

## **The Luna Trials by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 71**

### **Chapter 71.**

They were walking along a path lit by candles in thick glass lanterns that looked like stars strewn about their feet. The night was cold, but this was considered a good sign in the North because the dark sky was clear of clouds and thanks to that, they all could see one of the most significant miracles of the North Lycan Kingdom. The Aurora.

Savannah's lips parted slightly as the icy air kissed her skin, but that did not bother her in the slightest. She had seen magic wielded

before her quite a few times in the past, but she had never seen something so powerful and enchanting. The glimmering waves above

her head went from deep purple to magenta and then to soft pink, continuing to morph into lime green and then a slightly richer olive colour. It was magical, and Gideon stumbled, gazing up at the phenomenon, but

Savannah did not pause. She didn't care what kind of magic was surrounding her, she wouldn't care if the whole world was falling apart right now because, in the distance, she saw something

far more beautiful, something far more important and precious to her – the royal blue glow of her mate's eyes.

Kai

was waiting at the top of a high peak with Elene by his side as it was decided that she would be the one to perform their mating ceremony.

ceremony and the crowning. However, a priestess of Fenrir was present as well as it was required for the most important part. Claude and Chloe were working tonight with a small camera already filming the event. Their closest friends and family were the only ones invited this time as they learned from the mistakes of their past. Lachlan, Zara, Riannon, and Aspen in his new wheelchair waited on one side,

while Kyle, Evelyn, Petra, Ash, Reid and Naya stood on the other side of the groom, awaiting the Royal Western siblings.

Kai drew a deep breath when he saw her. His bride was the image of perfection in her pale blue dress, dazzling sequins dancing

down the gown. She emanated that subtle glow that made him forget that in the morning, they all would be going to war. To him, she

was shining brighter than the Aurora, even brighter than the North Star itself. And the best part was that this woman was now his. Her

luscious golden brown hair was covering her neck, and he couldn't see his mark, but he knew it was there, he could feel it, and this made

his lips curl into a smile.

She was breathtaking, and it seemed like her brother was taking forever to bring her to him.

Their eyes locked, and she smiled shyly. As if she didn't belong to him already with her body and soul. Fenrir, this woman was diving.

him crazy! She would always have this effect on him. Of that, he was sure.

Savannah passed her friends and beamed at Kyle, who winked at her, wrapping his arms around Evelyn, who pushed him away almost instantly with an eye roll. She gave a sad smile to Aspen, whose legs

in human form would never heal properly because they were broken on purpose and let heal in an incorrect position way too many times to be able to fix it now. He, however, nodded at her with a grin. As if his

heart wasn't broken into a myriad of pieces, just like his body.

Riannon smiled brightly at her sister-in-law, hands on her already growing belly. She was the only one wearing a fur coat here

because Gideon wouldn't have it any other way.

Finally, Savannah was within his reach and Kai wanted to touch her desperately, but Gideon stopped and did not make the few final steps. The Northern King suppressed a growl, wondering if this was some form of sabotage from his old rival, but when he heard the

Western King speak, he let it go.

"Savvy," Gideon placed his hands on his sister's shoulders and turned her to look at him. "It's hard for me to admit this and, esp

ecially to say it out loud, but you are a strong and independent woman now. Today you gain a new family, but I want you to know that you will never lose your old one. You are the pride of the Western Lycan Kingdom and you will always be welcomed there. If you ever need help, there is a whole kingdom that will come to your aid. This is my vow to you, dear sister.”

“Gideon,” Savannah lowered her head, blinking away the tears. “Thank you.”

“Now go and be happy!” The brother gave her a fatherly kiss on the forehead and stepped back, leaving her alone on the starlit path. However, everyone heard him mutter as he joined his wife, “Even if it’s with him.”

But nothing could stop Savvy now as she practically ran to join hands with Kai, their fingers lacing together instantly, each move filled with love and passion.

“Finally!” he whispered and she let out a giggle, knowing exactly how he felt. She couldn’t wait for all of this to be done, for the camera to be turned off and for them to be alone together again. She didn’t have enough of him after the reunion. She did not think she’d ever have enough of him.

“Tonight, under the North Star and the Aurora,” Elene started her speech with a serene smile on her lips, “we are gathered here to celebrate the union of King Kai Fionnlagh and Princess Savannah Stormhold. Two halves of the same whole, they have already proven to

be mates and accepted each other's true marks. They are already united in the eyes of Fenrir and the Moon Goddess, and tonight, they

will be united in the eyes of their people as well. Please, say your vows to each other."

Kai glanced at his bride once again, marveling at how beautiful she looked tonight. He had a speech prepared on a piece of paper, but he decided that he didn't need it. The right words were already on his tongue.

"Sawyer," he chose not to use her full name. What he was going to say was coming from his heart, and he did not want to bury it in formalities. "I didn't get to say this to you last time, but I need you to know this.

From the day I met you, I knew you belonged to me. I knew you were the missing part of me that I have been searching for my whole life. You had another mate, but this never felt right to me

because deep inside, I knew you were my North Star. You brightened my life

and showed me the way to being a better king and a better man. Even in the darkest hours, even in the worst of blizzards, you are the one who makes me see light. I will spend my whole life proving

to you that I'm worthy of the honour Fenrir personally bestowed on me when he made me your mate. For that, I will be forever grateful. I

swear to protect

you with my life, fight for you with the entirety of my being, love

e you until the day I die, and respect you the way you deserve. You're my Luna and my Queen, and nothing will ever change that. I will be trying every day to prove to you, to the gods, and to the whole world that I'm worthy of standing by your side." His mouth went dry by the time he was done, and he noticed tears glistening in Savannah's eyes. He wanted to kiss them away, but unfortunately, it wasn't that part of the ceremony yet, so he only squeezed her fingers tighter to let her know that he meant every word.

"Kai," she smiled softly, her voice betraying her emotions as she spoke. "You have nothing to prove. I can feel every word you said

with my heart, and you should know that I reciprocate every single one of them. I lost you once, and my life lost its colours. They call you

my second chance mate, but to me, you were, are, and always will be my one and only. The only one I ever wanted to spend my life with. I

swear to be the best Luna I can be and rule by your side in accordance with the Northern traditions and laws, I swear to give you my

unconditional support and love and stay on your side forever. You healed my broken soul, and I will do my best to ensure that yours is

never broken, I will love you for as long as these mountains stand and the North Star shines upon our heads. And even when they are all

gone, my love for you will still linger in this world because nothing can erase it.”

She stopped talking because her voice broke, and Kai pulled her closer, wishing for nothing else but to bury his face in the crook of

her neck.

Somewhere among the guests, Petra teared up listening to all this. It was so beautiful to watch true mates confessing their feelings. She knew both Kai and Savannah as fierce warriors and smart politicians. It was a new facet she got to see tonight, and her hand brushed

softly over her mate's. Ash flinched, and she held her breath for a moment, scared that he would push her away.

The problem was that he did not claim her, he did not announce to anyone who she was to him. Not the way she always imagined it

would be. And now Petra was questioning everything. She was told she was beautiful but was she really? And if she was, then why didn't

he act and stake his claim on her? This was what an Alpha was supposed to do. This was something she'd waited for her whole life.

However, here they were, together and with no obstacles between them, but he'd barely spoken a word to her during the last twenty-four

hours.

Of course, he was busy preparing for the war. It must have been that, and the rest was just in her head, But at the same time, there

was this uncomfortable gnawing feeling inside of her chest that told her that there was more to it.

She wasn't what he wanted. Or, at the very least, he wasn't sure that she was what he wanted.

Ash did not push her away, and she carefully entwined their fingers together, giving him a light tug. His eyes were on the happy couple but at the same time, she felt him gripping her hand slightly. A smile formed on Petra's face. This may not have been much to

some, but it was a beginning for her.

In the meantime, the priestess joined Elene with a beautiful ancient crown in her hands. The blue and white diamonds formed the

north star in the centre, surrounded by smaller stars. It was a thing of beauty, and only northern Queens had the honour of wearing

1. it.

"Fenrir tells us to choose our partners wisely," Elene said the sacred words. "Kai Fionnlagh, King of the Northern Lycan Kingdom, make a wise choice."



Kai accepted the heavy crown and turned to his mate with a regal expression on his face. “I’d already made my choice a while ago. There is only one Queen for me. Savannah Stormhold, will you accept the Northern Crown and agree to share the burden of responsibility with me, to rule not as Queen Consort but as my rightful partner? Do you agree to be my Queen, my Luna, my wife and the future mother of my heirs?”

Savannah lowered her head gracefully and answered with a smile, “It would be my honour.”

He placed the crown onto her head and was amazed by how well it fit. As if it was made for her.

His beloved mate bowed as Savannah Stormhold, but she lifted her head as Savannah Fionnlagh, the Northern Lycan Queen.

Everyone present bowed their heads to the new royal couple, showing their respect. Only Gideon and Riannon stayed standing as

their equals, but they placed their hands over their hearts in a sign of support.

Finally, Kai could turn his wife to face him and gently covered her lips with his in a chaste kiss. Just a little bit longer, and his kisses

would be different. Just a little bit more...

He pulled the string of her cape and it flew away in the wind, baring her neck and shoulders so that everyone could see that glowing

North Star mark of his on her neck. He followed that by undoing the top buttons of his traditional Northern shirt, making his own mark

visible.

“You’ve got Fenrir’s blessing!” the priestess announced loudly with a gasp while Claude and Chloe were filming every single moment. For that was the most important part of their plan. Bjorn claimed that Kai sold his soul to a demon to come back from the dead. However, it was common knowledge that a divine mark would never appear on a tainted soul. That was why today’s breaking news, the main event before their forces would meet on the battlefield, would be about Bjorn being a liar or a delusional man gripped by insanity, while at the same time painting Kai and Savannah as the new guiding lights and the hope of both kingdoms.

So far, it was working out perfectly.

They did not celebrate. There was no time for that and there were more important things to do. They had to return to the castle and continue strategizing. Lachlan, Reid and Gideon left to check on their troops, while Kyle monitored Claude and Chloe who worked hard to spread the news. This was the morale boost everyone needed after their last defeat. They did not forget to share as many fragments about Amarok as they could, drawing conclusions about his transformation and Fenrir’s blessing that was now evident, thanks to the

North Star marks.

When there were just a few hours of the night left, they decided that it was time to get some rest. The next day could be the longest they'd all had in a while as Aspen's spies were already bringing them information about secret movements made by the bear and fox forces. The brown bear packs were now joining their white bear relatives, while foxes were gathering at the opposite side.

It was decided that Riannon would stay in the castle with Claude and Chloe, working in the command centre and observing the battlefield from the sky with the help of drones. The Western Queen

was the obvious choice because she was the only one who could deliver the information they got in this way to both Kai and Gideon via the mind

link, not to mention that she could cover a longer distance than anyone else. However, it was clear to everyone that Gideon simply wanted his pregnant mate to stay safe.

"Hey, Savvy, maybe Ria could use some help in the control room,"

Kai cleared his throat nonchalantly and looked elsewhere. He also wanted his expecting Queen not to throw herself into the middle of the battlefield.

"Nice try!" she chuckled and then gave him a death stare. "I evoke my wish as the winning Luna Trials contender! My wish is for you to never offer me to sit a battle out again. I am a Royal Lycan who can now use my third form without restrictions. I am too valuable to stay behind. No offence, Riannon."

“None taken,” Ria nodded at her, offering her full support. “I am pro-choice.”

Back in their room that hadn’t been touched by the fire, Kai took his wife as many times as he could in the few hours they had. It never seemed enough because they both knew that it could be their last night together. They were confident in their strength and knew that their plan was good, but it would be silly to think that everything would go smoothly. Especially after how many surprises life had already thrown at them both. They wisely expected more.

“I am so sorry I couldn’t give you the bridal night of your dreams,” Kai whispered to her, voice hoarse from all the growling he had been doing. “You deserve more romance and-”

“Kai,” Savannah lifted her head to meet his *gaze*. “Since you came back to life, every night we get to have is the night of my dreams. Simply because we get to have it. I just hope... that we get to have many more.”

“We will,” he pulled her closer and claimed her lips in a gentle kiss that was his promise to her.

And in the morning, they went to wat...

## **The Luna Trials by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 72**

### **Chapter 72**

Zara was sharpening her favourite daggers for two hours straight, listening to Lachlan giving orders to his people. She knew she had

no right to distract him, and she had to live with it. In just a few hours, she will be in the sky, and they might never see each other

again.

She knew her role in all of this. She knew his role. They would be on different sides of the battlefield, and it would be impossible for

her to watch him even from above. She wouldn't be able to reach him, yet here she was—

preparing her knives in case she did notice that

he was in trouble. However, Zara knew she would fly down and shift back to her human

form if she had to without blinking. This was so

new. She wouldn't have done it for Castiel.

Two hands slowly wrapped themselves around her waist and pulled her closer. Lachlan's scent filled the world around her, and Zara

let herself close her eyes just for a moment and embrace their warm moment. As if there were no cold weapons in her hands, as if they were not going to a battle soon... As if they were two regular people who had no crucial tasks to perform.

“Mine,” Lachlan growled softly into her ear, and her toes curled from his voice alone.

His palms traced her curves, one cupping her breast and another grasping her neck gently.

“We shouldn’t-”  
” she whispered but did not push him away. She couldn’t push him away.

“On the contrary,” he covered her neck with kisses, leaving a hot wet trail. “We should because it’s now or never.”

“Lachlan-”

“I am going to mark you now, Zara,” he said in a tone that brooked no objections, and she gasped, turning to see his face and check

if he was serious. His eyes said it all, and her lips trembled. No one ever wanted to mark her before.

“I am not your mate,” she reminded him and held her breath, not knowing if that fact would cool him down.

“I already had a mate, and what I feel for you is no less. I don’t know if Fenrir and the Moon Goddess planned for me to have a second—

chance mate, but if she is not you, then I do not want her.” Lachlan gently bit on the soft spot on her neck, making her arch her back in delight.

“Because I only want you. Will you let me mark you?”

“Yes,” she was happy that she had her back to him now and that he wouldn’t see the tears in her eyes. She liked to play it cool, but that lycan was making her emotional lately. “One thousand times yes,” she added and heard a snarl of approval.

Lachlan’s fingers removed her clothes, garment after garment, until she stood naked before him. He scooped her up and placed her on his desk, not letting her know that he had already carefully removed all the important papers from it because this was planned since his mind kept coming back to her while he worked. She did not waste time either, unbuckling his jeans and freeing his hardness, stroking it while he crashed his lips into hers. They knew they were short on time, but they were going to make the most out of it. He drove into her roughly, fingers digging into her flesh greedily as Zara locked her legs around his waist. She pressed herself tightly against him, and they broke their kisses only when they needed to gasp for air. The room suddenly got so hot that it was hard to breathe inside.

“Mine, mine, mine,” Lachlan repeated over and over with every thrust, and Zara moaned into his lips when her release rippled through her body.

Breathing ragged, she whispered, “Now- Do it now!”

“As you wish,” the Beta obeyed her wishes as he kept taking her and bringing her over the edge again. Zara tilted her head to give him better access, and his strong hands held her in place. He knew it would hurt her, and he had to be careful, so he made sure she was as close as possible to her next climax, and when he saw it i

n her eyes, he probed the place gently first, piercing the skin lightly. “I accept you as my mate, Zara O’Neer!”

He sunk his canines into her soft flesh, feeling her warm blood in his mouth, sharing his DNA with her and marking her for life. He could hear her heart racing in her chest, and a soft whimper left her chest as he kept thrusting into her. This tipped them both over the edge at the same time. The ecstasy of their newly forming bond was intoxicating and overpowering. He stilled, and his tiny bird froze, their bodies united in all of the ways, finally as one.

“I love you,” Zara whispered, and Lachlan slowly got his teeth out of her, licking the wound gently to help it heal. It was so big on her delicate neck. For the first time, it occurred to him that maybe it wasn’t such a good idea. It would take the mark a week or so to heal completely. What if it distracted her during her fight?

“I love you too,” he responded and met her gaze. “I am sorry I didn’t think of the wound you’d have to bear. How much does it hurt?”

“Enough to remember why I need to stay alive today,” she smiled and leaned forward to claim his lips. “I wish I could mark you too so that you would have the same predicament.”

“This now, was what I needed to want to stay alive,” Lachlan chuckled, but the smile turned out sadder than he had hoped. He placed his forehead on his chosen mate’s and closed his eyes. “When this is over-”



“Shh,” the werebird stopped him, wrapping her arms tight around his neck, “When this is over, we will have our whole life before us. This is what I believe in.”

“Good,” he hummed, and the piercing noise of the alarm on his phone rang, notifying them that it was time to go.

Petra found Ash right before he was supposed to leave. She ran into the courtyard when he was already walking towards his car, and he stopped in his tracks before he saw her. He felt her presence, and she knew it. It was still hard for her to decipher the meaning of their relationship. It wasn't exactly a rejection on his part, but at the same time, he did not accept her either. Not like she expected from a true

mate.

Petra has been dreaming of a mate since discovering they existed. What could be

better than a person supposed to love you unconditionally? Sadly, this was precisely what she did not have. She remembered their fingers lacing together just hours ago at Kai and Savannah's ceremony, and that simple act made her believe that Ash wouldn't reject her.

“Wait!” she screamed and rushed his way, her pink hair whipped by the wind.

Ash looked at his second-chance mate, and his wolf Nox screamed to embrace her here and now. However, the Alpha knew that it was a bad idea.

Petra was already near and took his hand into hers without asking permission. “I know I am not what you wanted as a mate, and you don’t know what to do with me,” she said bluntly, and his lips parted in shock.

“But let me prove that I can be just what you need as a Luna. Ash- Alpha Ash, I-”

He hated that he made her feel this way, but maybe it was for the best. Ash had already lost a mate once, and today he was going to war, where he would be facing creatures far stronger than him. It would have been selfish to claim her in any way now.

Right now, if he ended up dead, she would cry a day or two for what they could have had. But if he deepened the bond, if he made

her any kind of promises now, it would hurt her so much more if he did not come back.

“Petra,” he caressed her cheek gently, “you’re a wonderful girl, and don’t let anyone make you believe you are not enough. I saw you fight the white bears chasing us when we were getting Aspen out. You need more training, but you’re already a fighter. Even if you don’t realise it yet. And, Petra... you are smart. You managed to get to the end of the Luna Trials. And don’t get me started on how beautiful

you are.”

Her breathing hitched hearing his words. What was the problem then?

He read her question in her eyes and felt terrible. Was he making a mistake by distancing himself now?

“Then why are you-” she couldn’t bring herself to ask bluntly and cast her gaze down.

Ash cupped her chin in one hand and made her look at him. “Because I want you to be free if I don’t return tomorrow.”

She did not like this idea at all.

“I am going to be fighting too,” she declared, taking him by surprise. “My pack is going, and so am I. And I don’t want to die thinking

my mate did not want me. I don’t want to die not knowing how his lips tasted-”

She did not get to finish because Ash slammed his lips into hers in a greedy, possessive kiss that made her forget the rest of her speech. She placed her fingers hesitantly on his chest, and it made him snarl into her mouth, making her lose her mind.

“Petra,” he growled, deepening the kiss, and she got brave, digging her fingers into him. She wanted to feel, to experience as much as he could give her.

But Ash was the reasonable one, so after a while, he stopped the madness.

“Petra, let’s agree on something,” he breathed, “When it’s all over... meet me at dawn. Here.”

She liked that. It was a promise that wasn’t a promise, but it was something that gave her hope for their future together, something

to look forward to.

“We meet at dawn then,” she beamed at him, unable to hold back her excitement.

“Any chance you would not go to fight?” Ash wondered. He remembered how she jumped at the huge bear who managed to catch up with them, but she wouldn’t have lasted long against him if she had been alone. “No,” she shook her pink curly head. “I already stayed back too many times. I’m not missing this one.”

She turned on her blush pink heels and walked back into the castle, and Ash’s lips curled involuntarily. She was a surprise, that Petra. And so much was yet to be discovered.

Aspen was pushing the wheels of his chair and swearing under his breath. The castle’s square bricks were not made for this. The castle wasn’t made for this. The life of a lycan wasn’t made for this. He wasn’t made for this.

time.

However, he couldn’t think of that now. He was still a Gamma. Even though Kai would probably have to find a new one over

Luckily, his wolf was all right.

So, at least he was able to fight in his second form. In his new found situation, he regarded this as a blessing. He could still be a warrior.

One of his men mind linked him, saying that he was needed at the main gate and this was where Aspen was headed. The wheels got stuck when he was already close to his goal, and there was nothing he could do about it, no matter what he tried.

His stomach churned, thinking that he would probably have to crawl now to get anywhere. Luckily, a warrior rushed to his side, willing to help. That only made Aspen angrier because he had never needed help before. He was always the strongest, the fastest, the most skilful. Only Kai and Lachlan were able to compete with him as equals. And now some boy was going to push him in a wheelchair. This was a humiliation he couldn't take.

"Don't!" he growled so loud that the walls shook, and the warrior stopped instantly.

"I just wanted to-

" the youngster tried to explain, but Aspen raised his hand to stop him. The Gamma quickly looked around, and

his angry gaze fell on a bunch of spears in the corner.

"Bring me one of those," he pointed there, and his subordinate obeyed, doing as he was told.

Aspen broke the sharp part in the spear and used the wooden stick left for support, standing up. He could feel his legs, but they were

not listening

to him. The way the bones grew together was awkward, and now he experienced excruciating pain when he moved. But

anything was better than this chair. Even a staff he ended up with. At least that one could be used as a weapon if needed.

He limped to the guard post at the gate, already sweaty from the effort he had to make, and noticed that his soldiers had perplexed

expressions on their faces when they saw him, but at the same time, there was respect in their eyes because he wasn't giving up.

"What is it?" he snarled at them to keep them in check. The last thing he needed was pity.

"There is a girl, and she wants to see you," one of his men reported.

"For fuck's sake! Is that why you called me?" He would have slaughtered them for this now if they didn't need everyone in the morning.

"Gamma," another warrior addressed him respectfully, "she is a white bear."

Aspen's whole world turned. He thought he started hearing things, but then he saw his men and knew that they were serious. He

thought he might see her again, but for the past twenty-four hours, he was sure that it would be on a battlefield. He didn't know what

he felt about her anymore. At first, he hated her when he thought that all his friends were killed by her, but then most of them turned out to be alive.

Most.

Not all.

The priestess killed that day, was the one he always went to see in Fenrir's temple. He personally escorted her to the castle for Kai

and Savannah's ceremony and was distraught when he later found out she was one of the few who did not make it. Same as the soldiers

who were killed trying to defend the castle. The ones whom he personally trained together with Lachlan.

Such things were hard to forgive.

Mate or no mate, that woman was his poison, and he was ready to snap her neck when he went to see her.

Only that the girl who stared at his broad frame with wide doe eyes, wasn't Brigit...

Kai and Savannah led their army hand in hand to their position and found the bears already waiting for them on the other side of the field. Everyone knew this would end here one day, in the historical place where the white bears and the lycans

always fought each other. Kai intended for this battle to be the last. Mountains surrounded the field on one side, and Forbidden Forest was starting on the

other. This was where the bears waited for them.

They could see Bjorn in his human form at the head of his formation, glaring at them. His gaze did not miss Kai holding Savannah's hand, her wearing the same outfit she did at the Forgotten City during the Luna Trials and the big glowing mark on her neck. That one

especially hurt him.

Joran appeared at his side, placing his hand on Bjorn's shoulder. "Just kill the King, and she will be yours. She was stolen from you,

but the moment he is gone, your mate bond with her will be restored."

Bjorn knew this. This was all that kept him sane lately. That tiny flicker of hope kept him going.

He met Savannah's defiant gaze, and she turned away, standing on her tiptoes and kissing Kai. Her hair was gathered into a high

ponytail with a northern braid in it. She knew how to play the game as he noticed the drones filming everything from the sky.

So be it. Let them film this. Let them film how he would kill Fionnlagh and then drag his mate back where she belonged in



his bed.

Savannah broke the kiss, and they held their hands just a moment longer, squeezing them as hard as they could. They couldn't show more emotions now because they had to radiate confidence.

"It's time," she said with the saddest smile on her lips.

"I know," Kai replied, not wanting to let her go.

But he had to. She was now leading her own squad – The Luna Squad. And her warriors played an important part today. So, she, Elene and other she-wolves stepped back, leaving the scene, which looked as if they were retreating.

Kai was left with Lachlan and Aspen in his wolf form by his side.

His loyal brothers-in-arms. No words were needed between them. Everyone knew very well what they had to do.

"What the—" Lachlan narrowed his eyes, watching what was going on on the enemy's half of the field. All of them darted their gazes there too, observing Joran stepping forward with an ominous sneer on his face. The skies became darker with malice as he faced the white bear army, joined by foxes and brown bears, multiplying their number at least by three.

This, however, wasn't the end of it. The deity raised his hands to the black as ink clouds and thunder rumbled, followed by a few

bright lightning bolts slicing the sky. They struck the bears' formation, and it glowed momentarily.

"F\*ck!" Kai swore loudly, realising what had just happened. He could feel that with his bones, the power erupting right in front of him as roars filled the world. One by one, the bears, the foxes, and some of the traitor wolves were turning into bigger and more dangerous versions of themselves with sharper canines and longer claws.

"What is that?" Lachlan asked, still trying to comprehend what was going on.

"They just got blessed by Joran," the Northern Lycan King said, voice grim. "All of them."

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### **Chapter 73 Blessed**

Kai watched as Joran, on the opposite side of the vast clearing, smirked at him and returned to Bjorn's side, placing his hand on his

shoulder and saying something that only made the bear more confident, judging by the looks of it.

"Well, we are utterly f\*cked now," Lachlan said to his King, using the mindlink between the two of them and Aspen. They couldn't

risk demoralising their warriors right before the fight by discussing openly how their chances of winning just dropped significantly.

“Just more bear meat,” Aspen snarled. He was the one ready to charge at any moment and avenge his human legs. The Gamma felt

like he had nothing to lose, but everything to gain by killing as many enemies as he could.

“Just a few chosen ones,” Kai reminded them calmly, even though inside he was worried. “They are bigger and stronger, but they are still mortal. Besides, there is a reason why gods don’t bless everyone all the time. Maybe they aren’t as strong as Riannon and I because they all shared one blessing.”

“Yeah,” Lachlan did not sound confident, “maybe-”

Kai closed his eyes and connected to all of his people at once, knowing that this was the moment they needed to hear from him. He hated giving speeches, and by no means was he good at it, but when duty called, he rose to the occasion once again.

“Remember who we are,” he said, skipping a fancy beginning. It looked like the bears were ready to attack, and he had mere seconds. “We are the true Northerners! We defend our home, our way of life! We shared the North with them; they had their land, they

had their ruler, but they were greedy and wanted more. They want what we have, and they want us gone! Like it or not, if we lose today,

the Northern and the Western Lycan Kingdoms, the way we know them, will be gone forever. The continent as we know it will be gone

forever! Everything will change, and not for the better. But we have friends, and we have allies. We have eliminated the traitors, and now

our lines only have people who will defend your back. We are fighting for what is right and just! Those bears and foxes will go home

tonight, and their lands will finally be enough for them because there will be just a few of them left – If any survive at all... We did not

start this, but we will finish the war today, whatever it takes us! Even if it takes all of us!”

First, silence greeted him, then a howl of approval emerged somewhere in the lines of wolves. And then another, followed by more

and more until all of the Northern lycans howled as one in a battle cry that let their enemies know they’d rather die than give up.

As soon as they were done, more howls erupted from afar, and Kai snapped his head to see more wolves approaching from the

Western Mountains. They were fast and ready to clash with the bears, but they stopped as the pitch-black Royal Lycan stepped forward.

Gideon roared, and his army joined him to let everyone know that the Western Kingdom warriors were here to support the North and

defend their own borders. This would be the first time in many years that the West and the North would fight back to back.

The bears roared in response, foxes snarling at their sides. However, soon the cats arrived and took the stage. Things of beauty,

there were so many kinds of them. Lions, pumas, leopards, lynxes, in all shades of furs. All graceful and deadly. And all were ready to tear

their adversaries to pieces. No one dared to underestimate them because their battle skills were legendary.

Bjorn was watching his enemies gather and wondering where Savannah had gone, secretly hoping she was far away, where she

would be safe and sound until he came for her when everything was done.

He hated Kai with a passion. Hated him so much that he couldn't wait to send his men to fight him and to see him and all the other

lycans dead. Even if he'd lose some of his bears and allies, it would be worth it. Kai always had it easy. He always had everything Bjorn

longed for. His parents never questioned him, never stabbed him in the eye, never separated him from his sibling. He did not have to earn.

bits of approval from his own people, and everything always came easy to the golden boy. While Bjorn had to work hard simply to

survive. Everything was denied to him. His birthright, the respect he deserved, and even his mates. Contemplating about his mates, the White Bear King decided that Ingrida made a choice of her own accord while Savannah was deceived from the very beginning and stolen from him. This was something he was going to fix today.

Usually, this was the moment where the final negotiations between the kings could take place, but this time there was nothing to -negotiate about. They all knew why they were there, and they all chose to stay and fight to the death.

A sneer spread over Bjorn's face. Finally, the fates favoured him. Joran did something he had tried to get for the past few years and blessed his army. The wolves had no chance now.

Kai knew what that ugly smirk meant Bjorn felt superior to him now, and he wanted to wipe that grin off entirely. The Lycan King shifted into his wolf form first and grew out his spikes purely as a demonstration of his might. Amarok's eyes glowed blue, and the second

his large paw hit the ground, the withered grass under it covered with frost. Like an unrolling carpet, it spread quickly through the field

towards the bears and the foxes with unimaginable speed until it reached the front lines of the enemies, and large icy spikes started emerging from the ground like a deadly trap. Some managed to dodge them, but many didn't, giving Kai his first kills.

Bjorn, still in his human form, roared loudly, "Forward!"

And a horde of enhanced shifters charged the lycan's way.

Gideon's people wanted to join the fight too, but he motioned for them to stay in place. It wasn't the time yet.

Kai snarled so loudly that the earth under their feet shook, the sound echoing through the woods and the mountains surrounding

them. It seemed like something changed in the world when the sound died down because one could tell that it did not disappear,

Instead, it became something else. A snow mist appeared out of nowhere, chaotic and merciless, surrounding the bears before they

managed to reach their opponents, It blinded and startled them, making them stop in their tracks to regroup. The unusual, unnatural

haze was biting at them, suffocating their senses.

"Now!" Amarok commanded his army with a loud growl which each of his men understood at once.

“Now!” Gideon ordered and shifted straight into his Royal Lycan form. He wasn’t going to risk it – there was no denying that this was what was required of him today.

Both forces lashed out into the cloud of the snow storm that was holding the white bears, foxes and traitor wolves captive. The enemy could hear them approaching, but the snow made it almost impossible to see anything. So, when Amarok reached them first, they could barely defend themselves from his icy claws and sharp canines. Kai was destroying them one by one, methodically working through their formation to make way for his lycans. However, this distracted him from keeping up the mist that he summoned. The power was still new to him, and he found it hard to control everything at once. Nevertheless, the desired effect was already.

achieved.

The armies clashed. Teeth, claws, cuts, bites, whimpers, roars and snarls mixed all at once. Warm blood was spraying the frosty ground, and lifeless bodies were falling left and right.

The bears were strong, too strong for them to be underestimated by anyone now, and Kai had to admit that without Fenrir’s blessing, he would have found it much harder to defeat them. He was throwing himself into their clusters, breaking them up to help his men, but often sadly watched his people die before he was able to reach them. The lycans were strong, but it was something else to be



blessed by a deity. The blessing made the white bears bigger and tougher, the foxes faster and with deadlier canines than usual, the

traitorous wolves probably got the least of this power, but even they seemed stronger than they should have been.

From the corner of his eye, Kai noticed Gideon in his Royal Lycan form, crushing whoever was in his way. The divine power was flowing through him. As Amarok, Kai could feel it and hoped that the North Star mark on his mate's neck would give her the same

strength.

He crushed skull after skull, broke neck after neck, tore limbs and ripped pieces of flesh out, acting on his feral instincts. Still, it was far from enough, and he saw lycan after lycan falling before his eyes while there was nothing he could do to help them.

Savannah was watching the battle from above, hoping that they had made the right call about the Luna Squad. Every fighter was important now and if she was wrong, she'd fail everyone on her first day as the Northern Lycan Queen.

It was hard to see what was going on below in what looked like a snowstorm, but she could hear the howls and the roars of the bloody fight. She could imagine what her mate had to face.

“He will be fine,” Elene placed her hand on her sister-in-law’s shoulder, giving it a light squeeze. “If anything, he is the last one I am worried about. Amarok can take care of himself.”

Savvy tried to smile, but the lips just did not want to curl today, so she gave up on that. Snarls from deep underground reached her ears, and this was when a cruel sneer painted itself over her face. She wasn’t wrong after all, and she wasn’t wasting resources at the most

critical moment. She was saving them all.

One of the perks of having her photographic memory was that she never forgot anything. So when her husband and brother were building a strategy for today, it was she who remembered the catacombs of the Lost City which Bjorn’s people loved to use so much. They sealed everything that was connected to the city, but she saw the map once and knew that there were other ancient underground tunnels leading elsewhere. For example, the ones where she was standing now. In the olden days, this tunnel helped people to escape from the city walls to the mountains and the Forbidden Forest since the capital was under attack.

The tunnel connected the Forest and the mountains above the battlefield, and Savvy realised that Bjorn wouldn’t pass an opportunity for a sneaky attack. It turned out, she wasn’t wrong about this.

They were standing right next to the exits of the mountain tunnel. It would be easy to descend on the battleground below from here

and catch the opponent by surprise.

However, thanks to Savannah, the element of surprise was now on their side.

The females waited patiently and quietly for the huge rock that was covering the exit to be moved aside and for the first werebears

to walk out before they attacked. The northern Queen and Princess shifted into their Royal Lycan forms, leading the rest of the

she wolves in a fast and precise attack. Sawy could tell that the bears were trying to avoid her, probably having some orders from Bjorn

on her account, and she wasn't below using that to her advantage. She had made her choice, and it wasn't her fault that Bjorn couldn't

accept it and let it go. She did not owe him anything, and she was happy to accept this little gift from him because her only desire today

was to win this war.

They were lucky that it was a smaller group. The White Bear King probably did not think that it was important and arranged this

ambush more as a habit. Or maybe it was just his backup plan to make one final blow from where they wouldn't expect it if things went

South. Savvy did not care. Her thoughts were on the main battlefield, where her husband and brother were leading their armies against a

force greater than anything they had experienced before.

Savvy and Elene worked nicely as a team, greeting the bears and attacking them first together, then letting the rest of the

she-wolves finish them off. Savannah knew now that she trusted Elene with her life, and the princess did not disappoint her so far even if

she never considered her a fighter.

The Northern Queen glanced down to see the mist die down and the bloody scene unveiled before her eyes. Amarok was the only

one she noticed at once, relieved that he was alive, but the overall picture made her panic slightly. There were so many shifters down

there, so much blood... It was hard to tell who was winning because it looked like one messy c\*\*\*\*\*e.

She had to focus on her own mission, but she couldn't erase the m\* 'e from her mind.

Things were not going well for them. She saw what Joran did and hoped that it wouldn't influence the fight, but it did. The lycans

were far from winning the war. The losses were too big, and she realised for the first time that she wasn't ready for the future under

Bjorn's rule. She wouldn't be able to- Anything but that!

The enemies from the tunnel kept coming, and the element of surprise that her group had was now gone, and now the bears were

appearing, ready to kill them all. She saw one of the she wolves attacking a huge bear only to have her head ripped off. Savannah was

moving swiftly between them, trying to wound as many and as deeply as possible.

But she knew that it was time for phase two, and she found a moment to stop and raise her head to the sky, letting out a long resounding howl...

Zara recognised her Queen's call at once, and a piercing shriek left her chest to summon the rest of the werebirds. A surprise that no

one expected and not the last one for today. Kai had to strike a deal with them which was unheard of before. Werebirds almost never

fought on anyone's side, not if their own safety wasn't in jeopardy. But the King's offer was too good to pass.

The only reason the Flocks sent Mavis to the Luna Trials was to try to make her a Queen, so that she could give them a safe place to

stay during the summer. This was something they never had but always wanted. So, this was exactly what Kai decided to offer them in

exchange for their help.

A dark ominous cloud rose from the forest where they had been hiding up till now, watching and waiting for their turn. Now the wait

was over, and they launched their attack from the sky, Zara among them, searching for her lycan mate in between attacks.

Birds of prey knew how to fight without getting hurt, making clean dives down, damaging the opponent and going straight back up.

They were distracting foxes and the bears, throwing them off the game and getting away with it.

Zara personally clawed a few eyes out, escaping before anything could be done about it by the victims.

Kai looked around, the picture was still far from perfect but it was too early to give up because it was time for his last surprise of

today.

The witches came from the Lost City, Salome fulfilling her end of the deal they made back when she was still a contender. The date that was filmed and broadcasted everywhere was nothing more than a business meeting for the two of them. Kai was surprised that a witch joined the Luna Trials, ignoring that there was no chance in hell of them getting married. Not unless she was his mate, and they

were done with that theory back at Introductions. However, he was still surprised when he heard Salome's offer. The offer he had

accepted, and now he was happy that he did.

It was a small group, just around ten people, but the damage they caused in minutes was incredible. Three of them were fire summoners, while the other three were earthbreakers, two were holding shields, protecting the team, and what Salome and the guy next

to her did was unclear, but they looked busy. And in all honesty, Kai did not care. They finally managed to shift the balance of power, and

now he could see the glimpse of final victory even despite their many disadvantages.

Kai was looking at the mountain where Savannah had taken her new personal warriors and said the silent prayer to Fenrir each time

he noticed her white fur gleaming in the sunshine, thankful for his lycan vision. He wanted to find Bjorn, whom he had been looking for

from the very beginning, and kill the batard once and for all. However, no matter how hard he looked, he couldn't find him.

Kai killed bear after bear, aiming mostly for the white ones as they were the strongest, but not a trace of Bjorn was found.

He suddenly had a very bad feeling, and his head snapped to the mountain where Savannah went. There was one serpentine path that led to the secret tunnel, and on that path, he saw a group of three bears rushing, undoubtedly to get his Queen. He tried to get out,

but he was in the very centre of the battle, and someone was constantly on his path. Kai's stomach churned as he realised, he may not get

there in time.

Zara was launching a new attack when she noticed familiar cream fur a few feet away from her. Lachlan was fighting several bears.

and foxes alone, and she did not hesitate to shift to a bigger-sized hawk to get one of the foxes out in less than a few seconds. She closed

her claws around the red beast's back, piercing her flesh while she was at it. Then she lifted the creature into the sky, only to drop it on



the rocks. She circled quickly and dived down again to defend the man she loved.

And this was what saved her from the huge black shadow that swept the sky, taking down dozens of birds. Their colourful leathers.

were falling down, drifting in the air slowly, and Zara couldn't believe her eyes. She had heard many legends, but never thought that

she'd see a real dragon with her own eyes...

Riannon ordered everyone to leave the control room. She still had monitors with drone footage in front of her, and just now, she witnessed half of them destroyed together with dozens of the werebirds. She stuck her emotions to the back of her mind, because she

knew what would happen next.

The dark shadow covered the castle so fast that even the Queen of the Western Kingdom lost her confidence for a few seconds.

However, she wasn't going to admit it, and did her best to calm herself down, taking her seat in the main chair of the room.

"Greetings, Riannon," Joran said as he hopped off the windowsill...

## **The Luna Trials by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 74**

### **Chapter 74**

Lachlan had been truly terrified a few times in his life, but this one was probably the worst. Going into that battle, he knew that not everyone would return. However, seeing a full-size dragon with dark blue and green scales flying right above their heads and taking out most of the werebirds in one go paralysed the mighty Beta with fear for his new mate. Feathers were flying everywhere- red, blue, white,

black, and every other colour imaginable. The sight was so beautiful and horrifying at the same time. Whenever a black feather landed in

front of his eyes, he wondered if it was Zara's, and the anger seethed in him. He had already lost a mate once. He couldn't do it

again.

Lachlan dug his teeth into an enormous white bear who tried to kill one of his men. These beasts were so big now, almost invincible, but the hate and the painful agony made the Beta blind to the unequal power distribution between them. He did not care. He would fight and die here if he absolutely had to. Especially if Zara...

He did not get to finish that thought as a huge black hawk reappeared to claw his enemy's eyes out. Just the glimpse of her allowed him to breathe again, and he deepened his canines into the white beast.

Zara was making short, tactical attacks, where she dived down, trying to hurt the enemy's vision, and then flew back up quickly to avoid their claws. Only to return to repeat everything until her

goal was achieved. She did not let herself think of the flock that was once hers. She did not let herself dwell on the fact that she was the one who brought them here. Most of them had died, and there was nothing she could do. Although they considered Joran taking part in the war, they did not expect a flying freaking dragon. No one had seen one for so long...

And now she was angry. Angry that her attempt to help cost so many lives, angry that her part of the plan failed, angry that she couldn't do anything.

But she could do one thing and that was fight by her mate's side until death indeed parted them today.

Ash ignored the blood trickling down his side as he was surrounded by two gigantic foxes that looked like they were a product of some crazy scientist's experiment. Joran's blessing looked like a mutation on them. If he didn't know any better, he'd take them for

demons from hell, not foxes. But unfortunately, that knowledge did not help him during his fight. They were too strong, too fast for him.

Although usually, he could defeat a couple of redfurs with his eyes closed.

He charged at one of them, aiming for his neck, but missed again. And what was worse, the other one jumped on top of him, nailing him to the cold frosty ground. This was a position impossible to get out of for a wolf, especially since the first fox prepared to deliver the

final blow.

A bolt of quick pink lightning flashed before his eyes, and Ash's heart sank. Petra threw herself at the fox on top of him, knocking him off with a growl. The beast was about to pounce towards her when a huge white bear appeared, scaring him off.

Ash tore the throat of the fox in front of him like it was nothing, although he was struggling just a few seconds ago. Seeing Petra against this bear made his blood boil in his veins.

The bear recognised his mate. He did not plan to kill her. He wanted her and was now trying to back her into the woods. This realisation made Ash more furious than he had ever been. The Alpha in him couldn't let this happen. The Alpha in him did not want to

share. The Alpha in him knew that this little black and pink wolf belonged to him.

Petra was his, and the bear was a dead beast walking.

Ash knew he would protect her no matter what.

Although everyone begged him to stay with Riannon for protection, Kyle had to politely decline the offer because of the one woman who had been on his mind for a while now. Even if she did not want it and objected every step of the way, even if she would reject him when everything was over as she promised to do many times, he couldn't leave her alone on the battlefield. Claude and Chloe were more than capable of taking care of the

footage and the coverage, and his Queen agreed that she did not need him for protection, leaving a few other lycans by her side.

Besides, in a massive war like this, every warrior was priceless.

And this... this was so much worse than their previous battle with the foxes that he started to think that he wouldn't make it. One of

the bears had already injured his foot, but as a lycan, he could still work with that.

However, after the bloody dragon destroyed one of their main advantages, the majority of the werebirds, he couldn't help but feel

pessimistic. Especially as he watched the witches who came to help them now simply defending themselves with their magical shields. If no one would get there soon, they would all be dead. So much for an alliance...

He could smell Evelyn and tried to follow her scent through the battlefield, searching for Petra's scent as well. If Evelyn was here, she

would still be trying to protect her girl.

Kyle could feel that she was near, but in the chaos of wolves, cats, bears and foxes, and other creatures, he couldn't move fast.

Someone was constantly attacking him, life hanging by a thread, blood spraying the frozen field. They had to manoeuvre between the

colossal ice spikes with the biggest bears' bodies pierced on top of them. The work of Amarok for sure. It was a mess, and he couldn't get

through, no matter how much he tried.

Though he tried to brush them away, gloomy thoughts were not leaving his mind. It did not look like they would be able to win today despite everything they did and tried.

Three white bears circled around him, trying to cut him off from everyone else. They were attacking lycans in groups, while foxes and brown bears were taking care of werecats and werewolves. That was a smart decision because, in the past hour, Kyle saw a few of his

friends lose their lives because of that tactic.

He bared his teeth, demonstrating to them that it wouldn't work with him. He'd make them bleed before they...

His thought was cut short when a red wolf knocked one of them off their paws, digging his canines in a death grip around his neck. And before Kyle could act again, something absolutely unexpected happened, and one of the two remaining bears attacked the

other

This temporarily stopped him from advancing as he took a quick glance around the battlefield. Now bears were fighting other bears,

and this... this was new.

Aspen did not believe in Brigit's words and promises. It did not matter what her little sister told him. His mate... his ex-mate was not

to be trusted.

Once, he was ready to give everything for one smile of hers. He was ready to love and cherish her, to kiss the ground she walked on, but she chose to betray him. His blind faith in her cost him his human legs. Now he would be a cripple until the day he died. Which, by the

look of things, would be today.

He was looking for her, knowing that although her sister promised them that Brigit would turn the tables in the middle of the fight and join them with their father's old clan, those were just empty words. The same as her confessions of love during their one and only

passionate night together.

Empty.

Useless.

Lies.

When he smelled her presence, he left a trail of dead foxes behind him and charged straight at her, seeing how she was going to attack that western pup alongside two of her comrades-in-arms. He wanted it to be a clean kill.

One good blow and the turmoil of his life would be gone.

She deserved it for all the betrayals.

He wanted this more than anything. He wanted to be done with her.

And yet... at the last moment, he pounced at a different white bear, knowing very well that it wasn't her.

However, when he was done with that one and turned to look for Brigit again, he saw her fighting her own kind. He saw how many

other white bears followed her lead.

This could have been their turning point now....

However, he did not see his King or his Queen. Moreover, the Western Lycan King was gone as well. And all this did not promise

anything good.

Riannon was expecting the Serpent. It was the only reason why she wasn't on the battlefield now, and she was happy that she had

interpreted yet another vision of hers correctly. However dangerous that was.

The Serpent needed answers, but so did she. And Ria knew she would be safe until he got what he wanted. Maybe even later if she

played that right.



“Welcome, Joran,” the Luna hopped off the desk she was sitting on as the intruder took in the empty room, and an understanding smile curled his lips.

“So, you’ve been expecting me,” the deity brushed his hand through his dark blonde hair and sneered at the Western Queen. “It’s

for the best, I guess. Saves us time.”

“And lives,” Riannon added, remembering her first vision of this encounter. In her dream, the deity killed several people to clarify his point. Luckily, Riannon already learned that knowledge was power and that with its help, she could alter the future. She had done it before, and she was doing it now.

“I was probably in a worse mood in your visions,” the man chuckled. “I hate having to explain the obvious. This is why I think we would work great together. You already know everything I want to ask. So, why don’t you just give it to me.”

“I wouldn’t say so,” she shrugged nonchalantly, biding for time. “My visions are usually very hectic and leave more questions than

answers.”

“I’d still take everything you have to tell me, Seer,” Joran insisted.

“Well, I know you are not getting that firstborn,” Ria arched her brow at the man that was now too close to her. “He is already promised to someone else.”

“Who?” the Serpent gritted his teeth.

“I think deep inside you know your answer.” This time it was her time for understanding smiles.

“We’ll have to see about that. I have broken many prophecies before. I am sure I will find a way to break this one too.” Joran slowly walked around the room, not watching Riannon at all. He was more interested to see the monitors and what was on them now. A smirk.

appeared on his face when he noticed how many of them were not working anymore. “Excuse me for destroying your drones,” he said, returning his attention back to the Luna in front of him. She was now within his reach but did not try to escape him. Which both amused him and concerned him, “I was aiming for the birds. It was a good idea to involve them, by the way. Yours?”

“Savannah’s,” Riannon answered, tilting her head slightly. It was the first time she was this close to what could be considered a God.

Her empathic nature could feel waves of power radiating from him. It was stronger than anything she could have imagined, but she tried

to restrain the fear. She knew he would be able to smell it otherwise.

“I think this was enough of small talk,” the Serpent insisted lazily, but she could feel how agitated he was. “Give me the information.

I want, and I will let you live.”

now.

“As I have already told you, it doesn’t work like that for me.” Rhiannon tried to stay calm. Everything depended on her self-control

“Perform Seidhrthen!” the man snapped at her.

“If only I knew what that is.” Ria had no idea what he was talking about, but she was curious. Very curious.

“Lucky for you, I’m a great teacher,” Joran sneered, but the woman in front of him furrowed her brows as he backed her into a desk,

cutting her ways of escaping.

“Fine.” She held her head high and met his gaze differently. The Queen that she was, she wasn’t going to grovel before him; she wasn’t going to give up or beg for mercy. She was going to profit from this. “Lucky for you, I’m eager to learn.”

“Admirable,” he muttered under his breath and grabbed her hand, pulling the Luna closer. “It’s going to be an express lesson. Seidhr is ancient magic that goddess Freyja herself used to see the future with. And sometimes alter it. Yes, some visions come naturally to Seers like you, and I bet the connection between the Moon Goddess and your wöll helps a lot. I can see it with my eyes closed. But often,

if you need answers to particular questions, and the answers don’t come easily, there is another way. Fast and foolproof.”

“Seidh,” Riannon repeated the word she had heard for the first time in her life. This wasn’t something Selene taught her wolf, but she knew she had to try it. Because she craved answers just as much as Joran did.

“What do I have to do?” she asked, tensing slightly.

“There are different ways to perform seidhr,” the Serpent chuckled darkly, taking her chin into his hand. “Most require close

contact. A kiss or intercourse-”

“Hard pass,” the Luna yanked her face away in disgust. She couldn’t imagine anyone other than Gideon touching her.

“Was worth a try,” Joran snorted. “If we are this picky, then I guess I can spare some blood of mine for you to consume.”

The thought alone repulsed Riannon, but it wasn’t much in the grand scheme of things. After all, species like vampires used blood

to access their magic all the time.

“Fine,” she agreed reluctantly and the man stretched his hand to her, offering his palm. Ria grew the nail on her index finger into a sharp claw and, looking into the deity’s eyes, slowly cut his skin to draw blood. The wound healed almost instantly, but a few drops were

left on the tip of her claw, and she knew this was more than enough for their purpose.

She brought the finger to her lips as Joran watched her every move, but then she paused and c\*\*\*\*d her brow up.

“And now let’s speak about the conditions,” she offered, ignoring how desperate he was. It was evident that he probably needed this

more than she did.

This did not make the Dragon God in front of her happy, and he frowned.

“The condition is you tell me what I want to know, and maybe I do not slaughter you here today!” He growled menacingly as the air

in the room became suffocating.

“Not good enough,” the Luna retorted, shrugging. “This is what I have now anyway. What is the point of giving you what you want,

then?”

“Let me tell you something, Queen of the West!” an ominous shadow ran over Joran’s eyes. “You think you’re so smart! But you’re not even ranking high on the list of the Queens before you. And there were so many before you. There will be many after you as well. You will be replacing each other in this post while I will keep reigning over the skies in the seas, ruling them from the divine realm you will never enter. I lived for thousands of years and I will leave for thousands more. And this is why when I tell you to do something, you’d better do it at once

without trying to outsmart me. Because, trust me, Queen,” he almost spat those words out, “You aren’t going to. You probably thought that thanks to your gift you would get me to back away from this war, but it’s not going to happen. If you don’t tell me where my dragonfly is, I will make sure that you live while I carve your baby out of your stomach and kill it before your eyes. It’s a boy, by

the way. Congratulations.”

She was not able to breathe while he said those words, entranced by the darkness that appeared in his eyes and showed her that.

his threats were serious.

She knew she couldn’t risk the baby. Maybe her son was still unborn, but he was already loved. The primal instinct to defend her pup overcame her, and she licked the blood drops off her claw, closing her eyes.

“Tell me where is my dragonfly,” Joran repeated calmly, but at the same time, he grasped the woman’s shoulders and squeezed them tightly.

Riannon was falling through the stars and galaxies... She did not have any control and did not know if this was ever going to end. She was just a tiny spec in the universe that travelled through times.

She saw a palace made of white moonstone and a couple reaching for each other in the darkness while nobody saw them.

However, they were wrong about that because Joran was there too, watching the two of them greedily...

Ria fell again. Through dark, ominous clouds and rain, through soft white clouds and blinding sun rays. The world was changing, and she was falling still. Until she saw a giant Serpent thrown into the sea. The creature did not want to leave his home, but he had no

choice.

“Dragonfly!” Joran’s voice cut her journey short, and she fell again.

She saw a woman with light silver hair taking her clothes off in the woods and a dragonfly tattoo shining on the left side of her back. Riannon tried looking for signs of where that woman was, but all she saw were the trees that surrounded her. She made a fire and threw all her clothes into it, watching it burn to ashes. The dragonfly took a plastic bag from under one of the tree roots and put on a fresh pair of jeans and a bra. Then, she went back to the fire and took out one of the thick branches inside of it that was still smouldering. Not wasting any time, the woman placed the hot end on her skin where the tattoo was situated and let out a snarl as she burned that place to the point that the skin became visibly charred. She threw the stick away when she was done with it and leaned over a tree, breathing

heavily.

Riannon wished to see the girl’s face, and at the same moment, she turned, making the Luna gasp at the sight of Astrid, one of the

Luna Trials contenders.

Astrid was in pain, but determination was painted all over her face as she got a black t-shirt out of the plastic bag and pulled it on, throwing everything else in the fire too. The last thing she did was get a little velvet pouch out and turn it upside down, making a little shining ring fall onto her palm. The Crescent Ring with a tiny star that Riannon had seen in so many dreams before tonight. The one she had been looking for.

Astrid cautiously looked around and put the fire down, walking away with just a little crossbody bag over her shoulders. There was no snow where she was, and Ria noticed a few more things she wished she didn't.

But it was too late because Joran shook her with force, making her open her eyes.

"You saw her!" he stated.

Not asked.

She wanted to lie to him so badly, knowing now that she couldn't give this person away.

"My dragonfly or your child, Riannon!" The Serpent grasped her neck now as if he was reading her mind. It was so tiny in his large palm that it was enough to press just a bit harder to snap it. "Choose!"

"She is going to the Eastern border," the Luna whispered, a single tear rolling down her cheek from all this helplessness. She was saving one person she loved but condemning another.



“How do you know?” Joran wanted proof.

“The trees around her are still northern pines,” she said, her voice hoarse. “And moss on them grows facing the North. Besides, she was walking towards the rising sun. She is heading East.”

“See, Riannon, it wasn’t that hard!” The deity scoffed and threw her across the room as if she weighed nothing. Ria managed to cover her belly, protecting her child, and tilted her body so that the impact with the wall hit her back. She knew that she was lucky and

this was just a light demonstration of what could have happened to her now.

“You recognised her, didn’t you?” The Serpent scoffed, stepping onto the windowsill he used to arrive here.

Riannon nodded quietly, knowing there was no point denying the obvious.

“Then you’d better forget.”

The deity was about to shift and leave when Riannon stood up, clenching her trembling fists. A cruel smile was playing on her lips when she told him.

“I hate to inform you, but you have way bigger problems than her now,” the Luna taunted, and his gaze travelled back to her with a glint of annoyance in it.

“Oh, really?” A wicked laugh rumbled through his chest.

“Enlighten me, Riannon.”

“Your brother is here,” she couldn’t hide her smirk when his dropped. “Can’t you feel what he is doing now?”

## **The Luna Trials by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 75**

### Chapter 75

Petra ran between the ancient pine trees of the Forbidden Forest like a flash of lightning. She may not have been the best warrior out there, but her speed was always impressive. This was one time when her small size was an advantage. It was much harder for the bear that followed her to keep up, but the beast was stubborn, and that was becoming a problem. She knew that bear. She recognised his scent at once when he got close to her on the battlefield because he was the one who kept visiting her while she was captive and swore that he would be the one to own her in the end. It seemed like he intended to keep his word even though the auction never happened. He was also the one Petra liked the least, not that she liked any of them. But there was something about this one... something that made her stomach churn in the worst of ways. She knew she’d better die than get into his paws..

However, that other scent that was now reaching her nostrils gave her hope. She dreamed of being enveloped in this pleasant earthy scent for the rest of her life. A part of her worried that he was chasing the bear because those beasts were much bigger and more dangerous now than ever before. The whispers travelled fast among the werewolves and lycans about their enemies changing into something else. Now everyone got a taste of that

change. They should have already won by now but were still struggling in reality. Their plan failed.

Petra thought of luring the bear into the Forgotten city. If she managed to get him into the tiles area, she could lead him into a trap. However, the problem was that they were now on the wrong side of the battlefield.

Something shifted before her in the darkness of the woods; at first, she did not know what that was. A chill soon ran down her spine when she saw another three bears walking out of thick shadows. The realisation made her stop, trying to change the direction.

A trap! It was a trap!

Her pursuer charged at her, knocking a few trees out of his way and breaking them into chips. He covered Petra with his heavy paw, and she found herself pinned to the ground just like that. She struggled desperately, trying to bite him, but that only amused him. That cruel glint in his eyes she noticed back at the bear castle was back, and it made her nauseous.

That did not last long, though, as a black wolf pounced at the beast on top of her, canines digging into his fur as deep as they could go and claws leaving their bloody marks on his back.

However, the bear managed to shake the werewolf off right in time for his comrades to catch up with them. Petra jumped in front of her mate, baring her teeth, her primal instincts were kicking in. Ash was next to her instantly, trying to push her behind them as the beasts surrounded them.

Four. There were four bears against the two of them. Enhanced, blessed, mutated... whatever it was called, they were simply stronger.

A loud growl emerged as one of the bears was attacked by an elegant chocolate wolf who tore a piece of flesh from his leg. Followed by a lycan who leapt at another monster.

It did not make Petra feel any better because she recognised her mentor, Evelyn and her suitor Kyle at once. Two more people she cared about were at risk now because of her. Sometimes she wished that Lyn did not care about her so much. Her life would be so much easier without Petra, who was always in need of saving. Even now, when she was putting up a fight for the first time in her life.

They stood back to back as the bears regrouped too. If they were regular white bears, the wolves would have a chance. A slim one, but it would be there. Right now... all they could do was pray and not give up. Because their powers were not equal, and surrendering would be so much worse than dying. They would have to fight until the last drop of blood if they had to.

Brigit had a hard time dodging attack after attack, slaughtering her own kind as she went through the battlefield, technically making a path for two armies to meet each other and separate Bjorn's lines.

Just that night, she reached her pack's camp and challenged her cousin, who was the new Alpha, for his position. The warriors at the Camp laughed at her and called her names that weren't new to her, only fuelling the flames of her anger more. They did not

know how much she needed their insults to keep going, to fight, to change the order that was so wrong and unfair. They did not scare her off. They didn't change her mind. They only reminded her of why she was doing this.

She was underestimated since birth. A girl. A thing to exchange for something more valuable.

Enough was enough. If the man of her kind we're not capable of change, she would make that step for them whether they wanted it

or not. Bridgit killed her cousin quickly. Well, he was showing off, thinking she was out of her mind when she looked him into a death grip and bit through the most crucial artery on his neck, dyeing the ground with his crimson blood.

She did not experience relief though because she knew that the men wouldn't be happy about her victory. This wouldn't be enough

for them. They would think it was beginners' luck and nothing else, and they would challenge her again.

Her prediction was correct, and her dead cousin's Beta challenged her mere seconds after his Alpha's death. She took her time with

this one, making it a spectacle this time but also ensuring that they all knew she wasn't lucky. She was plain good. So good that when she

was done, they finally bowed their heads to her.

She, never an heir, became the Alpha of her clan overnight and promised to lead them into a better future. She did not lie.

When it was their time to take their positions at the back according to Bjorn's plan, after he found out that she was the new Alpha,

she informed them of her real plan. The plan where they would strike their own kind at the back at the most crucial moment and change

the game. She could feel how men hesitated, but also she could feel how women were on her side, even if slightly wary. This was when

she simply had to hope that they would follow her, that they would believe in what she was offering them.

And luckily, most of them did.

Her warriors took care of the ones who disobeyed her first, proving their loyalty to their female Alpha. And then they waited just like she ordered them, which was another strike of luck because they were blessed by Joran like all the other bears and foxes. If she did not

want to wait, this brilliant opportunity would have been missed.

No one expected this and the changes that were happening to their bodies were scary at first. Bridget could feel her muscles growing, her claws getting longer and changing their shape, her teeth becoming sharper. She could hear sounds at a longer distance, see

further than she ever did, and was afraid to think what other abilities she had now. She also was not stupid and knew that this was

changing the balance of power, meaning that even with her betrayal of the bears, the wolves could still lose the battle and the war. The

-reasonable thing would have been to take a step back and abort her plan. Play nice and follow Bjorn until the day she died.

Only that she couldn't do this anymore. She had done this before. Took the most logical way out and not the one that her heart

desired. Each time she regretted her choice. She regretted staying in Castiel's harem for so long. She regretted pushing away and betraying her mate. She regretted so many things... And only when she burned that tower to help Aspen and Savannah escape she felt

good for the first time. She felt right..

So, she did not choose the reasonable thing. She chose to fight. Even the slightest possibility of having a happy ending was better than continuing life quietly under Bjorn's rule. Or anyone else who she did not choose herself. She was done with that.

But the price was high. Her pack had a hint of her scent now. They were recognisable, and soon every white bear knew who the

traitors were. Brigit's men had to face their wrath, but to their credit, none of them tried to flee. Which proved something very important.

Not all the bears were the same. Some of them could still be saved.

As their Alpha, Bridget stood out in the crowd too. That aura of power was impossible to hide, not that she would do it anyway. It

was all or nothing.

At first, Aspen looked for his mate to kill her, but she surprised him again. He killed a different bear first, releasing his frustration on him and watched Bridget being attacked again and again by her own kind. He had to give it to her, she managed to impress him. Never in a million years had he expected something like this. She arranged a coupe in the middle of the war, and she was now leading it.

This changed nothing for them, yet he found himself defending her when three giant bears charged at his ex-mate. He needed her for the rebellion she managed to pull today. She had to stay alive, and this was logical. This was also the only reason he was tearing to pieces everyone who dared to look at her with malice in their eyes. He was not falling for this trap again. He had already paid a price that was too high for this illusion.

The fight pushed them further and further away from the clearing, backing them into the walls of the Forgotten City. Aspen was fine with that. He was one of those wolves who knew this place like the back of his hand. It was literally in his



job description. Bridget was also supposed to know the surroundings because she went through this challenge during the Luna Trials. But they had yet to learn if the bears who tried to take them into a ring knew about the secret passages and tiles. Some of them did because Bjorn used that place a lot in the past. At least the catacombs were sealed now, and they would only have to fight on the surface.

Then again, nothing was going to help them when it was four against two.

The bears charged, joined by a fox who saw easy prey. Aspen killed it first to save time and threw its body at one of the bigger beasts

to try and distract it. He then injected himself between Brigit and another bear, cursing himself under his breath for this weakness of his. He was pathetic.

Brigit searched for at least a glimpse of his gaze, but he was avoiding her like the plague even though he was so close. That stubborn lycan shouldn't have been there at all, and yet... yet he was defending her time after time, after time. She prayed to all the gods she knew for them to get out of this. The bear Alpha had to promise herself that she would tell him how she felt about him when this was over. Even if he rejected her again, she wanted to do it. She always wanted to do it.

However, now wasn't the time for this as she hesitated for too long, trying to check on him and did not notice another fox monster created by Joran jumping at her and biting through a tendon on her leg. An angry snarl escaped her. Her leg hurt like

hell and made her pause... Enough for one of the bears to get close enough for that final blow of his claws. Those long sharp claws looked like talons now and were supposed to pierce through her like a knife through butter. Brigit closed her eyes before the inevitable.

Only to feel nothing.

When she dared to glance at her opponent again in disbelief, she saw why she was still alive. And Brigit finally got to see his eyes too, as Aspen stood between her and the beast. Pierced. His wine-red blood already trickling to the snow under his paws.

Her roar was so loud and full of pain that it resonated in everyone's heart.

This couldn't be his end. Aspen... he deserved so much better than this.

Rage and agony blinded her, and she slayed the one who did this to her mate. Even if he rejected her, Aspen would always be her mate. He was hers!

Another fox was next, followed by another bear. And then one more. She felt like she could kill them all now, not caring anymore who was before her.

Only that it was too late now because Aspen was lying under one of the walls of the Forgotten City in a pool of his own blood. The battle went on, but Brigit found herself back next to her mate, falling to her knees in her human form and ready to be killed next to him. If he was not happy in the future she tried so desperately to build, did she even want it?

me?”

“Open your eyes!” she ordered him through tears streaming down her face against her will. “Open your eyes, Aspen! Do you hear

Desperate. She was so desperate she had nothing to lose anymore. She asked Savannah to take care of her little sister when she passed the message, knowing that the Queen would stay alive either way. Neither Bjorn nor Kai would let anything happen to her. This was her only request when she sent Ingrid with the message about what she was planning to do.

Since this was taken care of, she only had Aspen to worry about. She did not want the new order any more. She did not want her Alpha title. All Brigit wanted was her mate alive and well, even if it was without her. It seemed like a little price to pay now.

He forced his eyes open and did not try to avert her gaze this time. She could feel his body quivering in her hands, pushing the rest of

his blood out. And there was nothing she could do about it. Everything was happening too fast.

She wrapped her hands around him, digging her face into his soft fur and crying without holding back.

“Please,” she wept, “I love you. I love you, I love you, I love you! Just stay with me! Stay without me! Do whatever you want, but please stay alive. Fight! Live! Be happy! Hate me all you want! I know I deserve it... Just... please...”

The lycan wolf in her arms whimpered softly, licking the tears off her cheeks and making all of this much more painful.

“I was a horrible mate! I know this! I did not deserve you! Just stay alive, and you will meet your second chance! I swear, she will be great, and she will make you happy! Please! Please, Aspen, fight for your life...”

She trembled at first, but soon she began to shake uncontrollably. She did not notice how four of her bears stood behind her back, covering her and not letting anyone reach their Alpha. She did not care. Not if this was how it ended tonight.

Aspen couldn't do anything. The pain seized his body like a chain. Each movement only tightened it and prolonged the torture. That she bear was trouble, and he had to push her away. Only that he did not want to. He had to admit it, at least to himself in his final moments, that this was probably the best ending for him. Feeling her warmth again, knowing that she cared at least a little bit, knowing that what he imagined wasn't actually just his imagination. They loved each other despite all their differences; despite the war.

Betrayals aside, they always loved each other and simply knowing that he was dying a happy man.

Aspen used the last bits of his strength to shift into his human form because he wanted to taste her lips one last time. He did not care about his legs anymore. He did not care about revenge at all. He only cared about this beautiful woman who betrayed him once, whom

he couldn't trust and with whom he would do the same things all over again if he was to ever repeat this life. There was only one regret on his mind now. He wished they had more time. He wished they had another chance.

But sadly, life was slipping away from him.

Savannah was getting tired, but the bears kept coming. Joran's blessing proved to be a big problem for them. She was watching the she-wolves beside her getting exhausted as well. Some of them were already dead, and this was making her angry. Deep inside, she

wished naively that she would be able to bring all of them back alive. However, that plan was not destined to come true and just by

throwing a quick glance around the field below the mountain she stood on, she knew that the losses were terrible. And she also knew

that it was possible that despite all their effort, all the great plans and the alliances they forged, they were still going to lose. That tasted

bitter and was a hard pill to swallow.

From the corner of her eye, she noticed a group of white bears climbing up to where she was standing now. The Luna of the North

had no doubts that Bjorn was the one at the very front of them, and she could already feel his scent of Wintergreen. She also saw Amarok

and a few of his loyal northern warriors following the enemies, and her lips almost curled into a smile. She did not feel good or bad

about it. A part of her always knew that this was how the war would end. And she was ready to accept this ending.

Savvy shifted from her royal lycan form into her wolf with ease and stood on the top of the path Bjorn used now until he could see

her. He was already near, and their eyes locked when she sprinted away to the top of the mountain as fast as the wind. The paths were

narrow, icy and slippery, but she knew she had to take the White Bear King as far away and as high as possible..

Bjorn charged after the woman who haunted his mind, her beautiful white fur blended with the snow, but her black ears were giving her location away. He knew very well that she was playing a game with him, and he was in. Whatever it took, he was getting her back tonight. Everything was on his side today. He had never been this close to winning.

She got to the top with ease, but it took him longer, and he couldn't ignore Amarok's growls behind his back. His rival would be here

soon, and Bjorn had no illusions about that. They would fight him together.

But he had no problem with that. If he had to prove his strength to Savannah, he would do just that.

It started snowing heavily when he reached the top and saw her slender figure standing alone, waiting for him to arrive. A huge black hawk flew straight to his mate and turned into her assistant just for a second to pass her a shawl to wrap around her body.

The girl with

short black hair glared at him, but after a few words from his mate, feathers covered her body again, and she flew back to the sky.

Savannah was in her human form, and it meant that she wanted to talk.

Bjorn really did not mind. He wanted to talk too. To talk to her, to touch her, to kiss her, to finally take her. He couldn't wait any

longer; this time, he would play his cards differently when he got her back.

He shifted before her eyes and straightened his back, proudly walking towards her with no clothes on. He knew he did not have to be embarrassed about his body and hoped to notice at least one appreciative glance from her, one hint... a tint on her cheeks... anything! However, his cruel little mate of his gave him nothing, remaining indifferent.

“Let’s go home, Savannah,” he told her at once, even though he promised himself to be patient.

“I am home,” she shook her head defiantly. “I am defending it from you.”

“This is my home too. The North is mine!” he gritted his teeth, clenching his fists but still trying not to scare her off. He could hear his bears fighting Amarok. He saw the black hawk still circling in the sky above his Queen. That bird was big enough to carry Savvy away in its claws if it had to, but he would kill it before he’d let that happen. Werebirds were quickly becoming his least favourite shifters. Too free, too unpredictable, too much magic at their disposal, too hard to control.

“Let’s agree to disagree on that!” She lifted her chin higher. “But look at what you are doing to it! It’s not too late to stop this now. You can still rule your bears on your territory. It doesn’t have to be like this.”

A deep cold laugh escaped him as he threw his head back. She wasn’t serious!

“Why would I do that when I am winning?” he glared at her with a sneer. “Look below, Savannah. What do you see?”

“I see a mad deity’s champions fighting in agony for something that would never be theirs! I see so many dead people who had their lives before them, and now they will be a feast for the crows! I see a madman-”

“Enough!” he stopped her, not wishing to hear this nonsense. “I am tired of giving up on what’s mine! And so are my people!”



We aren't doing this anymore, and everyone will have to learn and deal with this!"

"I hope you don't mean me!" the Luna snarled, the shawl falling off her shoulder and revealing the most beautiful North star mark

on her neck. It sparkled like the starry sky, stabbing his heart with its meaning. Bjorn choked on the air from the pain. He had already seen it in the videos. He knew that his worst enemy marked his mate. He knew that Fenrir interfered and somehow gave them a mate bond as a present that Kai did not deserve.

However, it was different to see it with his own eyes.

"Face the truth, Bjorn!" Savvy was as cruel to him as ever. "I love another. Win or lose, you will never change that."

"Challenge accepted," he smirked at her through all the pain. "Deep inside, you know that you were supposed to be my mate next. You did not feel it because you were mated to Zack, and straight after his death, it was too early. When it was time, Fenrir robbed me and gave you to Kai. But mark my words, Savannah, when I kill him, everything will be reverted. You will become mine again. Everything will be fine!"

"Do you even hear yourself?" she asked, frowning. "You are going to kill another mate of mine. Do you remember what it did to me the first time? Do you even care?"

"Last time you killed Zack, and this was why it was so physically challenging. And this time-" Bjorn was looking for excuses, and he was finding them. "This time, I will kill him

myself. Not to mention that it's a fake mate. He will be gone, and so will your great love for him. We will be able to finally be together!"

"I doubt it!" Savannah chuckled bitterly. "Look down, Bjorn. How many people I care about are dead down there? Just face it, I will

hate you forever, no matter how today ends."

He pressed his lips into a thin white line, knowing she was telling the truth. The truth he would never be willing to accept. He was a fighter, and he would fight for her until the moment he was dead.

"Then my love would be enough for the two of us!" he swore bitterly, each word a promise.

He took a step in her direction, but a tall ice spike grew in his way, followed by more.

Amarok was finally here.

Fenrir watched his people fight and suffer. He planned to be gone by now, but something stopped him, and he couldn't explain that. Some lingering feeling was eating up his soul, and he couldn't fight it.

It had been so long. Almost a century since he was this close to his people. Back then, he was in despair and could only watch them die one by one, losing yet another kingdom in the process. The East never recovered after that battle.

Would today be the end of the North? Although everything was telling him that, he did not want to believe that.

His brother gained more power since the last time he saw him. Blessing so many people in one go was madness. They were gods, but

even their power had limits. Fenrir learned that the hard way.

It was surprising how after so many centuries, Jormungand still craved to rule. Even if just over mortals. Or maybe he just wanted to

erase the wolves from the face of the earth? Did he still hate him this much? It looked like it...

He couldn't help but think that this was his brother's main goal. Destroying the lycans, creatures created by Fenrir, would be the

same as destroying his legacy. Killing most werewolves would give Jor control over the one that remained, bringing him one step closer

to his main wish.

There was just one problem, and Fenrir sighed, watching how his creations fought fiercely when everything was against them. Moon

Goddess' creature did not disappoint either.

He knew that wolves did not deserve to perish. They were the most loyal, beautiful creatures out there who always took care of

each other. This was something his own family never gave him, and this was why both lycans and werewolves deserved to live.

“I am so going to regret this!” he closed his eyes, wrapping his fingers tighter around the Divine Spear and summoning its power...

