

The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

Chapter 49

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Chapter 49. Live Our Lives

Brayden did not let her go. If anything, now he clenched her towards himself tighter in a useless hope that he had misheard the Lycan king right now.

But when Gideon stood up and moved in their direction, he knew that he had lost. He had just lost everything.

"I don't like to repeat myself," the lycan looked at him with a challenge in his eyes, "You need to step away from my mate. Now."

The silence in the room was long and awkward but after a while Brayden unclenched his fingers and Riannon stepped away. Gideon did not waste any time and pulled her towards him. Rubbing her arm where her ex-husband was just holding her.

"Ria, did he hurt you?" he asked in a fake-sweet tone, and Riannon knew that if they did not want the bloodshed, she'd better shake her head and deny everything. He waited for them to be together for too long and his patience had its limits too.

"No, I am fine," she said and her mate brushed his palm over her beautiful face, enjoying the tingles that the touch created. He could stay this way forever, but a sound of laughter distracted him.

It was cold and unnatural laughter on the verge of madness.

"Are you kidding me?!" Brayden rubbed his eyes and threw his head back, trying to calm down. Too many eyes *were* on him now and he needed to get the situation back in control.

It was bad. He was losing his wife and at least half of his pack. No one would ever look at him in the same way again. No one would let him ever forget what happened here today. So, he had to act and he had to act fast.

"So, was this the plan all along?" he scoffed, "This is how the lycans now try to get our lands? You don't want war, so you are just going to marry daughters of Alphas and grab their packs in the process?"

Neither Ria nor Gideon liked what he was implying now. And some of the alphas in the room became visibly more anxious. In the end, the territory was one thing they were all ready to fight for. Always.

"Can't you see what he's doing right now?" Brayden continued, "He is using my wife to weaken me and to expand his Kingdom! I'm sure that he's not even your mate, Riannon! Are you sure that this is not some kind of witchery? You two met before and neither of you seemed to be shouting that you were mates."

"You'd better shut up about it now," Gideon growled, "before you say something that

Ria knew exactly what kind of game her now ex-husband was playing, so she placed her palm on the king's chest. The gesture immediately calmed him down. Their eyes met just for a

"It may come as a surprise to you," she started speaking softly, but it was only pretence, "but some people know how to control their wolves and their urges. It requires tremendous willpower that you clearly do not possess considering the situation we are in now, but it can still be done. We simply controlled ourselves and behaved like people and not animals. Out of respect for you and our marriage in the first place. You should try that sometimes. And as for my lands, they will always remain mine. Gideon has enough of his own. He doesn't need to take anything from his woman other than love."

That was a low blow and she knew it. After all, their packs were merged through marriage. This was how Bray got to his current position that was now slipping away.

But she was cutting the cord today. It had to be done.

"And as for proof of us being mates, not that we owe you anything," she continued, "I think the fact that the mark you gave me started disappearing when we met should be proof enough."

She moved the part of the white blazer that she was wearing and demonstrated to him the now pale stains on her skin, where she used to have scars left by his canines. It was there before, only that he did not notice. He did not check. He did not pay attention.

Brayden's face lost colour as his mouth parted slightly. His eyes were filled with pain now and for the first time, she felt sorry for doing this to him. But then she remembered how he sunk his canines into Roxy's neck right in front of her. Mere minutes after he denounced her as his Luna in front of the pack. It was unnecessary cruelty that she did not deserve after

After months and months of struggle, she was finally free from that feeling that was eating her up from the inside. This was when she was going to leave quietly, knowing that there were places where she would be accepted. But it wasn't destined to be this way and she never managed to leave her pack. Maybe because it was her destiny to get it back after all. And fix everything that happened.

Brayden's hand went to his neck instinctively where he tried to find the mark that she left on him. Two small scars were still there, palpable. He couldn't comprehend what was going on.

"Yet here we are," Riannon sighed, "I did not want to do it like this. But it seems that you

will cause trouble if I don't."

"Ri," he tried to stop her, stretching his hand in her direction but Gideon growled as a warning, "Don't..."

"I, Riannon Michaels, reject you, Brayden Thorn as my chosen mate, my husband and my Alpha. Starting from today, there is no bond between the two of us." The words left her mouth and she was afraid to feel the pain. But nothing happened. The lycan king looked at her with concern on his face but relaxed when she gave him a little calm smile.

Brayden, however, did not look too good. He was already pale prior to all that, but now he looked as if he was about to collapse. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead. He kept standing, but it was obvious that he could feel their bond being broken.

"How could you?" he stared at her now with pain in his eyes, "We... after so many years

"Go to your mate, Brayden," was all that Riannon said to him, "And leave me and my mate alone."

This wasn't how she planned to do it. But it was too late now since it was done. There was nothing between the two of them anymore.

The room became silent.

"You know what," Alpha Zack Morgan stood up, "how about we take a little break and cool ourselves down a bit?"

"I don't know," the werecat leader smirked at him, playing with her hair, "I haven't been to a Summit this entertaining for a while!"

"We'll meet you back here in half an hour," Gideon said, taking Riannon's hand and bumping Brayden's shoulder with his as they walked out.

He pulled her behind him, not caring where they went and as soon as they made a turn, he immediately slammed her back over the wall and placed his hands on both sides of her. The

lycan crashed his lips into hers, tasting them as if he had never done this before. His fingers dug into her hair, and she moaned softly when he thrust his tongue into her mouth. She missed him. Even more than she realised.

"If I don't take and mark you now, I will die," he muttered as he peppered her neck with kisses, his canines grazing over her sensitive skin.

place. And..."

"I don't care," he growled, pulling the belt of her blazer, and sliding his hands underneath it to feel her exposed skin. She was wearing a lace cropped top underneath and he couldn't

appreciate it more.

"Gideon," she let out a little nervous laugh, "The place is packed with Alphas who can hear everything. My ex included. Don't prove him right and don't give him control over the narrative of our story. Don't make him a victim here."

He stopped, still breathing heavily into the column of her neck.

"We just claimed that we can control ourselves," she reminded him, "We can't..."

"I get it," he groaned and pulled away from her. However, a happy grin was plastered all over his face. Her lips curled into a smile too.

"I am free," she whispered, still afraid to say it out loud. "No, you are not," he grunted, "You are mine." "Yes," Riannon nodded to that, "I won't argue with that. I..."

A confession almost left her lips but she stopped herself because this wasn't how she wanted to do it.

"Come on," he told her, "Maya is waiting outside. I bet you would love to break the news to her personally."

"Really?" she gasped, "You brought her here too?" "Of course," he chuckled, "Not that it was a choice. Your friend is... let's call it stubborn."

"That she is," Ria agreed as he led her back to the foyer, while holding hands. They

passed a few Lunas who were waiting for their husbands and she saw the looks of shock on

their faces.

A lot of people expected her divorce but no one expected this.

When they were outside, Gideon called his driver and asked to bring Maya to the main entrance. But the car took too long to arrive and he decided to go check what was going on.

"Stay here," he said, "I'll be back quick."

Riannon smiled to herself as she stood there, waiting for him. But soon she heard a familiar voice.

“How could you do this to me, Ri?”

She turned to face her ex-husband and sighed. “I had its limits, “You have your mate and I have mine. Let’s live our lives.”

“You just destroyed my pack!” he said through clenched teeth. “No,” she shook her head, “I saved what I could.” “What’s that supposed to mean?” he furrowed his brows.

She opened her mouth to respond to him when they both felt it. The change in the air as it got heated. And the deafening sound of an explosion.

The glass walls of the hotel shattered to myriads of pieces that were flying their way. This was when the blast wave reached them too. At the last moment, Brayden jumped in her direction and they both fell to the ground as he covered her with his body. It took just a second or two, but it felt like forever.

The whole world fell into silence...

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Chapter 50. The Aftermath.

The silence was deadly and Gideon stood up, leaning over the car next to him. He looked around, trying to comprehend what was going on, and realised that he was the only person standing. Right next to him, Reid and Maya were still confused, lying on the floor and trying to

get up.

Gradually, he started to hear the sounds of the car alarms which had all been triggered

by the explosion.

Explosion! He missed a breath, looking at the shattered hotel in front of him and seeing pieces of glass that used to be its exterior everywhere.

Gideon ran as fast as he could to where he had left her. His mate, his Riannon. The woman who was his whole life now. The woman he had just announced as his and then so carelessly left alone.

He was back at the entrance in no time, but he couldn't see her in the clouds of dust and

smoke. The fear seized him for the first time in his life. Primitive animalistic fear.

He couldn't lose her like that. Not when all the obstacles were finally gone.

Just then, he saw something white on the ground next to the entrance and recognised

her platinum blonde hair as well. The relief washed over him.

Riannon had her head pounding from the fall and the noise made her temporarily deaf. The first thing that she recognised was Brayden's scent. He was lying on top of her and breathing heavily.

The hearing was coming back slowly as he rolled off her and then tried to help her get up.

"Are you okay?" she heard her ex-husband through muffled noises. But she could only nod.

"Ria!" Gideon appeared out of nowhere and lifted her into his arms in less than a second,

"Oh, goddess! Thank goddess that you... I..."

"I know," she wrapped her arms around his neck, allowing herself a few moments of weakness. A few moments of being cuddled against his chest and breathing in his scent to calm down. A few moments of feeling safe.

"You are welcome, you know," Brayden said through clenched teeth, and Gideon glared at him for daring to speak to them now. But then he noticed that the Alpha was bleeding heavily and realised that he had actually covered his mate during the explosion with his body.

"Put me down," Riannon tapped his shoulder and turned to face her unexpected saviour, "Thank you."

but he smiled painfully.

"Whatever happens, I will always protect you, Ri," he stepped towards her, making Gideon growl, and then let out a little groan, turning his backs to them slowly and demonstrating several big pieces of glass stuck in his flesh. His suit jacket was soaking from the blood.

The lycan king had to take himself under control. He hated that man, but he would hate it more if one of those glass shards was now in Riannon's face instead.

He had responsibilities before his people. He had to go inside and check on them, see who was injured and who survived.

Reid and Maya were running their way, the girl throwing herself in his mate's arms. His Beta and the king exchanged glances. They both knew what they had to do.

"GO," Riannon told him, and he was relieved that she understood everything as well, "I will help Brayden to get the glass out and join you."

"No," the king protested, "Stay here."

"Yeah, sure!" Maya snorted, rolling her eyes.

"We'll be there helping the survivors as soon as we are done here," his mate said calmly, "There are people who need our help there and we are not sitting this one out."

"Ria," Gideon wanted to say something, but seeing the determination in her eyes, he gave up. The Moon Goddess sent him a Luna who wouldn't be hiding in a situation like that and would want to help their people. He had to learn to accept it, even if his instinct was to hide her

from the cruel world around them. "See you there," he said and rushed inside. They couldn't

waste any more time.

Riannon traced him with her gaze and then returned to the back of her ex-husband, who was waiting patiently. She took off her belt and started using it for soaking blood as she

removed piece after piece. Luckily, he was an Alpha and she could see that he was healing fast.

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"He doesn't know you the way I do," Brayden hissed as she got a big shard out of him,"

No one does."

"That's questionable," she stated plainly, keeping up her work, "Sometimes I wonder if you knew me at all."

"Of course, I did," he sighed, "It's just... The mate bond, Ri. It's stronger than anything."

"I can agree with that," his ex-wife seemed preoccupied with what she was doing, "I can

His whole body shuddered at the mention of the lycan king.

"But I would still choose to handle the matter differently," Ria confessed, "I wouldn't expect you two to live together, share me and be happy about it."

"I was only thinking about you," Brayden tried to turn his head to look at his now ex-Luna but Maya stepped in closer with a menacing expression on her face.

"Oh, look! I see one!" she declared and grabbed one of the bigger shards, twisting it in his flesh and only then getting it out, "There. We are wasting a lot of time here!"

The Alpha winced from pain but said nothing.

"There is only one thing that bothers me, Bray," Riannon said when she was done with him, "You talk so much about your mate and this bond of yours. But right now there was an explosion in the hotel we were all in and you are here, talking to me and not out there – looking for her. How does that work?"

His mouth parted slightly. As if he had remembered something important.

"I'll see you later," he muttered, and ran inside of the hotel.

Maya and Ria looked at each other and followed him.

Inside of the foyer that was sparkling and shining just seconds ago was messy and dark, because now all of the lights were down. They could still see properly thanks to the werewolf

vision though. And Riannon did not like what she was seeing.

Disoriented people walking here and there, a familiar Alpha clenching his Luna in his arms while the woman did not seem to respond. And a few dead bodies...

It was a disaster. And someone planned it.

From the corner of her eye, she noticed a woman dragging another woman from where the restaurant was located. She recognised the Alpha of the werewolves, Ramina and went to help her.

"How are you?" she asked.

"What will happen to me? I am a cat," the woman snorted, "I have nine lives. Well, eight now. Six if I am honest. But I was lucky that your ex caused a scene and I went to check on my Luna. I didn't get there in time for the second explosion."

“The second explosion?” Ria looked at the werecat in shock. “Yes,” Ramina gritted through her teeth, “Whoever did this, arranged one attack for the that couldn’t be said about the Lunas.”.

Riannon and Maya looked at each other and went inside the restaurant where, less than an hour ago, she was meeting with her friends. And they both gasped at the sight before their

eyes...

NOTE: Sorry for the shorter chapter today and for all your comments and wishes. I feel like I am starting to have some covid symptoms myself so I will keep in touch with you about the

updates. For now, I intend to keep daily updates but a lot will depend on whether or not I will

get down with the virus.

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Chapter 51. First Help

The dust was settling down and they saw bodies scattered around the room. It was a terrible sight to see and Riannon gulped as she recognised her friends. It smelled of burnt bodies and blood. An internal scream was desperately trying to leave her body but she knew that this wasn’t the time to sob or panic, so she turned to Maya, who was equally petrified.

“We check their pulses and get them out of here if they are alive. Assess injuries and decide if they need extra help before regeneration kicks in. Especially if their rank is below Gamma,” she instructed and her Beta nodded, “We need to keep them alive until the medics arrive or until they can heal themselves.”

It was easier for her now that she voiced her plan. It was a task that she herself could

concentrate on.

They got to work. One by one they were checking the Lunas who were unconscious. Luckily, most of them had pulses still beating their rhythm. Yet some of them did not. Riannon closed the eyes of Luna Selena as a tear trickled down her cheek. Her mother’s friend did not make it. She remembered how many times she visited The Pearl Moon pack back when she

was still a child and her siblings were alive. It was a true loss...

she heard a noise right next to her and saw some movement under a pile of wood that was once a table. She recognised the red dress at once and rushed to help Luna Ada to get out.

"Hold on," she mumbled as she was getting the pieces out of her way, "I'll be there in just

a sec."

Ada was covered in cuts and breathing heavily. However, Ria was positive that she was going to make it. Her frenemy was of Alpha blood and was supposed to heal quickly.

She got her out and dragged her out of the room in hope that the healers were already there. They always had a few teams ready for each Summit.

"People are already looking for them," Riannon told her as she placed her on a bench outside, "I am sure he is fine."

"Your law...did you manage..." the woman had trouble finishing her sentences.

"Yes, we did it," Ria tried to calm her down, smiling gently as she brushed the hair out of her face, "It worked. Alphas went on a break, so most of them left the building. I am sure your husband is one of them."

"Good," the Luna in front of her nodded and waved her off, "Go, help the rest."

alphas who were unharmed, who joined them, worked through the restaurant, getting out the injured. Now the foyer's floor was covered with bodies of the ones who died.

The rest were taken outside. Luckily, some of the werewolves were regenerating fast and

some were even able to join the search party.

"I think we are done in that part of the building," her Beta told her, "The upstairs was not damaged too badly but it would be best to evacuate people in case the building collapses."

"Yes," Riannon agreed, "Can you arrange that?"

"On it," Maya said and disappeared at once. This was why she would be the best second-in-command ever. She was a woman of action.

Ria broke one of the vending machines that survived miraculously and got out all the

coming to their senses. At the same time, she tried not to think of how many did not have that luxury today. And there were too many...

She took a deep breath of air, throwing her head back. Too many thoughts were circling in her head. Ambulances started to arrive and she knew that they would take it from there. But just then she noticed a dark figure behind the cars.

He was standing at a distance and it seemed as if he was looking at her and her only. A Black long coat, brown hair that touched his shoulders and stormy grey eyes.

She clenched her fists and wanted to get to him and kill him. However, he was gone in less than a second and she did not know where he went.

'Everett definitely had something to do with it and now she was sure of it more than

ever.

But that also meant that Roxy had something to do with it as well.

Her lips parted at the realisation. Of course! There was no point for Roxy to be here. Something told Riannon that Roxanne had read the documents she had prepared for sure and was supposed to know what she was planning. She was supposed to benefit from the divorce. So, why come when everything was going smoothly for her anyway?

Unless she had a completely different purpose. Ria got her phone out and dialled Harmony's number. "Yes," her ex-sister-in-law was not happy to hear her. As always. "Are you okay?" Riannon decided to play nice for a start since she needed information,

"Oh, Goddess! How are Bray and Roxy?" Harmony's intonation changed. She didn't inquire about her health, though.

"Bray is fine," she frowned, "We are still looking for Roxy. Tell me, what time did you bring her here?"

"I don't remember. Why?" Harmony was as careless as ever.

"We are trying to build a timeline of events here. This is important," Riannon lied. Partially.

"I think I dropped her off at about eleven," the girl hesitated with her answer, "Do you

want me to come over?"

"No need," the ex-Luna replied, "Go back to the pack. It's safer that way."

She hung up, not waiting for a response. She already knew what she wanted to know. Roxy was here even before they arrived. Everyone knew that she was an Alpha's mate. After all, Brayden paraded her at the Alpha Ball. So that meant that she could wander freely in the hotel without being suspected of anything.

Could she be the one to do it? Or was it just a coincidence?

A moan not far from her stopped her train of thought and Riannon went to that person to see how she could help. However, the medics got there first and she decided to go inside and

check what else she could do.

Inside, the atmosphere was grim. People were crying over their dead beloved ones. She noticed a line of bodies at the other end of the foyer that wasn't there before and counted at

least eight people.

Just then, Gideon appeared with another man in his arms. Their eyes met and he carefully placed the Alpha, who was dead on the ground next to the others.

A few seconds and they ran into each other's arms. The lycan king pressed his Luna hard into his chest, burying his face in her hair.

"I love you," he said, and she flinched. Deep inside, she always knew it. He was not hiding his feelings from her from the very beginning. But it was the first time he said it out loud like that.

"Gideon," she looked at him and he took her face into his hands.

"I am sorry," he smiled sadly, "This wasn't how I wanted to do it. You deserve so much better than this. But seeing how many people lost their mates today... They will never be able

die without letting you know how much you really mean to me. I decided that I need to tell you this now. And not waste any more of our time together. I love you, Riannon. More than anyone. More than anything. For me, there will never be another. Only you. You are my life. And I need you to know this."

"I love you too," she wrapped her arms around his neck. She wanted to tell him so much more than that, but he couldn't wait any longer and his lips crashed into hers. The kiss was ragged and mad, with the two of them only taking breaks to take a sip of air. She felt so guilty to feel this happy during such a disaster, so when they heard another scream, they both forced themselves to stop. There was still too much work to be done here to be lost in each other

now.

"Help!" they recognised Brayden's voice and saw him running with Roxy in his hands, "My mate is wounded!"

"I need to check on that," Ria told Gideon. The redhead was her prime suspect now and needed to know as much as it was possible. She needed proof because she knew that simply pointing at the girl wouldn't be enough. Especially if it was her.

She went to Brayden and pointed him to another empty bench while the medics were

busy.

"Calm down," she told him, checking the girl's pulse, "She doesn't look too bad compared

to others. Where did you find her?"

"In one of the shops at the back," her ex informed her, seemingly annoyed.

"Then it's good," she muttered, "It's far from the restaurant and the conference hall. You could even say that she is lucky."

"Lucky is not the right word here, Ri," Brayden snapped at her, "She is an omega and for her it's not as easy as for the top-ranked wolves!"

"And yet she barely has a few scratches," Ria pointed out, but he ignored her. His attention concentrated on his mate now. It was interesting how he went from forgetting about her to only caring about her so quickly.

"Anyway," Riannon stood up, "Good luck to the two of you. But I am sure she'll be fine."

She went back inside. After all, she already knew everything that she needed to know.

It went on and on. And even after everyone who was alive got the help they needed; it did

not end. As the Alphas stayed to discuss the next course of action.

"Hardly," one of the Alphas shook his head, "We have zero proof to blame anyone at this point."

"Because the foxes and the werebears not appearing at the Summit is not proof enough?" Ramina snorted, folding her hands on her chest, "Wake up!"

"There are a few other alphas who did not arrive," someone said, "We can't cross them out this easily from the list of suspects."

"We will check everyone," Gideon said, not happy at all with how this was going.

"We need to return to our packs for now," Alpha Caleb of the Jade Moon pack said, "In

case there will be any attacks. Whoever did this, wanted to weaken us before something major.

"True," Riannon said, "But their plan didn't work that well."

"Is that what you think?" one of the alphas growled at her, "My mate just died! And so many of our colleagues!"

Lycan King didn't start the Summit earlier than it was supposed to start. We would all be in that room. And no one who stayed there is alive now."

"Or maybe this is exactly what the plan was all along!" Brayden gritted through his teeth, "Everything is going so smoothly for the mighty Lycan king! He wanted us to take part in his war and we were reluctant. But look at us now! Everything is pointing at the foxes and the werebears and, of course, any alpha would want to avenge Luna or their dead friends. And just how lucky is this that the king announced the break right before the bomb went off so that he and his precious new Luna could get out just in time?!"

NOTE: Thank you for all your messages and wishes of health. I am feeling much better now. The story goes on. I love reading your theories btw. Keep them coming.

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Chapter 52

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Chapter 52. Back To The Palace

Riannon wanted to smack him. She knew very well what kind of game her ex was playing right now. And she knew that he was very good at it. He knew just what to tell the other alphas to make them concerned and to make them doubt. After all, he was one of them. And Gideon

wasn't.

This was his chance to get back into the game and he wanted to use it. However, what they were in now was bigger than him and his need to bounce back. So, she couldn't let him

have his way this time.

“To throw accusations like that, Alpha Brayden, you need hard proof” she said firmly, “I suppose you have something to confirm your words. Otherwise, it’s just slander and you will lose the last bits of respect for you that still remain.”

Their eyes met and Bray knew better than to continue. It was different now that she wasn’t on his side anymore. He used to count on her support in matters like this, knowing that she would find the right words. But not anymore. Now she was defending another. And it hurt.

“Let’s not drag this. I think we just got lucky today,” Ramina, the Alpha of the werecats sighed, “And let’s be thankful for that. Right now, we need to gather our strength and mourn

the ones that we lost.”

“But it doesn’t change the fact that it was probably just one part of the plan,” Gideon said calmly. Surprisingly, he seemed absolutely unaffected by the accusations of his mate’s ex, “My guess would be that phase one was to decapitate packs by killing the alphas and, in case that did not work, make alphas weaker by killing their Lunas. And that means that phase two is about to start and we need to be ready.”

“I agree,” Zack Morgan nodded, “We need to make sure our warriors are always ready to answer the call of our neighbours if there is such a need in the future. We united for a reason and right now it is time to prove that our alliance is worth something.”

“I will dispatch lycans to each pack that borders the foxes and the werebears just in case,” Gideon announced, “They will help you train and also help you defend your territories in case of an attack.”

“That would be greatly appreciated,” an Alpha of one of the packs in question nodded and others agreed with him as well.

“As for the deceased Alphas,” the king went on, “Right now their Betas will have to step in as leaders unless they have heirs of an appropriate age. New alphas should be appointed within this week. I am afraid it can’t take any longer.”

“Then this is it for today,” Gideon announced. Everyone was too tired by now after everything they went through. “We’ll be in contact,” he said, and the leaders started to say their

goodbyes. Brayden was among the first ones to leave and Riannon was able to breathe easily when he was gone from her sight. She knew that his pride would always stand in his way of accepting the new order of things. And she didn’t have the emotional strength to fight him today anymore. She was too exhausted.

Her mate was still talking to a few alphas and she decided to go and get some air while she waited for him to be done. No one was asking for her opinion on things for now, since her pack was still in the making. Not that she wanted to share her thoughts before she discussed everything that was on her mind with Gideon.

Outside, she saw her ex leading Roxy out of one of the ambulances. The omega stumbled on the way and dropped right into her mate's arms helplessly.

Riannon rolled her eyes as she turned away from the sight and almost bumped into Ash's chest. For a few seconds, she and the Beta were just staring at each other.

"Is this true?" he asked, placing his palms into the pockets of his trousers.

"Depends on what you mean," she couldn't read his facial expression and thus did not know what to expect from him.

"You have a mate," Ash said in a broken voice, "A real one this time." "It's the truth," she nodded. There was no point in denying anything. Neither did she want

"The Lycan king, huh?" the Beta snorted.

"Trust me, I was as surprised as everybody else," she gave him a weak smile. "And you are not coming back..."

"Oh, Ash," she smirked, "I am definitely coming back for what is mine. Just not today." She noticed a faint smile on his lips as he gave her a nod. "I'll be waiting," he said, and for a second there was silence between them. "Ash, can I ask you something?" she decided to try her luck one more day today.

"Of course," the man seemed to be relieved for some reason. As if he didn't know how to talk to her anymore and was happy for her to initiate the conversation.

"Were you with Roxy during the explosions?" she asked and he furrowed his eyebrows, getting at once why she was asking that.

literally everywhere."

"And what was she doing right before the explosion?" Riannon did not give up.

"Shopping," he replied honestly, "She... liked that lingerie shop they had there. Then, when everything happened, she was right next to the glass window and it was broken from the impact. Roxy was thrown over the wall. I spent most of the time trying to bring her back to her consciousness right until Brayden came looking for her."

"I see," Riannon nodded. This wasn't much and didn't help her in her suspicions at all. Then again, it was more important what Roxanne was doing prior to the Summit. When no one even knew that she was there.

"Come on, Ash!" Brayden growled through the open window of his car, "We need to get back to our pack."

For a second there their eyes met and she knew that he was about to say something to her. Probably something hurtful this time since he was obviously

angry with how today went for him. So, she turned away before he had a chance to do so. She did not owe him anything anymore.

"See you around, Ash," she said and walked away. Gideon, Ria, Maya and Reid drove home together. The lycan king had his hands wrapped

around his mate while she rested her head on his chest. They were supposed to have their

triumphant return home but the recent events did not let them indulge in their happiness. Too

many people died and they both felt guilty for the happiness that they felt.

It also did not escape Ria's gaze that her best friend and her mate were not even

touching each other. Maya sat with one of her legs on top of another and her hands folded on her chest, looking everywhere but at Reid. At the same time, the lycan Beta was throwing glances at her from time to time, obviously eager for more contact. But he did not push her, giving her the space she needed.

Riannon told them everything that happened today with Roxy, starting from the very beginning and they all listened carefully to her.

"I know it's not much," she said when she was done, "But I do feel that she is not that simple. Considering everything that she did in my previous life..."

"Wow," Reid suddenly straightened his back, "Previous life? Did I miss something?"

"Apparently a lot," Maya snorted and again her friend wondered what was going on between her and her mate, taking a mental note that she would have to address this later.

her. "It's worth checking, my love," he kissed her temple, "Luckily, the video footage was saved in the cloud. So, we will be able to check everything that happened before the Summit."

"Really?" Ria looked at her mate, "Then we will be able to find that Everett guy as well!"

Every muscle in Gideon's body tensed.

"What's that supposed to mean?" he growled.

"I saw him again today," she confessed, "Just a glimpse, but I saw him. Right after the explosions when we were getting people out. I am sure that the two are connected. Now more

than ever.”

“Then it’s good that he appeared,” the Lycan king’s grip on her became tighter,
“It’s best

to know our enemies in the face.”

When they arrived back at the lycan kingdom, it was already dark. Gideon and Reid had a few matters to deal with, so the girls went to their rooms first. Riannon decided not to bother Maya tonight since her friend already looked exhausted enough after the long day they had.

She was also tired, but after a long and relaxing shower her strength replenished and she was disappointed not to find Gideon in her bedroom. She was even more disappointed not to find him in his bedroom since it was the middle of the night.

However, she had a pretty good idea of where she could find him.

She threw a black silk robe on top of the matching slip and went downstairs. All the way to the lycan king’s office, where she found him staring at his laptop. Luckily, Reid was nowhere in sight.

“Is this how it is going to be, Your Majesty?” she mocked him with a soft smile on her lips as she closed the door behind herself. He lifted his eyes to look at her and his mouth parted slightly. He could look at her forever and still be stricken with her beauty every time.

“I am sorry,” he tilted his head to have a better look at her and liking what he saw, “I just wanted to make sure that the footage was checked as soon as possible.”

“And?” she got closer to his desk and his eyes lingered on her slender frame.

“Unfortunately, there is nothing to incriminate that omega,” he sighed, “And as for that Everett guy, the cameras were not filming the side of the car park. This is probably why he was so bold and let you see him. It’s another dead end.”

“Disappointing,” she sighed and circled the desk, placing one hand on his shoulder and another on the laptop, closing it, “But this also means that you may be done for tonight. And

His eyes flashed golden as he took the laptop and threw it into one of the drawers, immediately bringing her closer by her waist.

“The things you do to me,” he smirked and pulled the belt of her silky robe.

“Maybe it’s time for you to do things to me?” Riannon shrugged her shoulders and the robe fell all the way down to her feet, making her mate growl. She bent down to him, lacing her fingers in his hair and kissed him greedily. Gideon’s hands were roaming her thighs and as his fingers reached her most sensitive part, a

snarl of approval rumbled through his chest as he found out that she didn't have any underwear on.

With both his palms, he grasped her bottom and placed her on the desk before him, spreading her legs for him. Riannon was watching his every movement as he stood up, towering over her and started covering her body with kisses, making her slip fall down to her

waist.

"I am definitely the Moon Goddess' favourite," Gideon chuckled, kneading her breasts in his hands, "How else can one explain me having you as my mate. The perfect woman."

"Gideon!" she arched her back, needing more action from him now than what he was giving her and he happily obliged, sucking in one of her n***les and at the same time inserting two digits into her

A moan tore off her lips as the pleasure started to build inside of her. In the meantime, the lycan's lips were travelling lower and lower her body, until she felt his hot breath on her bundle of nerves and then his canines grazing over it softly. And as soon as he started working on her with his tongue, she lost it, digging her nails in his shoulders and moaning his name. He curled his fingers inside masterfully, bringing her over the edge quickly.

She panted as he stood up again to watch her as if she was a work of art. But Riannon was not nearly done, so she tugged on his belt, unbuckling it clumsily, since she was still coming back to her senses after her rel**se. His hardness sprung out of his pants and she stroked him a few times, teasing and making his eyes go darker.

He grasped her thighs and yanked her closer towards him, pressing his head at her entrance and at the same time lifting her legs higher.

"You are playing dangerous games, little mate," he taunted, and a nervous laugh escaped

her lips.

"I am feeling brave tonight," Riannon smirked at him and Gideon lowered himself to capture her lips, at the same time entering her in one rough move which she enjoyed to the

"I love you so much," he breathed into her mouth as he thrust into her and she scratched his back, tearing off his shirt in the process.

"I love you... too," she managed to confess in between his powerful thrusts, "So... much!"

"Mine," he growled out loud and lifted her up in the air, to which she immediately hugged his waist with her thighs tight. He pumped into her again and again, making her bounce on him while giving her back the support which she needed. Riannon screamed in pleasure as he was filling her perfectly, the tingles of their mate bond spreading over her body more than ever before. She felt Onyx howling inside as she cl**max at the same time as him and bit his

shoulder from the intensity of the sensations.

Gideon was holding her tight, his most important treasure. Slowly catching his breath, he sat back in his chair, placing her on top of him and pressing her to his chest. She leaned into him as if she belonged there and it was the most natural thing for them ever. His fingers were brushing her hair softly and, for the first time on this very hard and uneasy day, they both felt happy and at peace.

Only to get none. "Ria?" he caressed her cheek and realised that his mate had dozed off already.

"Should have done it while she was moaning," Mars grunted, not happy at all with how the night turned out.

"She is ours now," Gideon smiled as he covered her naked frame and lifted her up in his hands to take her to the bedroom, "Day earlier, day later – it makes no difference anymore."

Riannon woke up alone in their bed, but there was no disappointment whatsoever, as she knew very well that her workaholic mate was probably already performing his royal duties. A white rose on his pillow and a sweet note only confirmed her thoughts.

She did not want to waste any time either and after a quick clean up, dressed to impress

and went downstairs.

However, she paused at the doors of the dining room when she saw Maya standing there

alone. She was clearly eavesdropping and this was so not like her friend.

Her Beta noticed her at once and motioned for her to stay quiet, signalling for her to start

listening too...

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Chapter 53. Preparations

Riannon quietly got closer to her friend and concentrated on her hearing. Whatever it was, it seemed important to Maya and she never ignored her friend's requests.

"I am telling you, he will be over this mate business in less than a month!" some she-wolf snorted, "It's Reid of all people! He will never be able to stay with just one woman!"

Ria turned to look at Maya but the girl averted her gaze, clenching her lips tight. "Unless she will be willing to take part in his orgies," another girl chuckled, and a group of them burst out laughing.

"And even then," someone added, "Reid likes to switch it up! If that girl thinks that she has any kind of future with him, she is delusional!"

Riannon had enough and she really wanted to walk into the room and explain to those women to keep their mouths shut about matters that were none of their business. But her Beta

grabbed her hand, shaking her head and motioning for her not to do that.

The Luna sighed and pulled her friend into the next available room, which looked like an empty study with a desk, a few chairs and a long bookshelf. She looked around, taking a mental note that this was the perfect place for a queen's office.

"M, you can't let it bother you like this!" Riannon said as soon as she locked the door behind them, "Those girls can talk but it doesn't mean anything!"

"Easy for you to say," Maya shuddered slightly and went to sit in one of the chairs, "I don't hear anyone saying things like that about Gideon. They are all very happy that he found you and no one has any doubts about his feelings towards you."

"So?" Ria sat on the armrest and leaned over the back of the chair, "The only opinion that should matter here is Reid's. What is going on between the two of you?"

"I don't know...". The confession did not come easy for the Beta female. "It all started so hectic with what was happening to you. And then the king was angry with him. He had to work and I sat there alone, waiting and not being able to do anything. When we try to speak, it's

awkward. And he hasn't made a single move on me. I don't know what to think, Ria. He doesn't

seem to like me at all."

"You've been thinking about all this too much," the Luna chuckled, "And from the wrong angle."

"Elaborate on that, please." Maya shot her brow up and Riannon saw how hopeful her eyes were. She really needed this to work.

"Well," she made a dramatic pause, "Reid is a known playboy but he hasn't made a move

like any other girl in his life because he respects you and wants more from you than just s*x. You were in a very difficult situation when you met each other and the way I see it, he is giving you space."

"Or it is just your wishful thinking," the Beta girl snorted bitterly, turning away, "Tell me something," Riannon continued, "What happened yesterday during the explosion? What did Reid do?"

"He covered me with his body," Maya smiled and bit her lower lip, "But in all honesty, I think he would do this for anybody."

"Right," Ria smirked, "And what do you think of him as the Beta of this kingdom?"

"He is great," the girl said at once, lifting up her knees to hug them, "One of the best I

have seen. Even better than Ash."

"Then think of the fact that for you this amazing lycan Beta disobeyed his own king," Riannon stood up, "He had a task to stay by my side at all times. But the moment he saw you, he chose you over his king and future Luna. If that's not a huge signal of what you meant to him, then I don't know."

Maya stayed silent. She hadn't thought of that before.

"You see," Ria brushed her hand softly over her friend's hair, "From day one he saw you as the most important person to him. Maybe he doesn't know how to express it yet. But neither do you. In that sense, you are charmingly the same." It was the truth. Maya wasn't big on dating either. She had flings but never anything serious. It was as new for her as it was for Reid.

"And what would you suggest for me to do?" she looked at her Alpha questioningly.

"I would suggest for you to claim your man," Riannon chuckled, "So that no she-wolf here would have any ideas on his account anymore. And so that he knew where you stand. After all, you are a Beta. And not some unconfident omega. Act like it, M."

She wanted to say something else but the door opened and they both saw Reid's head

poking in.

"I hope I'm not interrupting," the lycan smiled awkwardly, "Luna, Gideon is looking for you everywhere. He's in his office now."

"Great," she beamed, "then I will leave the two of you alone. Maya wanted to talk to you

about something." Preparations

him and hoping that the two would be able to figure everything out over time. However, all she wanted now was to see her own mate. She found him sitting by that same desk that they deflowered yesterday and she felt her cheeks flush from the sweet memories.

"Morning," she smiled, and Gideon growled approvingly at the sight of his Luna.

"Come here," he stood up and met her in the middle of the way, pressing her against himself and crashing his lips into hers. He left her warm body in his bed just a few hours ago but was already missing her as if he hadn't seen her for ages. "Slept well?" he asked her with a smirk.

"Like a baby," she replied, not getting his little hint.

"You know, Riannon, you are the first woman to fall asleep so fast after having s*x with me and I don't know where to take that as a compliment or if I should be worried," the lycan taunted her.

"You should be worried if you want to compare notes to what was happening to all those other women in your bed," she quirked her brow up at him and he cleared his throat nervously, realising his mistake.

"Anyway," he lifted her into his arms effortlessly and went back to his chair, sitting in it and placing her in his lap, "I have something for you."

– "Oh?" she laced her arms around his neck and watched him producing a folder from the depth of his desk, "What is it?"

"Just what you asked for, my love," he said, "I did the research on that omega."

"Really?" Riannon grabbed the folder and opened it, greedily reading the few pages inside while her mate was caressing her bare arms and playing with her long blonde hair which she left loose today.

"It's not much as you can see," Gideon commented when she was done, "But everything inside is confirmed."

"It's more than I ever had before," she turned to kiss him, "Thank you for that!"

"You don't need to thank me," he slowly brushed his palm over her cheek, "I will

do anything for you.”

“I will be going to my pack today,” she told him, “I need to claim my land and make sure that the separation of the packs will go smoothly. It cannot be postponed.”

“No, Gideon, you have your own matters to attend to. The war is not going anywhere.” she reminded him, “And I have to deal with it myself. Otherwise, they will never respect me as an Alpha.”

“I am just worried about your safety. That woman has killed you before and your ex... How do I put it mildly...”

“...is an a**hole?” Ria giggled, finishing the sentence for him.

“Yes,” he pulled her closer and breathed in her scent, “I don’t trust any of them. And you still have no wolf. I guess I am just worried about your safety.”

“I’ll be fine,” she assured him, “The pack is full of my people. I am sure that they will follow me. And Maya will go with me too. And as for Onyx... I felt her again yesterday. She is there.”

“I would be calmer if you could shift,” he said, and she felt a prick of pain deep inside. It

was hard still not knowing what was happening to her wolf. He sensed that through their bond and placed a soft kiss on her shoulder. “I am sure she will get back,” he added, “As soon as we are done with our current affairs, we will give all our attention to smoking her out of her sleep.”

“I take your word for it,” Riannon smiled, relaxing in his arms, “She only reacts to you anyway.”

“I am honoured,” the king chuckled, but then got serious again, “However, I insist on you taking Reid with you as well as a few of my best warriors. Safety first, Riannon.”

“Gideon!” she rolled her eyes.

“Ria,” he placed his finger on her lips to stop her from protesting more, “Just do it for me. Otherwise, I would not be able to concentrate on my work today and will end up coming with you anyway. You are a queen now and a few guards around you is a must.”

“I am not a queen yet technically,” she reminded him.

“You are my queen since the day I laid my eyes on you, my love,” he did not buy it and she decided that it was easier to let him win this battle.

“Fine!” she groaned and kissed him on the cheek, “I will take them.” She stood up and took the folder with her, preparing to leave.

“Ria,” Gideon looked at her thoughtfully, “When you come back we will also have to decide what to do next. How are we going to arrange our life with you being a queen and an Alpha.”

last time, “I am not going to refuse any of the titles. I want it all.”

“And all you shall have, my beautiful mate,” he made her a promise that he intended to keep.

Riannon left his office in the best of moods and bumped into Reid and Maya in the hallway. The girl had swollen lips and the guy had a smug smile on his face, which told her that they finally were able to take that first step towards being true mates. It was something!

She informed them briefly about what they agreed on with Gideon and Reid went to get the warriors to take with them. But to Ria’s surprise, Savvy was the first to join them in the car as they were waiting, followed by Kyle.

“What?” the princess snorted, “I am one of the best warriors in our pack and so is Kyle. And I am not missing the opportunity to see what all the fuss with your pack is about.”

“Actually, I am glad that you’ll be joining,” Riannon confessed, “My brand is all about girl power and you will fit just fine.”

“See,” Savannah sneered, “This is why I like you! I always wanted to have a sister just like you. And now I have two!”

Soon the preparations were completed and they drove all the way to The Silver River pack, discussing their course of action when they would arrive.

However, when they reached the main territory, they were stopped at the main gates. – “What is going on?” Ria looked out of the window and the three guards looked at her apologetically.

“I am sorry, Luna,” one of the men practically stuttered, “We have an order not to let you through....”

NOTE: Hi, I know this chapter is far from perfect but the covid finally got me too and it's bad. I will probably be taking a break tomorrow to try and get better (not 100% sure about that though). But even if I miss tomorrow's update, I will definitely post one on Sunday. I hope you can understand. Thank you for all your support throughout the book. It means a lot to me.

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Chapter 54

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Chapter 54. Regrets

Riannon frowned. She was expecting things not to go smoothly today, but for Brayden to obstruct her even entering the pack was too much.

“I don't think Alpha Brayden has a right to prohibit me from entering my own pack,” she looked the guards up and down. They were Brayden's warriors, so were supposed to be loyal to him. He actually thought something through for once. “And also,” she continued, “It's not the Luna, it's the Alpha now. Alpha Riannon Michaels.”

The men glanced at each other but did not move.

She sighed heavily and opened the car door, stepping outside. Maya and Reid followed her, and so did the warriors who drove in another car. The whole group looked menacing.

“We don't want any trouble,” one of the guards said firmly, “We just follow our Alpha's

orders.”

“Very well,” Riannon smiled softly at them and produced the papers out of her folder, “Then you should know that your Alpha is currently trespassing my lands. His territory starts miles from here. And I have all the required paperwork to prove it. So, at the moment you are obstructing me from entering my own pack. And this could be taken as an act of war. Since you are clearly in the wrong here, I have the right to call other packs and the lycans to support me. And what will happen after that will be out of my control.”

They stood there, gaping at her. And when one of the lycan warriors played with the knuckles on his fists, making them click, they retreated.

"Apologies, Alpha Michaels," one of them said, "We were not aware."

"That's fine," she gave them a gracious smile as they opened the gates for her, "Can't blame you for a simple misunderstanding."

She asked the driver to drive slowly this time as she wanted everyone to be a witness to her arrival. So, when they parked in front of the main mansion and got out of the car gracefully, there was a crowd already.

"Ria!" her friends Tatiana and Aria got to her first, "How are you?" "You have no idea what is going on here!" they were both speaking at once.

"Oh, I think I have a pretty good idea," she chuckled, happy that she could still count on the two she-wolves. She knew very well that loyal friends were priceless.

"Is that true?" Aria lowered her voice, "Did you really divorce Brayden?"

"Can you blame her?" Maya joined the group and Tatiana gave her a hug. They were all shattered by everything that was going on in the pack lately and were happy to see her doing

"I guess not," the bubbly blonde giggled, "But is it true that you both are mated to lycans?"

"Yes," Riannon couldn't help but smile and pointed at Reid, "Meet Maya's mate Reid

Frazer, the Lycan King's Beta."

"My, oh, my!" Tatianna jabbed her friend with her elbow, "Lucky you!"

"It's not the time for all this," Maya interrupted them, blushing probably for the first time in her life, "Right now we have more pressing matters. Help us to gather the pack members. As many as possible."

"Just give us a sec!" both girls nodded and disappeared in two different directions. In the meantime, Riannon took a deep breath and pushed the door into the house that

had been her home for many years.

Brayden was sitting in his office with a glass of whiskey in his hand. Everything felt wrong and he knew exactly when and how it started.

"My love," his omega mate wrapped her arms around his shoulders, trying to massage them gently, "You are doing everything right. You can't let her win after what she did to you. You are a good man and it's her mistake for not seeing you for who you are. She started it."

And yet he hesitated as his hand froze above his laptop's keyboard. One push of a button and Riannon would never have access to their pack's money.

"Just do it," Roxanne pushed him, "And within a month the whole pack will be yours again. People wouldn't tolerate an incompetent Alpha. They will choose you over her. She will be left with just her land and no pack members."

But at least half of this money came from the merger of their packs and businesses. He knew very well that if he did this, it would be wrong on very many levels. And his ex-wife would be able to go to court and even win the case. But by then, her pack would be done.

He frowned. They were his people once too. He knew that most of The Pearl Moon pack

would follow Riannon. It was a given. Not to mention that they had their homes on her land. And he did not want to harm them. They also helped to bring him to his former glory.

His ex-wife was the only one he wanted to punish. For betraying him and for making a

fool out of him in front of everyone. He wanted this even though he knew that she was in her

right.

He humiliated her first. And now he saw it. His omega mate was whispering something in

great ended up being such a disappointment.

He never wanted to make Roxanne a Luna. She wasn't fit for the role. She was sexy as hell but there was no comparison between her and Riannon. Despite helping him back with Maya once, she couldn't offer him much. She couldn't lead their people in battle, considering how weak she was. She couldn't take care of pack matters since she didn't have the proper education. So far, she was just a pretty face. And this wasn't good enough. It was definitely a downgrade from what he used to have, and everyone would see it that way.

He regretted bringing her into his pack. Now he was even thinking that he should have rejected her as everybody had been telling him to do. Then everything would have been

different...

He still couldn't believe that Riannon was lost to him. Even if he managed to destroy her pack, she wouldn't be back. She would be the lycan queen. And his enemy forever.

It hurt. Having her as his enemy was painful since she had been his best friend for many

years. He shared everything with her and was sure that she would understand the need for his

mate.

But this was what broke them. He saw that now and he regretted it. If he had known... If he had a chance to change the past, he would have.

No matter how hard he tried, he wasn't in love with his mate the way he was with his ex-wife. However strange that sounded. He wanted Roxy 24/7, the pull was there and his wolf wanted her too. But she didn't feel like the other piece of his soul, she didn't feel his mind the way Riannon used to. He now knew that mates were overrated.

Then again, he did not mark her. That could be it. They didn't have that connection yet.

His hand instinctively went to the mark on his neck, the scars still protruding from his skin.

When the lycan king mentioned the mark disappearing on Riannon's neck, he was in shock. It wasn't supposed to be possible. And yet here they were.

He needed more time to figure out what was going on and how to bounce back from all

this. But time was one thing that he did not have.

"You are hesitating," Roxanne sighed and circled his chair, moving the laptop away from him and sitting on the edge of his desk, "I really did not want to do it this way, Brayden. I just wanted you to choose your own future and understand that your ex-wife is not worthy of you.

But you are losing this battle to her, and I can't stay behind like this anymore. There is

"What is it?" he was slightly annoyed as he needed to think about everything. Preferably

alone.

But when she took his hand and placed it on her belly, his lips parted in shock. "I am with child, Brayden," the redhead smiled, "With your child. Your heir."

"That's impossible," he muttered, "I only forgot myself once and..."

"Once is enough for true mates," the girl bent down and placed a kiss on his lips, igniting his inner desire for her, "This is what happens when you are with the right partner. I will give you a son, Alpha Brayden Thorn. He will be an Alpha among all alphas."

He caressed her belly, lost in his thoughts. There was a reason why he did not want to risk it with her. Since she was an omega, she could give him low-ranked pups. Which would be unforgivable. It would make him the laughingstock amongst other alphas. Not to mention that it would jeopardize his pack's future. And he couldn't afford that.

This was one of the reasons why Riannon was a perfect partner for him. With her alpha bloodline, she could guarantee alpha pups to her husband.

He regretted once again that he didn't have children with her yet. That would have solved all their problems. The pups would be his and she would never leave him as a result. They would build their alpha empire together just as they dreamt when they were younger.

But instead, they were both caught up in their work all the time and kept postponing it. This was one of his biggest mistakes.

Now it would be next to impossible to get her back. She was with the Lycan king of all people. She was his mate... And even if she wasn't, it would be too hard to compete with him. He had power and money. Money...

Brayden stared at the screen of his laptop. He needed it more now than Riannon did. This

was the only way for him to remain powerful enough.

"Will you say something?" the omega pouted her lips, "I know it's too early to tell, but I can feel that our baby is an Alpha! It's like the power has been circling through my bloodstream since I got pregnant."

This gave him hope. Maybe his mate could act as a Luna after all? She had already

proved to him her scheming skills once. That might come in handy in the future again. But if

she managed to become a mother of an Alpha, then others would respect his choice too. This

could be the way out that he needed.

at the Summit and he owed her nothing anymore.

He pressed the button and looked at the screen, relaxing only when he saw a transaction

confirmation message. It was done.

"I am so proud of you, Brayden," Roxanne jumped onto his lap and this time he let her, "There is something else I need to tell you. Something about your ex-wife that I learnt recently. I think you are going to like this information."

He looked at her with a newfound interest.

"Do tell," he encouraged her and she leaned all the way down to his ear, whispering what

she knew and making his eyes go wide.

But at the next moment they heard Riannon's voice in the nearby hallway, "Honey! I am

home!"

NOTE: Thank you for all your sweet messages. I hope to return to updating the book daily, but the time may be random for now. The next update will be posted on Monday evening London time.