

The Luna Trials by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 46

she had already tried before. She knew she couldn't

one way too fast, way too close ...

it.

the secret tiles and tried to hop from one to another, looking for the empty ones or the northern

could almost taste the safety.

from her exploded, pieces of stone flying in all directions, one of the arrows flew at her, and she ducked down, sliding over several tiles.

ground started falling through under her as she activated one

The flower one.

The one that had sharp spikes at the bottom.

of her hands slipped.

This was the end.

her eyes.

Everything was in vain...

her wrist, not letting her fall to her

and a chill went down her spine because

Failed, failed, failed.

Big time.

wished it was one of the white
bears.

to the surface.

the northern mountains she loved so much.

his body.

or to himself, and she didn't care.

down now.

held her in his arms.

in place.

run away...but she did not want to.

She had dreamt of this her whole life.

her unconditionally, who would belong to her and her alone.

to fight for him, she did not want to beg for

was born to make her happy.

For whom she would be enough.

give her everything she ever wanted.

It was heartbreaking to know she couldn't accept him.

felt him placing a soft kiss on the top of her head.

Just for a moment.

Just this once...

she did not want to move.

over.

She would have to end this.

she saw one of the northern warriors.

to push him away, to distance herself from him.

He looked at her with fear in his eyes.

was afraid.

into an exploding maze in a heartbeat...

was the only person in the entire world who could break him.

Her voice trembled, chest heaved from the inner pressure.

as if she was suffocating

He looked at her.

Really looked at her.

still evident on his face.

louder this time, but the lycan in front of her stood up

“I don’t buy it,” he said and

“Come back when you actually mean it.

at first, but then rage took over her.

storming as far away from him as she could...

A week passed, and everything changed.

Bear King, who made his claim on the land after being silent for so

one.” Gideon stated calmly as they

hideout,” kai retorted while pouring himself a drink.

Riannon and Savannah exchanged glances.

Their men were so stubborn.

back in his chair.

“You screwed up when you blew this alliance.

“I could have been married to Savannah for years if not for your ego!”

Kai retorted as they drilled each

tapping her fingers on the top of the

we can form that alliance after all.”

“Maybe you are right, Savvy, but the conditions have

But her glare told a different story.

“You need this alliance as much as I do.

If not more.” Kai reminded him.

this?”

“I dealt with the brother I had on my hands.

Now they are concentrating on the North.

then destroy them when they are weakened? “Gideon repeated almost

The irony wasn’t lost on the Northern King.

tired of them going back and forth.

his arms on his chest.

here hate you now more than ever.

Savannah clenched her lips.

They all knew it was the truth.

since they found out that Penelope died, while it was only her and Savannah in the temple, things

in this story, a lot of newspapers started questioning her

laptop so that they could all see the screen.

the logo of the first channel news on

click on the play button.

his lips as he spoke.

a pathetic state.

reason.

one is safe.

to protect you, but because he simply cannot offer you protection! I got

Stormhold slayed her competition with ease and grace, worthy of a

what she expected from her chosen mate.

his shoulder.

her thumb in soothing
circles.

but when he pulled her into his embrace and wrapped his arms around
her

said, tucking his head into her neck and inhaling her bluebell

smiled softly and tilted her head to reach his soft lips.

wing of a butterfly might, and

dead bodies?” Gideon cleared his throat, turning away.

“And also, don’t forget you are not alone here.

I don’t want to see my little sister...

Savvy tore away from her man and raised her brow at her brother.

our house and supported you both along the way.”

“But he is not your mate.”

my mate.

he will have time for me between all the orgies he is having

woman with the adoration she deserved.

became cold and serious.

and stood before the king of The Western Lycan Kingdom.

some of them are partially my fault,” he started.

direction.

She didn’t expect this.

but for the past ones too.

a woman you don’t love and then get angry

I had never been in love before.

I thought I was, but I really wasn't.

Not before Savannah.

but it should be pretty close to what I feel for

I love your sister.

I will always love her.

Nothing will ever change my mind.

There will be no other woman for me.

She is mine the same way I am hers.

Everything I have belongs to her.

is already my soul, my heart and my best friend.

*Nice speech," Gideon looked them both up and down with a stern
deal with everything alone.

This time Savannah was the one to growl.

Athena inside of her was fuming.

wrapped his hand around his woman.

"I am not asking for your blessing.

If you decide against the Alliance, so be it.

you again for Savvy's sake because

Savannah and I are going to be together.

That's our decision, not yours.

And we made up our minds a while ago.

the Coronation, by the way.”

The Western King inhaled deeply

smile.

pull is, and I can say that what I feel towards Kai is so much different from what I

wanting each other, although we didn't have a

my whole heart.

my every wish, he's ready to fight for me if he has to, but most importantly, he respects

“Even if it's with you.

together, which formed a little wrinkle over his nose,

you tearing up?” Riannon asked all of a sudden in disbelief, and all eyes darted

He turned away quickly and cleared his throat.

“Of course not! It's just something in my eye.

seat, and his face already had his usual stone expression.

hiding and strike first.

Kai said coldly.

“But first, it's my time for a speech.

our Royal Marking Ceremony.”
Savvy’s heart fluttered.

This time with excitement.

She knew that she was ready for
this now.

“People hate her now,” Gideon reminded them.

cut him off.

Savannah was exhausted, but there was no time to relax and drop one’s
guard.

not going to risk her newfound happiness.

For this, she was ready to do anything.

now.



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noticing at once that the curtains were

Nothing changed in the last few weeks.

there, but no response followed.

However, she distinctly heard some movement inside.

“Elene,” Savvy decided to enter without invitation.

her the space she needed.

in the darkness.

The news of Penelope's death was devastating for her.
bed.

golden hair undone and reaching the
The air in the room seemed stuffy.

her answer once
again.

This was no way to go on.

the floor next to Elene.

One could hear a pin drop there.

this in complete silence for a while.

and leaned her head against the cold wall.

“And he needs you.

Probably more than ever before.

doorstep, and enemies are all around us.”

For a few moments, Elene said nothing, but then she asked, “Did she

her wanted to tell her the dead lycaness was never her friend in the first
place.

sister-in-law irreparably.

“No,” she said honestly.

“Not really.

He snapped her neck; everything happened very fast.

what was happening.”

And now Savannah was the one being blamed for this.

least half of the Northern Lycan Kingdom started hating her instantly

They got Bjorn’s little hint.

the best candidate for the role of the Luna.

and he was fuming.

Things were bad.

questioningly, and Savvy forced a little smile on her face, nodding.

“Her funeral was beautiful,” she added.

“Everyone was missing you.” “And I will miss her...

side.”

This time, Savannah chose not to comment because telling

“I saw her,” Elene said suddenly, wrinkling her nose.

“Who?” Savvy’s stomach churned.

of her long nightgown.

her lip almost to the point of bleeding and then exhaled heavily.

“She is so ...

woman stayed in her room the whole time.

the love of her life was also here with his beautiful, flawless mate.

The two always radiated happiness.

with a broken heart could feel next

It was a lot to take in for anyone.

“Yeah.

Riannon is amazing.

with her,” she admitted.

that maybe it was her fault he couldn’t choose her over everything.

have played out differently.

imperfections weren’t the problem.

He loved her the way she was.

He loved her for the way she was.

Elene threw her head back and closed her eyes, swallowing a sob that

“He does.” Once again, Savvy chose not to lie.

none of them said a word.

“I’m sorry,” Elene tried to hold back her tears.

they are mates.

He never looked at me like that.

Even when I thought he liked
me.

imagined it all.

you’re a passionate person ready to do everything for the ones she loves.

time when I arrived.” Savvy let out a little laugh,
ignoring how much Kai was smitten with you.
to take part.

That glimpse of that weak smile was gone again.
carefully.

could be pushed around easily, so the decision was always hers.

hand when she needed it.”

“Is he at least happy?” The northern Princess returned

“Gideon looks really happy with her,” she muttered.

“Of course, they will be happy.

They are mates.

irrelevant-”

“I’m not going to tell you that your feelings are irrelevant when I am
deeply in love with

and deeper than whatever I felt

It can’t compare.”

Elene looked at her.

then nodded slightly, brushing her hair with her fingers as if she had just
remembered

“I’ll get over it,” she promised quietly.

“I already did once.

It just...

her hand on the floor and gave it a little squeeze.

lot on his plate right now.”

“You said that

your help with what you can do best.” Savvy furrowed her brows, playing with her North

that happened at the Luna Trials.

media are on his side now.

Their loyalties are shifting.

twins?” Elene’s whole expression changed.

see her when she arrived in the North.

closet, going through the racks with clothes.

sudden change.

was the one to control Chloe and Claude.

of the nation.

They could bend the narrative any way they liked.

the door frame and watching the girl in front of her

go on,” Elene clenched her lips, but slowly, they curled into a vague smile.

Luna Trials yet.

in relief, hoping Elene would do everything she promised.

back.

her elbow slightly.

arrest may have been over, but he still spent most of

as he went down the long

“That was the day before yesterday!” She retorted.

on his face and she ran her palm over her face.

like two pieces of a puzzle, like Yin and Yang, like...”

“Yeah, got the idea!” Savvy let out a laugh.

her and then mimicked her voice, “I only come to the North for

I,” Savannah tasted the words on her tongue.

his finger to his lips.

A lot!” she admitted easily.

big announcement in a week.”

“Everything has to be perfect!” Elene was checking everyone in line as if

the only way!”

She glanced at Gideon, and

Riannon was glowing.

and Elene forced a smile.

their fingers together as he held her hand.

best Northern designers was ordered to make for the occasion by

yet, but it hinted that the crown would adorn this woman’s head very

North Star necklace sparkled on her

Savvy had her hair down, only two diamond hairpins keeping her locks
in place

balcony, where they would address people.

not just one but
two royal families.

witness it.

warriors join them.

loud, joyous screams.

King of the Western Kingdom arrived here with his Queen, which could
only mean one thing.

They weren't enemies anymore.

was exhausting.

quite some time.

Not to mention, there were bigger threats over there.

future bride.

“In fact, I can't wait anymore.

breath, and they walked out in the open.

and immediately a drone flew to film them from up close.

confident despite being nervous.

with her.

which helped her a lot.

for her despite everything.

He would get her through this day.

of their plan.

from lycan warriors, hiding underground when he could and making his people do the

of the silver pit by literally leaving her mark on

But the cherry on the cake was Mikaela's interview.

lycaness, so she made it very clear that Savvy defeated her in the Trials but

Elene and Savannah very comfortable in each other's company and claiming that.

And then a few more of Savannah with Kai.

Luna for the North, but the mood shifted slightly in her favour.

as their esteemed guests.

a line behind them.

smiled at the girl right next to her.

lowered her head slightly.

in the Trials.

hardly get a second chance like this.”

“We should fix that, don't you think?”

Western and Northern Lycan kingdoms.

young shifters.

Republic about that? This could be beneficial to all of

a fan of my wife?” Now Gideon joined their quiet conversation.

“Of her reforms,” Astrid chuckled understandingly.

for women’s rights is amazing.

hope to follow in her footsteps.”

“News sure travels

and she stretched her lips into an uncomfortable smile.

I get home.”

“To thank her for all the help Naya offered Savvy here?”

they addressed them, but Petra was...

Petra.

“Sure,” Gideon’s eyes gleamed menacingly.

for withholding vital information, but she also knew that her mother was aware of what she was

of the whole Western Kingdom, and cats were a part

punishment would follow, he had to see that only good came out of this decision.

And the proof was right before their eyes now.

the North raised his hand, demanding silence from his subjects.

Kai spoke as thousands of eyes were on him.

one woman! saw as my perfect match.

not to mention capturing my heart.

As I hope I did hers.

of King Gideon Stormhold, arrived at the North as someone no one wanted to see.

quickly prove her worth and wisdom.

to strive for, She even made more friends among the contenders than anyone else.

not looking for love either.

North Star in the sky or not, it shines brightly upon our heads anyway.

So did our feelings for each other.

love with is also the best Lycan Queen candidate

criteria! I am happy to announce that this remarkable woman has just agreed to become my wife,

change their opinions of her.

with the help of a few articles, photos and videos.

scary how effortlessly one could manipulate people.

cushion in her hands and bowed to the two of them as she was supposed to.

their mother's engagement ring.

slightly upwards in excitement.

her hand into his and lifted it to his lips, kissing it gently before sliding the precious

“They come together.

You get one; you are definitely getting the other.

around your neck.”

“Cheeky!” She tried not to roll her eyes

The crowd exploded for the two of them.

They liked what they saw.

cover her lips with a modest kiss, the people in the

her lips quickly again because he couldn't

a certain way to play the expected roles.

King raised his hand to get the silence he needed to continue

Now it was Savvy's turn to speak.

with a warm expression.

future Luna.

and I swear to fight for you until the day

with the North itself! This is a land of proud

you together with your King, and

our traditions and Fenrir's will – on the first

Queen to get married on early Aurora nights.

the most important part was about to begin.

peace and prosperity.

an alliance between our Kingdoms! We are committed to protecting our countries together from the common threat! If, of course,

a man who likes to hide in the sewers and ancient people's graves.

each time he ran! This time, all he did was destroy an old, empty city and kill one

Kai looked into the camera, saying the following words.

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Chapter 48

Lachlan had to be in bed for weeks, and this felt like a punishment. It wasn't his choice, but he had to obey the

King's order. However, one factor made this all an even bigger torture.

"How is our patient doing today?" Zara waltzed in with a bright smile.

"Go away, Cruel Bird. I don't trust you anymore!" He grunted and tried to turn away, but his eyes still grazed over her toned legs in high heels. She only wore those for occasions. He knew that from all the times he discreetly watched her during The Luna Trials.

"Feathered Gods! You sure are grumpy today!" She scoffed, slipping out of her favourite leather jacket and revealing that she was wearing one of her tightest little black dresses. This one was not too long either, and the thought of what was underneath made him growl internally.

“Go away, or I swear even Kai’s orders will not keep me away!” He warned her, knowing he couldn’t touch her even though it was all he was thinking about the whole time.

“Actually, I hoped you could be my plus one to the Engagement Announcement and the Marking Ceremony tonight,” she said nonchalantly. After they played their usual staring contest, Zara leaned back against her jacket on the chair, demonstrating to him her curves at a better angle on purpose and started looking for something in the pockets.

“You are playing with fire, Birdie,” Lachlan gave her a withering glance, to which she chuckled. She was toying with him for weeks, visiting him daily, knowing he had to restrain from any kind of physical activity due to the poison in his blood that proved not that harmless. They had been detoxifying him all this time. The treatment was painful and weakened him significantly. Yet every night, the cheeky bird slipped into his room, whispered dirty promises into his ear, touched him where she wasn’t supposed to and then disappeared into the darkness. Last night, as he was getting stronger, she flew straight out the window, leaving only her tiny underwear behind on purpose.

On purpose, because bird shifters’ transformation wasn’t physical like it was for wolves, cats and bears, they were using magic, and the clothes disappeared and appeared together with the human form.

The mighty Beta of The North would never admit to her that he kept the teensy piece of lace in the drawer right next to his bed. He’d rather die from that poison after all.

He should have thrown it away, burned it... But something stopped him each time, and each time he saw it, he

thought of how sweet his revenge would be.

“But I am serious this time!” She giggled and produced a piece of paper, waving it in the air before his nose. He had a few identical ones somewhere here in the bedroom. The results of his blood tests. “The doctors say that the poison trace is insignificant now, and it will be gone completely in a week or so, but you can certainly return to all the physical activi”

Lachlan did not let her finish as he yanked her onto the bed, towering over her instantly and getting the paper out of her hand. His eyes quickly read the very bottom line that confirmed Birdie’s words, and a satisfying growl emerged from the depths of his chest.

Zara sucked in a deep breath, trying to wriggle out from under the giant Beta, but he held her in place.

“The announcement,” she mumbled, but he stopped her by placing his index finger on her lips.

“This,” he whispered as the smirk spread on his handsome face. “I think we can miss that announcement and come straight to the Marking Ceremony.” He traced her lips, making them part and leaned down to her so that she could feel his hot breath on her skin. “But before that, you owe me so much, Birdie.”

“I don’t remember!” She rolled her eyes and tried to get away again, but he could tell she was just playing, so he pinned both her hands to the mattress and enjoyed her looking helpless under him.

“No worries,” he smirked at her. “I will remind you.”

“Will you?” She taunted, voice raspy and hitched.

“Of course,” he grew one claw and cut a strap of her dress, making her gasp. “You promised to let me peel off every piece of clothing from you.”

“Did I?” She blinked innocently,

“You did.” Lachlan cut the second strap off. “I hope you have another dress for tonight,” he chuckled and then hooked the golden zip at the front and pulled it all the way down, letting her breasts bounce out of it.

Another growl escaped him, and he traced his sharp claw over her skin to her already hard nipple. Her chest went up and down as he removed the rest of her dress to see that she was not actually wearing anything underneath.

“No undergarments?” He arched his brow, and she bit her lip, not a shade of embarrassment in her eyes.

“I think I lost mine!” Zara tilted her head playfully. “Have you seen them anywhere here by any chance?”

“I don’t remember,” he lied, mimicking her tone from a few seconds ago, and finally took her in. Retracting his

claw, he caressed her soft skin, feeling how this made her little heart beat faster.

They were not made for each other, but it felt so right for the two of them. Here and now.

Zara arched her back as his large palm travelled from her belly button to her neck, eliciting a rush of goosebumps on the way to cup her chin and make her look at him.

“First, my hands,” he reminded her, and his fingers brushed down to knead one of her breasts, thumb playing

with its firm bud.

A little moan left Zara’s lips, and that free hand went lower. Her core was already heated and moist when he reached her folds, parting them slightly with his fingers. The little bundle of nerves was throbbing when

he touched it, and her whole body jerked from the contact. She was so close, and he barely even started.

“Not so soon, Birdie,” he laughed as he slowly inserted a finger into her and curled it inside, making her tremble again. “You tortured me for weeks! I think I have to return my debt to you f

“You can try!” She narrowed her eyes at him, but another moan left her as he added one more finger, pumping them in and out slowly, building her up.

“No worries, I will!” Lachlan promised menacingly, finally finding the ridged sensitive spot inside her walls. Each time he touched it, her inner muscles clenched around him tightly, making him thrilled in anticipation.

He bent down, still holding her arms captive and whispered as their eyes locked, “Then my tongue.”

Lachlan clashed his lips with hers, tasting her properly for the first time and enjoying every second of it. He never thought he would be able to feel this way again. Not after his mate had died. Not after he killed all those responsible for it. A part of his soul was dead that day. He could never even imagine he’d ever recover from this.

His service to his King and Alpha kept him going for so long. He ate, drank, ran in his wolf form, slept with random women, fought in battles, and protected his country, but... it did not feel like he was living until now.

Now life had colours. Now, he wanted to see what was next. He was excited. He couldn’t wait any longer.

The tiny bird moaned into his lips, making him lose it. He wanted her. He wanted all of her. Every day. All the time. Preferably forever.

His hot tongue left a wet trail on her neck. Lachlan sucked in the delicate skin next to the collarbone, biting it slightly where he would mark her when she allowed it. She clenched around his fingers again, and he got them out, hearing a disappointed noise leave his woman's mouth.

"Oh, come on!" Zara groaned in frustration.

"I am so not done with you yet!" The Beta gave her a roguish grin as he licked her juices off his fingers and then

bent back down to twirl his tongue around the peak of her breast. And then another. He made sure not to leave an

inch of her body untouched as if he was staking his claim on her. Although, there were no ifs. She was his to claim. and he wasn't going back on this.

Finally, when she was already covered with crystals of sweat, he kneeled before her and parted her weakened

legs.

"Lan!" She used his nickname for the first time, probably not even knowing she did it, and that made him lose the last bits of sanity. He couldn't take it slow anymore and made sure to make firm, tactical slides of his tongue down her core to make her tremble in his arms. His fingers returned to work, pumping in and out faster than before as his tongue concentrated on the little quivering bud.

Zara screamed as the release shattered her mind into millions of tiny pieces, and the lycan let her ride it, not stopping even for a second. Her legs weakened, and he threw them onto his shoulders, digging his palms into her flesh for support. The lycan knew he could give her much more than this, and he intended to.

She laced her fingers into his blonde hair and kept him there until another wave of pleasure surged through her body.

Lachlan watched her with flushed cheeks on his bed, and a part of him wanted her to always stay here with

him. Just like that.

He stood up and draped one of her legs around his shoulder, brushing his tip over her wet entrance and ready to make that woman his, when her foot pushed him away gently.

“So cruel!” he snarled softly, thinking it was another of her games as she was already standing next to him. But when Zara shoved him to sit on the edge of the bed and kissed him on the lips, he took the opportunity to explore more of her body with his hands.

“I can’t believe you forgot!” She giggled as she tore off him and took a cushion from the bed, throwing it on the stone floor between his feet. “It’s my turn now!” she said and kneeled, wrapping her little fingers around his manhood.

“Zara...” He didn’t even finish the sentence when she traced his length from base to the tip with her warm tongue, her eyes at him the whole time. “You are the most beautiful... taunting little thing alive!” his breathing rasped as she took as much of him in as she only could.

Lachlan threw his head back, finding her short silky hair and entwining his fingers into it. She bobbed her head while moaning, stroking the rest of him with his hand, making him snarl and swear under his breath because of how good it felt. “Mine!” he growled so loudly that the walls around them shook, and Zara stilled.

Did she mishear him? Surely he wasn’t saying that...

He lifted her in his arms before she knew it and made her straddle him.

“Eyes to eyes, Birdie!” The Beta said as he lined himself at her entrance once again.

“Lan, what do you-” She wanted to ask what he meant because her mind worked in a way that she had to know

the answer here and now. Were they just playing with each other, or was this serious?

He slammed into her roughly, making her arch her back and gasp in delight. This was a part of his response.

“Look at me!” He ordered when he filled her, and she obeyed, her chest heaving. “You are mine, Birdie.”

“Are you going to ask me first if I agree?” She shot her brow up, wrapping her arms around his neck at the same

time.

“Are you going to say no?” He smiled, and there was so much in his eyes that she couldn’t keep up with the

games.

“No,” Zara breathed out.

“Then I guess I have my answer,” he drew back and slammed into her again, one hand sliding up her back to tug

on her hair and bring her closer.

“Then you are mine too!” She stated, and he claimed her lips, entwining their tongues. He rocked his hips back and forth a few times, filling her up and leaving her empty, until he couldn’t bear it anymore and started simply pounding into her as hard as he could, driving his member to the hilt each time.

Zara dug her nails into him, biting his shoulder to keep herself present. That much pleasure threatened to destroy her, and when the new climax

cascaded through her body, she didn't even know if she was screaming or not.

He kept pounding into her, and soon she stopped counting her releases, simply forgetting herself in his masterful hands.

Lachlan couldn't have enough of her. His wolf was hungry for the little bird too. The long-forgotten sensations of having someone they cared about were so overwhelming that he spilled his seed into her without hesitation when the moment arrived. Then he held her in place to ensure no drop was wasted.

Finding her lips again, he claimed them gently this time while both falling back down to the bed.

They stayed lying in each other's arms for some time until Zara sighed, sounding disappointed. "We need to go. The Marking Ceremony will start soon."

"I may have been sick, but I know the schedule." The Beta chuckled and towered over her, spreading her thighs again and positioning himself between them. "There are drinks and speeches in the beginning. It can go on for a while. I am sure Kai and Savvy would forgive us if we are fashionably late."

"If you say so," the girl giggled right before he crashed his lips into hers again and turned her around for the next round...

Riannon was nervous for some reason despite their perfect plan. In the next few days, Bjorn would try to kidnap Savannah one way or another. After his bold claim and Kai's speech today, there was no chance for the arrogant bear to let it slide. He was probably already packing his things for the trip. They even set up a perfect opportunity for him to approach

her. Savvy would be on The Luna of The North Tour around the capital, visiting the local packs. They predicted he would try to get her at the most secluded one, but truthfully, it could be anywhere. If it didn't happen on

tour, then the Coronation would be the next event.

“You are still worried,” Gideon wrapped his hands around his wife's waist, casually brushing over her belly. No one could tell it yet from looking at her, but he could already feel that Ria's tummy wasn't as flat as it used to be. He would probably be kissing it now if they didn't have so many witnesses around.

“The plan is good,” she smiled at him, but it did not reach her eyes. “I just wish I had a new dream by now. But other than that ring, there is nothing lately!”

“The Crescent ring,” Gideon sighed and kissed her temple. For the past month, his wife kept seeing her dead mother's ring in her dreams, which only saddened her. There was no context to all this, no explanation. She never

saw who was wearing the ring. Her wolf Onyx tried to reach the Moon Goddess to ask about it, but the Goddess who

once blessed them was now silent. Gods did not like to explain their plans.

It was so painful because Riannon's parents were long dead. Not to mention that she would really prefer a clue

about the right course of action now instead of the unnecessary walk down Memory Lane.

Their plan was good, yes, but there were weak points in it too.

“Yeah.” she leaned into her husband’s chest and closed her eyes. She kept looking for that ring everywhere, but

no one in the Western Kingdom had it. Neither did anyone she had met in the North.

“It will all make sense soon,” Gideon tried to touch the golden crescent mark on her neck, forgetting that she covered it today to ensure the whole attention was on Savvy. People usually stared at their marks because they were special. One of a kind. And since Savannah and Kai were just chosen mates, their marks would just look like two scars. Not that it mattered much if two people were in love, but it was a polite thing to do to not draw any attention

away from them.

Riannon noticed Brigit standing just a few feet away and looking out of the window, observing the castle’s main square. The people were gone now as the royals wouldn’t be making a second appearance tonight. The rest of the event was private. Only families of the Luna Trials contenders were invited, following tradition, so the guests were kept to a minimum. Luckily, Penelope’s father declined the invitation, and they didn’t have to worry about any problems from that end.

“Give me a second, okay?” Ria smiled at her mate, and he nodded understandingly.

“Go, spread your magic, my love,” Gideon lifted her hand to his lips to place a gentle kiss before he let go of her. “And I will go and scare Kai a bit more to make sure he worships the ground my sister steps on.”

The Western Queen had a hard time trying to hold back her smile when she reached the only white bear shifter in the room. Of course, none of Brigit’s family was invited due to the current situation.

Riannon knew who the strong woman before her tried to find with her eyes.

“He is stationed at the East Gate,” she told her, and Brigit flinched, meeting her gaze.

“Doesn’t matter,” she swallowed.

“Does it really?” Ria was not going to give up. “I remember you really wanted to find your mate. And here he is, ready to do everything and madly in love with you. So, what’s the problem?”

“We aren’t going to end up together, Riannon.” Brigit turned away. “He will reject me sooner or later, so why don’t I save myself the pain?”

“Why do you think so? Accept him! Give him a chance to prove you wrong!” Ria placed her hand on the woman’s shoulder. “Let him surprise you!”

“Always optimistic, aren’t you?” Brigit gave her a sad smile. “It’s the North, Riannon. I am a white bear, and he is a Lycan Gamma of the Kingdom. This will never work. I will ruin his life-”

“You will be regretting this your whole life, you know?”

“I know...” Brigit’s voice barely had any life in it. “Excuse me,” she whispered and left the room abruptly. Ria looked out of the window too, and noticed Aspen walking in the middle of the square. She hoped that the two mates would throw away their fears and reunite today despite everything.

The Western Queen took a look around the room. The tables were sat here for the big celebration, with a small platform in the middle, where Kai would mark Savannah in less than an hour. She caught Princess Elene staring at her husband while she gave local omegas their last orders for tonight. This made Riannon groan quietly. She tried to

be kind, but she wasn’t a saint. That Northern woman needed a new object of adoration.

Kyle tried to be a gentleman a few good feet away from her, telling jokes to Petra and making her laugh, while Evelyn watched him with a little smile on her lips. Astrid's family was on their way but running late. The Southerner only had her friend Emma by her side today. However, both seemed happy with everything. The ones not happy were Inga and her pack. Celia kept them company as her only living family was Aspen, and he was working tonight. It was clear that both girls still couldn't get over Penelope's death. This was to be expected.

The music started playing, and all guests slowly returned to their places. The future King and Queen were about to arrive.

Savannah felt excited. Yes, they had to rush and fit everything into one day, but it did not matter much to her. What was important was that once Kai's mark was on her neck, her bond with Zack would weaken. Gradually, she would be able to get rid of him even if he kept escaping them. Not to mention that it would increase the chances of him accepting her rejection the next time they saw each other. He would probably beg for it himself, as this should hurt him like hell. They were true mates; the bond between them was strong enough thanks to their mating. Only a mark was missing. As soon as her neck was pierced with Kai's canines, Zack would be in agony. She was surprised he wasn't still having s.ex with multiple girls to try and prevent her from going through with her decision. But the night

was young...

Kai laced their fingers together, and she glanced at him, forgetting her worries. He looked so good in a traditional northern coat. Just like a prince from a fairy tale. Savvy had hated fairy tales ever since she was a little kid, but she wasn't going to tell him that.

She was wearing a pale blue traditional bridal dress herself. The design was very simple yet elegant, with northern patterns embroidered on her corset. The long skirt reached the floor, and a small train of light fabric followed her as she walked.

Most of her hair was down in soft curls, but part was twisted in an intricate braid at the back of her head with the North Star and Crescent pins adorning it. She did not want to overdo it, but it was essential to show her respect to every Nnortherner present.

Savannah knew she wasn't their perfect Luna choice, but she would do her best to make them change their

minds.

"Did I say how much I love you?" Kai pulled her into his embrace, although it was almost time for them to join the guests.

"Only about half a million times today!" She grinned at him.

"Ah, this is why it feels like it's not enough!" He leaned down and brushed his lips over hers. They had to stay away from each other because of the preparations for the past few days, and he knew he couldn't do much to her

now.

Not yet.

But as soon as the ceremony was done and they paid their respects to everyone, he would take her back to their bedroom even if he had to throw her over his shoulder again,

"I can't wait for the formalities to be done!" Kai whispered, and she touched his cheek, her eyes gleaming with happiness.

"Let's go then!" She giggled. "The sooner we start, the sooner we are done."

An omega opened the doors before them, and they entered the throne room decorated for the event.

Savvy had been to this spacious hall so many times, yet she found it the most beautiful tonight. Candles were everywhere, Big, small, tall, short. On the tables and on the lamps hanging at the ceiling. And even in glass holders

on the floor. It was the only light source now, and it seemed like they were walking among little fiery stars.

Claude and Chloe were among the guests right next to Elene. There was just one camera inside today, as they still would have to show the footage to the world later. They earned this right by trying to help them to contain the damage control.

She was happy to see so many happy familiar faces tonight. Naya winked at her as they passed them. Her

mother. Alpha Ramina, was present too, although Savvy did not notice her Luna or Naya's biological father.

A priestess of Fenrir was waiting for them at the stage, but they stopped before they could reach her. As always.

it was time for a speech.

Some omega brought them their drinks, and guests also stood up with their glasses. Discreetly, Savannah checked if her wine had any scents that weren't supposed to be there, but to her relief, she found nothing. Kai gave her a reassuring squeeze, and their eyes locked again. Moon Goddess, she couldn't wait for his teeth to pierce her skin

and leave their forever mark.

“Today, you are all witnesses to my happiness!” Kai spoke with the confidence of a true king. “To me, Savannah is already my Queen and my Luna, but the sacred rituals must be performed for the world to accept my choice. And, to be honest, I can't wait to start!”

A wave of understanding chuckles erupted through the room.

Only now Savvy noticed that Lachlan and Zara were still missing.

“Each Northern Royal Marking Ceremony starts with a sip of the sacred wine made from fruit that grows on the mountain where Fenrir once walked and blessed by the priestesses from his shrine. Please, share with us tonight this wine and our happiness!”

“By Fenrir’s will!” The northerners growled in unison while the rest of the guests nodded respectfully to this.

Savannah couldn’t help her smile as her lips touched the liquid and her eyes locked with her beloved. The guests followed their example and took their first gulps. They emptied their glasses and placed them back on the tray. The young omega bowed and went to the corner of the room.

Holding their hands together, Kai and Savvy stepped on the platform, bowing to the priestess. The woman in a white and blue robe with tattoos on her face in the ancient northern language started to read an old prayer to Fenrir as Savannah looked at her chosen mate.

The sound of the breaking glass distracted them, and they turned to see a very pale Naya in Alpha Ramina’s

arms.

“Naya!” The werecat Alpha called her daughter. Another broken glass, and Celia, on the other side, fell with her

face on the table.

“No!” Savvy whispered in disbelief and looked at Kai again, clenching his hands as hard as she could. As if it could help the situation somehow.

“Protect my Queen!” Kai growled to the guards who were supposed to be outside the doors. They just saw them a few seconds ago!

No one arrived.

Another broken glass and a loud roar Savannah couldn't confuse with anything else in this world.

She lost the ability to speak the moment she saw Gideon trying to wake up Riannon, who seemed unconscious.

TO

set

“Ria!” He sounded so scared for the first time in her life.

One by one, the guests were fainting. Savvy hoped they were fainting. It had to be just temporary! It couldn't be happening for real! Some tried to run, but they couldn't make it to the door.

“Kai!” She turned to the Northern King and saw him struggling to breathe. “Kai!” Her piercing scream was

something she couldn't control. He fell on one knee, still holding her hands, and she dropped right next to him. Seeing him like that was more excruciating than anything she had ever experienced.

“Kai!” She looked him in the eye, and he tried to say something to her.

“Savvy-” He grasped her in a desperate attempt to do at least something. His lips were barely moving, “Run!” he said before he collapsed to her feet.

The Luna Trials by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 49

Chapter 49

Petra screamed, but Savannah didn't hear her. She was holding Kai in her hands and looking for a pulse that wasn't there

It wasn't there!

She checked his wrists and neck, but she couldn't find it. She tried listening to his heart with her lycan hearing, but something was wrong because she didn't hear anything

It had to be wrong! Obviously, he had to have a heartbeat' This.. this couldn't be happening! It couldn't end like this! She loved him, and he loved her They were supposed to have their whole life together He was supposed to place his mark on her in a few minutes, and she was ready She was finally ready to be loved and to trust again.

Because of him... Because he helped her heal. Because thanks to him she now knew what real love was And it was so much more than just this physical attraction This couldn't be it for them!

The priestess not far from them fell to her knees and started chanting some kind of an old northern prayer. Savvy didn't mind. She was praying for a miracle too now

Rannon!

Riannon would know what to do. The Moon Goddess blessed her sister-in-law! The divine power would protect her and help them save everyone else.

It wasn't ending like that!

Savvy turned her head to look at where her brother sat and saw him breathing heavily and holding his pregnant wife in his arms. The table before them was overturned Gideon probably knocked it off to see his little sister while still trying to save his mate

Pregnant. Riannon was pregnant! She couldn't be dying! She couldn't be dead! But she looked so pale and lifeless now.

Petra screamed louder, and Savannah's eyes locked with her brother's as he tore the upper buttons of his shirt. His eyes glowed golden, the colour of their family lycans". He was trying to shift, but something was stopping him Riannon was lying breathless in his arms, and Savvy shook her head

It couldn't be Elene made sure everything was triple-checked for tonight All food and wine were tasted before they were sent here. The omegas had their backgrounds checked, especially after she reported the one with a note from Bjorn Only the people Kai trusted were protecting them today They took all precautions necessary

Savvy sniffed the wine just in case because it was an old habit All royals did it She was sure that Kai and Gideon did it too. She had seen it so many times it didn't even arouse suspicions in anyone Just a normal thing to do

So why? How? What went wrong? Who did this? And how could she undo it? How did they end up here? So many questions and thoughts streamed through her brain she felt dizzy.

Savannah looked at a pale omega with the tray in her hands. The one who brought them the wine Both goblets were still there and Athena roared inside of her

"Get her!" The she-wolf snarled, and Savannah let her have control, charging at the wide-eyed girl and pinning her to the

"Why did you do it?" She growled loudly "I d didn't the omega stuttered "I swear"

The Lycan Princess unclenched her fingers and kneeled next to the broken glasses She picked up the pieces and smelled then again

Nothing'

Not wasting time, she moved to the table next to her. Celia was still lying face down. Inga on the floor next to her. Savvy took the glasses and sulked.

Nothing'

One by one, she checked all the glasses on that table and then smashed the last one on the wall. The cameraman barely managed to dodge the shards.

The cameraman! She noticed him for the first time. He was still conscious.

"We have nothing to do with this!" Claude, who stood right next to him, lifted his hands in the air to demonstrate his good intentions. Chloe did the same behind his back.

"We are not a part of the ceremony! We didn't drink the wine!" She tried to explain to the Princess at once to avoid any kind of confusion.

Savannah wasn't sure if she could trust the words of the two TV presenters. Of course, everyone would insist they were innocent, but were they really?

Claude and Chloe were the last ones to enter the room before Kai and her. It was unlikely they had time to meddle with the drinks as they simply couldn't touch the wine. If it was the wine at all. Why wasn't there any scent?

"Lyn!" Petra wept, trying to wake up her mentor gently. Kyle was still on top of her on the table, as if he tried to protect her with his body.

The realisation that Kyle was dead too made Savvy's body shudder uncontrollably. A sound escaped her throat as she looked around. Her lie was neither a scream nor a sob. It was something in between something.

that signalled that she was irreparably broken from the inside She had just lost everyone she loved in one day

Shattered, Savvy returned to Kai and lifted him so that his head was on her knees, brushing her fingers over his cheek that was getting colder

*This is all a dream,” she whispered, shaking her head in disbelief “A bad dream! Come back to me!”

But not a single muscle on his face flinched, and no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't hear the heartbeat she used to listen to before falling asleep every day Kai's heart wasn't beating

“Savvy!” Gideon's voice was so weak, but she lifted her eyes full of tears to look at her brother. He was still clenching Riannon but tried to concentrate his gaze on his little sister He tried to say something, but at this point he had trouble forming words

“Get someone to help!” Savannah shouted at the film crew when she realised that Gideon could still be helped *Run,” her big brother mouthed, and she remembered that Kai had said the same thing

Claude rushed for the main doors, but they swung open right before his nose, and he barely managed to avoid the contact

Savannah felt him before she saw him. The nauseating scent of mint reached her nostrils, and the physical pull started bothering her again, biting at her from the inside

Zack Morgan entered the room as if he was the King already, his men tactically circled the whole room from different angles Petra screamed again, but one of the huge bears yanked her and roared at her.

A bear He came together with the bears!

Gideon tried to get up, but a silver spear was placed at his neck by a different warrior. Savvy's lips parted when she looked at the spear. They had the identical one back at home.

Not that this was important now.

"Savannah Zack dared to make a sad face when he stared at her, his brows furrowed as if he was really sorry for her. For what he did to her.

Savvy clenched Kai tighter, just to feel him one last time. She couldn't know if there would ever be an opportunity for it again. "It hurts me to see you like this, but you didn't leave me a choice."

The Western Princess ignored him and bent down to kiss the man she really loved. Kai's lips were getting cold too, and one single tear rolled down her cheek, landing on his lashes. She hoped that something would click in the universe, some kind of ancient spell would be awoken, and he would open his eyes and look at her. If this happened, she would be ready to fight the whole world here and now. For him and for everyone else.

I couldn't end like this.

* Look at all this mess right now, if you think about it you would understand that it's the Moon Goddess herself making things right. Zack went on, stepping closer. She needed him to make just a few more steps. "We are mates, and she personally chose us for each other. I know I made mistakes, but so did you."

Savannah looked at him for the first time, carefully placing Kai's head back on the ground.

"The Moon Goddess." She chuckled darkly and met her mate's gaze with defiance. "Sometimes I think that she wanted to punish me by mating us in the first place. I wonder what for! What did I do to be cursed by you?!"

“Don’t be like that,” Zack took another step “I couldn’t save your brother, but I came to save you The North has fallen, but

you and I can come back to the West together. We can start things fresh! I will mark you and, little by little, we will restore the country together I swear to you, you will never regret it

!” She spat the words out, and he clenched his lips. “What a nice plan you have! But why do you think that your new master will allow us to leave?”

“I have no master. Just a partner who-”

Savannah laughed She let all her anger and frustration out with this loud resounding laughter Tears formed in her eyes because this was funny indeed.

“Moron!” She ran her palm over her face and found the strength to stand up “You are just his little dumb pawn and nothing more! Nothing has changed! You are still worthless on your own’ Delusional as ever! Where are your people Zack? Where were they last time when he ordered you to have sex with other women, and you obeyed in an instant? What other services were you performing during your stay in the North?*

“Savvy, enough!” He growled, wishing for her to stop as he noticed smirks on the bears’ faces “Come to me, and I will take you to safety i was barely able to negotiate to let you livelt

*The Moon Goddess is so cruel,” Savannah shook her head and took the last necessary step herself “To mate me with the likes of you It’s probably the biggest insult in my life!”

“Watch your tongue!” Zack had had enough of this He was crazy about this woman, but it wasn’t the first time she had humiliated him like this, and he wasn’t going to tolerate it This dynamic wasn’t working for him and he knew he would have to teach her back from the start

“Or what?!” The Princess was so close to him now that her intoxicating bluebell scent enveloped him. If they were alone, he would have dragged her to bed where she belonged and done all the things he had dreamed of doing for the past few months.

*Or I will have to teach you respect even if I don’t want to do it. Don’t make me Savannah Morgan warned her and she placed a hand on his chest, making him shudder from the contact. He hadn’t had a chance to touch her for so long and it was everything he craved. He needed it on a physical level because nothing else in this world felt so good. The separation from her wasn’t easy on him; in fact, it was getting harder and harder every day.

Savannah would forgive him one day; she would understand why he did all this, and she would accept it. Over time, he would make her forget about this day. He would give her so many pups that she would have no time to think about it all. He was born to make her happy and she was born to do the same for him.

*Zack” she whispered, “We haven’t been so close for so long”

“I know.” A smile curled his lips involuntarily and he leaned forward so that their foreheads touched. “I love you so much, Savvy.”

“For that, you would need a heart,” Savannah lifted her chin so that they were looking into each other’s eyes and then she pierced his chest with her sharp royal lycan claws and wrapped her fingers around his beating heart.

His eyes widened from shock and pain. Zack couldn’t move. One inch in the wrong direction and he would be dead. “Savvy, please * He begged but saw no pity in her eyes. His mate looked at him as if he meant nothing to her. “We could still

“Say that we could be happy together, and I will kill you faster!” she promised, and he knew that she was telling the truth because her claws grazed dangerously around his beating heart

If she got her hand out now and he was lucky, then maybe there was still a chance for him to survive Maybe...

But the Princess’s eyes were cold and dark. He had never seen her like this Not when she rejected him over and over again, not even when she tried to kill him last time He had never seen so much hatred in her before today

“I swear,” Zack’s voice trembled, if we get out of here together, I will spend my whole life trying to make up for everything. I will make you happy again Savvy. I love you, I will find a way,”

“You love me?” She asked through tears with a bitter laugh escaping her. He didn’t love this laughter at all. “And I love Kal” she added mercilessly

Hearing that hurt him more than her claws tearing his flesh, Until now, he was still sure that she was doing it for the show to help her kingdom He knew they were sleeping together, but once again, he assured himself that the reason behind that was political She was his mate, they had consummated the bond, and the only thing missing was his mark Savannah couldn’t love another man while she had a mate

The thought alone made him angry! He was an Alpha, after all, and did not plan to share his mate Zack bared his teeth, “You don’t mean that!”

*Oh, I do!” She nodded and wiped her eyes with a free hand “I love him more than anything in this world More than the stars and the moon, more than the sun, more than shifting and running through the forest as a wolf I love him, and I need him as I need air And you. Her voice broke, and she sucked in a painful breath, “you took him away from me!”

Zack's wolf growled in agony This was pain like none other because they both knew that she spoke the truth,

"You will forget him, and we..." Zack started saying, but she dug her claws, piercing his heart

"Goddess, I hate you!" She confessed, looking straight into his face

"I am your mate-" He tried to reason with her.

"You are a mistake!" Savannah snorted, her words laced with spite.

"Fine" he placed both his hands on the one that held his heart, trying to plead with her "Fine! I will accept your rejection! Whatever you want!"

Savannah didn't even laugh this time. It wasn't funny None of this was funny From the corner of her eye, she already saw that her brother Gideon wasn't moving any longer. The warrior next to him didn't see the point of holding the spear next to his neck anymore because because he could tell that the King of the Western Lycan Kingdom was dead.

Her gaze travelled through the room, seeing the people she liked and cared about without any signs of life and then she returned her attention to the man whose heart she was holding

"Please," Zack tried to smile weakly "Just... let me go, and let's talk I'll do whatever you want, even if you still want to reject me

She pulled his heart out so fast that he didn't even manage to finish the sentence. The blood gushed through the hole in his chest as he stared at his own beating heart in Savannah's hand The beautiful and strong woman was the perfect picture. She was everything he ever dreamed of and she became the last thing he saw.

"Too late!" Savvy said, void of emotions She hoped that it would bring her some kind of relief, even if just momentarily, but she was wrong

Sizzling pain rippled through her as she fell to her knees next to Zack's body and tried to catch a breath.

It seemed like every bone in her body was breaking, her skin was burning, her breathing ceased to exist. The mate bond was shredding her soul to tiny pieces, and the pain was unbearable. She didn't have any idea how hurtful it could be Zack hurt her so many times before that she was sure she wouldn't feel much doing this. Yet she was wrong because she couldn't stand it any longer

Everything mixed up in her head like a picture in a kaleidoscope, and she felt she was about to throw up.

'There, there Two large hands wiapped around her shoulders. "We'll find a way to mend a broken heart. Although, probably not his."

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Chapter 50

She wanted to shake off his hands, but the pain was still rippling through her body, and she quickly found herself weakened by it.

Bjorn kneeled right behind her, sliding his palms over her arms and waist to get a better grip on her. Savannah was shaking in his arms, and this was just the effect he wanted to see.

"I heard that killine your own mate is the worst," he whispered into her ear, his hot breath burning her sensitive skin. "I am sorry you had to go through this, but no worries, you are in good hands now"

"No!" She desperately tried to push him away, but he held her in place. "You did this! You did all of this!"

“Yes and no,” he cooed, rocking her slightly. “I warned you before, Savannah I gave you a chance to save your brother or your sister-in-law. You didn’t listen!”

She felt nausea churning her stomach as the bear’s grip on her tightened. Her breathing was heavy, as destroying her mate bond with Zack made every cell in her body burn and ache to the point she wanted to claw her own skin. This was much worse than what she had experienced when her mate was bedding other women. This was crushing her bones, and at the same time, the loss of Kal and her family was destroying her soul. She was in agony, pure agony, although she still tried to contain it somehow.

Was Bjorn right? Could she have saved Riannon and the baby? She couldn’t even look in their direction now, afraid to see her brother and his wife pale and lifeless. Two perfect mates, they didn’t get to live their life together the way they had planned. It ended too soon.

She dropped Zack’s heart to the ground. There was no point in holding it now. She didn’t want to touch anything of his anymore. She was done.

Only that their bond still wasn’t letting her go, piercing needles all over her body, wishing to make her regret her actions.

She didn’t. She would never regret killing that son of ab*tch. She only wished she had the strength to kill another.

“Come here!” Bjorn was surprisingly gentle with her, and she gathered all the strength still left in her to try and shove him away.

“Don’t touch me!” She tried to growl, but the sound came out like a whimper. Bjorn let go of her for a moment, and she almost lost her balance, but luckily managed to find it again at the last second and not fall down to his feet. She wouldn’t be able to take this kind of humiliation,

“Switch off the cameras now!” The White Bear King commanded, and Claude gestured for the cameraman to follow the order. The bears who stood around them looked intimidating

More people entered the room, and Savannah caught a familiar figure among them. Blue dress with leather straps and ice-white hair braided in a traditional northern plait, Brigit averted her gaze.

“You!” Savvy breathed out, feeling how her vision was getting blurry from all the pain she was experiencing. The shock didn’t help either.

Brigit... The most obvious choice. The only white bear here. The one who rejected her own mate, although she had no good reason for this. The one who fought Castiel and Bjorn. The one who made them believe she was on their side

“How... could you?!” Tears were burning Savvy’s eyes while beads of sweat were forming all over her body She barely stood on her feet. “We trusted you!”

“And this is your mistake number one,” Bjorn watched her with some kind of amusement, enjoying every second of it. He cupped her chin, making the Princess look into his healthy eye again. “Never trust a traitor.”

Brigit did not say anything, She lowered her head a few men around her chuckled, watching the show unfolding before their eyes

“Traitor.” Savannah repeated, her voice was barely a whisper now. She knew that she wouldn’t be able to stand for too long, but she needed answers

“Yeah,” Bjorn let out a laugh. “It’s kind of a long story, actually. To cut it short, she was supposed to be my wife.” Savvy gasped at the words, and he enjoyed her reaction, “Her father was in an alliance with my brother Castiel and me. He promised me his daughter as my future bride, and I had no reason to decline back then Imagine my surprise when the

said bride arrived but only had eyes on my handsome brother Her first betrayal. Naturally, I didn't want a woman who would rather have my brother than me Castiel did have that effect on women, that old fox she swore his love and loyalties to him and then betrayed him in the most gruesome way, leading to his death Backstabbing at its best"

"Didn't he betray her trust first?" Savvy forced a scowl "He locked her in a cage with dozens of other women in skimpy dresses and used them as he saw fit"

"He was always honest about what they could expect from him," Bjorn cut her off

"Debatable!" Savvy was practically panting now. The pain wasn't dying down, and she felt her knees shaking She knew she wouldn't be able to take this for longer.

"When she helped to kill my brother and returned here, she came to try and steal from me. Can you imagine?" The White Bear King laughed, and his men followed his example "One of her sisters was sent to me after Brigit left with Castiel, and I gave her to my third in command as a reward She has stayed with him ever since, but Brigit decided it's not a good enough destiny for her sibling, and she attempted to kidnap her"

For the first time, Brigit raised her eyes to meet Savannah's, but the Western Princess did not look sympathetic. They were in a room full of dead people she cared about Nothing could fix that. Nothing was justifying that

"So you ordered her to poison everyone!" Savvy's breathing hitched

"Oh, no!" Bjorn chuckled again. He seemed to be in the best of moods. "At first, she was here to kill Kai, but the opportunity didn't present itself. I already wanted to dispose of her, but she managed to prove her loyalty when she pretended to attack me back in the shrine. So I gave her an easier task this time. All she had to do was to di

disable her mate, the Kingdom's Gamma and unlock the security system he was responsible for today. And i have to say, everything worked just perfectly!"

Savvy gulped and felt how dry her lips were Aspen was probably dead too. However, there was still another question that bothered her if Bngit did not poison them, then who

did?

"M-how?" She asked weakly.waving her hand around the room. The leaders of the bears understood her question without further explanation.

"told you before, I have been preparing for this." His lips curled into an arrogant smile. "It's done. You can stand up now!" he commanded, and Savannah felt she couldn't breathe anymore

Her eyes travelled around the room. The dead bodies were not moving, For a second, she hoped it was some kind of a joke, and they were all alive Whatever the explanation could be, she was ready to take

But when Emma, Astrid's friend, stood up and sneered at her, adjusting the dress on her curvy body Savvy remembered she did not like her much instantly. but she never paid the she-wolf much attention

"Rise and shine, Astrea!" Emma kicked Astrid lightly, and the blonde groaned She was lying with her face on the table too, but clearly wasn't dead either. They tricked everyone. "You are the star of this show, after all!" Emma snorted and walked to the centre of the room, stepping over someone's body on the floor as if it was nothing

"No!" Savannah shook her head. This was too much!

Astrid sighed heavily and sat up in her chair, locking eyes with the Western Princess Her gaze was so cold and emotionless, not a trace of the sweet girl Savvy got to know during the Luna Trials

“Sorry,” she said dispassionately, “Nothing personal. It’s just my job.”

“Nothing personal?” Savvy let out an exasperated chuckle. “You killed everyone I loved! I thought you were my friend!”

“You overthink!” Astrid stood up and started making her way to the centre of the large hall as well. “I liked you, of course. But work comes first. Whatever the assignment, it always comes before everything else. And just because someone tells you they are your friend, Savannah, it doesn’t mean they are. I think you will learn this lesson today once and for all. Although the story you have with your mate should have warned you already.”

Savvy had trouble breathing and focusing. Just not falling down to the ground was a struggle on its own now, but she did not want to give them the satisfaction

“You didn’t even do it yourself!” She turned to face Bjorn, who didn’t take his eye off her. His smug smite faltered.

“A good king wins a war without battles!” He took a step in her direction

“It will be a nice page in history books!” Savvy snapped “He couldn’t take the opponent down, so he sent three women to do the job for him!

The white bear’s eye gleamed red as he yanked her towards himself, inhaling her scent,

“The plan was mine. I was the one to work on the strategy, to find all the weaknesses. I bribed people and killed the ones who couldn’t be bought. I used every opportunity my enemies provided me. Even the Luna Trials.” Bjorn shook her, and the room spun around her. She had trouble focusing on him now, and the ground was slipping from under her feet. “Call it what you want, but it’s a victory, and it’s all mine!”

“You didn’t even fight!” Savannah gave him a withering glance, and he pressed her against his chest with force as if he wanted to prove something

“I fought for years!” He snarled, his face almost touching hers. “I did things for my people that I am not proud of, but this... this is not one of them. When we rule the North together, you will learn!”

“Don’t count on me!” On a whim, Savvy tried to claw out his heart just like she did with Zack, but barely managed to scratch him. Either she was too weak now, or he was too strong. Or both... she couldn’t do it now.

“Oh, Heartbreaker,” he whispered into her ear, “Time will come, and you will take all those words back!”

“Unlikely! She gritted her teeth, and he spun her in his arms, making her back press against his chest and fixing her in this position so that she could have a good view of what was going on around them.

“Look at them!” He commanded, and the other bears in the room lowered their heads, hearing his Alpha tone. Savvy’s eyes circled the space. “The King of the North and King of the West are both dead! None of them left heirs behind. Do you know what will happen if you and I don’t step in together?”

“You should have thought about it before all this!” Savannah snapped, but he strengthened his grip on her,

“And I did,” he leaned forward so that his chin rested on her shoulder, and she hated it. “I know you

will not be selfish enough to abandon the people. Think of it. Savannah. You and I will bring peace and prosperity to both kingdoms. The war will be over, and everyone will be safe. Don’t tell me it doesn’t sound tempting”

She was too tired to listen to all this. The pain surging through her body was making it hard to stay awake. In fact, she was surprised she still didn't pass out.

"It's not!" She confessed, her breathing ragged

Bjorn growled softly next to her. "Maybe not now, but with time you will see this is the only way!" He insisted dryly and then suddenly let go of her.

Startled, Savvy landed on the floor as her legs didn't hold her anymore.

"Let's just make sure you don't have any silly ideas or expectations that everything will be resolved magically!" He stood in front of her, and she looked up to see him stretching his hand. One of his men immediately placed the silver spear in it

She gasped because from up close, she was sure now that this was exactly the one they had in their house Her memory didn't let her forget the ancient patterns on it. Riannon brought it from her house when she moved in with them before the wedding.

It was stored in her office now, and the fact alone that Bjorn had it in his hand now didn't mean anything good.

"I see you recognised it," the bear smirked at her, and she nodded, hoping that he would pierce her heart with it. If everyone she loved was dead, she wasn't sure there was a point in living She did not want to be left alone. She knew that feeling far too well back from when her parents were killed, and she did not want to go back to that darkness "I had absolutely no problem taking it from your house in the West when I went there to explore."

She looked at him in horror Her house was protected by the best warriors Then again, so was this castle "But h-how?" She couldn't help the question Bjorn smiled at her understandingly, still playing with the spear,

“Did you ever notice how much shifters rely on scents?” A laugh rasped through his chest. Brigit, Astrid and Emma stood silently behind his back, watching the scene before them. “This is what we use for pretty much everything! Find food, track prey, detect enemy, find mate... Everything! We rely on it so much that if we smell a wolf, we believe it’s a wolf. And if we smell a bear, we believe it’s a bear. Luckily, my brother has spent years working on controlling scents in his laboratory. And his research was amazing! Best of the best! Even now that he is dead, his legacy lives on! This allows my people and I to go unnoticed anywhere. Our tracks are impossible to find. We are the best at this! I walked into your house through the main door and walked out with the spear. And no one said a word because I smelled like someone from your pack. No one questioned my presence. The fact that Riannon and Gideon’s people still don’t know each other too well helped me, of course.”

Savvy closed her eyes for a second. It was sad that it was so easy for him.

“I was surprised to see an ancient Northern weapon in a Westerner’s house, but I guess it’s destiny that I have it now and that you brought me to it. The legends of the North say that this spear killed the first royal Lycan; hence it has the ability to kill them all. There are just old fairytales, of course. But it’s symbolic, don’t you think?” He taunted, but she did not give him any reaction, and he continued, “So. Just in case the poison doesn’t work...” He didn’t finish the sentence and charged for the stage where the priestess still prayed, and Kailay on the floor, lifeless. The White Bear King clicked his finger, and one of the warriors snapped the priestess’s neck, throwing her body off the stage. Bjorn’s eyes locked with Savannah’s right before she realised what he was doing

The spear pierced Kai’s chest with force, plugging him to the ground.

Something broke inside of Savannah at sight. As if it was her heart pierced instead

He was already dead before, he didn't even flinch or make a sound, but there was some sense of finality in all of this now

Men around them laughed as they watched the scene Brigit lowered her head, Astrid turned away. only Emma joined the fun

The pain inside of the Western Princess was getting worse. How cruel was her destiny, taking one blow after another? Just how much could one person endure?

"We need to go!" She heard Astrid's cold voice "Warriors from outside the walls will appear here soon, and I am not taking part in the battle."

Bjorn growled menacingly, and Savannah realised they wanted to escape now. They killed Kai, Gideon, Riannon and most of her friends, and now they had to leave not to get caught

They didn't have an army with them. This wasn't a takeover of the castle. It was just a mission. A successful mission for them. They made the biggest blow against the two kingdoms, but they didn't want to risk fighting now

Bjorn mentioned before that he had planned to rule from his own palace The true North. He didn't want to stay here. This was the only thing she could do now to pay them all back. She could stall them and

make them face the music

Or better. She could shift into her third form and kill them all. Hopefully, Claude, Chloe and Petra would manage to run away first

The plan wasn't perfect, but did she even care? There weren't better options

It was over for her. The moment Kai closed his eyes, it was over He was the only thing that kept her going, her second chance at love. And now he is gone

Athena did not respond to her because she was in pain. It was worse for the wolves than humans when a mate bond was broken. But she summoned her inner beast. The worst part of her. The only part of herself she still had trouble controlling even despite Kai's lessons,

Her claws started elongating, and a loud growl rumbled through her chest. But instead of shifting, she felt her nausea getting stronger.

She was already on the ground, claws scratching the stone floors. But nothing else was happening. Only more pain and weakness rippled through her.

"Oh, Savvy!" Bjorn returned and knelt next to her, cupping her chin and forcing her to meet his gaze. "You don't seriously think I didn't see that coming? Astrea here added something to your glass too. She put a drop of poison into each glass before the wine was poured. Odourless and colourless, both banes were something my brother worked on while he was still alive. In the end, he was able to have his revenge on your family."

Savannah tried to force the shift, but nothing was happening.

"I didn't want to harm you for obvious reasons, but I did have to take precautions. Luckily, you helped me by killing your first mate." He brushed her cheek while a vague smile touched his lips. "You will not be able to shit anytime soon. Don't torture yourself. It will only make things worse!"

She hated him so much now that she chose not to listen. A chance like this would never present itself again. Savvy tried to force a shift, tensing her every muscle, praying for every God for this to work.

And then her eyes went dark... Someone caught her before her face hit the floor, and she heard the words. "Time to move." Semiconscious, Savannah struggled to keep her eyes from closing. She was in and out of

it. “Film that” Bjorn ordered, and the cameraman got back to work.
“Leave the spear. It will have a

more dramatic effect when they find his corpse with it! The twins and their crew go with us.”

“And this one?” The warrior who held Petra asked. The pink-haired girl wasn’t screaming anymore. Pale, she was just crying silently in her captor’s arms.

“Take her with us,” Bjorn replied, and then he knocked the nearest candle on the floor, causing the fire to flare up one of the curtains. A warrior on the other side set a different piece of fabric on fire. And Emma lit a tablecloth on one of the tables.

The White Bear King went for the exit while his warriors checked the path was clear. A tear fell down Savannah’s cheek seeing how quickly the fire caught. Soon everything in this hall would be destroyed.

A part of her wanted to stay there with them. Burning in that fire together with her family and friends would probably be less painful than what she was experiencing now,

“The Old North is dead!” Bjorn chuckled as he took her away...

