

# The Luna Choosing Game

## Chapter 0641

Joyce, despite his best efforts, was not a fighter. He was not bred for war and battle like Hawke was, so even calling on the power of his Alpha wolf, Hawk tossed Joyce aside like he was a sack of potatoes.

However, Joyce did show amazing tenacity, and stood back up time and time again. Roaring, he threw himself at Hawk, all elbows and poorly-timed punches

Hawk blocked and blocked, until finally, he seemingly reached the edge of his patience and grabbed Joyce by the shoulders, stopping him.

"Enough of this," Joyce growled. Magic glowed around his hands, and then Joyce disappeared.

Teleportation.

"Where is he?" I demanded. "What have you done with him?"

"He's fine. You think I'd kill off my meal ticket? Hawk snapped. "I simply sent him to a locked room. Now.." Hawk stepped toward me, menacingly. "You are going to fall in line, Piper, or I am going to break you."

linched backwards. "I'll never do your bidding."

Hawk sighed. "Why can't anyone ever pick the easy way? Oh well." He took another large step.

Back up against the wall, I was running out of escape room. I had to make a stand, then.

I pushed my thoughts out through my mind, searching for Miracle, in wolf or bear form, but she was too weary, too weak yet from our last transformation. She wouldn't be able to help me with this.

"Be a good girl, now," Hawk said, lifting his arms.

Then, suddenly, Nicholas appeared in the shadows behind him. He hadn't been there before. Had he teleported as well? Veronica must have been here!

"Don't fucking touch her," Nicholas growled.

Hawk, startled, turned but he was too slow. Nicholas lunged and tackled him, stealing the breath straight from his lungs.

"How are you here?!" Hawk shouted, fear and anger rivaling in his voice.

"You dare to steal my mate from me?" Nicholas was slowly shifting, his teeth elongating and his fingers curling into claws. "You think you can separate us? You think you can use her?"

Nicholas soon becomes monstrous, all bulging muscle and fur and rage. He's half-human, half-wolf, a bulky towering, looming figure, with death in his eyes.

"You have hurt us for the last time," Nicholas growled. His claws ripped into Hawk's shoulder. Hawk cried out. Then, as before, magic swirled around him. But unlike with Joyce, this time the magic curled around himself. He was going to teleport

"Nick!" I shouted, but it was too late.

In a flash, Hawk blinked out of view.

Yet, just as quickly, Nicholas snapped his arm out. Suddenly, Hawk reappeared, with Nicholas's hand curled around his neck. Had Nicholas snatched him out of his magic? How was that possible?

How powerful must Nicholas truly be?

I watch agape and awed as Nicholas ripped Hawk away from the magic.

"Look away Piper," Nicholas said. When I obeyed, I heard a sickening crack. Then a heap, as Hawk's lifeless body crashed onto the floor. Nicholas had snapped his neck.

Hawk, leader of the notorious and treacherous underground, was finally dead.

Nicholas immediately shifted back into full human form. He stepped over the dead man and rushed to me. I was still trembling, tears in my eyes. I almost couldn't believe what I was seeing.

Nicholas. Here with me. Safe.

Hawk, finally gone.

And Jane... Oh, Jane.

"Nick," I said in a sharp inhale. Nicholas gripped me to his chest as the waterworks start in earnest. Now that he was here, I was finally safe, and in that safety, my emotions broke free of their restraints and overwhelmed me.

I sobbed and shook. Nicholas held me through it all, gently stroking my back. He must have seen Jane's body lying there. He didn't ask what was upsetting me. He didn't say anything at all. He merely gave me the comfort of his presence and his strong body.

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Slowly, my grief subsided for now, enough for me to look up at Nicholas and feel the relief of being reunited with my fiancé.

My... mate

"I love you," Nicholas said. "I'm sorry it took so long for me to reach you."

"How are you even here? It's impossible for you to have found me this quickly?"

Nicholas smiled a little. "Veronica was able to follow the teleportation magic. She'd been studying for months, just for this chance. Some of our wolves are fighting above, but I couldn't stand the thought of waiting. Hawk must have used the teleportation magic again, because Veronica sensed it and sent me straight to you."

I fell into Nicholas's embrace once more, thrilled to feel him so close and safe. His heart

pounded in rhythm with mine, the beat of our mating bond, brilliant and strong, holding us together. I wanted to revel in this closeness for as long as I could.

But that would come later.

For now, we had to get out of here.

Even as I thought it, the building quaked around us, shifting more dust into the air.

Nicholas gripped my by the arm and began herding me toward the door. "The sooner I have you away from all this, the happier I'll be. I wish I had teleportation powers of my own."

Me too. "We have to find Joyce first."

"Joyce?" Nicholas glanced at me. "He's here?"

"He tried to protect me, but Hawk sent him away. He can't be far. Hawk said he didn't want to hurt him."

"We'll search. Quickly."

At the door, I finally put up a fight, stopping Nicholas. I glanced into the dusty, shadowy room, looking beyond the corpse of my worst enemy to that of my sister.

She hadn't been kind. She'd hurt me time and time again, even tried to kill me. But my heart still mourned for her. For the woman she could have been had she taken a different path in life.

She could have been a mother. A friend. A princess.

Now, she wouldn't even receive a proper burial, Not yet, anyway. When we were safe, I would return to this place, and I would bring her home.

For now..

"Piper, I'm sorry but I will carry you out of here if I have to. It's time to go."

I nodded and let Nicholas lead me from the room.

We found Joyce not long after, screaming and pounding on a locked door to one of the

rooms on our way to the exit.

"Step back, Joyce!" Nicholas called through the door.

"Nicholas? How the devil are you here?" came Joyce's muffled reply.

"Back, Joyce! Now!"

Shuffling behind the door told us he had moved, then Nicholas, pulling on his Alpha strength, slammed through the door, smashing it into pieces.

On the other side, Joyce looked properly impressed. Then he looked guilty.

"Nicholas, I know that things between us aren't-"

"Later," Nicholas said, waving him forward. Then Nicholas stepped back toward me and wrapped his arm around my waist.

When the three of us were reunited in the hallway, we pressed on toward the exit together.

We burst through the front door. Outside, a war was indeed waging, wolves and bears shifted and lashing at each other's throats. It was a grizzly sight, with blood splatter here and there, though limited casualties, it seemed at first sight. Whenever someone was knocked down, they healed and reentered the fight.

Like this, who knew how much longer this could last?

Something had to be done. I looked at Nicholas for answers, but found him looking for his own in me.

And I knew, even if he didn't say it, what was needed here.

The bears would only stop the fight if their lost princess told them to.

## Chapter 0643

In a war between the wolves and the bears, only the lost bear princess will be able to stop this fighting. Else, the bears will continue to fight themselves to exhaustion or to death.

"It's up to you," Nicholas said. "I believe in you. You can do this."

I closed my eyes. Miracle was still exhausted, but I begged for her.

\*People could die, Miracle. We have to find a way to stop this fighting." We both knew the only answer would be to shift.

Miracle and I were not weak-willed. For too long, we'd been the victims of this plight. First being kidnapped, then everything with the underground organization, and now a war?

I, for one, was done standing by letting other people save me. This time, I would be the one to stop this war and save everyone else.

Miracle's determination matched mine. I gave her what strength I could, and together, we brought the wolf forward. I shifted.

Nicholas, seeing me as a wolf, shifted to, into his much larger Alpha wolf form. Then, he threw back his head and howled. Pulled in my strength of his howl, I too pulled my head back and did the same.

Soon, all of the wolves across the battlefield did likewise, joining in an eerie chorus of wolf cries and howls.

The bears, still shifted, seemed startled. They looked toward us, standing up high near the entrance to what I could see now was a castle of some kind.

The fighting, for now, had ceased. But with the bears unsure, the peace wouldn't last. The bears needed their own hope. Their own reason to give up the fight.

And I had it.

"Now, Miracle," I said in my mind. Together, we gathered our remaining strength and pushed our bear form to the front.

Again, I shifted from wolf to bear. Somehow, I was still smaller than Nicholas's Alpha wolf form, but I didn't mind. Besides, that wasn't my purpose here.

My purpose?

I sucked in a heavy breath and then I roared.

The bears startled and then did the same. Some lifted up onto their hind legs. Others jumped in small circles, too excited to contain themselves.

Then, with the peace restored, both wolves and bears began to shift back to their human form.

"Our princess!" one of the bear shifters cried out. "She's returned?"

"A wolf and a bear in one!" said one of the wolves. "And Prince Nicholas's fiancé besides!"

Rushing toward us, I recognized a familiar pair: Julian and Veronica.

Julian smirked. "Does this mean the war is off?"

I was relieved to see them both, and wanted to tell them so. So I shifted back into human form. Nicholas quickly shifted as well, next to me. He reached out as I stumbled, suddenly exhausted, and caught me against him.

Julian and Veronica hurried the rest of the way up to us.

"You okay?" Julian asked.

\*Tired," I admitted.

"I believe that," Julian said. "Not many people can shift from a wolf to a bear and back again. In fact, I don't know anyone else who can do that." Julian glanced to the other side of me, where Joyce stood awkwardly. "And you found our errant brother. Good job."

When I was steady enough to stand on my own, Veronica stepped forward and pulled me into a quick embrace. "I was worried," she said.

"Me, too," I admitted. I pulled back enough to look at her. "Nicholas said you followed the teleportation magic?" "It wasn't easy," Veronica said. "I wasn't sure it was even possible, but I couldn't give up. We'd lost Jane to Hawk, but I wouldn't lose you. The book from the merpeople held many secrets. It helped."

I hugged her again.

As we stood there, reunited and tired and relieved, we were joined by another - an official looking man wearing the colors of the bear kingdom.

"My princess," he said, bowing low.

"Oh. None of that please," I said at once, motioning for him to stand.

He seemed surprised at first, but obeyed. Then he cleared his throat, "If you would permit me, my princess, your parents wish for you to be returned to the palace as soon as possible. A reunion is long overdue."

"My... parents?" With everything going on, I hadn't really even considered that side of it. Yesterday, I thought I was an orphan. Today, I have parents and a kingdom of my own?

I looked at Nicholas. He met my gaze with one of his own. His face with a blank slate but concern weighed heavy in his eyes.

"That is your rightful home," he said. His voice was carefully neutral. He would not sway me one way or another. A kindness. But unnecessary.

"I want to see Elva," I said. Elva and Nicholas were my true home. "Once we're safely together, then I can decide what to do next."

Nicholas's lip twitched, a small smile. It dimmed when he looked at the bear captain. "You heard your princess. She will be returning with us for the time being, but she will be in contact."

"But, my lady," the bear captain insisted. "Surely you would feel safer among your own kind..."



"Don't forget I am also a wolf," I reminded him. Seeing his distress though, I softened my tone. "I'm not disappearing again, I swear. I just need time to wrap my mind around all this. And to recover."

"A princess's request should be honored, yes?" Julian chimed in. "Usually that's how things are done, if I'm not mistaken."

The bear captain looked stricken as he lowered his head. "Yes, my lady. Of course."

With that resolved, I looked at Nicholas.

"I want to go home now," I told him.

His arms wrapped around me. "Gladly."

We rode in a car to the train station, and then took a train back towards the palace. It was a long route, an overnight trip, but I was relieved to be able to slide up against Nicholas in a darkened, private sleeper car, and hold him well into the night.

We hadn't done anything but hold each other, but I've never felt so content in my entire life. It was as if, now that we've admitted and accepted the bond between us, simply being near one another was enough to keep us contented.

It wasn't all that I wanted, of course. I wanted Nicholas heart, body, and soul, and when I gathered a bit more strength, I had every intention of exploring that body part to the fullest.

But for now, holding Nicholas close and being held, was enough to ease my frazzled nerves and heal my wounded heart.

Nicholas gently traced his hand up and down my spine. The ministrations were relaxing and my eyelids were growing heavy.

But then, he leaned in, kissed my forehead, and said, "You have so much to think about, and so many decisions to make."

I supposed I did, but they could wait. The important ones were already covered. I was here with Nicholas, on my way back to my daughter. The war was over, and though messy right now, I had a glimpse of a happy future.

"I'll understand," Nicholas began, voice suddenly deathly quiet, "if you wish to break our engagement."

At once, my heart leapt up into my throat, while simultaneously crashing down into my stomach.

I pulled away from Nicholas enough to push myself up onto my hands and stare down at him.

The thought of breaking the engagement had never crossed my mind! Nicholas proposing had been one of the best moments of my life. No way he was going to take that away from me.

Nicholas immediately detected my anger, and his hands flew up, palms forward, in defense. "I didn't mean that you should break it. Only that you could if you wanted to."

"Why in any universe would I not want to be engaged to my mate, the man I love. The only one I've ever loved! The man I want a future with!" I was getting more and more upset, my voice raising. It was a very long day, I was so emotionally drained, so tears welled up in my eyes. "Nick..."

"I want to be with you, Piper. I want to marry you and have children with you. I wouldn't have proposed otherwise." Nicholas placed his hands on my shoulders and gave me a gentle massage. "But things are different for you now than they were when you initially accepted."

"I don't care. I don't care if I'm the princess of the moon, you are the man that I want as my husband." I was fired up now, voice loud and determined. "I won't settle for anyone less, Nick."

My passion only made Nicholas laugh, bright and beautiful. That smile, so breathtaking, lingered even when the laughter had gone.

\*Alright, Piper. Okay. You can have me, I promise."

"Good." I settled back down against his chest. "No more talk of broken engagements."

"I promise," Nicholas said and kissed my forehead again. I tilted my head back and kissed my nose next. Farther, and finally his lips fell onto mine.

It was a gentle kiss, but I wanted more.

So I combed my fingers through Nicholas's hair and moaned against his mouth.

"You're tired," he said, though he tilted his head to start kissing down the length of my neck instead.

"I want to be with my mate," I whispered, and he sucked in a breath. Our legs were tangled under the thin blanket, so I felt his sudden interest when I used the term.

Nicholas pressed into me, rolling near on top of me, and pushed me down into the thin yet comfortable mattress of this sleeper car.

I spread my legs, and Nicholas settled between them. I was wearing a nightgown with no shorts. It was nothing for him to bunch it up all the way to my arm pits. I lifted my arms and he removed it over my head. Gently, he placed it on the edge of the bed.

Then, with me exposed to him, Nicholas lowered his head to my breast and sucked one of my nipples into his mouth.

Moaning, I let my head fall back against the pillow. I clawed at the back of his head, desperate to keep him right where he was, lapping and laving at my hardening nipple. He eventually broke off, but only long enough to hop to the other nipple instead, which he lavished with equal attention.

Nicholas had too many clothes on. A point I made clear my dropping my hands to his shoulders and tugging at his sleep shirt.

At my urging, he quickly discarded it.

His pants followed. And then, finally, my panties, leaving us naked and tangled in bed.

With him on top of me, he lined himself up with my entrance. Just as he was about to push forward, he stopped himself.

"I don't have a condom," he said.

I looked at him, searching within his gaze. Here was the man I have loved since my youth. The man who was soon to be my husband. Who was already my mate.

"Any children with you would be a blessing," I said.

His face instantly softened. "Piper..." He spoke my name with so much reverence, it took my breath away. How could I love a man as much as I loved this one?

"I love you," I told him. I loved him so much I wanted him to bury himself inside of me so deeply and fully that no one would be able to tell where he ended and I began.

"I love you," he replied, and pressed into me.

"Aah," I sighed. He fit so perfectly inside of me, it was as if he had been made to be there. Maybe we truly had been made for each other.

My perfect mate.

Slowly, he began inching out of me, and then, with a snap of his hips, he pushed forward again, filling me once more.

Again and again, he completed this same rhythm, moving slowly, I clawed down his back, aching for more. "Nick, please...ah..."

He lowered his mouth to my ear. "I want to make - nng - this last - ah - all night..."

Even with the night half over, that would be an impressive feat of stamina and endurance. But I was up to the task.

If I wasn't pushed to insanity first. Gods, he felt so good.

I spread my legs farther apart and began to move with him, allowing him to push even deeper inside of me.

\*Shit," he growled, and his forehead dropped to my shoulder.

I nearly laughed, if lust hadn't been choking me in its grasp.

"Maybe... we can go all night... another time," I told him in a moment's pause.

He looked up at me, and I could see the promise in his eyes.

"We have time, after all," I added, smiling.

\*The rest of our lives," he agreed and kissed me.

I cupped my face with my hands and deepened the kiss.

At once, his hands went to my ass. He lifted me higher and then plunged into me with renewed fervor. I broke our kiss to gasp, and then moan.

He moved like a man possessed now, rocking in and out of me at a fierce pace.

"Ah! Ah! Nick!"

I clung on, gripping his shoulders as tightly as I could.

\*Pip-er! Nng. God. So good."

I wouldn't last long like this. I hoped he could tell from the way my moans grew louder and my whimpers more frequent.

Nicholas pounded in me with his hard dick. Again and again. Filling me with his love for me. Giving me pleasure over and over.

It's not too much, I need more and more and more - until suddenly it is. I crash over the precipice of desire and scream my bliss.

"Nicholas!"

He followed me, not more than two hard thrusts afterwards. "Piper!"

The starlight crept in through the opened window of our train sleeper room. Nicholas and I were tangled together

in sweat and sheets. He was still inside me. I felt him twitch now and then.

"I will make you the happiest wife in the world," Nicholas said.

\*You are off to a great start," I teased.

We eased apart, gently, and his dick slipped free. Immediately, I wanted him inside of me again. There would be time for that though, later and for the rest of our lives.

"I just want to be yours," I told Nicholas, more seriously.

He lowered his mouth to mine and kissed me. "Soon."

## Chapter 0645

I wasn't sure what to expect when our car delivered us from the train station to the palace, but even in my wildest dreams, I wouldn't have guessed what actually awaited us.

Cheering crowds lined the outer walls of the palace. Balloons and streamers of various colors were abundant. A stage had been set up with a band.

Some people had signs. Long Live The Bear Princess, they said, with a picture of my face.

When they separated to make way for our car, they nearly rioted with their joy.

"Praise you!" shouted one woman.

"Our hero!" called a man.

In the backseat of the sedan, I clutched at Nicholas's hand, unsure what to make of all this. Not all that long ago, these same people had been half-ready

to start a rebellion. Now, the only thing they seemed to want to fight for was some of my time and affection.

Nicholas clapped his free hand on mine, the one holding so hard onto his other hand.

\*Breathe, Piper. You've earned this," he said.

\*All I did was exist," I told him. How could that matter to so many people?

Nicholas gently shook his head. On his face, he wore a look of fond sympathy. "Piper, you have done so much more than that. How can you not see that?"

I tried. Truly, I did. But to me, I was ever that down on her luck woman working as a waitress trying to make ends meet. I didn't feel like a princess. I certainly was no great hero.

Yet, looking in Nicholas's eyes, I could almost see the way I was reflected within them.

If Nicholas saw me as someone more... shouldn't I trust in him? As I trusted in him in all other things?

\*I'll tell you every day for the rest of your life how special you are," Nicholas said. Shifting closer to me, he dropped a kiss to my shoulder. "And how much I love you."

"I'm going to need you to hold to that promise," I said, heart melting.

"I'm a man of my word," he said. And I knew that was the truth.

Through the palace gates, the world seemed a bit calmer, though, to my shock and surprise, everyone was waiting for us out near the palace's front doors. Including the King and Queen.

The car in front of ours carried Joyce, Julian, and Veronica. Joyce exited first. He only took one step before Jessica, having run from her spot at the entryway, collided into his chest.

As Joyce held her to him, I noticed a softness in his expression that he hadn't otherwise shown. Perhaps with his brainwashing, he hadn't allowed himself to love. Or perhaps he had, and he'd buried it down until now. Either way, Joyce clutched Jessica tightly, and I knew the pair would soon be a match.

Julian and Veronica exited next, their hands clasped together. It had not escaped my notice that much like Nicholas and I, Julian and Veronica had disappeared together on the train, only to reemerge this morning looking rumpled but pleased.

Honestly, it was about time. I only had joy in my heart for my two dear friends.

\*Mommy!" Elva cried. She broke away from her nanny's hand and rushed toward our car. Immediately, I pushed

the door open and jumped out to meet her. I scooped her into my arms and swung her around for good measure.

How much I missed my little girl. How much I loved her.

Nicholas quickly joined in our joy, wrapping his arms around us both. Elva cried, and I may have too.

"We're a family," Elva said. "We're finally a family."

Nicholas kissed Elva's forehead, then he kissed my cheek. "We're a family," he confirmed. "And no one will ever break us apart again."

With all the happiness and tears, it took some time for us to separate. But we couldn't keep the King and Queen waiting for long.

Nicholas took Elva into his arms and together the three of us met the King and Queen. They'd always despised me, I expected nothing less now.

## Chapter 0646

Instead, the Queen pulled me into a hug. It was uncomfortable and brief, but a hug none the less. From the Queen, this was a tremendous breach of decorum, and I froze, unsure how to react. Even Nathan, standing dutifully as his King's side seemed shocked.

"I have misjudged you dearly," the Queen said. She pulled away to look at me. "I will not make that error again."

The King offered a small smile. "Your engagement to our son has our full approval."

We were going to marry either way, but having their blessing certainly made it all easier.

\*Thank you," I said.

Nicholas shook his father's hand. "Thanks, Dad."

In the quiet moment that followed, I glanced over the remaining crowd. Charlotte was there, waving at me, along with many other servants and staff that I recognized.

Then I saw her, there at the edge of the crowd. The only frowning face in a sea of smiles.

Bridget.

As Nicholas and I stepped back from the King and Queen, Bridget saw her opportunity and stormed toward us. Even with Elva in Nicholas's arms, she still had the audacity to reach out and grab at Nicholas's sleeve with both hands.

\*Drop this pretext, Nicholas," Bridget said. "I know this is all an act. I want you. You are the perfect man for me. How could anyone turn me down?"

Nicholas sent Bridget a glare so icy even I felt chilled.

"I will never want you, Bridget. Piper is the woman I love. The woman I will marry. The mother of my soon-to-be adopted daughter and all of my future children. Accept this. Or see yourself out."

Bridget released him, expression stunned.

Nicholas nodded to me and together we walked away from her.

My heart soared.

Outside the castle gates, the crowd began to chant, "Piper! Piper! Piper!"

The war was over. Peace was here.

I had my prince and a secure future for my daughter. I couldn't imagine anything else I needed in the entire world.

A year later, a rub at my rounded belly. Within it, a new prince or princess was growing.

"Everything is so wonderful," Susie said from one side of me. We sat around a table filled with cakes and sweets. In the ballroom, we were having a banquet.

My husband, Nicholas, had just been crowned King.

Susie held her own baby close. His quietly brooding expression matched that of his father's, who stood just behind Susie's chair. Mark and Susie had married shortly before Nicholas and I. Their baby had been born soon after.

"I'm still amazed this is my life now," Anna said from the chair on the opposite side of me. "But I always knew you were great. Didn't I tell you so?"

"You did," I said, laughing now. So much hurt and pain we'd experienced over the years. Never again. I certainly wasn't about to leave my dear friend behind.



Out on the dance floor, Elva was showing her craziest moves. Her uncle Julian, ever indulgent, was seriously

trying to learn them. Nearby Veronica watched with a smile. Those seemed to come easier to her these days, especially since Julian had put that engagement ring on her finger.

Joyce and Jessica were noticeably absent, though I imagined they would soon be caught making out in the library. Again.

Nicholas was near the stairs of the ballroom, thanking and welcoming each of his guests. The crown looked good on him, golden and dignified. But he'd always looked handsome to me.

As if he felt me staring, he turned and met my eyes.

Then, with a dignified saunter, he excused himself and crossed the room.

I stood to meet him.

Formalities were never our strong suit. Especially when Nicholas wrapped his arms around me and kissed me right there, in full view of the entire ballroom.

People clapped and cheered. Anna whistled.

My heart was so full of love that I thought it might burst.

"I love you," Nicholas said against my lips.

"I love you," I replied.

Together then, and for the rest of our lives, we were happy.

The End.