

The Beast And The Blessed by Ashley Breanne Chapter 2

Natalie's P.O.V.

I pushed through the crowd, desperate to get away from everyone. I had been beaten, bullied, and broken by this pack over the past few years, and the only salvation I had was upstairs cheating on me with my sister.

Although, I guess he wasn't anymore. Now, he was just fucking his mate. I no longer existed to him. Our relationship had just been a way to pass the time until he found someone better...someone, who had shifted and wasn't human still.

A hard shove came from behind me as I raced down the last few steps. My vision was blurred by the tears, and I was clutching my chest as I tried to catch my breath. I didn't want the rest of the pack to enjoy my pain any more than they already did.

They loved it when I cried and when I begged them to stop hitting or kicking me. It spurred them on to hear me calling Jake for help. This time, I had no one to call for... no one who cared enough to help me.

The force of the push sent me flying into the hardwood floor with a shout of pain as my wrist twisted beneath me, my dark brown hair falling over my shoulder.

"Silly Tilly, always being in places that she doesn't belong." Savannah hissed as she stepped over my body. I knew I needed to get away, but a large foot came down on my back as I tried to stand, sending my chin to the floor.

I turned my head, panting for air as they pressed more of their weight down on my spine. "I've been really sick of you bothering us. If you are not a wolf, then you are not a part of this pack. We don't want humans here. It's time for you to get lost, runt."

"That is quite enough!" The Alpha's voice boomed through the house, and I took in a deep breath as the weight on my back was lifted.

I didn't want to look up at Alpha Dalton. He felt the same as the rest of the pack did. He wanted me away from his son. It wasn't because I was human. He despised me for being weak. According to him, I was nothing more than a distraction to Jake, and he was right.

“Make your way home, Natalie.” He ordered as he looked down his nose at me. I didn’t need my wolf to feel the alpha command he used, but I did feel the blood dripping from my lip as I scrambled to get to my feet.

As I was rushing out the front door, his voice rang out again, and I paused just outside the open door on the front porch. “For the rest of you, the announcement has been made of their travels, and The Offering will be tomorrow.”

Gasps filled the house, and for the briefest moment, my pain was replaced with panic. We knew they would be arriving any day now, but we hadn’t expected them to come so soon and with such little notice.

The Lycans.

They ruled the world. Wolves, Fae, witches, and humans alike were all under their thumb.

They were supposed to arrive days ago. We had begun to assume they were going to reschedule or cancel as it had been silent on their end.

I sniffled as quietly as I could, needing to hear what my Alpha was saying, but unable to stop the tears from the pain and betrayal I had experienced tonight. My wrist was cradled to my chest, and my breathing was coming out in shallow and shaking gasps.

“Don’t worry, runt,” Savannah said quietly but with malice in her voice. The Alpha would have been able to hear her still, but he didn’t say anything. “They are coming for the she-wolves, not for disgusting humans.”

I didn’t bother to respond as I just wanted to get out of the pack house and forget tonight ever happened. But a small part of me hoped they chose her. I wanted them to take her far away from here, where I would never have to see her again.

“It has been announced that the Lycan king will be joining his pack this time. I want everyone on the best behavior.” The shock of the news was audible as the pack gasped in awe.

The Lycan King hadn’t been seen outside the castle walls in years. He was rumored to be a vicious beast, one who fed off the pain and torment of those around him. He killed without warning and took whatever he wanted without

consequence. The stories of his ruthlessness were vast, and I knew nothing good would come of him leaving his castle.

When The Offering was done each year before, it was only the unmated members of his pack that showed up to choose from our unmated she-wolves. Never him.

I shook my head as I turned and made my way out of the pack house, wiping the tears from my cheeks as I did so.

Savannah was right. The Lycans wouldn't bother with me. Even the Alpha thought my knowledge of their arrival to be unessential. He had tried to send me away before he told the rest of the pack.

I had nothing to worry about, but it would be a good chance for me to make my escape.

I wasn't welcome in my pack. They only kept me around in case I were to shift late. They couldn't have someone shifting around the humans. While they knew about us and also lived under the rule of the Lycans, they kept to themselves as much as possible.

It was exactly how I wanted to live.

Away from the pain. Away from the suffering and abuse.

The image of Haylee and Jake had been burned into my mind, making it hard to focus as I ran back to my house. It was as though I could feel my heart physically breaking inside my chest, and I had no way to reach in to hold it together.

I stumbled as I held my arm tightly to my chest. The pain in both was excruciating. While a part of me demanded that I go back and give Jake a piece of my mind, I had nothing more to say to him.

He was a liar. I loved him with everything I had, and he had taken my heart and spat in my face. I wasn't sure how to come back from it. How did one ever get over being betrayed by the person they loved most in the world?

Small drops of cold water landed on my skin, making me choke out a laugh at the irony of the rain at a moment like this. Yet, the chortle of amusement only made me cry harder.

The freedom I had craved was going to mine sooner than I had imagined. Before I thought I would be freed of my torment by mating with the man I loved. Once he had claimed me as his Luna, all the bullying and pain would stop.

That was my mistake.

I never should have believed that I would be freed by a man. I would take care of myself from now on, starting with getting the hell out of here. As soon as the Lycans arrived, all attention would be turned to them. Everyone from the pack would be present, and no one would notice one little human missing from the crowd.

I would have a very brief window to make my escape, and it didn't matter what happened. I was willing to risk it all.

What was the point of being alive, if you were scared to live? I had to be missing something. There had to be something out there better than this.

The lights were on in my house and gave me pause. I slowed as I approached. I wasn't ready to face my parents. They hated that I didn't shift more than even I did. They had high standards for us. Coming from a Beta bloodline, they were ecstatic that I had been dating the future Alpha.

When I didn't shift, they were livid. I was a disappointment to their name and our pack. It was something they reminded me about repeatedly, how ashamed they were of me and how I let them down.

Silly Tilly.

That was what they used to call me as a kid. I was their Silly Tilly, always doing adorable things like bumping into walls, smearing food in my hair, and building things in ways that seemed right to me but went against the instructions.

Now, I hated that nickname. Silly Tilly, the girl who thought she could find love and happiness. That girl dreamed of having a safe place to live and raise her own family someday.

Haylee and Savannah loved to use it against me as I got older. Silly Tilly... they would spit it with disgust and mocking tones, laughing at me for one thing or another.

Turns out I was silly after all. There was no true love. I had nothing left here for me.

