

# The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

## Chapter 79

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Chapter 79.

Savannah closed her mouth with her hands, afraid to even take a single gulp of breath. This couldn't be happening. This was some kind of a sick joke.

Or there was another Castiel who her mate could be talking to in the middle of the night... However unlikely that sounded.

There could be another explanation. There had to be another explanation.

"No, that part changes obviously," Zack went on, "Savannah is my mate, and she will stay with me. But think of it, Cass. It's for the best. We agreed that I would become the Wolf King and rule the werewolves that would remain and it would be so much easier if the lycan princess was my wife. She will be the symbol of my power..."

Sawy tried not to breathe. She wanted to cry, to scream, to burst into this room and confront her mate.

But she was taught better than this. She was trained. She was prepared.

Unfortunately, now her broken heart did not matter anymore. She would have to think of it later. And maybe it was for the best, because Athena was unsettled inside and she needed to control her better, so that Zack's wolf wouldn't sense any distress. She had to play the happy mate part now more than ever.

"There will be no need for this," her mate's voice sounded firm. "Savannah is mine and we mated today. I will mark her tomorrow and be done with it. Trust me, I can control my mate. You don't have to worry about it. She won't be a problem... No, she will not be a distraction, trust me. The proof is that it's our first night and I am here talking to you. Just deal with your women. You have too many to worry about. I'll deal with mine. Savannah will be busy the next few years mourning her brother and friends as well as giving birth to my pups..."

His every word felt like a slap to her face. How could a mate do this to another mate? He sounded so cold and calculating... Did he not feel anything for her? Was it even possible?

"Yes," Zack seemed annoyed, "I will contact them all and let them know where you expect them tomorrow. Do you think the redhead will crack by then?"

He listened to someone on the phone and Sawy couldn't hear what Castiel was saying, no matter how hard she tried. She knew that she would be able to if she got closer. But then Zack would be able to sense her and she couldn't risk it.

"Yeah, it is lucky that now he will never be able to make that marriage alliance with the North... No, he has no idea. I think everything will go smoothly and it will be done tomorrow. Just make sure you kill Gideon in one blow and don't create any more trouble for us... Fine, I'll call them now. Bye."

The words echoed in Savannah's ears again and again.

She then heard her mate hanging up and dialling another number and prepared to listen again.

"Yeah, hi," Zack said to someone at the other end of the line, but this was when she sensed another werewolf walking from the other end of the corridor and hurried back to their bedroom.

Although 'their' wasn't the right word anymore. Life was cruel and Savannah became the happiest girl alive and the most broken one in just under twenty-four hours. She curled in the bed, pretending to sleep and thinking about her options. She needed to get out of this place and preferably do it fast.

But before she did that, she wanted to do something else – to find out the names of the people Zack according to what she heard, she had to try.

She heard from Reid that Riannon let herself be captured willingly to try and use that chance to destroy their enemy. And Savannah thought that, as a princess, she owed it to her people and her family to at least try. She was more than just a breeding machine his mate took her for.

Tears were treacherously forming in her eyes at the thought of him. But she forbade herself to cry. She couldn't give herself away that easily.

she heard the sounds of approaching steps and then the creaking of the opening door. The scent of her mate overwhelmed her again. He had that musky masculine scent with a hint of something woody. She loved it so much when they first met a few hours ago. And now it was enveloping around her, tempting her to pretend that she did not hear anything, did not know anything.

A part of her wished she could. Because deep inside there was this longing for him.

The mattress next to her dipped and in a few moments Zack's hands were wrapped around her. He brushed his nose and lips gently over her neck and shoulder, inhaling her own scent. And after doing it a few times, he planted a soft kiss on her silky skin.

That would have been a sweet moment if only he wasn't a lying scumbag who plotted to betray them and to kill her brother. Savannah had to channel all her inner strength not to try and kill him now. She could probably do that. He was a werewolf and she was a royal lycan.

Only that then would it be unlikely for her to escape and warn her brother of the betrayal. She did not know the exact plan yet. It would probably still work

without Zack. So, she couldn't kill him now. Even though he was breaking her heart.

She had been waiting for a mate all her life. For a person who was supposed to love her unconditionally.

But he didn't. Zack didn't. He did not even hesitate to use her to his advantage. He did not consider her feelings. And it did not seem to have any kind of remorse about it. On the contrary, he adapted fast and had already chosen a role for her. Without hesitation. Just like that...

"I know you are not sleeping," he whispered and her whole body tensed as he cupped her breast, chuckling. "Sawy, you are wearing my shirt and when I left you, you were naked. Just the way I like it."

Of course. This was all he needed her for after all. "So, what were you doing while I was gone?" he asked, teasing her with his fingers.

And she decided to just go with the role he chose for her. This was how he saw her and it had to do. For now.

"I went to the bathroom and realised that you were gone," she pouted her lips and could feel him smirking at that. "I missed you and decided to put your shirt on. Where have you been? You left me all alone..."

"I am sorry, *my love*," he bit her earlobe gently. "Urgent pack matters. You looked so tired. I did not want to bother you. But I am all yours now."

His hands started going up and down her body, one of them dangerously low on her thighs.

"I am tired," she tried to whine (something she wasn't particularly good at). "Tomorrow is a long day and you have already exhausted me. Could you... could you just hold me?"

Zack chuckled again and stopped his advances, following her request. "Anything for you," he lied, and she felt as if a knife went through her heart. They could have been happy. They could have had anything. But they never would... Savannah started to control her breathing to make it seem as if she had fallen asleep. But every time

She closed her eyes just for a moment, after fighting with herself for most of the night, and the sunlight was already streaming through the windows. But most importantly, Sawy felt something sharp grazing over the sensitive spot on her neck. The realisation that these were Zack's canines made her flinch and he growled in protest.

"What's wrong?" he asked her, turning her to face him. "We are mates, aren't we? You are mine. I want to mark you, Savannah."

She had to switch on her inner Riannon, running her fingers up his naked chest.

"I want that too, Zack. More than anything," she bit her lip seductively when she looked at him and that made him snarl hungrily. "But... I want a marking ceremony. As you know, I am a princess and there are rules and traditions. These are very important for lycans. Those things are inherited by us from the olden days. Lycan royals were marking their mates publicly so that there could never be rumours about the couple and their children. It's important to us."

"Then marking ceremony it is," he agreed with ease. He probably really wanted to be the king if he bought that lie.

"We need to get ready," Savvy sighed with a fake regret in her voice. "Gideon might find out where Ria is any minute. And we can't lie in bed naked. We need to be prepared."

"Life is unfair," the Alpha snorted, but got out of bed after all and went in the direction of what looked like a bathroom. "Care to join me? I bet we still have a few minutes to spare," he taunted.

"I am not a big fan of quickies," slipped off her tongue before she bit it. But, luckily, he only let out a little laugh and then closed the door behind him.

Savannah decided not to waste time and charged for the bedside table, where she noticed his phone. To her disappointment, it was locked and, after a few attempts with the six digit code, she had to admit that it was useless. So, she put it back and stared at the wall in front of her. There was an almost full-sized picture of her mate hanging in a golden frame.

What a narcissist.

The time went by quickly and she was counting seconds until Zack would come out after he was done showering.

The smile on his portrait was smug and she did not like it.

"Maybe it's a misunderstanding," Athena suggested, and Savvy smiled bitterly. She wished it was a misunderstanding. But she knew that it was not. "But he is our mate, we need to at least talk to him," the wolf suggested.

"We will talk when our family is safe," she cut her off.

"But look at his face! Someone like him can't be..."

"Right!" Savvy jumped onto her feet with his phone in her hands and went all the way to the wall, swiping her finger and enabling... face recognition.

She had to try different angles, but in the end the phone *unlocked*.

Savannah knew she had seconds to get what she needed and she scrolled through the list of the last calls first. Luckily, Zack was very well organised and next to each name there was also the name of the pack.

"Bingo!" she whispered with excitement, but at the last moment a new message icon appeared and she opened it, her eyes going wide.

Zack took his time in the shower as if water could help him wash away the feeling of guilt that his wolf tried to make him feel. But the decisions were made long before Savannah. All that he could do now

She would still be a royal and she would have their kids to *love* instead of her brother. Yes, it wasn't perfect, but it would work. He could tell that she already loved him, the bond *made* him change his *own* plans. He was supposed to kill her together with Gideon, erase the western *royal lycan* family *once* and for all. But the moment he saw her, he knew that he would move mountains to keep her. *And while everyone* discussed their plans at the impromptu Alpha meeting, he was making *adjustments* to his *own* plan in his mind.

He couldn't sleep even with Savannah by his side and only after talking *to his partner* Castiel *did* he feel at ease. They could both have it all.

He dried himself properly after the shower and walked out of the bathroom *not to find* his mate waiting patiently for him on the bed as he had hoped.

"Sawy?" he called her, but there was no response. Although, what was he hoping *for?* That she was hiding under the bed?

Zack got his clothes and started pulling items on one by one, feeling how distressed his wolf

was.

"What is it?" he asked nervously. "Our mate is unhappy. She is far away and getting further every second!" The reply irked him. There was no *way...* No way in hell!

He quickly scanned the room and saw his phone right where he left it. But just in case, he decided to check. Savy couldn't know the code...

Yet when he checked the messages, everything became clear. The last two were received while he was in the bathroom. And they were both already marked as read.

One was from King Gideon. But the other... the other could be the end of him if he didn't get his mate back.

"My mate Sawanah is gone and is on the run," Zack mind linked his Beta, "Send everyone available. You've got to trace and get her back. I am going to. This is a

life and death kind of situation. But I would prefer to get Savannah back alive. If there is a chance of that..."

He threw the phone away and shifted, jumping out of the window. He had to get her and he had to do it fast.

Sawy managed to reach the woods unnoticed in just her mate's boxers and shirt. There was no point wearing anything else as the moment she was hidden by the bushes, she shifted into her wolf work and ran, ran, ran. But before she even managed to get far, she heard a howl after a howl. Dozens of wolves were after her now and she sped up.

Her wolf, Athena, was a true Alpha warrior and despite of being in pain, she accumulated all their energy to save themselves.

She had the speed of a lycan as her advantage. But unfortunately, she did not know where she was. These lands were unknown to her and she didn't recognise her surroundings.

However, these *were* minor things now, because here and there she started to see the glimpses of other wolves. They were getting closer. And she knew that there were too many of them for her to handle alone.

But she wasn't going to give up.

A grey and white wolf jumped on top of her out of nowhere, knocking her off her feet. Savannah bared her teeth and ripped his neck out for obstructing her. The blood sprayed her own fur.

And soon she sensed him. Her mate. He was after her too...

Two brown wolves attacked her from two different sides. She managed to bury her claws and teeth in one of them, but unfortunately, the other one ripped a part of her side.

She winced from pain, but charged at him next, killing him almost instantly. Then she finished off the first one and charged in the opposite direction from the howls. She was running for her life now. But not only. She was also running for the lives of everyone she loved.

Savannah could feel them with her skin. They were literally inches apart now. So *many* of them.../ Would Zack kill her now, knowing that she wasn't a little obedient princess? Or would he just hurt her and lock her up? She heard so many stories about Alphas treating their mates horribly. She'd rather die than be one of them.

But in all honesty, she'd prefer to kill him instead.

She took one last leap and ended up with her paws in the shallow water. It was a small river and she decided to cross it.

Her pursuers charged right after her, yet suddenly, out of nowhere, three pumas jumped out from the trees on the shore she just walked out on, followed by a beautiful snow leopard.

Savannah shifted back to her human form in seconds, falling to her knees and raising her hands. "Asylum!" she screamed, "I, Savannah Stormhold, seek asylum!"

She turned to look over her shoulders and realised that there were more than just three pumas there. There were also several lions and tigers, all of them baring their teeth at the wolves.

Zack shifted before her eyes, looking at her with a mix of emotions. But fury was evident on his face.

"Sawy, come back!" he called her with an intonation that, before everything she found out today, she could call gentle and full of love.

But she wasn't buying any of that anymore.

"No!" she said firmly and the snow leopard shifter into a young woman with snow-white hair that contrasted with her skin. A part of her skull was shaven while the other was braided into many thin long braids tied together.

"I am Alpha Zack Morgan," her mate spoke, addressing the woman, who was clearly in charge there. "This is my mate, Savannah. All I want is to get her back."

"She doesn't look like she wants to go with you," the white-haired woman smirked.

"It's just a lovers' quarrel!" Zack insisted, talking as if Sawy wasn't even there. "I'll take her home and we'll fix everything."

"No, we will not!" she stood up from the ground, covering her bleeding side with one hand and clenching the fist of another. She had enough and she wanted to put an end to this. "I, Savannah Stormhold, princess of the West Lycan Kingdom and a member of the Stormhold pack, reject you, Alpha Zack Morgan, as my mate."

"No!" he growled so loudly that flocks of birds flew away from the nearby trees, feeling the predator. "I do not accept!"

She wanted to insist, but the wolves suddenly charged at the werecats and a new fight began. Savvy wanted to join them, but the woman with white hair stopped her.

"There is no need," she said, "They will not be able to come to our land." It looked like it was the truth as more and more huge cats were arriving now. She saw pumas,

Savannah realised how lucky she was. The wolves would hardly be able to deal with all of them, Those were deadly beauties.

"Come," the girl stretched her hand, "You need help and you will get it here. My name is Cresseida, am the daughter of Alpha Ramina."

"Nice to meet you, Cresseida," Savvy smiled weakly, "I will never forget your kindness. And, *now*, please... It's very urgent. I need a phone to speak to my brother..."

Gideon was standing and watching at the mansion where his beloved was kept and wishing nothing more than to get her out now. He was about to try and connect with her via the mind link when his phone rang

His sister's voice was trembling and he wanted to ask her what was going on. But she stopped him and told him things that he least expected to hear

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## Chapter 80

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Riannon was locked in her room and the feeling was not new to her. Now that she had time to think about it, she had been trapped before. In her first marriage with Brayden. She was a hostage *to* that relationship and her own reputation. Trying to be perfect all the time was exhausting. It was *funny* that only death helped her to see the vicious cycle. Gideon helped her to get *free from* it. And just like that time, soon he would help her to her freedom once again. She knew it.

But by the time he came to get her, she was sure that she would destroy this place. And when she heard a knock on the door, a smirk formed on her lips.

"Onyx, help me out to scan this place," she asked her wolf, and now she could sense that there was only one person behind the door. A female. Two guards were standing at a distance that would make it hard for a regular shifter to know what they were talking about. Those two were new. The Paddington and the fox she knew were replaced by Castiel and now no one was fulfilling her every request like before. The fox king learned his lesson.

"Riannon," Bridgit whispered, "Do you hear me?"

"Yes," she smiled, knowing that the presence of the werebear was the proof of her plan working. "How did you manage to get here? I thought that everyone would be punished..."

"Everyone was punished," Bridgit confirmed with a sigh, "But I am not everyone. I have some privileges around here and Castiel either trusted me or forgot to strip me of them yesterday."

"Good for you," Ria chuckled, "He didn't forget to strip me of my privileges, as you can see."

"Oh, Riannon, you are still the most privileged woman here. Just the fact that you are locked in the room that's right opposite to his own is proof of that."

Ria swallowed. She did not want to think of Castiel sleeping this close to her.

"Anyway, he is not here now," Bridgit assured her, "and I want to speak to you again. Do you have any kind of a plan?"

She did have a plan. A few actually. But this right now was her number one plan. She wasn't sure though that sharing the details with the werebear was a good idea though. All they had was two conversations and during the first one, Bridgit tried to kill her. This wasn't a friendship built on trust just

yet.

She was probably silent for too long and the girl on the other side of the door got that right. "Listen," Bridgit sighed, "you probably don't get how it feels to be betrayed by a man you loved." Oh, the irony of that statement was not lost on Ria, but she did not say a word.

"When we joined the harem one by one, we knew that he wasn't exclusive with either of us. But each of us believed that there was a possibility of that. Castiel could make you feel like you are the only one for him. While he is with you... but over time, I think all of us realised that this would never be the case. However, it was too late because each of us had feelings for him."

"Bridgit," Riannon couldn't stop herself from saying, "he is hot as hell, yes. But there is no way that every single woman could fall in love with him. Have you seen his lab? Have you seen what he is doing there? He learned to create scents that give you a similar response that you would have if you met your mate. I hate to be the one telling you that, but he is so good because he was experimenting a lot. And I think that he was experimenting on you. All of you."

The werebear girl on the other end of the door was silent but then started speaking again with

"We all came here willingly, and we agreed to be with him willingly too. The rest is history."

For a moment there Riannon was worried that she had lost her new ally. Was it too late for those girls? Was there some kind of addiction to those scents? After all, Brayden was an Alpha and he had fallen to the charm pretty fast. She always thought that it was because of Roxy's siren abilities, but what if those artificial scents were to blame too?

"But," Bridgit chose to continue her speech, giving her hope, "When we entered the Eden there was an

it on both ends. Each girl agreed to be with him and not to be the only one. Each of us had a

different reason for that. Some had no choice, like me, some already liked Castiel, some were seeking, political gains and some were so poor that living in the harem of the fox king did not seem like a bad thing at all. The list goes on and on. But there was one condition that he himself set for all of us. He was always saying that it's important to him that each of us lived here willingly. He made it a big point and this was one of the reasons we all trusted him so much. He said that we could leave whenever we wanted."

"And?" Ria leaned over the cold door.

"And when after the revelations of yesterday, a few girls expressed the desire to leave, he did not let them," the she-bear's voice trembled. "Everyone is locked in the Eden now. Now we know why there is only one door and no windows except for the ceiling that we can't get to."

"The Eden is locked yet you are here," Riannon pointed out. She still wasn't convinced she could trust the woman she was talking to.

"I know how it looks," Bridgit replied to that calmly, "but I was here for years. I earned his trust. And he doesn't know yet that he lost mine. I was thinking about what you told me. As long as I stay here, I will never meet my mate. And I want to try that, to experience that. I want to be the only one for someone. I don't think I want to share anymore. I want to love and be loved in return. I want a mate who would never lock me up or lessen me. I want what you described to me. I want all of it if that makes sense."

"It does." Ria could feel that the girl was telling her the truth. "So? Do you have a plan?" she asked once again. "I do," Ria finally admitted, "Do you think you can fight and open the door of the harem on your

Own?"

"We can, but there are more guards here than usual. We wouldn't be able to tackle them on our own."

"You won't have to," the Alpha smirked, "All you have to do is wait for my signal to act."

"What will the signal be?" Bridgit asked.

"Oh, don't worry," Riannon chuckled, "You will recognise it when you hear it."

"I hope you do understand that we entrust our lives to you," the werebear said, a slight hesitation in her voice.

"And I am not making you any promises." Ria wanted to be honest with these girls, who were already lied to so many times. "I am asking for your trust, yes. But I cannot promise you that when the action starts every one and each of you will survive. If you want to have your freedom, you will have to fight for it yourselves. I will be with you – this is something that I can promise. Because I will be fighting for my own freedom and the freedom of my people. I have already been fighting for it for a while. I know that we deserve it and I know that this is what the Moon Goddess always wanted for her daughters. I changed the laws for women, and I want to live in the kingdom that I am building with my mate to see the changes that I made with my own eyes. Every red girl would be welcome in my land if they have nowhere to go. This is also something that I can promise. But for the rest – you will have to make your own decisions now and if

The silence was her reply and she was afraid that this wasn't what the werewolf wanted to hear. But she sensed how the girl placed her hand on the door.

"I will tell the others," she said, "I can't speak for them now. But I am willing to fight by your side, Riannon."

A sigh of relief escaped her and she smiled to herself. This was exactly what she wanted.

"I need to go now," Bridgit whispered, "The ones willing to fight will be waiting for your signal whatever it is."

"As I have already told you – it would be hard to miss," Ria grinned.

Gideon was getting closer and closer with his best warriors to the place where, according to the little fox, his mate was kept. They took mostly lycans and some of the very best werewolves since Maya insisted on it. A huge force was left slightly behind them in case things got really bad. He couldn't march with them into this territory and give themselves away immediately. He at least hoped to get to Riannon first.

The scent of warriors guarding the perimeter hit his nostrils and he motioned for his people to stop. Through the bushy branches of trees, Gideon noticed the glimmering of the distant lights. The palace of the fox king was well hidden deep inside the woods. This kind was used to not being together all the time and hiding in small groups so that enemies couldn't find them even within their territory. They would have been searching these woods forever if not for the top of the disappointed and broken Roxanne. He ordered

for her to be moved into a better cell now. Purely because she was pregnant.

He made a few steps, counting the guards that he would have to kill to get closer when he felt her. His mate. She could feel that she was agitated and not happy. He could also feel that, despite all that, she wasn't broken. She was determined and stayed strong. And the feeling of pride for her filled his chest.

"Riannon," he called her name via the mind link and immediately felt a wave of happiness and relief coming from her via their bond.

"Gideon!" There was so much in her voice. He knew that she had been waiting for him, that she missed him. He never admitted it to himself, but he had been worried. He had been worried that Castiel would do something to her, trick her, bewitch her or whatever. He had been worried that he could hurt her even though he knew that his mate was strong. Waiting and not knowing had been an agony for him and he was so happy to hear her voice. Just one word of hers healed his heart and his soul.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"Yeah," she said and he could tell that she was smiling through tears. He could feel her sharing his emotions through their bond. "And you?"

"I am now! I am coming for you," he chuckled, "Just give me a moment or two." "I will wait for you for the eternity if I have to," Ria reassured him.

"You will not have to, my love," he gave her a promise that he intended to keep. But then suddenly he felt her worried and distressed. "Riannon, are you all right? What is happening? Speak to me!" he was desperate to know what was going on.

"He came to take me somewhere," she informed him quickly. "He knows that you are here. I think it's a trap, Gideon."

"It couldn't have been anything else," he tried to calm her down and give her strength, "I am ready to face whatever he has got!"

"And I will help you," his mate promised, switching off their connection.

"I'll see you soon," he said into the emptiness before him, hoping that she could feel his intentions.

And then he shifted his men following his command.

They were as fast as lightning, cutting through the bushes before their enemies could even see them, digging their sharp teeth into the werebears, leaving the foxes to the werewolves to deal with.

Gideon was ripping throats and guts out, each kill bringing him closer to his *woman*.

He had almost reached the building – a very tall mansion with a glass dome towering over its centre when he received a distress syngas from Reid.

"What is wrong?" He asked him via the link while still staying one bear after another.

"They attacked us. They were expecting a backup from this side I guess," his Beta notified him, growling. Reid was probably fighting too now. This meant that whoever Gideon had with him was it.

"Can you take them down?" the Lycan king asked. "Yes, but it will take time. Will you manage without us?"

"I think so," he replied, "But when you are done there, come here. Since they know already, there is no point in staying behind."

His Beta cut him off and it meant that he was in the very heart of a battle. And Gideon hated it. He hated that someone tried to take his mate and his friends away from him. This made him and Mars even more furious. Their common beast was threatening to overtake them too. Because it hated that someone tried to take what was his...

He was already near the entrance when he heard the loudest and most piercing howl, recognising his mate...

"You are coming with me!" Castiel burst into Riannon's room, grabbed her hand roughly and pulled her after him.

"Just leave me alone!" she struggled against him, not making it easy for him. Onyx inside of her was ready to act any moment.

"Stop it, Ria, I am just taking you to a safe place! I don't want you to get hurt!" he gritted his teeth, throwing her into the arms of two werebears, whose grip was painfully tight.

"Hurt?" she scoffed. "These are my people over there and they came for me! I'd rather believe that you are trying to cover yourself with me! And why don't you try to take your girls to that wonderful safe place?!"

"Because," he was next to her in less than a second and grabbed the hair at the back of her head, tugging it to make her look at him, "Because the only one I am worried about is you."

He crashed his lips into her and she completely did not expect this. His tongue was forcing itself inside and trying to dominate her. The two guards were still holding her hands and she felt him using Gideon's scent again. As if it could have helped to make her agree to any of this.

Anger boiled inside of her, like lava. It spread down her veins and filled her whole. So much for not forcing women!

Riannon wanted blood and blood she got because she bit him as hard as she could, spilling the warm ruby liquid from his tongue and his lips.

Shocked, Castiel stepped away, looking at her with wide eyes and covering his mouth with one hand. It took him a few seconds to process what she had done, but then a smirk appeared on his face, which annoyed her even more.

"Not your Queen!" each word was punctuated with the growls from the outside which were getting closer and closer, "Gideon's!"

"We'll see about that!" Castiel spat the blood onto the immaculate marble floor of the passage they used, "Bring her to the dungeons and lock her in the best cell until it's over. Trippl the men guarding her. I want them to never get to her until I am dealing with this!"

"Will be done, my king," one of the bears said, and Riannon burst out laughing. She couldn't stop for a while and now the three men looked at her, not knowing why she had such a reaction.

"You see," Ria raised her chin and tilted her head slightly, "this is exactly your problem! You recognised me as this special, perfect Luna but even now you are not taking me into consideration. And this is exactly why a man like you will never be by my side!"

"No offence, my dear," Castiel smirked, "but I know that you haven't been able to shift since your wolf returned."

"Oh, really?" she snorted, relaxing in her captors' hands to give them a false feeling of overpowering her finally. "And who told you that? By any chance was that your spy Marcus?"

The king's face changed but it was too late.

"You think I am a powerless female who can't shift?" Riannon snarled, her eyes glowing with pure light, "The Moon Goddess herself blessed me! Now, watch me shift!"

It took her less than one breath to let Onyx out in all her glory, their silvery-white fur glowing just like the last time. She could feel how power was streaming through her and she knew that she could destroy anyone in her way now. She had been brought back for a reason. And this fight that was ahead of her today was a significant part of it.

Castiel and his two bears were looking at her in shock and she used that moment to lift her head up to the moon and let out the deepest and longest howl of her life. In that howl, the Moon Goddess herself was joining, calling to every woman in the area to fight for what was right.

Deep inside the Eden, every girl in red heard that howl and Bridgit's mouth opened when she recognised the sign they all had been waiting for. They felt the ancient goddess' call and most of them chose to respond to it.

"Ladies, it's time!" Bridgit commanded and one by one they were turning into their beasts – wolves, bears, lionesses, panthers, birds, reptiles... Castiel sure got himself an amazing and rare collection. But now he was about to taste their fury.

Bridgit's white bear, Uma, was the one to knock out the doors of Eden and to attack the guards outside of it. But the rest joined her quickly, destroying anyone who stood in their way. They all had enough

and they all craved freedom now.

Gideon had to blink twice when he saw a fox being thrown out of the window. He was finishing off yet another bear when he finally could have a glimpse of what was going on inside. And it seemed like there was pure chaos.

"After me!" he commanded to his warriors and jumped inside through the window on the first floor. Enemy warriors were throwing themselves at him, but he dealt with them at ease, amazed by the sight of a huge eagle pecking out one of the foxes' eyes. When the bird was done, they looked at each other and he wasn't sure if it would attack him next or if they were on the same side.

But the bird flew away upstairs and he followed it, his own men bursting inside through windows at the very same moment. beautiful queen was lighting two werebears at once, slashing the inroat or one of them with ease.

Their eyes met just for a second in the chaos that was surrounding them and warmth spread over both of their hearts. Some fox dared to attack him and he snapped its neck in two, moving towards his mate. Onyx finished off the second bear and he was amazed by her strength and grace all over again. Even now, in her wolf form, she was the Queen. His Queen.

They let themselves just two desperate seconds of reunion when their noses were dug in their furs. Riannon could smell blood on him but she also knew that none of it was his. He had already killed many in those minutes since they last spoke, so many!

"Who are all those creatures helping us?" he asked her when they looked into each other's eyes again.

"Castiel's harem," she giggled, "I guess he wasn't making them as happy as he thought."

"You don't say!" he chuckled, "Ria, you are amazing! Not only are you safe, but you also managed to stage a coup."

"Ah, don't exaggerate!" she snorted, "Just doing my usual thing and multitasking!" "Where is he?" Gideon knew that it was time to get back to business.

"I am not sure," she said, knowing without any further explanation who he meant, "He ran almost as fast as I shifted. So much for making me his queen!"

He knew that she was joking but he growled anyway, "In this life, you will only be my Queen, Riannon.

"I have no objections to that," she agreed, "Let's go! Onyx can recognise his scent now even if he changes it! We need to find him!"

"How does she do it?" Gideon followed her, without any kind of hesitation.

"Perks of being blessed by the Moon Goddess," Riannon chuckled, "And we also already tasted his blood a few minutes ago. Now we will recognise him anywhere!"

Onyx was following the trace and they sprinted out of the house just in time to meet Reid with the rest of the warriors.

"Finish them off," Gideon commanded, his wolf nodding his head back to the mansion. "Be careful not to hurt any of the harem girls. They are on our side."

"Maya," Riannon greeted her Beta, "Find Bridgit, she is a white bear. She is in charge of the harem now. Help them, they were all captives for years!"

The two Beta's followed their commands without any extra questions and the two Alphas continued

their way.

She could feel that Castiel was alone, abandoning all his people just to save himself. Some leader he

was!

"He went this way!" she pointed to Gideon the path, "I think he is trying to reach the border with the werewolves. If he manages to do it, he might be protected and we will have to back off."

"Not going to happen!" her mate sped up and she had a hard time keeping up with him even now in her upgraded wolf form.

They saw his red fur soon. Castiel was running for his life, but when he heard Gideon's mighty roar, he knew that he wouldn't make it to the border and he stopped, preparing himself to fight. One of his eyes was glowing red as usual and Riannon realised that in his fox form he was blind. She also noticed that a part of his face looked burned. Just what happened to him?

But she threw those thoughts away. He wasn't the one to feel sorry for. He was the one who planned everything and later destroyed the werewolves and the lycans on the union, leaving just a few behind as his puppets. If they didn't stop him now, everything would be for nothing. So, she was ready to attack him, but Gideon stood in her way.

"With all due respect, Riannon," he said, "But you have nothing to prove as a warrior. And I don't want my woman to fight while I stand and watch. I should be the one to kill him, not you."

That was debatable, but she saw the determination in his eyes and knew how important it was to him, so she stepped aside, giving him the honour of slaying their common enemy.

Without a shade of doubt, Gideon charged at the fox and the latter managed to recoil. He tried to attack the lycan in a desperate attempt to gain some advantage. Ria could tell that Castiel was a good warrior, but it wasn't enough if he was fighting against her mate.

The lycan king was bigger and stronger, he was also faster, so very soon his teeth cut into the fox's flesh, making him shriek from the pain. The master of schemes did not expect to fight today and it was clear to them both.

Not wishing to prolong his agony, Gideon slashed his side with his sharp claws, bright red blood spilling onto the grass underneath them.

Castiel was desperate, trying to make one fatal blow after another. His canines and claws were aiming at the lycan's vital organs but he barely managed to scratch him.

Gideon pressed him to the ground, breaking his arms and legs one by one. The pain was so immense that Castiel turned back into his human form. The king and the queen followed his example, and Gideon sat on top of him throwing punch after punch, breaking his handsome face once and for all.

"This is for the explosion at the Summit! This is for kidnapping my mate and holding her against her will! This is for Dean! And this is for your schemes! And this one is for sending that siren to kill her in her

past life!"

Castiel's eyes went wide and Riannon placed her hand on her mate's shoulder. The touch immediately helped him to calm down and look at her.

"Past life?" Castiel hissed, barely being able to speak. "So, this is why you knew everything... That... explains it."

"What you did was awful. All those schemes and traps!," Riannon decided to tell him what was on her mind after all, "You destroyed so many lives! Including mine!"

"I wish I knew," he chuckled, coughing up blood, "I would have stolen you away sooner..."

Gideon punched him again, preparing to make that one fatal blow to end this when Riannon stopped him. Something was off.

"Why are you laughing?" she asked, every fibre in her tensing. "This was a trap," he told her, looking at her only. "We already figured that out," Gideon clenched his fist.

"No," Castiel gave them a crooked dark grin, "This is not the trap. The two of you still did not learn to deal with foxes even after two lives. This was just a distraction..."

# The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

## Chapter 81

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Chapter 81.

Savannah watched Zack and his wolves fight the werecats from a safe distance when Naya got her a phone. Her heart was still in pain, seeing her mate over there. What was he trying to do? To get her back or to just kill her before she could tell Gideon what was going on? She wasn't sure she wanted to know his true motives.

Someone wrapped a piece of fabric around her and something similar was given to Naya who immediately turned it into a stylish wrap dress. The werecat seemed confident and maybe even slightly arrogant. She did not have any doubts about what was going on. But Sawyer did not care about anything at the moment as she dialled her brother's number. It went to voicemail and she called Reid instead.

"Pumpkin, it's not the best time," her uncle told her, but she had to stop him.

"I need to speak to Gideon! It's urgent, Reid! Zack is the traitor you all were looking for!" she practically screamed into the phone.

"Are you all right?" was the first question that she heard, "Did he hurt you? Are you safe?"

"I got to the werecats territory and asked for asylum. They are fighting Zack now," Savannah explained quickly, "Reid, I am serious, I need to speak to my brother. Zack is the least of our problems now!"

"Got you," the Beta said firmly, "He doesn't have his phone with him. But I will forward the call to one of the warriors by his side who should have one with him at all times."

"Good," she breathed out, watching two pumas tear one of the wolves to pieces. Zack's black wolf was fighting too, but she caught him looking at her from time to time. It pained her that he was her mate. But it was even worse that he didn't accept her rejection now. She couldn't be tied to a man like that. She had to set herself free from him. One way or another.

"Sav," she heard a familiar voice on the phone and felt a little bit better that she got through to him on time.

"Gideon, listen to me very carefully," the princess said, "Don't say anything until I am done. Zack is the traitor. He has been working with Castiel this whole time. There are others too..."

"Are you okay?" her brother seemed really worried, forgetting her instruction at once.

"Yes," she didn't let him ask more questions not to lose time. "It's all irrelevant now, G. So, pay attention, please! This is a trap! And not the kind that you anticipated while going to get Riannon back. Right at this very moment they are attacking our kingdom, Gideon!"

She heard her royal sibling swearing on the other end of the line but he got over himself quickly.

"That's fine, Sav. Kyle is there and so is the Gamma with most of our warriors. They will defend it," he said firmly.

"I wouldn't be so sure," she bit her lip nervously, "They are bringing a whole army there! This is exactly what we've been worried about this whole time."

"But now we know that they will attack now. We knew that for a while," Gideon's confidence was giving her strength. "We were warned so we are ready. I will get Riannon and we will be there soon to join the fight. Now, tell me quickly everything else that you know."

She started giving him names she learned one by one and every other little detail she could remember

"Savvy," Gideon said when she was done. "I am so proud of you. I am sorry for..." Prove to everyone inat true mates still mean something. I need to know this now more than ever.

She switched off the phone, not wishing to hear anything else. He needed to act, not to console his little sister

And she... she had things to do too. But the silence stopped her. She did not hear the sounds of battle anymore.

Savannah turned slowly on her feet and saw that the werecats were licking their minor wounds there, notorious for being able to speed up their healing but she couldn't see any wolves around.

"Cowards!" Naya snorted, folding her hands on her chest and looking at Savannah with interest.

"No," the princess whispered. She had to find him. She needed to break their bond and she needed him to accept the rejection. He couldn't have run away without a trace!

"What are you going to do about your mate?" Naya sighed and Savvy clenched her lips, thinking of her next step.

"I need your help," she said quickly. "The kingdom will be attacked soon. I need werecats to help us."

"Oh, really?" The girl cocked her snowy brow. "You went very quickly from begging for Asylum to demanding things..."

Savvy wanted to explain to her why it was so important and necessary when she heard an authoritative, firm voice.

"Naya! Manners!"

A gorgeous tall woman with sleek black hair was walking in their direction, wearing a red dress which looked like it was made out of another long piece of fabric and just draped around her perfect athletic body. Savvy caught herself at the thought that this was actually a genius idea. One swift movement of her hand and she could shift without ruining the garment. But she immediately felt guilty about thinking of such trivial matters now. She knew instinctively that the woman was Alpha Ramina. And she was followed by her beloved Luna Aisha and their top warrior, Alexander. The names she learned because she had to. And judging by the snow-white colour of his hair, Savvy knew that the rumours about who was Naya and her sisters' father were probably true. This must have been an interesting relationship

"Alpha. Luna." Savannah bowed to each of them respectfully. "I have to ask for your assistance. The enemy is about to attack the Western kingdom's capital and..."

"How is it our problem?" Naya snorted but one glare from her mother was enough for her to become serious.

"It is our problem, daughter," Ramina gave her child that look that made her close her mouth again. "We are members of the Union pack and if we want them to come to our help when we are attacked, we need to fulfil our part of the deal."

"We can protect ourselves!" Naya gritted her teeth and this time her mother frowned.

"And this is why I would never be able to pass on my title to you, Naya," the Alpha said harshly, "You never see the full picture! We are the best warriors, yes. But our clan is not that big and there are bigger threats out there. We need this Union. And this why we are going to help princess Savannah now."

"Thank you, Alpha," Savvy held back a smile, "We need to hurry then. Since Zack is gone, they are going to attack sooner."

"Gather the warriors!" Ramina told the man behind her and then turned to kiss her Luna gently. The two women couldn't take their eyes off each other.

"Keep our home safe while we are gone and I will," the Alpha brushed her palm over her mate's cheek and Savannah felt a prick of pain in her heart. She would never have that... Not anymore.

She was surprised by how quickly the warriors were gathering and she now stood in front of a little army. The best thing about them was that they were hard to

notice. Some men and women were jumping from tree to tree with grace, others were walking out of the bushes and it seemed like they didn't disturb a single brunch. Yes, there was something about those cats and their abilities different from other shifters. out there.

"Lead the way," Alpha Ramina told Sawyer when they were ready. And the princess was happy to oblige.

Castiel had that smug smile on his already broken face and Gideon couldn't wait to wipe it off once and for all. But he had to make sure. The foxes weren't the strongest of warriors compared to lycans but what made it really hard to deal with them were their constant schemes. This was where they were definitely and undeniably the best. So, he had to be sure that he wasn't missing a piece of crucial information.

"Another trap?" he smirked, trying to agitate the enemy more. "Castiel, did you do anything else this past year other than think about me? Seems a bit obsessive, don't you agree?"

The fox king coughed blood but the grin on his face only grew wider. "You have no idea," he hissed.

"About the attack on my kingdom that's going on this very moment?" Gideon chuckled. "Don't be naïve, Cass. Of course, I know."

He could feel his mate's shock through their bond and tried to send a wave of reassurance to her. He had this under control. Gideon wished he could turn and grab her in his arms, but now he had to be a leader first.

He wasn't breaking eye contact with Castiel, who was scanning his face to find out if this was the truth.

"You f\*\*\*ing sister!" the fox spat and the lycan nodded, enjoying the moment.

"Finally outfoxed," Riannon joined him, fixing the red shawl on her that one of the female warriors that caught up with them brought for her. It probably belonged to one of the red girls. The Luna did not hesitate to support her mate's game. "And twice in one day."

"Shame you didn't mention the bomb in your packhouse, Ria," Castiel tried to give her an arrogant smile, but it came out as a scowl.

"You are lying," she looked at him with so much hate that his heart clenched. He never had a chance with her... He desperately wanted to believe that he did, but her eyes were telling a different story. And he hated that story so much. Why was he never getting what he really wanted? Why was it always like that? It was supposed to be his win, his triumph... But now his brother would have to finish what he started and win this war instead. Him. Again.

He could bet that his brother would even find a way to make Riannon stay with him if he wanted her. That bastard... He looked at her again and this time hate

filled his heart. For his brother, for the lycan king before him, for the woman who did not fall for him, for the life that was slipping away through his multiple wounds.

He had seconds to make the decision... And he made it. He couldn't go down like the loser king who got outsmarted by a woman and didn't take all the credit for his work, he would know that this achievement was his!

He opened the link with his last spy in Riannon's pack, the one she didn't figure out. Their eyes met and for a second he felt as if she understood what he was about to do. Her lips parted slightly while he said the code worked via the link.

"Blaze." His man did not respond. He knew that once that word was said, he had work to do.

"What did you..." Riannon looked terrified now and he enjoyed that. Maybe that was what he had to do to her from the very beginning, not play nice to her as he did with the others.

"It's done," he laughed, coughing up more blood, "Right now... Your packhouse is gone. And you

..."

Gideon did not let him finish, realising what had just happened. One firm masterful movement of his leg and the fox's neck was broken, ending the life of the controversial king. He couldn't let him give any more orders to his spies. Even the intel that he could give was not worth it. Castiel was too dangerous to for them alive.

He then to look at his mate who was already calculating what to do next. Her eyebrows furrowed and

Finally, she noticed him and their eyes met. Goddess, how much he missed her! He would give everything to hug her, kiss her, take her... But he knew very well that he couldn't. Everything was far from over.

He knew that Kyle and his Gamma would be able to fight off the ones who attacked the kingdom, but he had to be there to make sure everything went smoothly. He also knew that there was a disaster happening in Ria's pack if Castiel did not lie about the bomb.

"Who is missing?" Riannon asked all of a sudden and he did not understand at once what she meant.

"What are you..."

"Who is missing out of our people you brought with you here!" she was next to him in no time, her nails digging in his flesh. "Gideon! He gave someone an order

via the mind link! It means that this person was within the range! It's another spy in my pack! Or yours... But probably mine."

She was muttering word after word but he knew where she was going with it. The house probably wasn't exploded yet. There was still a chance to save people and even the building.

"I need a phone!" Riannon screamed and a young lycan appeared next to her at once, handing her what she asked. Her fingers pressed the familiar order of digits one by one and soon she heard her best friend's voice.

"Yes?" Maya did not seem surprised. She was waiting for the news.

"Get back to the pack. Order to evacuate the packhouse! Now!" Ria screamed, "And every nearby building too. There might be an explosion, so make sure people are at a safe distance. No one should be left inside. And place people around the perimeter. See who comes back first from the ones you sent and catch them if you can. I'll be back soon too."

"Sure you will," her Beta said and, before hanging up added, "I will do everything." Ria gave the phone back to the warrior and fixed the shawl on her shoulders.

They couldn't even spare a second, but when their eyes met again, Gideon grasped her hand and pulled her into his chest. He kissed her hungrily, greedily. As if she was air and he was drowning. As if his life depended on that one kiss. As if it was the last time...

"No, Ria, come with me," he muttered, not willing to let her go again. First he had to wait for her to feel their bond. Then she was taken from him. And now he couldn't face parting with her yet again.

She was his. His woman, his love, his Luna, his Queen, his equal. She was his everything.

"I need to get back to my pack," she swallowed, glancing at him through her lashes. "I am the Alpha. This is what Alphas do. If the explosion happens, I need to make sure I am there working with everyone. If it's prevented, I will bring my people to fight on your side as per the agreement of the Union."

"Riannon," he wanted to object, he was even considering forcing her for the first time ever. But seeing the inferno of determination in her eyes, he knew that it would be useless. He loved an Alpha, not just a Luna. He had to respect that. She had to go and save her people just the way he had to go and save her.

"Gide..." she started saying, but he covered her lips with his again. This time roughly and briefly, but with the same immense desire as before.

"This is the last time we are ever apart," the lycan king told his mate and she nodded, agreeing wholeheartedly.

"Last time," they entwined their fingers together and both their breathing became ragged.

"Go," he told her, "Go before I decide to abandon both my kingdom and your pack and just run away with you. Just you and me, no crowns, no exes, no psychos, no obligations..."

"The dream," she smiled and added right before turning into her wolf, "But we would get bored fast, don't you think?"

She sprinted away, followed by her people, and Gideon made a few orders to the people he was leaving in this house, before getting into the car and driving all the way back to the Western Kingdom for the final battle.

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Riannon was so close to her pack when she smelled the burnt scent. She howled to let her people know that she was near, she was with them.

It was painful to see the house she loved so much in flames. But she knew that she still wasn't allowed to be weak even for a moment. Maya was talking to one of the warriors, giving him orders on how to put down the fire. She lowered her head at the sight of her alpha and gestured for one of the omegas to bring her clothes.

"I am sorry, Alpha," she said, "We were in the middle of the evacuation when the detonator worked. It is my failure and I will understand if..."

"Don't say nonsense," Riannon quickly threw on a simple pair of jeans and a white t-shirt with short sleeves that someone handed to her and started putting on shoes as well. "Did you manage to get the people out?"

"Almost everyone..." the Beta responded, "I suspect that there might have been a few omegas in the storage room. We couldn't find them after the explosion and were about to go and search for them. Plus the prisoners in the dungeons. I didn't get to them... But I think we got the traitor you were looking for. Ash caught one of the warriors in the woods. He had a device that looked like a remote control with a radio transmitter, and we suspect that he used it to trigger the bomb that was pre-installed in the building earlier. Do you want to see him now?"

"No," Riannon shook her head, standing up, "There will be time for that. People's lives should come first. I will go inside to look for survivors too."

"Maybe it's not the best idea," Maya did not feel comfortable endangering her Alpha. But looking

"I'll go with you," Brayden appeared in dirty clothes and with smudges of cinder all over his face. It looked like he was helping to clear the ruins. And they could use all the help now,

Riannon did not care about the looks that Maya was giving her ex. An extra pair of hands was what they needed now.

She was walking for a few minutes inside what was her house once. The marble floors were cracked now and some of the columns were broken too. The staircase survived by some miracle but she did not go upstairs. She wanted to look for survivors.

It was weird to have Bray by her side at a moment like this. And she would have given up a lot for it to be Gideon instead.

“Would you look at that?” she went up to a huge mantelpiece that was also broken now. There used to be a silver-plated spear placed about that, a replica of what the Moon Goddess used, according to the legends. It was gone now. Like most of her belongings... “I wasn’t such a great Alpha after all. Just a few days and the packhouse is down.”

Brayden stopped walking over pieces of glass that were crunching under his feet and stared at her.

“You must be kidding me right now, Riannon,” he said simply, and she turned to face him. “The damage would have been so much bigger without you. Ash already got the main suspect and Maya managed to evacuate people. You can always rebuild the house. But the lives are priceless.”

“Look at who is back to his senses,” she gave him a vague smile and went to the next room. Brayden followed her, not saying anything else. She reached the door that led to the dungeon’s staircase when he placed her hand on hers.

“I feel like I am back to my senses,” he said, standing right behind her. “Everything became so clear to me and, Ri, the way I treated you...”

“It’s water under the bridge now,” she brushed him off. This was neither the time nor the place for that conversation. However, it did not stop Brayden.

“Whatever you think of me, I deserve it,” he insisted, clenching his fists. “You were not just my wife and the love of my life. You were my friend and partner before everything and I betrayed your trust... I paid the price and I keep paying it every day now. You found your mate and the Moon Goddess knows – you deserve it. It’s hard to be happy for you... really hard. But I will be trying. Because, Ri, you deserve all the best things in life. You deserve a man who will make you happy. If I could turn back time...” His voice sounded distant and broken so much that she felt sorry for him.

“Everything is how it is supposed to be now,” Ria pushed the door and slowly went down the destroyed stairs to the cellars. It did not look good down there. The floors were flooded and water was splashing from several pipes. She saw sparks of electricity in the distance and was happy that she was wearing sneakers with rubber soles.

“What I am trying to say,” Brayden cleared his throat. “I hope that I can at least be your friend now. Losing you to another man is one thing. But losing you forever is another. Ri... I am so sorry for everything. I truly am.”

There they were. The words she wanted to hear so much in her past life and never did. She thought that she would feel some kind of satisfaction at that moment. But right now all she felt was empty. It did not make her happy or unhappy. Bray’s regrets did not impact her at all. She knew that now.

She was finally ready to move on from those horrible memories. What Brayden said or did was irrelevant to her now.

“I know that you will probably hate me forever,” the man added as he knelt to check one of the many bodies in front of them to confirm his death.

“I don’t hate you,” she stopped and rubbed her forehead, “Brayden, I.”

Riannon felt someone else’s presence and quickly turned to see a splash of red locks in the distance. Something shiny was thrown at her. And the last thing she managed to think was – she found the spear...

# The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

## Chapter 82

[/ The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert](#)  
Chapter 82.

The silver-plated spear cut the flesh with ease... Blood appeared on the already stained clothes, soaking them rapidly. Ruby-red drops were falling onto the flooded floor, dissolving in the water within seconds as if they were nothing.

As if his blood was nothing...

Brayden looked at Riannon with a sad smile on his lips.

“I told you I would always protect you,” he said and fell onto his knees, Ria tried to process what happened when she saw the one who threw that spear and an internal snarl left her chest.

Roxanne was glaring at her from the other side of the dungeon. Breathing heavily, the little hybrid gritted her teeth. She did not mind killing her fake mate. She did not care enough about him even though they did spend so much time together.

She had a bigger fish to fry. That spear was for Riannon. Because she cared about her death. She wanted her dead more than anything at that moment in time. That woman was the source of all her troubles.

That woman could take what she wanted from her, and she wasn't having any of it anymore.

"Haven't you done enough?!" Ria screamed at the fox while catching Brayden before he fell face flat into the water. She slowly lowered him to the ground, noticing his ragged breathing.

"This one is on you!" Roxanne hissed, narrowing her eyes. "All of this is on you! He blew up the house not even caring that I was inside! Was it some kind of punishment for you? After all, he loves to train his girls! But with you he is so different! This madness will be over the moment you are dead! And everything will get back to normal!"

Ria scanned her face, realising that her enemy was talking about Castiel. Everything was even worse than she imagined. Roxy didn't just love him. She was obsessed with him. It was an unhealthy sick addiction that was driving her crazy, making her break all the imaginable and unimaginable boundaries.

"Do you even realise that he has been experimenting on you?" she decided to ask, feeling how life was slowly leaving Brayden who now tucked his head in the column or his neck for support. "He used you! He used your siren abilities, used you as his Guinea pig! He was intoxicating you and all these other women with fake mate scents! And now that I think of it, I bet you were a frequent visitor to his laboratory. There's no way someone like him wouldn't try to copy the siren pheromones!"

"That was because I am special to him!" Roxy snarled, growling her claws. "He treated me better than anyone else!"

"Then it's just sad," Riannon admitted, "Because he was putting you under other men with ease. He never cared whether you stayed dead or alive in the process of his schemes. And he never even asked about you while he..."

"Shut up!" the fake omega screamed hysterically, "Who are you to judge me? You didn't even fight for your man when he brought me to your home!"

"I did fight you the first time," Ria heard herself saying and felt Brayden twitching in her arms. But she did not regret her words.

Her secret wasn't important now. The reality changed so much that there was no point to hide it because she didn't possess any essential knowledge about future events anymore. This life was going very differently from what she knew. So different that no events were the same with the exception of the over. "I lived a life where I was fighting for the man who was clearly wrong for me! I love him and I thought that I could fix things between us if I just try hard, be perfect, do something... I was wrong. And I paid the price. Because you killed me. And the man I practically sacrificed my love for probably didn't even notice..."

"What kind of bull sh\*t is this?!" Roxy stared at her in shock, her chest heaving.

"How do you think I knew everything you did before you even tried to act? How do you think I knew all the things I wasn't supposed to know?" Ria gave her a sad smile, "The Moon Goddess brought me back in time. At first, I believed that it was only to change my course of life. But now I see that a lot of people needed things to be changed. Including you, Roxanne. Look at what you are doing! You are going to have a baby, for Goddess' sake!"

"Shut up about my baby!" Roxy looked around in search of a weapon. Anger was filling her heart and soul; fury was burning in her veins.

This was why everything happened! She wanted to kill that woman once and for all! She could have won. Could have fulfilled Castiel's task and expectations. But Riannon changed everything! It wasn't fair! It seemed like some cruel joke of the gods!

Roxanne found a metal stick with a sharp end and decided that this was good enough. She wanted to wipe that Alpha-female from the face of the earth!

But as soon as she made a step, she felt a kick on the back of her knees.

"Not so fast!" Maya growled and knocked the stick out of her hands. Ash appeared nearby and helped her to subdue the girl. Regardless of the hatred they both felt towards her, they didn't want to hurt a

pregnant woman. It wasn't who they were.

Brayden sighed and Riannon was finally able to concentrate on him. She carefully turned him on his back and placed his head in her lap. Their eyes met at last and there was so much understanding in his.

"Ri," Brayden breathed, "I am so sorry."

"It's okay," she was assessing where the spear went through, and came to the conclusion that it probably got his heart as well. Which was a bad thing for a shifter. Hearts almost never regenerated... The blood was still gushing and she tried to apply pressure, knowing that now everything depended on whether

his wolf would be able to heal him or not. It did not help that the spear was silver..for more Daily updates visit :- . It was a bad sign.

She remembered how Brayden purchased it at some auction for a ridiculous amount of money even though she protested against it. And how proud he was to display it in their house.

"The joke is on me," he tried to chuckle, but coughed up some blood instead. He probably knew what she was thinking and her lips curled into a little smile.

He was becoming more and more the Brayden that she used to know and love. It did not change her feeling towards Gideon, but she was glad to know that at

least she had not made that man up. They weren't meant to be, but she hated to see him lose everything he worked for all his life, including his own personality.

A part of her was still angry at him. She used to think that this part of her would always be angry.

But everything changed when he took that spear for her, risking his own life without hesitation. Before Roxanne, she always felt safe with him...

At the distance, Roxy was still struggling against Maya and Ash, who tried to sustain her but not hurt her too much. Their eyes met and something crazy gleamed in Roxy's as she started cackling. this! Soon you are au going to...

"Your Castiel is dead!" Maya interrupted her speech and the fox's head snapped in her direction. They all became silent and only the sounds of water dripping and splashing from broken pipes could be heard.

"You are... lying!" Roxanne stuttered in disbelief, but Maya met her gaze with ease.

"Hurts, doesn't it?" the Beta said bitterly, watching her worst enemy suffer finally. But when Roxy fell to the ground helplessly and tears started rolling down her cheeks one by one, her chest shaking uncontrollably as if she wanted to sob but couldn't... Maya realised that the sight was not making her happy. It was not making the loss of her brother any easier. It changed nothing. What a disappointment.

"I'll take her," she said to Ash and gestured at their Alpha who was holding her ex-husband and whispering something to him. "You stay and help them and I will call more people to come here and finish things up."

This time Roxanne did not struggle. She let her hands be cuffed in silver-plated cuffs and seemed lifeless when the Beta was leading her away. She just followed her. As if there was no point in her fighting anymore. As if there was no point in doing anything...

By now Riannon knew that Brayden was not healing properly. He knew that as well.

"If we keep the spear inside, we might win some time and get you to the hospital," she said, thinking of what was the best way to transport him there, when his hand caught hers.

"No use," he said, but she shook her head.

"Don't be ridiculous," she insisted. "A good doctor might still help you. You are an Alpha, you can hold on for a long time. You will make it through..."

"Not this time, Ri," he tried to smile again, but she knew that it was hard for him. "It's okay. It's fine. Don't cry..."

She didn't even realise that there were tears in her eyes. Riannon tried to wipe them away quickly, but the new ones were appearing in their stead.

He was an important part of her life, her friend. Yes, he made many stupid mistakes but losing him was still painful.

Her tears were now falling onto his face and he brushed one palm over her cheek, smearing it with blood.

"I've been such a j\*\*\*\*t, Riannon," Brayden smiled, his voice getting weaker and weaker. "I can say am sorry a thousand times but it would never be enough."

"It's all right," she sniffed seeing how pale he was getting. His body was not healing and he barely had a few minutes left. Sadly, werewolves were not immortals...

"It's all right, Bray," she repeated, her tears now uncontrollably falling onto his face, for more Daily updates visit :- "I forgive you. I really do."

"Good," a smile formed on his face, "At least I will know that he will take good care of you. Better than I ever did. Goodbye, Riannon..."

She didn't understand what he was doing at first, but Brayden grabbed the spear and pulled it out of

- his body in one swift and immensely painful move. Now they were sitting in a red puddle of his blood that couldn't stop gushing out of him. Ria held his hand, the two of them looking into each other's eyes. But at the very last moment, she bent and whispered into his ear what Onyx had just told her. "wiae, you ana your wou will be reborn in a new ure. Ana in that new ure, you will be given a mate. ine one that will be right for you and you alone. It will happen...and you will find your happiness."

She distanced herself, to see that he was looking at the ceiling with glassy eyes. But even now there was a vague smile reaching the corner of his lips.

She closed his eyelids with trembling fingers and took a deep breath of air, trying to hold back the sobs. He was her husband once. He was her friend first... He was her partner for a long time. And now that man was gone forever.

But even in his last moment, he was dreaming of his true mate that he had never got to meet. His one true desire...

"I hope you two will be happy in your next life," she kissed his forehead one last time and only now noticed Ash that stood next to her.

"I'll take him," the Gamma lifted his best friend's body in his hands without asking anything." Everyone else in the house is either dead or out. Let's go."

Riannon followed him, trying to gather her thoughts. This wasn't the time to be a soapy mess.

Her heart was broken from the loss of Brayden, but she would be truly dead if something happened to Gideon.

She already had a mate, the one who meant everything to her, the one who never failed her and the one for whom she was ready to do anything.

And her mate was fighting an army now. She couldn't leave him.

"Maya," she called her Beta, "Call everyone who can fight. We are going to the lycans. Now. Leave just a few people for protection here and to help the wounded. We will deal with everything else later."

They were in cars in just a few minutes and took the shortest way imaginable to the Western Kingdom overspeeding on their way. The closer they were getting, the faster Riannon's heart was beating. She couldn't sense her mate through their bond even when they were supposed to be in the range for mind-linking.

She couldn't feel him even when she saw the battle before her eyes. And that brought fear to her soul because she could go through anything. But only as long as she knew that Gideon was fine.

She got out of the car and took the spear with her. Ever since Ash took Brayden's body, she couldn't let go of it...

She knew that field. She already saw this place in the vision that Onyx showed her after her return. And she swallowed uncomfortably, knowing that this was the battle that would decide the fates of many.

All the scents were mixed here and it was hard to find the one that she was looking for.

Riannon froze when she saw a man holding another man in his arms right on the hill where she witnessed Gideon holding Reid in her dream. Everything was repeated and it suddenly became harder for her to breathe.

She closed her eyes and when she opened them again, she saw that the man was actually blonde and not as well built as Gideon. Now that she looked at him, he looked more like a fox. And it brought a little bit of relief to her.

All she wanted now was to help her people, the Union that they formed for peace... and also to find her mate.

She motioned for her warriors to join the fight and didn't stay behind herself. She didn't shift, using the spear as her weapon successfully to kill the enemies on her way. It helped her to manoeuvre better

Her bond wasn't working for some reason, but she knew that there was no way that Gideon was dead.

However, if something did happen to him, she wanted to find him sooner rather than later.

Riannon pierced some fox's head with the spear when she finally found the one she was looking for. But she didn't know whether it was a good thing or a bad one...

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They knew about the upcoming sneaky battle, so Kyle met the enemy forces earlier than they anticipated and attacked first. But the element of surprise was working only for so long... The bears and the foxes brought a whole army with them. And lycans didn't have enough time to call everyone who was on their side in time for the battle. Most were still on their way

Though even when they all would be here, there was still a risk that Savvy didn't get all the names right and traitors could be between them. The possibility of being stabbed in the back was huge and they all knew that.

However, lycans were strong and soon Savvanah arrived with werewolves, who jumped right into the epicentre of the battle, fearless, elegant, powerful. One of the best allies they had.

Gideon and Reid were working efficiently, targeting the biggest bears and killing them first, for more Daily updates visit :- so that the werewolves and cats did not have to. The lycan king tried to find who the leader was but no matter how hard he searched for, he couldn't find one.

Shrill screams, growls and screeching were turning into a background noise for him. Too many warriors were dying at both ends. But each time more foxes and bears were arriving. The whole battlefield was a mess of blood, dirt and dead bodies... Sometimes not even whole bodies.

"You know what we have to do," Mars said but Gideon snarled at his constant companion. "No!" he refused that idea.

"G, you know what Riannon saw!" his wolf insisted. "As of now, there is a 60% chance of us winning this battle. But that's a big maybe and only if a lot of our people give their lives... But if we let him out..."

Gideon hated to admit when his wolf was right at a moment like this.

He hoped for quite some time that he wouldn't have to do it. But now it was clear that he had to. For the men and women who fought on his side, for his little sister who turned out to be way stronger than he ever imagined... For his beloved mate, who deserved to be a queen and would do a good job even if he was no longer around.

"Reid, Sawy, Kyle," he connected to his family who was close, "If anything goes wrong, I want the three of you to try and put me down."

"No, Gideon!" Savannah was the first to react. She had the same blood in her veins and probably had the same thoughts in her head right now.

"What do you mean?" Kyle, however, didn't get it at once.

"Gideon," Reid also understood what he was about to do, "If you are decided on that, you have to do it as fast as possible. You know that your beast is controlling. He will never let you get the control back if he can... So, don't let him come to his full strength!"

"I will try," he agreed, "But if it goes wrong, you know what I want you to do. I need your words on that."

"I don't like it!" his sister said. She was the only one who knew how hard it was to control the true royal lycan form. message to nis enemies.

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"Promise me!" he growled, feeling how the lycan inside him was getting to the surface. He was both him and Mars, but he was also something else. Something stronger, something bigger, something that he couldn't control well.

"I promise," Reid said and Kyle repeated his words. Savannah hesitated.

"Gideon," she said, "You have to come back after this! For all of us. Or at least for Riannon. She will kill us all if we don't bring you back and your sacrifice will be in vain."

"I will do everything to return," he said, and he intended to keep his word.

"Then I promise too," his sister agreed, and he let out a long loud growl that shook the mountains.

His bones started to crack again. Because his true battle form was different from his usual wolf form. It was bigger and way more powerful. His muscles were getting heavier, firmer as if they were made out of steel now, and the shape of his body was changing. The wolf was turning into a lycan and for a few seconds, it seemed that the battle stopped because of him. Everyone was staring at him now. In shock, in fear, in disbelief... There were all kinds of emotions.

And when the beast that he now was stood on his two feet and let out another mighty and soul-piercing growl, it was as if he took everyone out of their daze. – Dozens of bears threw themselves at him. They knew that they would only have a chance if they .! attacked now, while he wasn't at his strongest yet. And only if they fought wisely. Foxes tried to launch a series of smaller assaults but that was like tickles to him now.

He didn't even bother to look at the little red things when he crushed them with his feet or backslapped them, sending them to the flight of their lives. Even bears weren't that much of a threat to him now. He was catching them and snapping their necks with ease. Or catching two and crushing their skulls against each other. He wanted their blood, he wanted to see their death, to feel that power over their pathetic lives. The beast wanted more. More, more, more...

Catch, snap, crash. Repeat. Catch, snap, crash. Again.

Riannon couldn't believe what she saw. She called her mate, she knew that it was him. But Gideon wasn't responding to her.

She knew that royal lycans did not like to shift into this humanoid wolf form of a monster. She remembered how her mate was telling her about his struggles with control. The stronger the beast was, the harder it was to get back after shifting into him. And Gideon's lycan was one of the stronger ones that ever existed...

She wanted to go after him but some fox jumped on her. The spear proved to be useful again. And Riannon had to use it a few times as she ran after her beloved. He was slaughtering their enemies one by one and cleaning the field off the rival species.

From the corner of her eye, she already saw that the presence of the true lycan was changing how the battle continued. Wolves and werecats were getting the upper hand.

Gideon was now in the middle of a large enemy group. They were jumping on him, trying to bite him, cut him, do anything possible to turn the tables.....

Ria tried to get to him but it was so hard in all that mess. Someone was attacking her every second and her progress towards him was slow.

Before her eyes, a huge wave of bears and foxes covered her mate from her, climbing on top of him, jumping on his back and forming some kind of a moving mountain. mountain telt.

She tried reaching her bond, she tried calling for him... But he wasn't responding. for more Daily updates visit :- As if he was not there at all.

Riannon did not know what was going on there but she tried to get to that part of the battlefield whatever it cost her. Another fox, a grey one this time, sliced her back and she screamed again, falling to her knees. She twisted and managed to pierce the one who attacked her. However, a huge brown bear was there before she managed to get up. He snarled loudly and was about to tear her into pieces when a resounding roar shook the ground beneath them.

In one breath the bear was gone, his bloody head falling to her feet and a huge black beast stood before her, his eyes grazing over her slender frame.

"Gideon," she called her mate's name but he did not respond. "Gideon!" she sounded desperate now, but she did not care. He looked at her as if... as if he did not know who she was...