

The Beast And The Blessed

Chapter 176

Epilogue: Natalie - The Beast and The Blessed

Natalie's P.O.V.

"You're doing great, Lincoln! Keep it up!" I yelled, trying to encourage my son as he faced his opponent.

Every kid had to go through it, the training, the placements, and the competitions. If he could win at least 3 out of his five rounds, he would move up to the next level training class. He had lost the last round, which had knocked his confidence down a notch, but he was still doing great.

He had been working hard, training extra. The pressure to impress his dad drove him forward, but he had to know by Killian's yelling and cheering that it didn't matter if he won or lost. Killian would always be his biggest fan.

I'd stand by my decision that I was the biggest, but if I was honest, Killian put me to shame. The man adored his kid, and even when Lincoln lost the last placement challenge, Killian cheered him on and told him how well he did, and Lincoln ate up every word.

I told him the same thing, but coming from me, he didn't hear a thing. Everything his father said was like it came from the mouth of the Goddess herself. Our son looked up to him and wanted to be just like him. It was adorable.

"Keep going! That's my boy!" Killian shouted proudly from beside me. I let out a sigh of adoration as the corners of Lincoln's mouth twitched up at the sound of his father's voice before he regained his composure, his eyebrows dropping as he focused.

"TAKE HIM TO THE GROUND, LINO!" Amara yelled angrily, on her feet, as her father glared at my son from next to her. She sure was a spitfire, and I had a feeling whoever she ended up with would be in for one hell of a ride.

Just like Joselin and Killian, Amara and Lincoln were best friends.

Amara was born three years before Lincoln. The day Joselin had her, I cried fat tears of joy.

There was some jealousy and heartbreak in there too, but I wouldn't ever tell anyone that. Each month that I failed to conceive, I would wait for Killian to leave our room and head to work for the day before letting the gut-wrenching sobs out. For years, I prayed to the Goddess, asking what was wrong with me and why I hadn't given Killian the baby and heir he wanted.

My mother had asked me to consider going to The Sanctum of Light to conceive, thinking it had something to do with my connection to the Goddess as one of her descendants. But I knew my parents had conceived me away from The Sanctum, and I was fine.

Where I made the baby wasn't the issue. I was the issue.

I also didn't want to risk my child having the attachment to the Sanctum that my mother and each generation before her had. I wanted them to be free instead of having to go back to The Sanctum every few weeks to replenish their magic and energy.

"GET HIM IN AN ARM BAR!" Amara screamed again, throwing her fists above her head in frustration. She looked just like Joselin. Her long white hair and violent tendencies left little question in anyone's mind about whose daughter she was. It was the brown eyes that Amara shared with her father that Joselin was the most proud of, gene-wise.

She gushed over how beautiful her daughter's eyes were from the moment she opened them. She was ecstatic when her three boys were born over the next few years, looking just like Tobias. I knew one of her biggest fears was passing on her white eyes to her children. They were unique and special, but they caused her difficulty growing up with people not accepting her, and she didn't want that for her kids.

Lincoln flipped his opponent, dropping down on top of him. They wrestled until he could securely lock the other kid's arm, on the verge of breaking it.

Three taps to the ground later, Lincoln stood tall in front of the roaring crowd as he was declared the winner of this round.

It was his fourth round but third win, earning him a spot in the higher-level training group.

At eight, he was advancing faster than anyone had expected but considering who his father was; I had no doubt he would do well.

"Yes!" Killian shouted, up on his feet, thrusting his fist into the air. It seemed so stupid now that I had ever questioned whether Killian wanted children. Lincoln was his world. We had been trying for another, but this time around, I knew it would happen when the time was right. I just had to be patient, even though I felt my frustration building with every passing month. Those months turned to years; with it, my soul hurt a bit more each time.

"Good job, Lincoln!" Amara screamed, knowing her best friend had just earned himself a spot in her training class. They would not get anything done now. The two of them together were just asking for trouble.

Neither had shifted yet, and everyone was wondering what gene they would take after. Now that we knew both could reside in one body, we planned to train them on both regardless, but one gene would always be dominant.

Joselin was down on the mat, clapping as she stood next to the rest of her training class. She was beaming with pride, but I knew she was sad that Lincoln would leave her trainees. He was the last to fight, and I knew it was because he was the prince. He was the final event, and he did not disappoint.

As we made our way down the bleachers to the training mats, I watched my son wrap Joselin in a tight hug, thanking her for teaching him before sprinting past her.

My arms opened wide, and I smiled as I anticipated one of his big bear hugs. Sweaty or not, I adored them. Whenever I wrapped my arms around him, I could feel how small he was and remind myself that he was still a kid even though he acted older.

Killian choked on his laugh when Lincoln flew right past me, his hands grabbing Amara's shoulders as he shook her once in excitement.

"We're going to train together!" She cheered. "Next time, just break his arm!"

Killian stepped to my side, placing his arm around my waist, and he kissed the top of my head as I straightened back up. "I think we have finally hit the age where we are no longer on his radar, my mate. It will get easier."

It was easy for him to say. Lincoln still hung on his every word. I wasn't ready to let go of my only baby, but it seemed he wouldn't give me much choice. Lincoln was eight now, but Killian had shifted around this time when he was a kid. Soon, Lincoln would too, and then he would be off training even more, and as he got older, he would start looking for his mate.

My lips pursed together as I joined Tobias in glaring at our children. They were still just kids, but I wasn't ready for them to grow up this fast. He was protective of his baby girl being around a boy, but I was just upset that my boy no longer needed me.

'There will be no breaking of any limbs until you shift. That applies to both of you.' Killian's voice was thick with amusement as I leaned into his side, still pouting.

Neither of the kids reacted; their selective hearing for when a parent spoke was turned on. Instead, they talked over each other and made plans to celebrate with the others from their training groups for ice cream sundaes in the dining hall.

I didn't even get to congratulate him before the two ran off to meet up with their friends.

"You're doing great, Nat," Joselin said, bumping my shoulder with hers. Raising children together brought us even closer, and every day I was thankful that she had her vision and kicked Killian into gear to come to find me.

"You are too." I picked up on my toes, watching as my son and her daughter made their way into the castle. "Where are the boys?"

Her three boys were always out causing trouble, and she would laugh it off, but I knew she laid down the law whenever they took things too far. "Last I heard, they were trying to craft homemade bows and arrows, so I'll be in the infirmary with at least one of them to see the healers within the next day or two."

I nodded, but my eyes were wide at how relaxed she sounded. She trusted her kids fully, and they lived a very free and exciting life. My blood pressure always went through the roof when Lincoln would run off to play with them.

"Do you want to go celebrate with the kids?" Joselin asked, rubbing her slightly rounded stomach. I could practically see her salivating at the idea of ice cream over a hot brownie.

"No." Killian's sudden response made me jump, and I pressed my lips together to stop from laughing.novelxo.com fast update

Tobias smirked before looking away, still not being as comfortable around Killian as my mate had hoped. Their friendship was still beneath everything, but Tobias preferred treating Killian as the king instead of his friend. I didn't know what happened between them, but I would continue to pray for them to work things out soon.

I was sure they would get over it one day, but I was surprised they had taken so long.

"Message received. Have fun!" Joselin chuckled before grabbing her mate's hand and dragging him to the dining hall to steal some dessert, even if she wasn't planning to stay there with the kids.

Killian wanted another baby, and I would spend every free second we had wrapped around him if it meant I could give him another one someday.

"Let's go back to our room." He whispered against the side of my head, nibbling on my earlobe.

"No, let's go to your office." My chest rubbed against his as I spun around in his arms to face him. "I have a few things I want to do in there."