

# The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

## Chapter 33

[/ The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert](#)  
Chapter 33. Fake Scent

Something was happening. Something new. Something amazing.

Ria was an Alpha. Power and strength were not new to her.

But what was happening right now was beyond anything she had experienced before.

She now saw fear in the wolf's eyes. She inhaled his scent and smelled fear as well.

She knew that she could crack that skull of his with ease with her bare hands.

And he knew this too. He could tell that his end was near and tried to distance himself

from her but now she was holding him with her fingers dug too deep into his flesh.

However, at the next moment, a beautiful grey wolf jumped at her enemy, startling her and knocking her prey off her.

Riannon tried to steady her breathing. Everything around her seemed to be happening in

slow motion.

"Onyx," she called her wolf, feeling how the two of them were together again. But at the next moment, that feeling was gone.

Ria could barely breathe and felt warm blood trickling over her hand and belly. The werewolf managed to cut her in a few places.

She saw the grey wolf dealing with him, while mothers were covering young children's faces.

And in just a few seconds Reid was next to her. Kneeling next to her face while having no

clothes on and making her come back to reality fast.

"Luna," he took her arm and started looking at the wounds, "Sh.it. He managed to hurt

you."

"It's okay," she hissed from the pain as he helped her up, "Just a scratch." "It doesn't look like a scratch," the lycan Beta looked worried, "Gideon will kill me for this.

"Why?" Ria's eyebrows shot up as the feeling of power washed away from her completely.

"Why?" the voice of the mighty Beta was unusually high pitched, "Because he entrusted me to protect you and this is what happens!"

"I don't see how it is your fault!" she gave him a reassuring smile, looking around. At least there were no other rogues in plain sight. Savannah walked in through one of the doors,

getting leaves out of her hair. And one of the women threw her a shawl which she immediately

something.

"Oh, my!" she looked at the two of them, "Reid, you are so dead!" "I know," the man chuckled nervously.

"What's the big deal," Ria shrugged her shoulders, "Just lick it and we'll be done."

The silence in the room suddenly got heavy.

"Lick it? As in lick you?" Savvy snorted, "Now you just want him to die, do you? Is it like an old grudge or something?"

"No, I mean the lycan healing," Riannon said, slowly realising what was going on. There was no lycan healing.

"Oh, that!" Savannah couldn't help a sly grin spreading over her face, "Lycan healing. Duh! Why didn't we think of that, Reid?"

The Beta turned away, trying to hold back a laugh and Ria felt like an i\*\*\*t. She was going to do what the rogues couldn't. She was going to kill the lycan king.

Just then Gideon appeared through a wide passage and everyone started gasping at the sight of their kind covered in blood. They could smell that it wasn't his own and a wave of sighs of relief rippled through the room.

In the meantime, Riannon forgot how to breathe, let alone what she wanted to say. Her

eyes were glued to his perfect body. She saw it just the previous night. But back then only the

moonlight was letting them see each other. That and the werewolf sight.

But right now... In broad daylight, she couldn't take her eyes off his stone-hard muscles. Sculptures of ancient gods had nothing on that man. For his body was immaculate. Each line was perfect from top to bottom. And even the line of dark hair leading from his belly button all the way down to a piece of fabric he had wrapped around his lower part.

"Brother!" Savvy snorted, "Riannon here is in need of some urgent lycan healing. She

asked Reid to lick her, but..."

"I didn't!" the Beta practically shouted as the princess giggled next to him. But the next second the two of them were pushed away by their king, who grabbed Riannon and lifted her in his arms effortlessly.

"I thought I told you to protect her!" he growled angrily at his second-in-command as he

clenched the woman he treasured to his chest.

"And he did," Ria said finally, startled by everything that was going on, "He saved my life."

"I will take you to your room," he said, ignoring everything else around him.

"There is no need," she tried to protest, "I can walk myself and also... Don't you have more things to do here?"

"It all can wait," he muttered walking away, "All the rogues are dead anyway. Reid and Sawy will deal with everything else."

"They were not rogues," she said and he stopped, darting his piercing blue eyes at her. "What?" Gideon furrowed his brows. He couldn't believe what he was hearing.

"Why don't we go to the office?!" Reid appeared right next to them again, pushing them slightly in the correct direction.

Gideon grunted but even he had to admit that this conversation had to take place in

private.

As soon as the door behind them closed, the Beta went to one of the drawers and got a

pair of jeans out of there, pulling them on quickly.

“Riannon, what did you mean just now?” he asked her while Gideon held her pressed against his chest. Unknowingly, she leaned over him, relaxing in his firm grasp. It did not even occur to her to ask him to put her back to her feet. He seemed comfortable. And so was she.

The Beta had to cough a few times to bring their attention back to him.

“So, about our matter,” Reid tried to insist, “You said that they weren’t rogues?”

“Yes,” she nodded, “I am positive they are not rogues.” “Why?” this made Reid agitated, “Their scent is pretty obvious.”

“I thought that they were rogues at first,” she said, “But then... When this wolf was on top

of me...”

Gideon growled. He hated the thought alone that she was this close to death. She was his and they didn’t even get to be together properly. And yet he almost lost her today. He

cursed inside. This was outrageous!

“You know how rogues smell, right,” Ria was choosing her words carefully, “They have that burnt scent. When they are exiled from their packs, the link on their aura that connects them is burning out together with their true scent. They only smell like fire or smoke. They cannot have any other scent unless they are accepted into another pack and a new link is formed, restoring their aura.”

“Yes,” Gideon confirmed everything she said.

but it was there. His true scent.”

“But that’s...” Reid rubbed his neck.

“Impossible,” Riannon agreed, “For a rogue. But if he isn’t a rogue. If he only pretends to

be one and this burned scent is fake while his own is suppressed...”

“Then it would explain a lot,” the lycan king and his Beta were now staring at each other.

That indeed explained a lot. Because no rogue would be so stupid as to attack the royal lycan palace.

"This was a very useful observation, Ria," Gideon looked at her with gentleness in his eyes, and she flinched as it was the first time he used her short name. It sounded so nice on his tongue that she wanted him to repeat it. Their eyes met and his got darker at once. At the same time, his grasp on her tightened.

"Check this out, Reid, and report to me," the king said walking in the direction of the door, "I will wait for your full report in a few hours. But right now I am going to take care of the Luna."

"Of course," the Beta held the door for them, trying to mask his smirk with a serious facial expression. But it wasn't working that well.

Gideon took her all the way upstairs to the bedroom where they slept together the previous night. Just the memories alone made his breathing speed up. He carefully placed her back to her feet as she kept holding his shoulders.

"You are hurt," he stated in a very low and husky voice, "I am afraid I have to check your

... wounds."

"If you must..." was all she said.

## The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

### Chapter 34

[/ The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert](#)  
Chapter 34. Shower

She looked at him and he did not take his eyes off her.

Gideon cursed himself inside. She was clearly hurt but all he was thinking about now was how much he wanted her. The realisation that someone tried to kill his mate just a few minutes

ago was angering him.

And also bringing him pain. He couldn't lose her. Not like that. Not in any other way. He couldn't lose her at all.

"Are you going to use that magical lycan healing of yours?" she taunted him with one of

her brows up and a slight smile on her lips. The lips that he wanted to kiss so desperately that

it was all he could think of now.

"If you will allow," he leaned lower and touched her shoulder that was already healing slowly. It pained him that this happened on his watch. The wounds on her stomach seemed worse but blood stopped dripping already.

Gideon took the piece of fabric that was holding the dress in place and slowly moved it off her shoulder. His eyes were asking for her permission too.

"Well, it hurts," she cocked her head up to meet his gaze and held it until the end.

"We need to clean you up first," he said with his hands still on her shoulders, his thumb making tiny circles on her skin.

"You are the expert in healing," she tilted her head slightly, "I will trust you with this one."

The lycan king lifted the girl in his arms once again and took her to the huge marble

shower room. She threw her shoes away before he placed her on the cold floor as if she would

break if he made the wrong move. The water switched on, the automatic tropical shower took care of them both before he even managed to warn her. And now they all were all wet. But it didn't seem to bother them.

Standing behind her and feeling the heat that her slender body radiated, Gideon was afraid to make a wrong move. His large palms slid up her bare back, hooking the two pieces of fabric that held the whole thing together and sliding them all the way down to her waist. He could see the blood tainting water at their feet but he knew that the more he touched her, the

sooner she would heal.

And he wanted to touch her badly.

Riannon was conflicted. What the hell was she doing? She did not need this. She knew very well already that no magical healing existed. So, why didn't she tell him to leave? Why was

she standing topless with her back to his chest and... wanted him to do something about it.

And yet... She did not stop him.

She felt his gentle touch on her shoulder first, as his fingers traced her wounds carefully. The wounds were healing way too fast. It was supposed to be slower. Not that she wanted to

complain about it.

There were other sensations too. New. Pleasant. Alluring.

His palm moved lower, cupping her breast gently. Riannon threw her head back, resting it

on the mighty chest of the lycan. His other hand took the pins out of her hair, making her

blonde locks fall down her back. At the same time, his lips placed a gentle peck on her

shoulder.

Her chest was going up and down as he still held her breast in one hand, tugging the n\*\*ple between his fingers and making it firm.

“Riannon,” he muttered in her neck as he traced the line of it with his tongue. She tasted so sweet, the woman he desired more than anything. She didn’t struggle against him, she didn’t try to stop him. And he knew that he wouldn’t be able to do that himself.

His hands went down her back, he tried to find the zip of her dress unsuccessfully. So, when he gave up on that, he tore the wet fabric to relieve her of the clothes.

The woman in his hands started to breathe heavily, driving him crazy. He knew that if he made one wrong move, this magical moment between the two of them would be gone.

He tore off the piece of clothing that he had wrapped around himself, it couldn’t hide his

hardness anymore anyway. Not after he had been so close to her. Not after she allowed him to

touch herself that way.

He took her delicate neck in his large palm and made her turn to look at him, tracing her

lower lip with his thumb.

“Are you sure you want this?” he couldn’t believe that he was asking this question now,

risking her coming to her senses.

"Yes," was all Riannon said and the next moment she felt his other hand brushing lightly all the way down her abdomen and in between her thighs, parting them slightly. He caught the hem of her lace panties and moved it slightly to give himself access to her core. Gideon teased her folds gently, probing and studying what was his from the very beginning.

He watched her gaze as he slightly moved her creases apart and thrust one finger inside of her, moving it back and forth slowly.

wasting his chance.

Mars was howling inside of his mind, because never before the two of them were able to

be so close to their mate.

Riannon closed her eyes because it felt so good. It wasn't like he did something she

never experienced before, but it was the way he did it... As if she was the most precious thing to him. As if he was afraid to scare her off.

She loved it. She loved how he made her feel about herself. And she loved how every

contact of their skin was bringing her tiny bursts of pleasure.

He added another finger to her, deepening the kiss at the same time. Ria moaned into his mouth as drops of water were falling all over their bodies.

A soft growl left the lycan king's chest and something stirred deep inside of her soul as

well.

"More," she whispered, and he picked up the tempo in teasing her. Warmth and pleasure were building up inside of her slowly, a sweet feeling of being on the edge. She felt Gideon

showering her shoulders with kisses, paying special attention to her neck.

"I want you to be mine, Riannon," he muttered into her ear, tightening his grasp on her, "Only mine. No one else's."

The words pulsed through her mind at the same time as the climax rippled through her body, as she clenched again and again on his fingers. Ria threw her head back and relaxed into his chest as he held her tight, not letting her fall down since her legs were weak now.



She felt his hot breath right on her neck, where her mark was. Even in spite of water pouring over their heads. His canines grazed over her skin, pressing into it softly and she...

froze.

So did he. He was afraid to move because he lost himself just for a second there and she noticed. Did she get scared? Or maybe she was excited? He had no idea but he didn't want to risk it, so he turned her to face him and then knelt before her, throwing her thigh over his shoulder before she managed to even say anything.

He was the mighty and fierce lycan king and he never knelt in his life. Until today. His mate was the only one who would ever receive the honour of looking down at him.

He pushed her slightly so that she leaned her back over the marble wall and only then

when he made sure she was secure at all times had he dipped his head in between her legs.

already started building up another. He took his time pleasing her and Riannon laced her fingers into his hair, tugging on it to make sure he wouldn't stop.

But Gideon had no desire to stop. He loved listening to her moans and whimpers. He loved that he was the one to make her produce those sounds. He loved every moment of what they were doing.

Ria screamed as she climaxed again and this time she was sure to fall down and

properly hit herself over the hard floor. But he caught her before that, pulling her closer in his arms. He walked out of the shower cabin and went straight to the bed, throwing her on top of it.

"Mark. Her," Mars growled possessively, "MARK: MATE."

The fight for control was too much. Especially when she lay in front of him wearing nothing. He looked at her innocent face and swallowed. She had no idea what kind of fight was going on in his head.

Only now Gideon noticed that her phone was ringing all the time. Something that she also chose to ignore. They both knew who it was and he never hated anyone as much as he hated

her husband. The man who had what was his and hadn't even appreciated it.

He saw his faint mark on her neck. That weakling even couldn't do that properly!

And all he wanted now was to put his own lycan mark on that neck. To make the whole

world see that this woman was his.

“Do it!” Mars growled possessively and he knew that if he stayed there for at least one moment, he would obey his wolf and mark her without permission.

“I am sorry,” he grunted and walked out into his own adjacent room, leaving Riannon

alone.

She was disappointed. And she had questions. Just what was that right now? Did he seriously leave her at a moment like this? When she practically offered herself to him on a platter?

This was far from over!

Ria jumped off the bed and found a silk robe to wrap around herself hanging over a huge

mirror.

However, this was when she truly felt shocked. All the wounds that she received today

were gone.

But it was impossible! It was too early. She knew very well that something like that had to

Her eyes darted in the direction of where the lycan king disappeared just moments ago. “Go to him,” she heard Onyx’s voice inside her mind. And this time she had no doubts

what to do next.

## The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

### Chapter 35

[/ The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert](#)  
Chapter 35. Mine

She decided not to waste any time and pulled the silk robe on, storming after the Lycan king. Her hair was still wet, and water was trickling down her skin but she

did not care. She had to see him, she had to speak to him. She was dying to find out what was going on.

Luckily, he did not lock the door and she entered his own bedroom with ease. It was dark as the curtains in the room were shut and they seemed to be with a complete

blackout effect. This was a manly room in dark shades. Very tasteful and minimalistic. Very

very

him.

She saw Gideon at once as he stood by a desk breathing heavily with one of his hands covering his eyes. This posture startled her and she paused.

But it was too late since he sensed her presence and snapped his head in her direction. "Not now, Riannon," he said, and it sounded like both warning and begging.

"Just what is going on?" she stepped forward and his eyes landed on the wet silk of her robe that wasn't hiding anything from his gaze.

"Oh, Goddess!" he muttered, turning away and feeling how desire was overwhelming him again.

"Gideon, speak to me!" the Luna was not giving up, "You are giving me some seriously mixed signals here!"

Mars was howling in his head, and he couldn't stay close to her anymore. He had the best self-control for a lycan. But this was too much. He had nerves of steel. He wasn't made of

1. it.

So, the king did the only thing that he could and opened the heavy curtains, letting the light in and stormed out to the balcony to take a deep gulp of air.

He needed to cool himself. But the shower wasn't going to help him anymore. The thought alone of any kind of water procedures now was bringing him back to his problem.

"Gideon!" she was already behind him, and he closed his eyes as he inhaled that sweet scent of hers, knowing that it would be best not to turn back and look at her.

"Ria," he would have chuckled at how they suddenly dropped all the formalities now if he wasn't in physical pain, fighting his body and Mars seemed hard. Too hard. "What is it that you

really want?"

"Answers!" she replied without even so much as a shade of hesitation, "Tell me what just happened! You clearly..."

Her voice broke as did her bravely. Wasn't she too bold with him? With the Lycan king of

But she clenched her fists and pronounced the next words firmly.

"You clearly want me," she said and he couldn't hold back a snort, turning to face her. "You think?" he raised her brow at her. "Then what was the problem right now?" she did not budge.

"The problem, Riannon?" he made a step in her direction and for the first time since they met she managed to see something menacing in his eyes. It was the same handsome face, the

same person that he knew, but somehow the air between them got different suddenly. "The problem is that I more than just want you. I want you all. For myself. Without sharing you with anyone else in this world. I wanted you like that from the moment I saw you and it gets worse every day. The things I want to do to you... You can't imagine! But if I take you now, I am going to mark that pretty little neck of yours."

She gulped, trying to process the information.

He told her before that he wanted her as his woman. She even believed him. But marking her... He couldn't be serious about that.

"But I am already marked," the words left her lips without her realising as her hand went instinctively to the place where her husband made his claim once. She couldn't feel it. She couldn't feel the scar that was there for years.

"Really?" Gideon chuckled darkly, "Where is it then? All I see is two little red stains on

your skin."

*What? When did that happen?*

"B-but," she stuttered, "A mark would seal us together for life."

"How terrible!" he rolled his eyes, coming closer. And now she was backing away. "And

what if I don't mind?"

She didn't know what to say to that.

At the same time, he was studying her scared face, coming to the sad conclusion that she still wasn't ready.

"Go back to your room, Riannon," he said, turning away again and hoping that she would just simply obey him for once, "Go back and close your door. Make sure that..."

"Why?" she interrupted him and he flinched, "Why do you want me so much? I am not even a lycan! It doesn't make any sense! Why does mostly everyone here react as if it was completely normal? Why does my wolf react to you? Why did my wounds heal so quickly today

He did not let her finish as he was right next to her in less than a second, piercing her with his eyes that were glowing golden.

"Why do you think?!" he growled as he grasped her waist and her pink lips parted slightly.

Riannon was startled, to say the least. She did not know why she came here in the first place. From the very beginning, all this was wrong!

So, why couldn't she push him away? Why did she crave him so much?

"Mate...". Onyx whispered, turning the Luna's world upside down.

"Mate," Ria repeated her wolf's words and at the very next moment, Gideon's lips crashed into hers possessively.

"Mate," he growled into her mouth, lifting her up with ease.

Riannon wrapped her thighs around his waist and her hands around his shoulders as their tongues were intertwining wildly.

It was surreal. How could she miss this? How could she miss that he was hers this whole time?

He slammed her back over the cold stone wall, pressing himself tightly against her.

"You said the word," he muttered still conquering her mouth, "Now I don't know if I would be able to stop..."

"Don't... stop," she responded and he snarled into her neck, peppering it with kisses.

"Very well," the lycan king said as he pulled the tie of her robe, making her breasts bounce freely. He tore off her for a second, to take a breath and looked at them, taking on in his

hand and kneading it gently.

Ria sucked in a breath and he lowered his head to inhale the firm nipple, finally being able to enjoy her to the fullest. Her fingers laced into his hair, tugging it gently, and when he released her flesh, their eyes met. Without any words, there was an understanding between

them now.

He grasped her bottom and moved them to the bed, throwing her on top of it as if she weighed nothing. She watched his every move as he unzipped his jeans and got rid of them. And she forgot how to breathe when he got onto the edge of the bed and took one of her ankles into his hands, placing a soft kiss onto it. And then one more a little higher, and one more... Slowly, he was moving up as she bit her lip, starting feeling the tingles.

They definitely weren't there before. But they were here now and Riannon had a very hard

no time and she felt his tongue flickering over and over her most sensitive bundle of nerves.

Arching her back in delight, she clenched the sheets and arched her back as she got yet

another mind-splitting release from him.

He let her come down from it, watching her and trying to remember every single detail.

Their eyes met again, and he felt her hand running all over his length. Her fingers wrapped around it as she stroked him slowly several times without breaking their eye contact.

Ria liked what she felt. She was going to enjoy it for sure.

Understanding her silent command, he positioned herself at her entrance, nudging it with his head.

"Are you sure?" he asked, and it was obvious that it was hard for him to even say the words, "Your...plan..."

"I think I am going to need a new plan," she admitted honestly, holding his gaze, "Gideon Stormhold, if you don't take me right this very..."

He entered her in one swift move. Not gently at all. He couldn't be gentle anymore. He waited enough. She was his everything and he craved her from the moment he saw her. And

now she was finally his.

Just watching her face as he pulled almost out and then roughly thrust back, making her moan, did things to him. He hooked one of her thighs to give himself better access and

repositioned himself.

“Gideon!” she muttered his name as he started pounding into her, each thrust cementing their bond. Mars was howling inside because they both were getting exactly what they wanted.

Their Luna.

Riannon was completely overwhelmed with all the sensations. The only man she had

prior to the king was her husband but it never felt like this. It was so good that she wanted to laugh and cry, and scream, and beg him for more. All at the same time.

He was hitting just the right spot over and over while she could feel pleasure building at the lower part of her. He took up the tempo and she didn't even notice how her fingernails dug into his back and arms. They were both mad. And hungry for each other. Whatever they did it wasn't enough. It would never be enough.

He lowered himself as his canines grazed the skin on her neck and for a second there . she thought that he was going to mark her. The thought alone brought her over the edge and her mind shattered into millions of pieces as her body trembled in his hands.

made him speed up, even more, making a few deep thrusts and stilling inside of her.

He spilt every drop of his seed into her, not wishing for it to stop.

“MINE!” he growled as he fell on top of her, panting but still searching her lips. “You are mine, Riannon,” he repeated.

“Yes,” she said, locking her arms around his neck and feeling happy and content to be

with this man.

He traced the place where he had to mark her with his fingers and looked at her. It was a

question and they both knew it. So, she shook her head, telling him that it wasn't the time yet.

And he had to accept this. At least now he knew she was his. Whatever happened next, it

was only a matter of time. His mark would be decorating her neck. She would be his Luna.

"I am sorry," she whispered, knowing what he was thinking about. She hated that this was how everything was starting for them.

He cupped her chin and made her look at him, claiming her lips for another sweet moment.

"It's perfect," he said, brushing his thumb over her lower lip, "We'll deal with everything together and I will mark you. And trust me, I will do anything for it to happen faster. And in the

meantime..."

A devilish smirk appeared on his face. "You don't want to rest?" Riannon shot her brow up.

"My Luna, we are only starting..."

Back at the Silver River Pack, Brayden was enjoying his own little mate. Roxy was obedient and learned what he liked very fast. He could allow himself to do things to her that he wouldn't want to do with his wife. His wife was perfect. Too perfect for things like that.

"Yes, Alpha, yes!" the omega whined as he took her from the back, slapping her when he felt like it. He was already so close to his own release when something changed.

It felt as if someone was chocking him and the mark on his neck was stinging. He tried to

control it at first but it wasn't letting him go.

By the end of it, it got so bad that even his hands were shaking.

"Alpha," Roxy, looked at him over her shoulder. She was already doing all the job herself. "Is everything ok?"

He pulled out of her, having difficulties breathing.

"Leave," he commanded curtly, and she knew better than to argue. When the door behind her closed, he took a deep breath and made himself stand up from

the bed.



On wobbly legs Brayden walked to his desk and got out a flask from one of the drawers, gulping greedily the burning liquid. His gaze fell onto his reflection on the standing full-length mirror in front of him and he did not like what he saw in there. Hid mark... was inflamed.

“Riannon!” Bryaden gritted through his teeth...

*NOTE: Sorry for the delay. But I hope it was worth it for you. This one was also longer. The next update will be on Sunday evening.*

# The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

## Chapter 36

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

**Chapter 36. Tell Me What Happ...**

Riannon couldn't believe her own happiness when she opened her eyes and saw him lying in front of her and watching her.

Amate. She had a mate. A real one. Not a chosen one. A smile curled onto his lips and she reciprocated it. There were no regrets. Whatsoever.

This was very different from what she had with Brayden back in the day. Now that she thought about it, if this was what Brayden felt when he met his own mate, she could

understand why he couldn't reject Roxanne.

- She would never reject Gideon if she knew.

.

.

This did not cancel all the horrible things that Roxy did to her and to others in their power struggle. But she could understand now.

Partially.

This was not changing her plan. But it gave her some understanding. “Onyx,” she called her wolf, “Are you there?” At first, all she heard was silence. But then the familiar voice sounded in her head.

“I will be soon...”

She tried calling her again, asking what was going on. But Onyx spoke no more.

However, this was better than nothing. This was a promise. And just knowing that her wolf didn't abandon her made Riannon smile wider.

The motion did not go unnoticed. Gideon pulled her closer. So that her head was now

tucked into his chest, and he was able to dig his face into her hair and breathe in her scent that

he loved so much was able to enjoy for the first time.

"I can't believe this is real," he muttered, "From the moment I saw you... I dreamt of this. of holding you like this, of having you as mine."

She looked up at his handsome face and slid her hand to brush his cheek with a short stubble that prickled her fingers slightly.

"Why didn't you tell me?" She asked. "Would you believe me if I simply told you?" He arched his brow at her.

"I guess not," she admitted honestly. She had too much on her plate to simply believe some lycan who approached her out of the blue insisting that she was his mate: Even if he was a king. Not to mention that Onyx, the little hyena, never told her that they were mates on the rare moments she spoke to her. She couldn't believe her wolf would waste her strength to tell

everything

On the other hand, Onyx was smarter than regular wolves. Ria always knew that. She proved it to her many times. And to be honest, maybe it was for the best that she did not throw them into a situation where Riannon knew that he was her mate from the very beginning yet

did not feel the connection. In that way, Gideon had to work for it and earn her trust.

Yes, that wolf of hers wasn't simple at all. She took a bet and look at where it got them...

"Yesterday," he traced his fingers over her bare hand, "You said the word. You called me Mate. How did you know?"

"Onyx called you that," Ria decided to confess. Now that they were together, she did not want secrets from him. It was hard starting to trust the new man in her life but what they had was so much different from what she experienced before.

It was bigger. And better. And so special. Everything one could wish for.

"Is Onyx back?" Gideon asked with hope in his voice. They were already together but he would still feel much better if he knew that the wolf was there.

“Partially,” Ria gave him a vague smile, “I feel her presence somewhere there inside of my soul but she is not at full strength yet. I think she is trying to restore after.”

She stopped talking and he suddenly got serious. This was not a joke to him at all. He knew about a few people who had lost their wolves. He started reading about them when he found out about Onyx’s absence. This was rare. But it did happen several times in shifter’s common history.

When the beast was lost, the host was becoming just an empty shell as half of their soul

was gone. That did not happen to Ria yet. But a mostly missing wolf was a bad sign. This

wasn’t a destiny that he wanted for his mate.

But there was another thing that bothered him. Those people he read about were all

warriors who fought in battles. Sometimes against forces much stronger than them. In the

very few cases known in history, it was always the same. When on the brink of death, the wolves, foxes, bears or other creatures sacrificed themselves to protect their hosts. The hosts survived but at the same time were deadly wounded and hardly ever lived longer afterwards.

And when the beast died, the owner was slowly becoming just a mere human. A fate

worse than death.

of yourself. To stop seeing through your beast’s eyes, to stop sensing what he or she could

sense...

It was the same as losing hearing, sight, and ability to move properly at once for humans. Probably even worse because something inside was missing as well. Everything was lessened, everything was different... Less vibrant. It was the same as sucking the joy out of life. That most vital part of a person was gone forever.

And not everyone could cope with that.

He could tell that Riannon was one of those who would be able to cope, though. She was strong. In some sense maybe even stronger than him.

But he did not wish for her to have that kind of fate. For her, he was ready to do

everything

Then again, there was another thing. He didn't know of any recent battles she took a part in. As far as his research on her showed, and his spies were among the best, her life was a typical Luna life. She had her hardships but nothing too major happened.

Just what was done to her in that pack behind the closed curtains that made her almost lose her wolf?

"Ria," he said, "I am going to ask you this again. Regardless of me asking you this earlier. But this time I want you to be absolutely honest. You can trust me. All that I do from the day I met you is for your protection. You are my Luna even in spite of being another man's wife. You are mine."

Riannon smiled at the words even though she knew that she wasn't going to like the

question that was about to follow.

"Did he hurt you? That husband of yours?" Gideon tried not to show it, but she felt his

inner rage by the way his grasp on her tightened.

"Yes and no," she sighed. How could she tell him everything that happened to her and

expect him to be okay about it?

"Did he hurt you physically?" the Lycan king asked through clenched teeth.

"No," she said at once to calm him down. Luckily, it was the truth.

"But something happened to you," he took her chin into his large palm and made her look at him, "Something that made you want not only divorce but fight for your pack. Something that broke you so much that your wolf almost died."

did sound weak every time she spoke. She tried to convince herself that it was just a

temporary weakness due to their rebirth and their chosen mate bond breaking. But what if it

was everything? And more...

"I don't even know how to say it," she sat up, wrapping the Egyptian cotton sheets around herself, Gideon following her motion not to miss any trace of

emotion on her beautiful face." You will probably think I was crazy," she muttered, covering her face with her both hands.

He took them away so that she could see him. He hoped that she would understand that no matter what was happening, he was going to be by her side. Whatever she was going to tell

himi..

"I am hard to scare off, Riannon," he gave her a soft smile. "Let's hope so," she gave him a nervous one.

And then, taking a very deep breath, she pronounced everything in one go as she was letting it out, "I already lived this part of my life. With Brayden and his mate Roxy in my pack. He never rejected her as he promised, and she took everything away from me. She killed the people I cared about, made Brayden reject and humiliate me, taking my title. And even then, after I already lost everything, she still killed me with the help of one of the wolves from my own pack. It was horrible. But then I somehow came back to the very moment it all started. Gideon, I literally opened my eyes when the door opened and the two of them walked in into our packhouse. This was when I lost Onyx. And since that day I had to live again during the most horrible days of my life. Only that I didn't want for everything to repeat. I wanted to change what happened. And I started tweaking things one by one. Big and little. I changed them and they were changing the reality. Yet main events are still the same. For example, when I tried to fight Roxy joining the pack, I still lost. But when I called you earlier this life than I did before it resulted in this... And then the Alpha Ball..."

She stopped when she noticed the frozen expression on his face. Did she overdo it? Was it too much for him? Should she have stopped after the rebirth part?

Gideon tried to process it. He thought that she was joking at first, but she was too serious and nervous about that. And now that he was thinking, it all made sense to him.

All right, not all. But some of the things did. Their very first conversation. She was already sure that bad things would happen.

And then her appearance at the ball. Her husband brought out his mate and mistress for everyone to see. Anyone would be crushed by that. But not Riannon. She held her head so high

exactly the opposite.

Not to mention the way she spoke to him. No one was that bold. Unless... they were on the brink of death and had nothing to lose.

"Gideon?" she called his name, biting her lip. He could see how worried she was about everything and wanted to tell him to forget about all that.

But in the next moment, he grabbed her and pulled her into the tightest of hugs.

He didn't say anything, but she knew that he believed her. And it did not change anything for him.

"I am so sorry you had to go through this," he said, kissing her hair as he couldn't reach anything else from this position but didn't want to let her go yet.

Slowly, she wrapped her arms around him too, embracing his warmth and his wonderful scent. Embracing the feeling of safety that he gave her. And for the first time ever she cried...

She rarely did. Almost never. But right now at this moment, she could finally afford to let it all out. The pain, the loneliness, the fight, all her raw emotions were out finally.

And it felt so much better.

Gideon was holding her in his arms as long as she needed, hurting together with her. Even Mars was howling inside feeling their mate's pain.

She was done way faster than he expected. But his beautiful Luna never ceased to amaze him. She was perfect. His perfect Luna...

Riannon looked at him with puffy eyes, embarrassed by her little outburst.

"Now," he said as he wiped the last tear away with his thumb, "Tell me everything from the very beginning."

They spent the whole next day in his room. Only ordering food in and talking about

everything. They talked so much but still, none of them felt like they were done. It seemed that there was always more. It started with the rebirth and then went on to their previous life. Then they were discussing their possible theories of what everything that had happened to her could

mean. But later they started to simply plan what they would do next.

Ria knew well how to work in a team. She was doing it with Brayden for years. But it was so different with Gideon. And not at all what she expected. They weren't finishing each other's sentences. He wasn't agreeing with everything that she told him the way Brayden did.

The Lycan king had his own ideas. Often much bolder than hers. And much more violent.

the brown wolves in her pack. Something that she couldn't agree with. So, the plan was changing and evolving, and they were both tired by the next night. Yet it felt so satisfying to do

this with... an equal.

Because this was what they were. Equals. Partners.

They were finishing their dinner, still wearing nothing but sheets when someone knocked

on the door.

"It's Reid," Gideon tolled her with an eye roll, "Give me a sec. I'll get rid of him and then maybe... we could take a bath?"

"We already took a shower together, remember?" she teased him.

"I do," a smirk stretched on his face as he winked at her. He opened the door but stood there, obstructing the Beta's vision.

"So, this is how it is now?" Reid said in a fake spiteful tone, "You have secrets from me? After everything we've been through?"

"Ha-ha," Gideon said emotionlessly, "You are welcome to come in, of course. But if you see something that you are not supposed to see, then I just have to kill you. Your choice."

"Here is fine!" the Beta chuckled, but then added in a serious tone, "The report is ready. And you are not going to like it."

"That bad, huh?" the king asked, taking the papers. He spent a few minutes reading and then Riannon heard a grunt.

"Shall I?" Reid asked bluntly.

"No, I think this is something I have to do personally," Gideon cut him off, "You will look

after Riannon. She is..."

"No need to explain it," the Beta replied, "I get it. I will protect her with my life."

She cleared her throat and came up closer to them.

"Excuse me," she said calmly, "But while we are at it I want you both to remember that I still have my own obligations... to my old pack. I can take care of myself."

"Ria," her mate looked at her with a mixture of begging and warning.

"I will act on my own if I have to," she insisted folding her arms on her chest.

"But you will use lycan protection at all times and let Reid know everything," he said.

"Fine!" she had to agree. Not that lycan protection was a bad thing.

"Okey-dokey," the Beta said awkwardly, "So... I think I am going to go for now..."

the door.

"You have to go," she said. "I have to," he admitted.

"For how long?" she asked as he removed the sheet that was covering her and lifted her up, entering her in one swift move. It already felt so natural to the two of them... Yet the crazy attraction wasn't fading away.

"A day or two," he grunted into her neck, showering her with kisses. "Do we really have time for this," she panted, digging her nails into his back and shoulder.

"No," he chuckled, speeding up his thrusts, "But I don't care. If I am not going to see you for this long, I am going to make it a goodbye to remember..."

She came back into her room after he was gone. She even watched him leave through the window. Like some pathetic wife-wannabe...

She chose this room as the Alpha suit smelled of him too much. And she needed a clear head to think of everything.

Only after a quick shower, she go to check her phone, discovering that the battery was off. She put it on the charger and soon it was on again, showcasing to her all the missing calls from her husband... There were so many of them. She knew very well why.

And she didn't want to deal with any of it. There were messages too. She did not open

them so that he wouldn't get the notification.

But then she saw one from Ash. And she couldn't ignore that one.

"Maya is in big trouble," was all that he texted her.