

The Beast And The Blessed by Ashley Breanne Chapter 1

Natalie's P.O.V.

I felt uneasy as soon as I entered the pack house. The way my pack mates were smirking at me, laughing behind their hands... I knew they were up to something. Their pranks and bullying had been getting worse and more painful each time they managed to get me alone. My bruises still hadn't gone away from the last time.

My body ached from the beating I had taken two days ago, but I was only a few hours away from it all ending.

I just needed to get to Jake before they set their plan into motion.

Jake was my boyfriend of four years. He was the only one that cared for me, and the only one I could trust.

We were high school sweethearts. He was also the next in line to become the Alpha of our pack. That didn't matter to me, but it did matter to the other women in the pack. They hated that he was with me. They felt that they deserved a stronger Luna than I would be, and they all wanted to be his chosen one.

I hadn't even shifted yet. To them, I was no more than an omega...a runt as they liked to call me, the weakest of the litter.

It should have happened three years ago when I turned sixteen, but it didn't. Now I was nineteen, the age at which we could recongize our mates as our wolves should have matured by then. Had I shifted, I would have known Jake was my mate already, but we had to wait the extra two months until today, his nineteenth birthday, for him to recognize me as his mate.

Jake didn't care that I hadn't turned. We had been together since before either of us were old enough to shift, and we were both positive that we were mates. He stood by me and protected me from the cruelty of the wolves around us when I failed to shift with the others.

He didn't have the authority to use the Alpha command yet to get them to leave me alone all the time, but he made sure to be there for me and defend me every chance he could.

Everything about being with Jake made my shitty life feel like a dream. He made all of the bad disappear when he held me, and I always knew that I was going to be okay when I was with him.

Today would be the day that would change the rest of my life.

I scanned over the crowd, desperate to find him. He would probably be looking for me too. We had talked about this night for years.

‘Jake? Where are you?’ I asked through our pack link but received no response.

“Poor little human, you have a lot of guts to show up here right now. Do you have any idea how happy the pack is? Having you here will just ruin it. This party is for pack wolves only.” Savannah, my sister’s best friend, said as the crowd parted for her and the music stopped. All of the party guests stopped dancing and talking to watch as the biggest bully in the pack approached me.

The flashing lights of varying colors continued in the uncomfortable silence.

I hoped the man of the hour would see the disruption and step forward to my side, but he didn’t. As I glanced around at all of the amused faces, he was nowhere to be seen.

“Jake invited me. I am in this pack, and I’m allowed to be here.” I whispered, but I could feel the heat building in the back of my eyes as they all laughed again. Something was going on, and it was more than just Savannah running her big mouth.

“Even he doesn’t want you here.” She sneered before smiling at me widely. “See for yourself. Where is Jake, hm? I think he went up to his room. You should go bring him back down to the party and see what he has to say.”

I held his present against my chest tighter as I narrowed my eyes. She was up to something, but I wanted to get to Jake more than I wanted to deal with her bullshit.

As I took a step forward, Savannah stepped to the side, and I could feel everyone watching me with amusement as I went up the stairs.

Jake’s room was at the end of the hall behind double doors, and I rushed toward it. I could hear people coming up the stairs behind me, no doubt being led by Savannah, but my salvation was only a few feet away.

As soon as I got in his room, I could close the door and act as if none of them existed.

It would just be the two of us.

There was a stirring in the back of my mind as I wrapped my hand around the cold door knob. It was a warning, telling me not to go inside. It wanted me to turn around and run, knowing this was a trap. Yet, I turned the knob anyway and pushed the door open.

The loud moan of the female beneath my boyfriend made me freeze, and I stared wide-eyed at the couple tangled together. Jake thrust into her quickly, releasing his own groans of pleasure.

My stomach tied in a knot and it felt hard to breathe. The small spark of light in my life was extinguished, sending my mind into complete darkness as I processed what I was seeing.

He lifted his head, meeting my tear-streaked face, but not seeing me as his wolf was in control. His canines extended just before he latched onto her neck, puncturing the skin and marking her as his mate.

My sister.

“No,” I whispered as my hand covered my mouth. Jake pulled back snarling at the disruption

“I told you he didn’t want you,” Savannah whispered into my ear, and my sister laughed from beneath my boyfriend as she reached up and ran her hand through Jake’s short blonde hair.

“Would you mind closing the door, Tilly?” Haylee asked innocently, but the malicious look in her narrowed eyes showed she was pleased by her victory over me. Not only had she stolen the love of my life, but she was now to be his Luna. “I’m trying to have a private moment with my mate.”

Mate.

The word seemed so empty now. Jake had hated Haylee. He had watched how mean she was toward me and resented her. Now, he was baring his teeth at me, defending her.

“How could you?” I choked out as a sob wracked through my chest, and the present in my hold dropped to the floor before me. The sudden and loud noise seemed to snap Jake back into control, and his eyes returned to their normal brown.

His jaw dropped open as he glanced from me to my sister with guilt, but he didn't look the least bit regretful. He was happy to have found and marked his mate, he only hated that he had been caught cheating. The torn look on his face only made me angrier as he gasped my name while he pulled out of my sister. She sat up as he climbed to his feet, neither of them ashamed to be seen naked.

“Natalie, I...” He said, stepping forward and causing me to take a step away, only to be pushed back toward him by the crowd of on-lookers.

I stumbled forward, trying to stay as far away from him as possible.

The steady stream of tears blurred my vision, and my chest hurt as he whispered my name again. “Tilly...She's my mate.” He finally announced, causing the house to cheer in celebration that their future Luna had been claimed.

Hearing it from his mouth made it even worse, and I shuddered with revulsion as I watched my sister place her hand on his back. Goosebumps rose along his skin, and he let out a low growl of pleasure at her touch.

“You hate her.” I sobbed as I thrust my finger in her direction. “You've told me so many times how awful she is and how you felt bad for her mate for being stuck with such a horrid person! You could have rejected her!” I pulled my arm back, wiping the wetness from under my nose as I blinked quickly to clear my vision.

“She's my mate,” He repeated. “I never meant to hurt you, Tilly. I swear that this was not how I expected tonight to go. But you of all people know how important it is that I marked my mate before The Offering. They could show up any day now, and it's not like I could mate with you if you weren't my mate. You're a h..”

I took in a deep breath as he cut himself off from saying the word. I was trying to calm myself but my body was fighting to give in to the despair and pain of his betrayal. “Human.” I spat out as I tried to fight against my tears.

He had been the only person who hadn't held that over me. The only safe place in this pack. Now he was on their side. I never expected him to see me the same way they did. He had pretended that it hadn't mattered to him, but it seemed that after

all this time it did. So much so that he would rather mate my sister and make that vile woman his Luna, than be with me... a human.

“Don’t make me out to be the bad guy for finding my soulmate, Tilly! Finding our one is what we have been dreaming about for years! I didn’t know it wouldn’t be you, but you should still be happy for me.” He insisted, trying to defend himself, but only making me hate him more.

He didn’t bother to step away from her as she began to rub his shoulder, making sure to curl her manicured claw around to the front of his chest to ensure I would see her hold on him.

I eyed him with disgust as he began to grow hard again from her touch, and I shook my head back and forth. “I feel sorry for you, Jake.”

The whisper was met by my sister’s growl of anger, but she smiled at me as she raised an eyebrow. “Please close the door behind you on your way out, runt. We aren’t done in here yet.”

