was certain Rowan would lose what little control he had left.

Alpha, Lylah didn't lie about her status," Gavriel said carefully. "Perhaps it's time to release her. Let her go."

He stopped.

Rowan's golden irises snapped toward him. A low, dangerous growl vibrated from his chest,

"The woman who spoke to me earlier was not my Lylah," Rowan said, his voice cold and razor-sharp. Lylah would never speak to me that way. That man poisoned her mind. He turned her against me. He used her."

But their mating license is real. The bond has been legally sealed," Gavriel said quietly.

Rowan's snarl twisted into something feral. "Even so, she does not love him. I know it."

In a blur of Alpha speed, Rowan drove Gavriel back and slammed him into the wall. The impact cracked the plaster, the force of Rowan's power pressing down like a crushing weight.

"You still don't understand?" Rowan snarled. "Lylah will only ever love me. She promised me years ago. She is bonded to me in her soul—she will not deny it!"

The face that once made women swoon was now carved from shadow and madness, his eyes glowing with something cold, possessive, and terrifying.

Rowan released him. Gavriel lowered his head, shaken.

Rowan snatched his phone from the table.

"Elijah," he said.

"Yes, Alpha?" came the voice of his lawyer—Blackfang's most ruthless legal mind.

"Come to Lunaris. Take the fastest route. Now."

"Now?" Elijah hesitated. "Alpha, what's happened?"

Rowan's lips curved into a cruel, knowing smirk.

“There’s a mating that needs to be annulled.”

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Chapter 54

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Finished

Elijah gasped—but Rowan ended the call before he could respond.

Gavriel stared at him in disbelief. “Alpha, you would shatter Lylah’s relationship? Please reconsider. We still don’t know the true identity of her mate. Our enemy remains in the shadows. It is not wise to make a move now.”

Rowan scoffed. “Who else could he be? Some powerless student.” His eyes gleamed with arrogant certainty. “He has no power to stand against me.”

Even after Lylah had made it clear she did not want him—Rowan would not let go. Only then did Gavriel truly understand.

His Alpha had lost his mind.

Inside the Modern Healing Department, two figures walked side by side through the gleaming corridors.

Cora’s hands were clasped tightly together. Her mood was dark, her thoughts still tangled in humiliation and anger. Rowan and Gavriel had abandoned her without a second thought—left her standing like she meant nothing.

Cora, you’ve been quiet,” Alexander said gently. “Are you alright? I can show you around the building.”

He had been the first to find her earlier—standing alone on the lawn while dozens of phones were raised, recording, whispering, watching.

I’m fine,” Cora replied.

Alexander smiled at her warmly. “Then smile for me. You’re so beautiful when you smile.”

Cora forced one onto her lips.

Disgust curled in her stomach—but she also understood the value of allies. Alexander was useful. He would take her side. He would believe her.

Suddenly, he stopped walking and turned to face her fully.

That man earlier,” Alexander said carefully. “That was Alpha Rowan Blackfang, wasn’t it?”

Cora stiffened.

“Why did he rush off like that, and leave you behind?”

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The Betrayed Princess Rising

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

3rd Person’s POV

Finished

“He just...” Heat of humiliation burned across Cora’s cheeks. Her mind scrambled for something to cover the wound to her pride.

“He just had something important to handle,” she said quickly, forcing a soft laugh. “But don’t worry, Alpha Rowan will be staying in Lunaris with me.”

Alexander’s shoulders relaxed. “Ah. I’m relieved to hear that.”

Cora nodded, then smoothly steered the conversation away before he could pry further into the incident that had already scraped raw at her dignity.

“Come on, Alex,” she said brightly. “Please show me our classroom and the laboratory. I heard the facilities here are the most advanced in all of Verdanth.”

“Of course. This way.”

They walked together through the halls.

Cora kept her smile fixed in place, responding warmly to everything Alexander said, even though the small talk bored her. First impressions mattered. If she wanted to rule this place socially, she had to be flawless.

She had learned that lesson long ago.

Coming home from school with claw marks across her skin had taught her how cruelty worked—and how to survive it. From that pain, she had learned something far more valuable: how to control people, how to guide their emotions, how to make them see only what she wanted them to see.

It worked.

Alexander looked more and more pleased, clearly taken by her attention.

“I’ll tell the others you prefer sitting near the window,” he offered eagerly. “You can look out over the lake if lectures get boring.”

“Thank you, Alex,” Cora said sweetly. “I already know doing something like that is nothing for you

Praise inflated him instantly.

But then Alexander’s expression shifted. His smile faded, irritation darkening his features as the morning’s events resurfaced in his mind.

“I could’ve done even more for you,” he muttered. “I had your supplies and your laptop lined up, but that screwed new assistant ruined it all.”

Cora tilted her head, keeping her voice gentle. “What do you mean? Is everything alright?”

“Just a small disturbance,” Alexander said with a huff. “Some random assistant from the Traditional

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1:21 pm

Chapter 55

Healing department interfered. Refused to hand over the supplies I was supposed to give you.”

Cora’s hand came to rest lightly on his shoulder in a comforting gesture.

“I got her name,” he added. “Lylah.”

For half a second, Cora froze.

Her anger coiled sharp and hot in her chest.

Finished

So Lylah had already moved. Stirring Rowan's fury on the lawn hadn't been enough—she was interfering with her resources too?

Of course, she would.

Deep down, Cora had always known Lylah would never sit quietly and accept being beneath her. Even after failing to become Professor Corvin's student, Lylah would still find a way to **rise**.

And some treacherous voice in Cora's mind whispered that she just might succeed.

Cora would not allow that.

"So it was Lylah..." Cora's voice wavered, turning fragile. "I—I thought she had already accepted it. I didn't realize she was still angry with me."

Alexander frowned. "Wait. You two know each other?"

The hook had sunk in perfectly.

Cora lowered her gaze, hiding her satisfaction.

"Yes," she said softly. "We're sisters."

"What? Sisters?"

"Lylah is my parents' adopted daughter," Cora explained. And then she began to tell her version of the

story.

By the time she finished, Alexander's eyes were burning with indignation.

"That shameless little leech!" he snarled. "She paraded around like Ironcrest's precious princess while you suffered and then she had the nerve to fail the Vale trials and blame you for it? She deserves to be put in her place."

"I've already forgiven Lylah," Cora said, dabbing at her eyes.

Alexander's anger softened instantly. "Cora... you're too kind for someone like her."

"I still consider her my sister, Alex," Cora said gently, her voice heartbreakingly sincere. "I never wanted rivalry between us. All I want is peace, and to finish my studies without trouble. That's all."

“Oh, Cora.” Alexander reached out and wiped away her tears. “I’ll always be on your side. I won’t let anyone make things difficult for you here.”

2/3

1:21 pm

Chapter 55

Cora lowered her lashes, letting another tear fall.

She looked small. Fragile. Breakable.

An innocent, wounded lamb in a den of wolves.

The one they mistook for prey.

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Finished

Ruby Walker

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

Ezra’s POV

Finished

I informed Lylah I would be out, that I wouldn’t be at the penthouse when she returned. She agreed too easily. A part of me had hoped she would object—hope she would try to stop me, but she didn’t. So I left.

The restaurant had been cleared for a private meeting. The kind reserved for alphas, and those who liked

o pretend they were untouchable.

The hostess led me down a secluded corridor toward the reservation suite. Conversations in the hallway altered as I passed. Wolves sensed dominance even without recognizing its source. Heads turned. Spines straightened. My presence carried weight whether I wanted it to or not.

It was night, so I didn't bother with my tinted glasses. Moonlight never bothered me the way sunlight did. If anything, it only sharpened my vision.

Before the door even opened, I caught Rowan Blackfang's voice.

'He's late. He has no respect for my time.'

You were the one who requested this meeting. Alpha Rowan,' Archer West replied coolly. 'You'll bear with

t.'

Rowan scoffed. 'He hasn't even earned a name yet, and he's already this arrogant?'

Just a reminder,' Archer said mildly, 'Sir Riven isn't fond of small talk. So get to your point when he arrives.'

**M**y hand closed around the polished handle. I pushed the door open.

The room went dead silent.

Three men stood inside: Archer West, Rowan Blackfang, and Rowan's Beta, who lingered a half-**step** behind him.

'Alpha Rowan,' Archer said, his tone measured, 'this is the man you insisted on meeting. Lunar's lead tech engineer.'

Rowan took a **step** back.

If his Beta hadn't steadied him, he might have stumbled.

The shock on his face was unmistakable. His skin drained of color. His wolf recoiled inside him, startled, terrified, recognizing what his mind hadn't yet accepted.

'You...'' Rowan rasped, half-choked.

'I suppose there's no need for further introductions,' I said calmly.

His throat worked. Slowly, disbelief etched into every line of his **face**.

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## Chapter 56

“Alpha Ezra Moonclaw,” he said. His gaze snapped to Archer, betrayed and furious.

**049**

Finished

Archer’s voice hardened. “Per our agreement, everything you see and discuss in this room remains sealed. You and your Beta will not speak of this outside Lunaris territory.”

Rowan barely seemed to hear him. His eyes flickered with too many emotions—shock, fury, fear, and something dangerously close to challenge.

I walked to my seat and sat with deliberate ease.

“Sit,” I ordered.

Power rippled through the room at my command. They stilled at once—three wolves obeying on instinct. Wine was poured. Crystal glasses clinked softly, too loud in the sudden silence.

“You came alone, Alpha Ezra?” Archer asked.

“I assigned Damon to retrieve my Luna and keep her company while I’m here.”

Rowan choked on his wine.

“Your Luna?” Archer blinked, surprised. “I was out of town last week. I hadn’t heard you already have a Luna.”

“We sealed our bond a few days ago,” I said evenly.

Archer’s

eyes widened, then softened. “My sincerest Congratulations, Alpha Ezra.”

Rowan’s grip tightened until the crystal groaned in protest, spiderweb cracks threatening beneath his fingers.

“Your Luna?” He demanded. “Who is she?”

Archer’s gaze cut to him, sharp as a blade “Alpha Rowan, remember your place.”

Rowan’s Beta placed a firm hand on his shoulder. Rowan blinked, regaining control—barely.

“My apologies,” Rowan said quickly. He forced a thin smile. “I was just surprised. This is quite a coincidence.”

“No worries. Alpha Ezra, please excuse Alpha Rowan’s curiosity,” Archer said smoothly. Then he steered the room back to business. “Let us proceed. Alpha Rowan has a proposal he believes will benefit both Corlis Prime and Lunaris.”

Rowan straightened, forcing his shoulders back as he swallowed his pride.

He began to speak. Wrapping his ambition in polished words—shared growth, open systems, national development. The language of diplomacy. The language predators used to make their hunger sound

reasonable.

But I heard what he wasn’t saying.

Rowan didn’t just want cooperation. He wanted control.

pm

Chapter 56

**0:91**

Finished

Full access to Lunaris’ research center—its secured labs, its classified development floors, the very heart of our innovation. He wanted my engineers, my facilities, my resources. The minds and machines that had taken years to build were guarded by loyalty and oath.

He was asking me to build his private empire on the bones of my own.

When Rowan finally finished, Archer gave a measured nod and turned to me.

“Alpha Ezra,” he said carefully. “The decision is yours.”

The room held its breath.

Rowan’s jaw trembled. His wolf pushed hard against his skin, a low, furious snarl vibrating through his chest. He already knew.

“I decline,” I said.

Rowan exploded to his feet. His chair scraped violently across the floor.

His fist came down on the glass table with a thunderous crack.

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

Chapter 57

Ezra's POV

0:01

Finished

“What? You’re declining?” Rowan’s eyes shifted first—human brown bleeding into molten gold as his wolf surged closer to the surface.

Inside me, Ragnar lifted his head, calm and calculating.

“We don’t do charity,” I said evenly.

Rowan took a sharp step forward, his Beta mirroring him on instinct. He pointed at me, anger flaring hot and reckless. “What the hell do you mean? You’re not making decisions based on logic. Just because you don’t like me, you’re refusing cooperation. Afraid my skill and reputation will overshadow yours here, Alpha Ezra?”

Archer shifted beside me, preparing to intervene—but I lifted a hand.

I hadn’t intended to engage. But if Rowan wanted a confrontation, I would give him one.

I rose slowly to my feet. The room seemed to tighten around my presence.

“Overshadow?” I said coolly. “You certainly have an impressive amount of confidence.”

Rowan’s expression twisted.

“Our research center exists for our future, not to bankroll yours. If you’re here to profit without paying the price, you can leave now.” I added.

This time it was Rowan's Beta who spoke.

"Alpha Ezra," the Beta said carefully, "forgive me, but it seems you may have misunderstood us."

"No," I replied flatly.

"Then perhaps you could clarify?"

I turned my gaze to him. "Corlis Prime presents a platform model, inviting outside developers to build on it. But under your contract, any ecosystem created within Lunar is becomes the sole property of Blackfang."

My lips twitched. "You collect the innovation and intellectual property of our engineers without compensation. Then if Rowan withdraws, all outcomes remain with his company. That is your definition of cooperation?"

Silence slammed into the room.

Archer's face darkened. "Wait. That's... that's completely true. That benefits Corlis Prime entirely. What does Lunar is gain?"

Rowan said nothing. His eyes burned into me, fury barely contained.

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1:21 pm

Chapter 57

0431

Finished

His Beta hurried to recover. "That's a legal oversight. The clause can be amended. It's a minor issue."

I tilted my head slightly. "You expect me to entrust the future of our research center to a pack whose legal team overlooks ownership of an entire ecosystem?"

The silence deepened.

"That's not minor," Archer said grimly.

"You're free to consider what this collaboration would truly bring to Lunar is, Archer. And whether our engineers would welcome it," I replied.

Archer answered immediately. "They won't, Alpha. They'll reject this outright."

Good.

There was nothing left to say.

I drained my wine and turned away.

The door had barely closed behind me when Rowan's enraged curse echoed through the room—followed by the sharp crash of shattering glass.

Outside, the night air cooled my skin. Damon waited by the car, alert.

"Alpha Ezra." Archer hurried out after me.

I stopped, but I didn't turn around.

"I regret missing your mating ceremony," he said carefully. "If you would allow me the honor, I would like to convey my congratulations to your Luna personally."

Small talk. A polite excuse.

A classic probe.

Archer wanted to see who had claimed the Alpha bond that so many in Lunaris had failed to earn.

I had known Archer long enough to trust that his curiosity held no malice. Still, Ragnar stirred at the thought, a low, territorial growl echoing through my blood. The idea of another male setting eyes on Lylah tightened something dark and possessive in my chest.

My mate was not a spectacle. She was not a prize for inspection.

"Come to my house directly. Alone."

Archer hesitated. "But our other colleagues may also wish to offer their congratulations—"

My gaze turned glacial.

The message landed instantly. Archer went still, instinctively recognizing the line he was not permitted to cross. He was fortunate that I **was** extending even this much access to my territory. To *my* mate,

2/3

1:21 **pm**

"My apologies, Alpha," he said quickly. "On second thought, perhaps I'll visit another time."

Chapter 57

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Finished

Ruby Walker

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

The Betrayed Princess Rising

Chapter 58

3rd Person's POV

Gavriel slammed the hotel suite door shut behind them.

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Finished

“Damn,” Gavriel muttered, running a hand through his hair. “That man is dangerous. He caught every weakness Archer missed and exposed them without a second thought.”

Rowan didn't answer right away. He moved to the table with the heavy, restless stride of a caged predator, poured more wine, and drained it in a single, merciless swallow. The alcohol barely touched the fire in his veins. His skull throbbed, but it was nothing compared to the fury clawing at his chest.

Ezra's voice still rang in his ears. Ezra's confidence. Ezra's bond.

And worst of all, the knowledge that Ezra had something Rowan believed should have been his.

A Luna.

“Less than five years, Alpha.” Gavriel continued, voice edged with disbelief, “Alpha Ezra has dragged Lunar is into a new level of technology and warfare.”

Rowan’s fingers tightened around the glass. “What level?” he asked. His tone flat, a challenge disguised as indifference.

“All this time we thought Riven was just a ghost. A brilliant engineer with no past or pack ties. A nobody with extraordinary skill.” Gavriel gave a humorless laugh. “But if he’s Alpha of Moonclaw, then of course he excels. Power creates opportunity and wealth breeds advantage.”

A bitter curve touched Rowan’s mouth.

His bloodshot eyes burned with alcohol and resentment. “You think he’s that impressive?”

“Compared to you?” Gavriel said instantly. “He’s nothing, Alpha. Don’t insult yourself by measuring against someone born into strength.”

“Of course we’re not the same,” Rowan snarled. “Moonclaw never fell. Ezra was never left crippled while his pack burned around him. He never felt silver in his blood, slowing his healing, rotting *his* strength, breaking him for three long years!”

His glass hit the table with a sharp crack.

“I fought my way back with blood, sweat, and nights so long my wolf nearly tore itself apart. While Ezra was fed Moonclaw’s legacy with a silver spoon. If he had lived my life, he wouldn’t have survived long enough to wear that Alpha crown.”

Gavriel nodded, though a flicker of unease crossed his face.

Even he couldn’t deny the truth – Alpha Ezra of Moonclaw was not just powerful. He was young. Brilliant. Rising fast. A threat in ways Rowan hadn’t faced in years.

“The guy who kept calling Lylah, Riven,” Rowan said suddenly, his voice dropping. “Did you uncover

1:21 **pm**

Chapter 58

anything else?”

0:31

Finished

“No. Alpha. After that last call, there’s nothing else. It’s as if the line went dead.” Gavriel hesitated. “Perhaps Lylah prepared her escape after that. Maybe he helped her sever the app’s link.”

Rowan shook his head sharply. “Impossible. I wrote that code myself. It answers only to network shifts. Distance means nothing.”

“Then perhaps they simply stopped contacting each other,” Gavriel offered. “He could have been nothing more than a student, someone helping her with paperwork and entry clearance into Lunaris.”

Rowan said nothing.

But his wolf stirred restlessly, pacing inside his bones.

He knew one thing – it wouldn’t be long before Lylah was back in his arms.

At Ezra’s penthouse, life moved to a very different rhythm.

The kitchen was both alive and chaotic in the best way. Fresh herbs perfumed the air. Vegetables lay chopped and half-prepared. Pans, knives, and unfamiliar cooking tools covered the counters in cheerful disorder.

Lylah stood in the center of it all, sleeves rolled up.

“Ezra will love this,” she murmured, a small smile curving her lips. “He relies on machines for everything. I’ll teach him how to use things that don’t need power or code.”

For a man who had ruled through innovation and algorithms, the simple act of cooking was foreign. But she would show him.

“Lylah! Daddy is here!” Bambi chimed, bouncing slightly on his feet. “The elevator is coming up!”

Joy flared through Lylah instantly.

She took Bambi’s small hand in her own.

“Then let’s welcome him together,” she said softly.

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

Chapter 59

Lylah's POV

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Finished

The door slid open, and Alpha Ezra stood in the doorway. Our eyes meet. Something about the moment made it feel as though he knew I was there, waiting, instead of just Bambi.

“Come in, Ezra. You must be hungry.”

The instinct to reach for him—to touch, to pull him inside—rose fiercely in my chest. But I restrained myself.

“I made shrimp soup,” I said as we walked toward the kitchen together. “I knew you’d be home late, so you’d need something warm right away.”

Steam curled up from the pot on the stove, carrying the rich scent of broth and spices into the air.

I hadn’t had time to tidy the kitchen, and a flicker of nerves tightened in my chest—if Ezra noticed the mess, he wouldn’t say anything, but I knew it would bother him.

“It smells nice,” Ezra said.

“Really? Thank you.” Relief softened my shoulders. “Bambi gave me the recipe. Should I make it spicy, or very spicy?”

“I can handle either,” he replied, already loosening his jacket. “I’ll change first.”

I nodded. “Of course.”

His presence faded down the hall.

Moments later, Bambi’s small, floating form zipped in a cheerful circle.

“Lylah! Your phone has an incoming call!”

I stilled. It had to be Tiara—probably demanding every dramatic detail of my day.

“Bambi, could you bring it from my room and put it on speaker?” I asked. “My hands are full of spices.”

“Sure!” He darted off and returned quickly.

His eyes rotating as he synced with it, a soft chime signaled that the call had been routed through his **system** and switched to speaker.

I braced myself for **Tiara’s** voice—her usual playful chatter, the kind that always managed to pull a laugh from me no matter how heavy my mood.

But the voice that filled the room was not hers.

“Lylah!” Gavriel’s voice **rang** out, harsh and desperate. “Can you come over? Alpha Rowan hasn’t eaten, but he’s been drinking nonstop. His condition worsened—he threw up blood. You’re **the only** one who knows how to handle this. You **used** to **take** care of him.”

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**1:22 pm**

Chapter 59

Finished

My breath caught.

Then Rowan’s voice bled through the background.

“Lylah... I miss you. I was wrong. Please forgive me, come back to me.”

My heart slammed against my ribs.

Not because I cared. But because the speaker was loud. Too loud.

Alpha Ezra could hear everything.

I snatched my phone off Bambi without thinking and rushed from the kitchen, my pulse roaring in my

ears.

“Lylah? Are you still there?” Gavriel pressed. “Answer me. I’ll send the address-”

“Don’t you dare,” I hissed.

Silence.

Then, cautiously, “You’re there. What did you say? No? You’d let Alpha Rowan die?”

A bitter laugh escaped me. “Do you think I’m some miracle healer? Take him to a doctor, you idiot. Or better yet, ask his Luna. It’s impressive how your first instinct is to drag me back into this mess.”

I heard Gavriel’s sharp gasp on the other end of the line. I rolled my eyes and ended the call without

another word.

Then I returned to the kitchen.

I set our dinner on the dining table, forcing myself to concentrate on each small task instead of the echo of Gavriel’s words—bowls aligned, spoons placed, steam still rising from the soup.

Twenty minutes passed as I waited. But Alpha Ezra still hadn’t come out.

A prickle of unease crept over my skin.

“Maybe I should check on him.”

I walked to his door and knocked once.

The heavy door swung open unexpectedly. He hadn’t locked it—something he always did. Strange.

“Ezra—”

I froze.

He stepped out of the bathroom, wearing nothing but a towel wrapped low around his waist. Water **still** clung to him, sliding from his dark hair and tracing slow paths over the sculpted lines of his back and

chest.

**1:22 pm**

Chapter 59

Moon Goddess.

My heart thundered. Heat rushed to my face. I couldn’t move. Couldn’t look away.

Finished

Ezra approached calmly, as if he didn't notice the way the air thickened between us, as if he wasn't fully aware of the effect his presence had on me.

"Why are you still here?" he asked quietly. "I thought you were leaving."

"Ezra, I-" I swallowed, forcing my eyes away. "I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to barge in while you were showering. I'll go-"

His hand closed around my wrist. He turned me to face him.

"No need," he said, his calm edged with something dangerous. A faint curve touched his lips. "I don't mind you see this."

His gaze darkened, lingering on me with quiet intensity.

"You shouldn't either."

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

Chapter 60

Lylah's POV

"What?" I was certain I was as red as a shrimp.

0181

Finished

“We shouldn’t mind seeing each other’s bodies,” Alpha Ezra said, his voice settling back into that calm authority that came so naturally to him. “We’re bonded now. That makes certain things normal between us. There’s no reason to run or feel guilty.”

His words snapped me back to myself. To the truth that my thoughts had wandered somewhere they didn’t belong. The realization only made the embarrassment burn deeper.

“You’re right,” I murmured. “Um, maybe you should get dressed first. Where are your clothes, Ezra? I’ll get them for you.”

‘That door on the side. You’ll find them there.’

I had just reached for the door when his voice stopped me again.

‘But why are you still here?’ he asked quietly. “Aren’t you leaving for Rowan?”

[ froze.

So he had heard my call. All of it.

I turned back slowly, lifting my gaze to his.

I searched his face for anger, for jealousy, for the dangerous edge an Alpha could so easily slip into. But here was none. Only curiosity. And something else—something careful.

‘You don’t have to stay. You can *go* if you truly want to.’

‘Ezra, do you really think I want to go to Rowan?’

‘You don’t?’

I shook my head hard. “Even if he were mauled by a bear, drowned in the ocean, dead or alive—I don’t care anymore.” The words came out sharper than I meant, but they were honest. “I want to stay. I want to be here. I’ve been looking forward to having dinner with you all day.”

For a heartbeat, his power stirred—just a subtle shift in the air, a ripple of Alpha presence responding to

emotion.

Then a faint smile touched his lips.

“Not just today,” he said softly. “We can do that every day.”

Warmth bloomed across my **face**, spreading deeper than simple embarrassment.

I went to his walk-in closet and opened the wardrobe.

1:22 pm

Chapter 60

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Finished

Inside, everything **was** precise and controlled—dark neutrals, clean cuts, expensive fabrics. It suited him.

I chose a soft gray t-shirt and a pair of sweatpants that looked the most comfortable.

When I returned, I held them out to him. “Once you’re dressed, come out. I’ll help dry your hair.”

“Dry my hair?” His brow lifted slightly.

“Yes. Like blowing warm air on it. You’ll like it.”

Later, we settled in the living room.

I sat on the couch while Ezra sat on the carpet at my feet, close enough that I could reach him easily. The position felt intimate in a way that went beyond proximity.

His damp hair slid through my fingers, soft and thick. It was longer than I’d realized—falling past his ears now *that* it wasn’t styled. Without his usual control, he looked different.

For the first time, I saw him not just as Alpha Ezra—the powerful, brilliant figure—but as Ezra, the man bound to me by choice and law.

Messy suited him. Dangerous in a different way. It softened the sharp edges of his presence, made him look warmer and more approachable.

More mine.

“Come on,” I said with a small laugh. “Let’s eat. The soup will get cold if we keep waiting.”

Not long after, we were seated at the dining table.

“You didn’t stop giggling while you were drying my hair,” he said, studying me. “Do I look ridiculous?”

“No. Not at all.” I shook my head quickly. “I was just happy cause this hairstyle really suits you so much. When you don’t keep it perfectly neat all the time.” I hesitated, then admitted, “I know you hate imperfections, but...this one is cute.”

For a split second, his eyes snapped to mine.

His wolf flared—sharp, dominant. My heart stuttered.

“Cute,” he repeated quietly. “That’s the second time you’ve called me that.”

Oh, Selene. I really needed to learn when to stop talking.

Then he nodded once.

“Well then,” he said, a faint smirk touching his mouth, “This will be my look from now on.”

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