



Moonlit Betrayal

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Category: Romance, Fantasy

Description: My marking ceremony was supposed to be a celebration of love and unity. Instead, it became the day I learned Zane Thorne—the man I loved and the father of my unborn child—had vanished in a deadly snowstorm. His body was never found. Just like that, I was left to grieve alone, clinging to a future I no longer recognized.

They told me to stay strong. “For the pup,” they said. But how do you breathe when the person you were supposed to build a life with disappears without a goodbye?

Weeks later, Dorian Thorne—Zane’s twin—returned from the border with his own mate. Looking at him was t*****e. He had Zane’s face, Zane’s voice... but none of Zane’s warmth. Or so I thought.

Until I heard the conversation that shattered everything.

“Zane, your brother died for you. Let Lyra believe you’re Dorian. Let her deliver the pup in peace.”

“But she’s carrying my child,” he said softly.

Zane. Alive. Pretending to be his dead brother, while I mourned him like a widow and carried his child alone. The betrayal cut deeper than death ever could.

So I picked up the phone and called my brother.

“Ryker, I’m coming home. The man I loved died the day he chose to lie.”

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I completely broke down the moment the phone call connected and I heard my brother Ryker Black's voice. Tears streamed down my cheeks, and I pressed a hand over my mouth to muffle any sound.

He knew right away that something was wrong.

“What's wrong, Lyra? Did something happen?” Ryker enquired, his voice tense.

I shook my head, but couldn't say anything, allowing the silence to stretch as tears fell.

After a moment's silence, Ryker replied: “Don't be scared, Lyra. I'm here. Whatever it is, I'll fix it. Just hang on for two more days. I'll send a car for you the day after tomorrow and sort everything out.”

His words sparked a rush of warmth through me.

I nodded, gathered myself, and then ended the call. That's when someone knocked on the door.

Zane Thorne—or, rather, the man pretending to be Dorian Thorne—stood outside, holding some milk, his voice soft. “Lyra, are you asleep? I warmed some milk for you. Drink it and get some rest.”

I took a deep breath and wiped away tears.

Zane stiffened as soon as the door opened. His gaze remained fixed on my puffy, red-

rimmed eyes.

“Why are you sitting on the floor, Lyra? Are you feeling sick?” he enquired, concerned.

I kept my head down and said nothing.

Zane sighed, set the milk on the table, and reached to help me up. “I know you still miss Zane, but he’s gone. You need to look after yourself for the pup you’re carrying.”

My hands balled into fists as I felt pain and anger from his hollow words. When I looked up and saw his face, my chest hurt so much that I could barely breathe.

“I’m fine. It’s just some mild stomach cramps,” I explained.

Zane paused, his expression softening in concern. “Do you want me to get a doctor?”

I shook my head and fought back tears. “No, I just need to rest. I’ll be okay.”

He assisted me to the bed, but his gesture was a little overly affectionate for a “brother-in-law”.

Once I was seated, his gaze shifted to my still-flat stomach, and he laughed quietly. “This pup’s already giving its mother trouble before it’s even born. Just wait till it gets here. I’ll set it straight as its uncle. Lyra, you’ve got to stay strong for the pup and Zane.”

Zane’s voice was filled with concern, but each word cut deep. I bit my lip, my eyes welling up with tears that I refused to let fall. I finally looked up at him, my voice trembling. “Zane...”

Zane froze, his eyes becoming slightly redder. He reached out to hug me, but his hands stopped in midair, as if he had suddenly remembered the role he was playing.

After a brief pause, he collected himself and chuckled. “Lyra, you miss Zane so much that you’re seeing him in me. But it’s okay. I’ll look after you and your pup in his place.”

His voice was filled with concern, but he had no idea that I didn’t want Dorian to look after me; I wanted him to care for me as much as Zane did.

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I lowered my eyes, my fists tightening as I resisted the urge to ask who he truly was. But I knew no matter how hard I pressed, he would not tell me the truth.

It would only aggravate our relationship, or worse, make him suspicious and jeopardise my escape. So I stayed quiet.

Zane did not appear to notice anything unusual about me. He gave my shoulder a light pat and spoke quietly. “You should get some rest. Just say the word if you need anything.”

With that, he turned and left, gently closing the door behind him.

I listened as his footsteps faded down the hallway, and another wave of tears flowed down. I drew my knees up, folded into myself, and pressed my face into the crook of my arm to drown out the sound of my crying.

A memory from five years ago popped into my mind. I remember dancing on stage at the university’s anniversary celebration. That night, Zane fell in love with me at first sight.

Even though he knew I was an Omega without a wolf, he still tried to win me over.

Zane had made me a promise prior to the marking ceremony. “Lyra, don’t worry. Once I’m back from the border, I’ll give you the biggest ceremony this pack has ever seen.”

I believed every word back then. I never imagined that I would be waiting for

betrayal.

The next morning, Zane got up early to drive me to my prenatal checkup. We had barely made it to the front door when we noticed Anastasia Cross.

She was clutching her stomach and her face was pale.

“Dorian, my head hurts so bad...” she complained.

Zane quickly let go of my arm and picked up Anastasia instead. “What’s wrong? Did the wind make you sick? Come on, let’s get you back to your room so you can rest.”

He only realised I was still there when he reached the staircase. “Lyra, go to the hospital on your own. The driver’s already at the door. Everything’s set. Just follow him.”

Without looking back, he rushed up the stairs, clutching Anastasia in his arms. It broke my heart to see him hurrying away like that.

Anastasia turned towards me, a triumphant expression on her face. I clenched my fists, forcing myself to keep my emotions in check.

Later, the driver drove me to the hospital, where I sat alone through my prenatal checkup.

While staring at the grainy ultrasound image of the tiny foetus, I was overcome with a flood of conflicting emotions. Every time I thought about Zane and Anastasia together, the pain in my chest intensified.

I took a deep breath and tried to steady myself. I dismissed the driver and went to another hospital alone because I didn’t want Zane to find out what I was going to do

next.

I sat in the hallway waiting for my turn. I clutched the test results tightly, my stomach twisting with nervousness and fear.

Walking into that operating room meant losing this puppy and, with it, my last connection to Zane. But then I'd think about what he did, and the pain would come back.

Could I really hold it together if I had to face our puppy?

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I had no idea what to do when my phone buzzed unexpectedly and a message from Anastasia appeared on the screen.

I opened it to find a video containing hundreds of photos of Zane and Anastasia. They held hands, ate together, rode the Ferris wheel, and did all of the typical things couples do.

My entire body shook while I watched. They looked so good together, and I felt like the other woman. I pressed my hand to my mouth, tears streaming down my cheeks.

Anastasia taunted me openly by sending me those photos.

Was she aware of Zane's true identity? Did everyone else know the truth about him, leaving me in the dark?

I felt like an idiot.

Then the doctor called my name. "Ms. Black? They're ready for you in the operating room."

My eyes welled up with tears once again. The pain was so intense that my legs gave out, and I crumpled to the floor, sobbing uncontrollably.

A nurse quickly approached and patted my shoulder. "Miss, are you okay? We can always do this another day if you're not ready." I pressed my hands over my ears, tears streaming down my cheeks.

There was no denying that I still loved Zane. I couldn't stop thinking about him, despite the fact that he had lied and hurt me.

My heart felt torn apart, and the pain was so intense that I could barely breathe.

My hand shook as I pressed it to my stomach, remembering the steady thump of the pup's heartbeat from the prenatal monitor. The sound gave me a sense of softness and fragility.

I owed Zane another chance, even if it was only for the puppy. I had to try. I wiped my tears away and picked up the phone to call Zane.

His voice came from the other end of the queue. "Hey, Lyra? What's up? I'm in the middle of something—"

"Zane, I need to talk to you. Can you—"

Before I could finish, Anastasia's voice broke through from the background. "Sweetheart, can you tie the back of my dress?"

And just like that, any hope I'd had slipped away.

"Lyra, what's wrong?" Zane gently enquired on the other end.

"Nothing."

My body shook as I finished it. Tears blurred my vision again, and I bit my lip hard to avoid making a sound. That was when I lost all hope.

I got up and turned to face the nurse. "I'll have the surgery."

She noticed my bloodshot, puffy eyes and spoke in a worried voice. “Are you absolutely sure?”

I forced a faint smile and nodded. “Yes. I’m sure.”

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The procedure went quickly and smoothly. When they rolled me out of the operating room, my body felt hollow, as if my tears had dried up.

I arrived home, but Zane and Anastasia were not there.

I lay on the bed alone, eyes fixed on the ceiling, my thoughts drifting. I had no idea how to proceed or deal with a world so full of betrayal and pain.

Later that night, Zane returned.

He noticed me lying there, pale and still, and his tone softened with concern. “Lyra, what was it you wanted to tell me at the hospital today? Your eyes are really red... have you been thinking about Zane again?”

I stared at his face, so familiar yet so distant, and felt a rush of emotions rise in my chest.

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A part of me wanted to hate him and erase him from my memory. But no matter how hard I tried, that stubborn love deep inside refused to let me cut him off for good.

I could not take it anymore. I closed my eyes and turned away.

Zane sighed, pulled the blanket over me, and quietly exited the room.

That night, I dreamed about the past.

I was suddenly 18 again, standing at my shifting ceremony. Zane stood in front of me, looking at me with tenderness. “Lyra, I’ve been in love with you since the moment we met.”

Back then, his eyes were filled with honesty, and his smile was so warm that it could melt even the coldest heart.

I was completely engrossed in the dream’s sweetness, but when I awoke, all of its beauty was gone. I lay there, staring out the window at the overcast sky, feeling a dull weight in my chest.

The door suddenly swung open, and Anastasia walked in.

She gave me an almost challenging look. “Lyra, you’ve been seeing Dorian every single day. Don’t you know who he really is by now?”

I remained silent, lost in memories of the past.

When I learnt of Zane's death, I became ill due to my grief. I didn't even get to see his body, let alone attend his funeral.

By the time I left the hospital, all that remained was his grave. However, I believed in what we had had—those five years together—and it never occurred to me that any of it could have been fabricated.

Anastasia stepped up to the bed, unconcerned, and looked down at me as if I were beneath her. "Lyra, you still haven't figured out that Zane was playing you this whole time?"

I clenched my fists, barely able to contain my anger.

But Anastasia only looked happier with herself. She leaned closer, her voice a taunting whisper. "You know, Zane treats me like a valuable asset; he won't even let me pour my own water.

"He takes me shopping and travelling. He even gave me the pack's priciest white fox fur coat. Everyone knows I am his true mate. And you? You're just a worthless Omega that he'd never admit in public!"

Every word carved deeper, leaving me raw; my entire body shook, and tears welled up in my eyes.

But Anastasia wasn't finished: "Who do you think you are, Lyra?" Just a foolish woman. Zane never loved you. I'm the one he truly cares about!"

I had reached my breaking point and just wanted to leave.

Anastasia, on the other hand, purposefully bumped into me before faking a fall and pretending I had pushed her. She cupped her cheek and looked up at me with those

big, wounded eyes as tears streamed down her face.

When Zane heard the commotion, he ran.

He saw Anastasia on the floor and charged at me, his eyes filled with rage and disappointment. “How could you do this, Lyra? Anastasia is your sister-in-law. You really hit her?”

Sister-in-law?

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Anastasia clung to him, sobbing as if she'd done nothing wrong. "I was just trying to be there for you after Zane died, Lyra. Why would you push me like that?"

Zane whipped his head towards me, his eyes filled with rage. "Lyra, please apologise to your sister-in-law." Now!"

I gave a hollow smile, my heart reduced to ash.

While holding Zane's gaze, I asked slowly and deliberately, "Zane, tell the truth. Are you the real Dorian?"

Zane fell silent; his lips parted, but no words came out, as if something was choking him.

Anastasia seizes the opportunity, pressing against him with practiced delicacy. "Dorian, my stomach hurts. Will you take me back to my room?"

Zane scooped her into his arms and turned to me with a heavy expression. "I'm sorry, Lyra." I will leave you alone now. Anastasia needs me. As to your question... "I'll respond another time."

His eyes were full of reluctance, pity, and even guilt, but he still turned away, took Anastasia with him, and left me behind. As I watched them go, my heart ripped in half.

I checked my phone and saw Ryker's message, "The car's here."

I took a deep breath and tried to gather myself before moving to the desk, where I grabbed a pen and paper and began writing a letter.

After sliding it into the nightstand drawer, I turned to the wardrobe and reached for my favourite white dress, which I slipped on before noticing my reflection. My face was deathly pale, and my eyes were sunken.

I forced a dry, humourless smile before leaving my room, and as soon as I opened the door, I saw Zane just a few steps away.

Lyra, I apologise for what happened earlier, but you shouldn't have treated Anastasia that way. She was simply trying to help—”

I smiled and cut him off: “I’m fine. She is your mate. I understand why you would defend her. I think I’ll take a walk. “You should stay with Anastasia.”

He paused, conflict on his face. “Lyra, the thing is... “She and I...”

I held my breath and waited; if he had simply said it, I would have forgiven him.

But then his expression became dull. “Never mind. Forget I said anything. Go clear your mind, okay? Just take care. I put \$50,000 in your account. Get yourself some nice jewellery, a dress, whatever you want. You’re carrying a puppy, so keep your spirits up.”

I nodded, pushed him aside, and walked towards the door.

Zane watched me leave, his eyes flickering with confusion, but he didn’t sense anything wrong, instead calling out, “Come back soon, Lyra.” I will have the maid prepare your favourite dishes.”

I smiled faintly, “Alright.”

The warmth drained from my face as I turned away; this was my final goodbye to Zane; I’d vanish from his world, leaving him and Anastasia together.

I left the house and climbed into the car Ryker had sent for me. Through the window, I took one last look back at the pack, which had been nothing but lies and betrayal.

As the car drove away, I closed my eyes and finally allowed myself to cry.

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Meanwhile, back at the house, Anastasia clung to Zane, whining, “You must stay with me tonight, Zane. Lyra really scared me earlier.”

Zane barely heard her, his mind still on me; something felt off when I left, but he couldn’t put his finger on it.

He was about to pursue me when Zane’s butler, Seth Morris, burst in, looking terrified. “Mr. Thorne, this is bad news! We just received word that rogues attacked Ms. Lyra and Mr. Ryker on the road. They jumped off a cliff in an attempt to escape!”

Zane was stunned. “What?”

Zane’s face turned deathly pale, his body stiffened, and he collapsed to the floor, unconscious.

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When Zane finally awoke, he was in a hospital.

He stood up and grabbed Seth by the collar. “Where is Lyra? Is she OK? Has anyone found her?”

Seth hesitated and shook his head. “Mr. Thorne, the pack’s search team is already on it, but the cliff is too high. The chances of survival are essentially zero.”

Zane pushed Seth away and stumbled towards the door, his eyes burning with a red

haze. “I’m going to find her.” She is out there alone. “She must be terrified.”

Seth and his bodyguards rushed after him.

Zane pushed himself forward with pure willpower the entire way, barely making it to the cliff’s edge. His body shook as he looked down into the endless drop.

“Lyra!” Zane’s hoarse and broken voice echoed throughout the valley.

The rescue team moved in, their voices cautious. “Mr. Thorne, please. “The chances of finding Ms. Black alive are extremely slim.”

Zane didn’t seem to hear them, and he dropped to his knees, digging into the dirt with his bare hands. “No, Lyra would not leave me. She is still alive. She needs to be!”

He kept shouting my name, as if something had taken hold of him, his voice cracking with each scream.

By the third day, Zane had not eaten or drunk anything, and he appeared gaunt and exhausted.

On his knees, face ghostly white, he muttered, “Come back, Lyra.” I was wrong. I was totally wrong.”

Then, suddenly, he coughed up blood and collapsed to the ground, unconscious.

When Zane awoke, he was in a hospital bed.

Anastasia sat beside him, tears streaming down her cheeks. “You nearly scared me to death, Zane.” If you died, I wouldn’t know how to live with it.”

Zane did not respond; he simply lay there, staring blankly at the ceiling.

She gripped his hand, choking out, “Zane, I know you’re distraught over this, but it wasn’t your fault. No one saw what happened to Lyra coming.”

Zane’s eyes were filled with anguish as he slowly turned his head, his bloodshot gaze fixed on hers. “No. That was me. I got her killed. I betrayed her, which is why... she....”

His voice faded slowly, as if a heavy weight of agony had swallowed him whole; deep within, his wolf let out a long, mournful howl.

Zane was released from the hospital a few days later, and he returned to the house that had once resounded with laughter but now sat silently.

After entering the bedroom, his gaze fell on my photo on the wall, where I was beaming joyfully.

His eyes flooded at once, and with trembling hands, he reached up and gently traced the outline of my face in the photograph. “Please come back, Lyra. I cannot live without you.”

Then his composure completely broke, and he sank to the floor, sobbing uncontrollably, his cries rough and painful.

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Seth rushed over after hearing the noise and was taken aback when he saw Zane. “Mr. Thorne, please. You need to pull yourself together!”

Zane didn’t seem to hear him. He kept ripping the bedsheet apart, and Seth stumbled back, bumping into the nightstand. An envelope slipped off and fluttered to the ground.

Zane paused briefly before reaching for the envelope, which he tore open to reveal my goodbye letter inside.

“Zane, living in this house without you is unbearable. Every time I look at Dorian, I think of you. The pain prevents me from sleeping. It’s eating me alive every night. That is why I am leaving. I’m going home to try and move on.”

The words hit Zane like a punch in the chest, and he crumpled to the floor, clutching the letter. Tears flooded his vision, making everything hazy.

Seth noticed him unravelling and moved in, his voice low and worried. “Zane, don’t tear yourself up like this. Ms. Black, even from heaven, would not want you to be hurt like this.”

Zane’s head snapped up, his bloodshot eyes fixed on Seth. “You are correct. Falling apart will not help. I need to know what really happened to Lyra before she fell!”

His body was weak, but he pushed through it, demanding, “Track down every detail about Lyra’s movements before she falls off the cliff.” I need to know which rogues targeted their car!”

Seth didn't waste any time and immediately began the investigation.

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Seth returned a few days later with the results, his expression grim as he stood before Zane.

Zane's eyes landed on the tablet in Seth's hand, and a knot of dread tightened in his stomach. He took the device and swiped through the report, his expression darkening with each swipe.

Later, the screen displayed surveillance footage from a hospital hallway; I was sitting on a bench, clutching the hem of my shirt, my eyes hollow.

When my phone buzzed, I picked it up and saw a flood of messages; my face turned deathly pale in an instant.

Zane noticed how my hands trembled as I opened the attached video; my body shook as if a live wire had just struck me.

He recognised the images in the video Anastasia had sent me, which showed him and Anastasia holding hands, wrapped in each other's arms, and even curled up close on a Ferris wheel.

After seeing those photos, I collapsed sideways onto the bench, as if all of my energy had been drained away. I covered my face with both hands, my shoulders hitching with silent sobs.

Zane's chest tightened so much that it hurt to breathe as he watched me; he couldn't imagine my despair and agony at the time.

His hands trembled as he clicked to the next page, revealing a medical report. Anastasia's name stood out in bold letters, and the results hit him like a punch in the gut: Anastasia had never been pregnant.

Zane's body went weak, and he collapsed to the floor as he remembered how he had thrown me away for nothing more than Anastasia's lie. The weight of regret fell on him.

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He pressed his face into his hands, tears slipping down his cheeks. “Lyra, what have I done to you?””

Then his head snapped up, eyes blazing, and he spat, “Get Anastasia.” Now!”

Anastasia was soon brought before Zane, and his dark expression caused her to tremble.

“What’s wrong, Zane? Why are you looking at me that way?” she asked.

Zane threw the tablet at her feet, his voice icy: “Look what you’ve done!”

Anastasia picked it up with trembling hands, dropped to her knees, and grabbed the hem of his shirt. Her face turned ashen after checking the contents.

“I was wrong, Zane! I wasn’t thinking clearly because I love you so much. I was so envious of Lyra. That’s why I faked the pregnancy and attempted to turn you against her!”

Zane clutched her throat, his gaze merciless.

“You’ve ruined my life. You ruined everything between me and Lyra. And now you’re going to pay for it!” He turned to his men.” Bring her to the interrogation chamber. Let the fire teach her!”

With that, he flung her to the floor, and the bodyguards grabbed her, dragging her away as she screamed and struggled wildly against them. “Zane, you can’t do this to

me! I love you!”

Anastasia yelled, “Zane, you can’t blame me for Lyra’s death! She already knew you were faking your death. She chose death because she hated you!”

The words struck Zane like a physical blow, destroying the last glimmer of hope he’d held onto.

His hands trembled as he pulled out my old medical records and flipped straight to the last page, where the words “Abortion Consent Form” were written in stark black and white.

Before I decided to end the pregnancy, I called him, my voice shaky, and said, “Zane, I need to talk to you. “Can you-”

But he was with Anastasia that day, distracted in a boutique, and she cut me off before I could finish.

Zane collapsed on the floor, his body suddenly drained of strength.

He couldn’t stop thinking about my despair, my agony, right before I jumped off the cliff; guilt hit him like a tidal wave, dragging him under and drowning him entirely.

Meanwhile, as the bodyguards dragged Anastasia away, she continued to shout defiantly, “You should rot in hell, Zane!” You killed Lyra! Do you think you’ll live happily ever after this? Hell no!”

Every word cut deep into Zane’s heart.

He clenched his fists, his eyes were bloodshot, and the veins at his temples pulsed. A rough, guttural sound tore from his throat as he lurched to his feet and sent chairs

flying, releasing the guilt and rage that had been eating him alive.

“What kind of monster would do that?” How in the hell could I do that to her?” he shouted.

Seth remained nearby, helpless as Zane unravelled.

Zane’s chest rose and fell violently as his breath sawed in and out. With trembling hands, he pulled out the abortion consent form, and my name was right there in front of him.

Then his phone rang.

“Mr. Thorne, I think I just saw Ms. Black!”

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“I am on my way!””Zane said, clutching those words like a lifeline.

He hung up the phone and told Seth to get the car ready, eager to head out and find me.

As he grabbed his belongings in a rush, he muttered under his breath, his voice buzzing with excitement: “I knew it. Lyra couldn’t have died. We never recovered her body from the cliff base, so she must be alive. Simply stay alive, Lyra. I am coming for you, and I will make things right.”

I left that place of sadness with Ryker and returned to live with his pack, where we kept to ourselves.

I tried to forget the past, Zane, and all the pain, but in the quiet of the night, my thoughts kept drifting back to him and the good times we’d had.

One day, Ryker and I were gathering herbs in the garden when we heard a knock at the gate; he went to answer it, frowning.

When Ryker opened the gate, he saw Zane on his knees, his face streaked with blood, his eyes filled with pain and regret. Ryker’s face twisted with rage, and he swung without hesitation, snarling, “You’ve got some nerve coming here!””

Zane did not flinch; he took the blow without protest, remaining on his knees and pleading, “I just need to see Lyra, please.”

Ryker drew back for another hit, but I stood firm and met Zane’s gaze with icy

stillness, refusing to let his words penetrate my mind this time.

Zane's eyes lit up with excitement the moment he saw me. Still on his knees, he straightened his posture and held my gaze. "Lyra, I finally found you."

Ryker stepped between us, his glare intense. "Get out! You're not wanted here!"

But Zane shook his head, refusing to concede. "I'm not leaving. I need to talk to her."

I took a deep breath and held my voice steady as I said, "Zane, we've said everything there is to say."

Regret washed over his face as he looked at me. "Lyra, I know I messed up. I came to apologise. I'll do whatever it takes to earn your forgiveness."

Ryker was about to throw a punch until I stopped him. I fixed Zane's gaze, my words cold and deliberate. "Remember? We never had the marking ceremony. We were never really bound."

He shook his head, stubborn as always. "No. You're my mate. My only mate."

The sight of his bloodied face sent a wave of emotion through me. Tears rolled down my cheeks before I could stop them.

I choked up: "Zane, do you remember what I told you all those years ago? I said I'd never forgive a betrayal."

I took a deep breath to calm myself and locked eyes with Zane. My words were measured and cutting as I continued, "You were the one who betrayed me first, Zane; you broke every promise you ever made to me."

“You said you’d love me forever, but you chose Anastasia instead and tore me apart.
“There is nothing left between us now.”

I turned to leave, but I saw Ryker’s rage in his eyes before I did. He glared at Zane and slammed the gate shut with a loud bang.

Beyond it, Zane’s figure faded into the night.

I expected Zane to back off after this, but instead he rented a nearby flat and began showering me with flowers and gifts on a daily basis.

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Every single thing he sent reeked of guilt and panic, whether it was a large bouquet of roses, fancy jewellery, or a handwritten apology letter.

I looked at them coldly and moved on.

Ryker, on the other hand, was enraged and threw all of the gifts away. “Oh, now he feels bad?” Too late! If he truly loved you, he would not have pulled such a cruel stunt to harm you!”

Every day, Zane would appear outside my gate, watching me from afar with eyes filled with pain and longing.

He wouldn’t leave, no matter how much I ignored him. He’d stand in the rain until he was completely soaked, or he’d bake in the sun until his skin turned red.

Slowly, I began to waver, and that’s when the fear struck: I was afraid of giving in and allowing him to drag me back into whatever mess we had created before.

I promised myself that I would never forgive him; I would not let him destroy me again.

I expected Zane to keep going, but his pack sent someone after him: his mother, Leah, who had a stone-faced expression and eyes full of arrogance and disdain.

“Zane, are you seriously choosing a woman over your own family?” Listen, you’re no longer my son unless you come home with me right now!”She warned.

Zane dropped to his knees by the gates, clenching his fists, and looked at me, his eyes filled with pain and longing. “Lyra, just wait for me.” “I swear I’ll come back for you,” he said quietly and firmly, as if he meant every word.

I stared back at him, cold and unshaken, my heart refusing to soften.

“Zane, we ended this long ago. “Just leave,” I said coldly.

My words were final, cutting through whatever remained between us.

Zane held my gaze for a long time before finally getting to his feet and leaving with Leah. I watched until they vanished from sight, but I didn’t feel sad; instead, I felt relieved.

After he left, my life returned to its usual quiet routine; the gifts stopped coming, and I no longer ran into him; it was clear that he had returned to his world, and I would also be moving on.

But what I didn’t expect was Leah pushing Zane to form a mate bond with Anastasia after they returned to the pack; the woman he’d chosen over me was now the one holding him back.

According to what I’ve heard, Zane and Anastasia were constantly at odds with one another.

Finally, on a stormy night, Anastasia grabbed a silver knife, murdered Zane, and committed suicide.

When I got the news, I let out a heavy sigh; I never imagined it would come to this, but it wasn’t my problem anymore.

Zane’s life and death were none of my concern; he made his own decisions and

sealed his fate.

As for me, I had a fresh start.