The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert Chapter 1

CHAPTER 1

Riannon stood there not quite believing her eyes. Her husband of six years had his arm wrapped around a petite girl in the middle of their pack house. The cute ginger head peeked at her discretely and Ria could swear that she saw a smirk for half of a second.

"Ri, dear," Brayden, her legal husband, chosen mate and the Alpha of their pack addressed her in a way he always did when they were alone, "I need to confess... I have found my true mate. Her name is Roxanne."

The silence in the room was deadly since the moment the two of them walked in, holding hands. Everyone stopped doing what they were doing and all eyes were on the three of them. The Alpha, the Luna and the Alpha's mate.

Ria couldn't force herself to say anything, so Brayden took the lead.

"Listen, I know that we are chosen mates and you will always be my Luna, I assure you of that. But since my wolf saw Roxy, he is going nuts. It will be bad for the pack if I rejected her now. He wouldn't be able to deal with it. And it will weaken us."

There it was – the excuse!

The two of them were school sweethearts, the perfect couple. Rhiannon was a daughter and the heiress of a powerful Alpha from a very strong pack. Brayden was her father's best friend's son and the future Alpha of his own pack. Since they started dating when she was just 15 and he was 16, everybody couldn't stop buzzing that they were true mates. They always were the IT couple and everyone envied their love. Besides, as a daughter of any alpha, Ria was educated to become a Luna one day. And not just any Luna. The perfect one. She spent all her

free time studying what she would have to do for the rest of her life. And she mastered every single thing to perfection. So that when she was 18 and ready to marry Bray, she would be prepared.

But Bray's 18th birthday was first. She trembled to meet him on that day, longing to hear the one and only most significant word of both of their lives – mate.

He came to her pack early that day and she ran down the stairs to greet him. But as she ran, both their smiles faded a bit. She couldn't feel anything, but he already knew.

"We are not mates, aren't we?" she asked, tears trickling down her chin.

"Not the fated ones," Brayden sighed heavily and locked her in his arms, his lips in her hair. They stood like this for quite some time, waiting for the disappointment to wash away. And when they were ready, Bran took her face into his hands and said, "It doesn't matter, Ri! I choose you! I will always choose you! No matter what, no one can break the love between us. You will be my mate, my chosen mate! My one and only!"

It did help that their families practically planned the whole wedding at this point. Her father had no son anymore, since Riannon's older brother died young trying to save their little twin sisters from the rogues. All of them died as a result and Ria was the only one left. So, there was a pressing matter of who would be inheriting the pack. And Bray seemed like the obvious choice. The two of them loved each other and no family members were against the merger of the two strong packs.

A contract was drawn but Bran suggested waiting until Riannon was 19. He told her that he made his choice but wanted for her to try and find her mate before she made hers. They were visiting other packs for the whole year before her next birthday. And then got married one month later, since no mates were found but their feelings were only getting stronger.

They became the power couple of the werewolf world and merged both their packs into one, year by year working to make it stronger. And now at twenty-five, Ria was a renowned Luna whom everyone admired.

Riannon traced her gaze around the room and saw the shocked faces of her packmates. Yet she couldn't help but notice that not everyone seemed startled by the recent events. Her husband's Beta was watching quietly from the distance, his hands crossed at his chest. But absolutely no surprise in his eyes.

However, the most stunned among them all was still Riannon herself. Although not for the reasons that they all assumed.

Her fingers were trembling and lips twitching slightly as she looked at her husband and his true mate with wide eyes.

"No," she muttered, "It couldn't be!"

Why would the Moon Goddess return her into that exact moment in time when all her life turned upside down, leading to her demise.

Just seconds ago, Ria was crawling over the ground in the woods, fighting for her life as two creatures followed her closely. The wolf found her first, digging his sharp canines into her flesh and making her wince in pain.

She was a strong wolf herself, but unfortunately, someone drugged her with aconite, making her weak, unable to shift and practically paralysed.

The wolf growled as he ripped a part of her thigh off and for the first time ever Riannon screamed loudly.

"You can shout all you want," the girl who stepped forward said, "No one is going to hear you here and now."

Ria recognised that voice at once. Her tormentor was none other than her husband's true mate, Roxanne.

"You?!" Ria panted, trying to sit up, "Why are you doing it? You already took everything from me?! My husband, my position as Luna, my pack…"

The wolf growled at her and she tried to recognize him but it was too dark and she was too weak. The only thing that she knew was that the werewolf was brown. Yet there were many brown wolves in the world so it did not help.

"I have my reasons," Roxy smirked, rubbing her round belly, "And I don't have to explain them to you. Not anymore. Your time has passed. You are done, Riannon."

"They will find everything out!" the ex-Luna pleaded, "You will not get away with it!"

Resounding laugher was her answer as Roxy kneeled next to her and grabbed a fistful of her hair, "Dear, Riannon, don't you get it? I already did!"

She then forcefully threw Ria towards the ground and ordered the wolf, "Finish her off. Make sure nothing is left."

Her arms and her legs were not listening anymore as Riannon watched Roxy walk away leisurely. As if she did not just order to murder her.

A tear trickled down her cheek as the wolf had a moment of hesitation.

She did not deserve it!

It was not fair!

If she had another chance, she would do everything differently.

"I am waiting!" Roxanne's sweet voice broke her train of thought as the wolf jumped over her and ended her life in seconds.

Riannon gasped as she suddenly found herself in the reception room of her house. Something was off because all the old furniture that she loved so much was in place. She couldn't understand what was going on until Bran walked in with Roxy in his arms and she recognized the day as exactly one year ago.

"Moon Goddess has some sick sense of humour!" Ria thought to herself, "Out of all of the moments of my life, she brought me back into this most miserable and unpleasant one. What is up with that?!"

Luckily, she was always reserved and knew how to hide her feeling pretty well. So, she just lifted her chin up and met her husband's gaze.

"I understand that this is very sudden," Bran tried to sound considerate and she barely managed to hold back a scoff. Sudden? He had no idea!

"I know our agreement, but my wolf is going nuts. You are not only my Luna but also my best friend, who always understands me. And I know that you always want what's best for the pack. Roxanne is an omega and an orphan, in her pack... Ri, it was horrible how she was treated there! They abused her and treated her as a slave. I couldn't leave her there. It would be horrible and my wolf would never forgive me."

He finally let go of Roxanne, leaving the redhead alone and came to his wife, taking her hands in his.

"Let her stay in the pack for the sake of it. My wolf is stronger next to her, the rejection would kill him. And we can give Roxy a peaceful life here. She will…"

"No," the answer sounded calm yet loud enough for everyone to hear…