

## Betrayal

\*\*Alpha King Draven POV\*\*

\*\*Stormclaw Keep, High Wing Alpha King Chambers\*\*

The fire in our chambers was dying low, the crackle of embers was the only sound between us for a long while. Aelira sat near the hearth, her back straight, her hands folded in her lap, but I knew the signs. She was trembling. Barely.

I'd seen her face armies and rogue packs without a flicker of fear. But this? This was different. Because this wasn't a war we could fight with teeth and claws.

This was our daughters.

"She's not handling it," Aelira whispered, eyes fixed on the flames. "Vaela. She hides it, but... she's unraveling. And Soria's not much better. Her loyalty's been wrapped around Vaela since they were pups."

I exhaled slowly, rubbing my temples. "They were raised to lead," I said. "To be the next Luna, the next enforcer, the next everything. Then Elowen arrives with a prophecy in her blood and five mates in her orbit, and they feel like they've been... replaced."

Aelira's voice cracked. "I hate thinking it. But I have to say it, Draven. I think... I think Vaela contacted them."

My heart stopped. "Aegis?" I asked, my voice low, barely holding back the snarl.

She nodded, tears spilling silently down her cheeks. "There was an outgoing comm-link spike the night before the attack. Unsanctioned. Traced to Vaela's private terminal. They scrubbed the data, but the techs confirmed the signal was intercepted before it was fully erased. It pinged one of Aegis's Eastern listening posts."

"Mother of the Moon," I whispered. My stomach dropped. Not my daughter. Not our girl. Where did we go wrong?

"She handed Elowen over," Aelira said, breaking. "She gave them her location, her presence here. Us. She risked the entire pack."

I paced the room, my claws threatening to shift. Elowen was the key. To survival. To unity. To a future beyond species war and division. But she was also just a girl. A hybrid. One we swore to protect. And now our own blood had sold her out.

"We have to call them," I said, my voice hollow. "Bring them here. Now."

Aelira nodded once, wiped her face, and stood tall.

**\*\*Fifteen minutes later...\*\***

Vaela and Soria entered the room like they owned it, their heads held high, their eyes sharp, and matching arrogance radiating from their posture.

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It shattered when they saw our faces.

"We know," I said quietly and firmly, my heart breaking.

Vaela's mouth opened, but no sound came. Soria took a step forward. "Whatever she said, we didn't..."

"Don't," Aelira snapped, her voice cracking. "Don't lie to me. Not here. Not now."

The girls froze. Tears were pouring down Vaela's face. I couldn't look. It was breaking me. And then Vaela's mask cracked. "You're just replacing us. With her. Some random half-blood you didn't even know existed until last week."

"She is the future of this world," I said, rising to full height. "You gave her to the enemy."

Soria's lips trembled. "We didn't mean to hurt her."

"But you did," Aelira's voice broke again. "You've endangered the prophecy. Our people. Your brother. You let your bitterness outweigh everything we raised you to be." She was yelling now. "You risked all of our lives Vaela! Why!? For what reason!? Jealousy!?"

Vaela just sobbed quietly as Soria held her, her eyes narrowed at her parents. The door opened behind us and Daxon walked in slowly, his eyes wide. His gaze landed on the girls...on the bags, the packed trunks, the enforcers waiting silently near the wall.

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"What's going on?" he asked, his voice hard.

Neither of the girls answered. So I did.

"Vaela sent Elowen's location to Aegis."

Daxon went still. Like he hadn't fully processed it. Then he looked at Vaela.

"Tell me that's not true."

She opened her mouth. Closed it. Then said, "She doesn't belong here."

Daxon's jaw ticked once. Twice. And then he erupted.

"You don't belong here!" he roared. "You tried to hand over a bonded mate to fucking Aegis? You're lucky all you're getting is exile and not a death sentence. You risked our entire pack! You're not fit to lead! Ever!"

"Dax," Soria whispered. "Please. You're our brother."

"I hope they throw you in a pit," he snapped. "You're dead to me."

Aelira let out a sob that nearly brought me to my knees. I had never felt pain like this. I had to choose my pack over my own children. The enforcers stepped forward. Vaela fought. Soria begged. But it didn't matter.

They were escorted out of Stormclaw Keep screaming, clawing at the guards, screaming Daxon's name like they hadn't just shattered everything. The doors opened and I saw them...Elowen and Taya, standing there wide eyed and frozen. The look on Elowen's face? Devastated. Because she

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knew.

They had tried to hand her over to Aegis.

For nothing. Jealousy. Petty bullshit. As if she needed this to deal with right now. I sighed heavily, my heart absolutely broken.

\*\*Daxon POV\*\*

\*\*Stormclaw Keep Outside the Alpha Wing\*\*

I didn't say a word when I saw her.

Elowen stood just outside the corridor where the enforcers dragged my sisters away screaming. Her eyes were wide and hollow. Her cheeks were pale beneath the burn of betrayal. Taya stood beside her, frozen like a statue, and Jace hovered just down the hall, unsure whether to approach or run.

But I moved first. I wrapped Elowen in my arms and pulled her in so tight, I felt her ribs shake. She didn't say anything either. She just buried her face in my chest, and let me hold her like I was the last solid thing left.

"I've got you," I murmured into her hair. "You're okay. I've got you."

I hated that I couldn't erase the look on her face. That stunned, heartbroken realization that someone you'd shared a roof with could sell you out to the enemy. That your own pack could betray you just for existing. She didn't cry. Not then. That made it worse. She was too tired to cry.

"I'm taking you to our room," I said softly. "Ash is waiting."

She nodded, her fingers fisted in my shirt like she didn't trust herself to let go.

By the time we reached the room, Ash was seated at the round table. His sleeves were rolled up and his dark hair was tied back. The table was covered in parchment scrolls, a leather bound grimoire, three sharp daggers, and two sealed mana stones glowing faintly with arcane symbols.

He looked up as we entered and immediately rose.

"Elowen," he said gently. "Come here."

She stepped away from me and into his arms without a word. He held her in that way only Ashrian could, restrained and dignified, but still real. Protective in the way no one expected of him.

"I heard what happened," he said, his voice low. "I'm sorry. They're fools. Dangerous ones. But it's done."

"Why does it still hurt?" she whispered.

"Because you still have a heart," Ash replied. "That's what they never counted on."

She pulled back slowly, and I saw it, the fire creeping back into her spine. Her breath steadied. Her hands stopped shaking.

"I have something for you," Ash added, motioning to the table.

He handed her a scroll and a clean leather bound notebook. "Battle magic. History of hybrid warfare. Prophecy case studies. Physical combat. Strategy. You're not just going to survive this prophecy, you're going to master it."

She blinked at him. "You made me a curriculum?"

Ash smirked. "Darling, if I'm going to teach you, I'm doing it properly. You start in an hour. Uniforms will be delivered after lunch. First session is outside. Meet us at the south training grounds."

Elowen stared between us. "You serious?"

I stepped forward and tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. "Dead serious. No more waiting. No more hiding. This is where the prophecy meets training, and you? You're gonna run circles around them all."

She smiled. Just a little.

"Okay," she whispered. "Let's go to school."

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**\*\*Stormclaw Training Grounds – One Hour Later\*\***

The sun was high by the time we reached the southern field. The grass was flattened from years of sparring, and the white training stones glowed with faint runes of protection and reinforcement.

Taya was already stretching under the trees, her red hair braided tight, her

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eyes locked in. Rylen stood beside her, his thick arms crossed, his face stoic, but I saw the way his eyes flicked to Elowen the second she arrived. Jace was lounging on a bench pretending not to be excited.

Ash stepped forward like a general taking command.

"This is your class," he announced. "And this is your war."

Elowen stood straighter, her eyes scanning the field.

She didn't flinch. Didn't fold. She stepped into the grass like it was a battlefield.

And Moon Goddess help anyone who stood in her way.



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