

The Perfect Luna by Marissa Gilbert

Chapter 41

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Chapter 41. Tell Me What To Do

He kept looking at her and breathing hard. Panting almost. And she saw his eyes glowing just for a moment there, knowing what it meant.

“There is a big difference, Riannon!” the Alpha looked at her with menace in her eyes, “Roxanne is my mate! I can’t help it!”

“And he was a lycan king. I can’t help it either,” she said, “No one says no to him, Brayden. Not even you. Not to mention that MY wolf was in pain, and he helped to distract her

and took care of both of us better than...”

He groaned painfully and then grabbed the whole massive desk and threw it at the wall, clearing the space between them.

“You are my wife!” he growled, “You were supposed to come to me if you needed comfort!”

“Really, Brayden? After everything?” she cocked her brow up at him, “It’s like you don’t know me at all!”

He closed his eyes, trying to steady his breathing. Deep inside he knew that she was right and that he needed to fix that, not make it worse. Threatening and force would never work with

someone like Riannon as she was an Alpha herself. He knew that far too well. This would only

push her further away from him. And now, knowing that she had been with another and...

enjoyed that.., that another man had been her consolation while he was too entranced into his

omega mate, was making him crazy mad.

His chest tightened. He couldn’t be losing Riannon. His perfect wife. His perfect Luna.

She was his. He wanted her back. He wanted to fix all that and make her forget about his mistakes and about that other man who was making moves while he was distracted.

They had been together for years and he knew everything that she liked. They had many quarrels in the past and he always found a way to appease her. He would find such a way now

too.

Starting with the obvious...

He had made just a few steps in her direction, but she stood up from her chair and walked to the window, trying to avoid the pieces of her broken desk scattered all over the floor. She knew that he wanted to caress her, to try and seduce her and make her forget about everything. As if he forgot about one of their anniversaries and not betrayed the bond that they both chose.

Brayden slowly shifted in her direction, standing behind her and wrapping his arms

instead of her relaxing into his arms, he felt her trying to struggle and get out.

"Ri, let's finish all this," he murmured in her ear, "You know I love you. You wear my mark. You are my wife, my Luna... I am sorry. For everything."

She did not know how to get rid of him. Just the thought of him touching her repulsed her. Even being this close she felt like she was betraying Gideon. She knew she would have to endure living with her husband a few more days, but sleeping with him was out of the question.

"Brayden," she tried to remove his hands but he attempted to keep her in place instead, "Let me go."

"I missed you so much," he ignored her completely as he lifted her in his arms and went in the direction of the bed, "We need to reconcile. And I am not taking no for an answer."

"You will have to!" she gasped and kicked him in the abdomen right as he threw her to the bed.

"Ri!" he growled at her and grasped her hands tightly, yanking her whole body back up.

"I am serious, Brayden! I am not in the mood!" she yelled at him and prepared to hit him again if she had to. The bad news was that he was stronger than her. But at least she never considered him capable of taking a woman by force. She hoped that she was right about this

now more than ever.

"Ri," he pulled her into a hug and tucked his head into her neck again, "What do we do now? How do we fix this?"

She sighed, knowing very well that right now he was inhaling her scent that was still mixed with Gideon's. And it probably only made him angrier.

"What do you want me to say?" she pushed him away and distanced herself from him.

"Tell me what I can do to mend this. I will do anything! Whatever you want, babe," Brayden looked desperate at this point but she did not buy it.

Unfortunately for him, they already had a similar conversation in the past when she spoke of their divorce for the first time after she couldn't tolerate Roxy anymore. But he was against it. He promised her things. Things that he did not fulfil later. And then he dumped her off the cliff... Metaphorically, of course. But it still hurt the same.

This was why she did not have any moral problem going on with their plan with Gideon. Brayden had a part to play in it as well.

"I don't know what could be done here," she sighed, "I guess I need time to forget. But

"No, tell me, Ri," he placed his palms onto her shoulders.

"I want to be heard, Brayden! I want to be supported!" she said and noticed the relief in his eyes. Of course, the reasonable thing would be to demand him get rid of his mate. Yet she did not go there.

"Okay," the Alpha nodded simply, "I am ready to give you that."

"Then let me finish my work on that women rights law I've been working with king Gid..."

"No!" he snapped in less than a second, "Don't even say his name!"

"Very well," she rolled her eyes, "But you do realise that He Who Shall Not Be Named wouldn't abandon that project. He likes it and he needs it as he is trying to change the image of lycans. From ruthless to at least civilised. He would want to finish it and propose it at the next Alpha summit. And for that he needs me. As I do the heavy lifting here."

He did not say anything this time and it got her worried, so she continued.

"You don't even care...", she tried to walk away, but the Alpha caught her and held her

close to him.

"How sure are you in this project of yours?" Brayden asked. In his mind, he was calculating ways to use all that to his advantage.

"Don't insult me at least!" she snorted, "It is my project from top to bottom! I have no

doubts about it!"

"Then I will make sure it gets approved, Ri. I swear to you, you wouldn't have to go to that lycan ever again!" the werewolf in front of her now looked very excited. He loved to be the star of the summits. He sure as hell would be one soon.

"Very well," his wife shrugged her shoulders, "At least that's some kind of a start for us." "See?" he smiled at her, "We are still a team. Still, a force to be reckoned with."

"That we are," she agreed and his grasp on her became tighter, his breathing ragged. She distanced herself at once to avoid any kind of confusion. "I will need to speak to quite a few alphas to explain to them the law."

"We will take a few each," Brayden suggested, "To save time."

"Good idea," she praised him. This was turning out better than she hoped.

"So," he smiled at her, "Am I forgiven?"

"Of course, not!" she rolled her eyes, "This is just step one, Bray. After this is done – then

we talk about what's next."

support as I can." He was still slightly unsatisfied that he didn't get her to fall into his hands, but at least there wasn't a rift between them anymore. He addressed the issue and dealt with

1. Just a little bit more time and effort, and he would get her back in his bed too.

"Thank you," she said.

"Don't thank me yet, Ri," he smirked, "I have a condition." Every muscle in her body got tense.

"What is it?" she quirked her brow up.

"A kiss," now he simply looked smug and she wanted to facepalm, but she knew that too

much was at stake.

"A kiss?" she repeated.

"Yes," the Alpha brushed his thumb over her lower lip, "A kiss. Just one kiss... Unless

you wouldn't want to stop afterwards."

Brayden was sure that as soon as she gave in, he would find his way back into her heart. And bed.

"Fine! Deal!" she decided to go with it, "But until then keep your distance! I am serious, Bray. I want to see how serious are you about it."

"I am very serious," this time he caught her hand and brought it to his lips without breaking their eye contact, "You'll see."

"I sure hope so," she sighed and took her hand away, "And now give me some space. There are a lot of things I need to think about. Too many..."

"Fine," he had to agree with her. Even though he did not want to leave so soon.

But Brayden knew that she needed time. He needed some too. There was no hurry.

He prepared to leave when he turned to face her again.

"Ri, I need to read that law of yours," he said firmly and this was something she was

ready for.

"Of course," she agreed with ease, "I will send you the file. As soon as I get all of this

sorted."

She gestured at the mess he made and he felt guilty. But not too much. However, this was when Ash mind linked him about something important and he had to

leave.

Riannon sighed as the door closed behind him. Phase one was done. Broken desk. It was getting late and she was surprised that when she walked out of the bathroom, wearing nothing but a flimsy silk robe, her bedroom was dark. She looked for a switch but when she pressed it, it did not work.

"What the hell?!" she muttered under her breath and wanted to go and get her phone to use the build-in torch, when she noticed an unfamiliar figure standing at the entrance to her balcony with curtains blown by the wind, covering his face from her.

But she knew exactly who that was...

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Chapter 42. The Mystery Guest

It took a few good seconds for Riannon to realise who that person was. And it took her a

few more to gather herself and not give in to panic.

She tried to think calmly. She knew very well that it was best not to scream. No one would be here fast enough to save her. And she wouldn't have a chance in a fight with a professional warrior now. Not without her wolf at full force.

To her disappointment, Onyx still wasn't showing up. So, she had to think in a completely

different direction.

Axel/Everett or whoever this guy's name was never showed up in her previous life. He escaped without a trace. It would be easier for him to kill her quietly and do just that while she was washing in the bathroom. But it looked like he was waiting for her, meaning that her life

wasn't what he was after.

At least not now.

It was surprisingly convenient how his story helped out Roxy. And Riannon did not believe in the coincidences like that.

"Impressive, Everett" she smirked and praised him as she stepped closer, folding her hands on her chest to cover herself at least a bit. She used that name on purpose to let him know that he didn't mishear her the first time.

"Right back at you, Luna," the man-made a step forward as well. He had a few cuts and bruises here and there and was topless, wearing just a pair of jeans. Not his, because they were sitting too tight on him.

"Did you lose your shirt on the way here?" she cocked her brow up at him.

"Do I really need one?" he flexed his muscles playfully while his lips curled into a sly smile, "I find clothes restricting when I kill people."

Riannon's chest tightened at his words. Those were her people. Moreover, she asked Ash to make sure only the best ones guarded him. And his best warriors were the strongest among the werewolves... If he took them down, then...

She prohibited herself to think about that now. Now wasn't the time.

"So, I guess, I have to thank you for fetching some trousers on then," Ria slowly walked to one of her armchairs and gestured for him to sit on the opposite one.

"I have to admit," Everett said, "You surprised me. And that doesn't happen often."

"My pleasure," she shrugged her shoulders, "So, what brings you here... Excuse me, I still don't know your real name, Everett. Or Axel. What is it again?"

his lips. He was incredibly good looking. But she did not like the vibes that he was giving her. He was dangerous. She always knew it. In this life and in her previous one.

However, now it was different. Something about him definitely changed right now even compared to a few hours ago when she saw him last. Her lips parted as he let her feel it more.

"You are an Alpha," she whispered, not being able to hide her surprise. She suspected him to be a Beta or a Gamma at least. But not an Alpha. Alphas were rare. They weren't disposable like that. No pack would send an Alpha to a dangerous mission alone because they were valuable even if they weren't the actual alphas of their packs. And Everett was risking a lot. She could have ordered to kill him earlier and the warriors would obey after some persuasion. Yet he still did it.

Even now, he was risking a lot. This kind of confidence was frightening.

"And you are a Luna," the man in front of her smiled and his left eye gleamed in the darkness with the red colour, making Riannon swallow. Although she made sure to keep herself in control even now. "And a very unusual one at that," he added, "I've heard about you a lot. But I thought that all the praises were baseless rumours. Just a woman who is not bad at what she is supposed to do anyway. That was what I thought about you, Riannon."

"Again, it's not polite to call me by my name without introducing yourself properly first," she tried to trap him but he did not buy it. His grin, however, grew wider.

"But you surprised me," he continued, ignoring her words. "I can't say that a lot of things

surprises me lately. I usually hate surprises."

She clenched the armrest of her chair a bit tighter, and this did not escape his gaze.

"Don't worry," 'Everett' added quickly, "This one was a pleasant one. I thought this mission would be boring and painful. But I needed to see with my own eyes what I am dealing with. But you completely changed the game for me."

"How so?" she now rested her head on her fist lazily.

"This also something I will reveal to you at different circumstances," he avoided answering her question.

"Why bother coming here in the first place if you aren't even planning to speak?" she sighed, pretending to be annoyed.

"I just wanted to make sure you would remember me," he chuckled and the sound echoed through her empty room, "Selfish, I know. But also, I wanted to make sure that I wasn't wrong

about you. And it looks like I wasn't."

"That means that the most precious thing in your pack is not the power that comes with it," he averted what he was asked again.

She knew that he wouldn't crack, so decided that it was pointless to ask him directly.

"So, you confirmed what you came here to confirm. Seems like it's about the time to

leave for you," she gestured at the balcony door he came from.

"What, you aren't even going to try and scream?" he looked properly amused, "What if the warriors manage to catch me while saving their Luna."

"Considering the kind of guards that you just escaped, I highly doubt it!" she snorted and he stood up. He was right next to her in less than a second, cupping her chin and making her look at him.

"This was entertaining," he admitted simply and then let go of her. He went in the direction of the balcony as if he wasn't in a hurry at all.

"All right," she stood up quickly, "How about you ask me one question and I ask you one in return. And we both tell each other the truth."

He turned to look at her slowly with his lips curled.

"Since you offer it yourself," he leaned over the doorframe. "Shoot."

"Why did you really come here?" Riannon asked the question that bothered her the most.

"To make sure that you remember me, to make you think about me until we meet again next time." He sneered, "I already told you that. But you just wasted your question. Now it's my

turn."

She really thought that there was something else. Maybe he was not honest with her. Or maybe he was this crazy and she got his attention.

"How did you know that I was supposed to call myself Everett here?" his face suddenly got very serious. He really did not expect anyone to know a thing about him here.

Riannon contemplated for a second whether to lie to him or not. But then decided that there was no point. She could use the same trick she just used.

"You told me yourself," she tilted her head, smiling viciously with her hands crossed at her front.

At this exact moment, someone started banging at the door. "Luna," Ash screamed from the other side, "Please, open the door! I need to ensure your

safety according to the protocol. If you don't open I would have to knock this door out in thirty

Ria turned to look at her guest again, but he was already gone.

Sighing, she went to open the door. It was clear that Ash wouldn't be joking. And she had enough of her furniture destroyed for one day.

"Are you okay?" he looked at her and grasped her arms without seeking any kind of permission, "The scent in your room..."

"Shhh," she pulled him inside and closed the door behind him. Although her husband wasn't probably even there. They had to alert him about the intruder first. And he was probably

checking on his mate's safety now. How pathetic was that? Not that she cared anymore.

"He..." Ash looked at her with a desire to kill in his eyes, "Did he do anything to you?"

"Nothing," she replied calmly, "But if you consider yourself my friend or at least my Beta, you would stay quiet about it."

He looked at her with a perplexed expression on his face, clearly not knowing what to do.

"I have to tell him according to protocol," he said finally and she decided not to hide her disappointment. She noticed that he hesitated and when he went back to the door, she decided

to stop him.

"Ash," Riannon called his name and made his turn, "I want to speak to you. Stay."

She never did this in her past life and she always regretted it. The way he chose Brayden time, after time, after time... It was painful because she was sure that they had a good relationship prior.

However, this time, in this lifetime he seemed different. Just a bit. But she wanted to

check.

If he chose Brayden again, it wouldn't change anything for her. But she wanted to give him the benefit of the doubt. So that at least she knew that she tried everything.

"Ash," she stepped closer to him and at that time the lights started working again so that they were able to have a good look at each other. His eyes lingered around her body in the thin gown quickly returning to her face. "I am not sure how long my marriage to Brayden would last," she said calmly and he didn't even flinch as if he was expecting it. "When it happens, you can only be with him or with me. Not with the two of us. And after we split it will be too late to make that decision. I always thought that we were friends..."

"And we are," he interrupted her speech, "We are more than friends." "Then why didn't you tell me about Roxy?" she looked him in the eye and he licked

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Chapter 43. Guilt

Maya was crying quietly all the way down until the Lycan kingdom and Reid didn't know what to do. She did not show it to him and neither did she sob or weep, but her eyes were red and puffy and she was wiping them with her palms every few seconds as she turned away to

stare at the window.

He never wanted a mate in the first place, never looked for one. And when he saw how

finding a mate changed his best friend Gideon, he decided to stay away from wolf mingling events and stick to the she-wolves he already knew, considering them safe options. Luckily,

there were quite a few who were always ready to keep him company.

It was supposed to be for the best. He wasn't a family man anyway. Maybe a funny uncle

material. But this was it. He was a Beta and needed his focus on his work at all times.

Yet when he first sensed this amazing scent of almonds and something floral that evoked everything feral and primal inside of him within seconds, all his rules and self-taught mantras went to hell. He struggled for a few minutes in his car, trying to talk himself out of

going there and finding his mate. But gave in rather quickly under the pressure from his wolf, Nox, who was eager to meet their mate.

He had to see her too; had to know who she was.

And when he saw her with another man who tried to hurt her, all his instincts flared up. It was a done deal. That woman was his and he wouldn't let anyone touch her, let alone hurt her.

He disobeyed his king's orders for the first time ever and left Riannon behind without any

support. Before that, they planned for him to stick around with her as a representative of the Lycans on the pretence of helping her with their new law project. That would allow him to be there to protect her if needed as it was required from their positions. She was already his Luna regardless of being marked and married to some annoying werewolf Alpha.

And now his Luna was on her own.

It was her silent order, of course, to take her best friend out of this place. For some reason, she considered that more important than their initial plan and he decided to trust her instincts as Maya's safety suddenly became of prime importance to him too.

But he knew that he would pay for this. Because Gideon trusted him what he treasured the most and he failed his Alpha and his king.

"It's going to be okay," he decided to try and break the ice but his mate snapped her head

in his direction and glared at him with the intention to kill. As if he was at fault before her.

Which he wasn't.

She wanted to hurt him on purpose and he let it slide. He could sense that his mate was using her snarky attitude to hide how worried she had been inside. And he could understand that. He liked Riannon a lot, but she was new in his life. If he had to leave Gideon in the sea full of sharks, he wouldn't be happy too. He couldn't be happy now either. The guilt was washing over him in waves. But it had already been done and he had to trust Riannon with this one. Hopefully, she knew what she was doing.

"Reid," he stated calmly.

"Reid, let me tell you a little story," she spoke in a voice one would speak to a child that wasn't bright. "Once there lived three girls and they were the best of friends. A lot of sh*t happened, some dead parents, dead siblings, boyfriends being as*holes, terrible life choices, but the three of them stuck together. Then one of them died too, leaving the other two. And they swore to stay by each other's side no matter what! Guess who these girls are, Reid?"

"You and Ria," he answered plainly, allowing her to let out the steam on him.

"Correct! What a clever boy you are!" she praised him, "I... I left her there! You have no idea what is going on there and what it means to me! She..."

"She is sticking up for you, Maya," he interrupted her speech and she looked at him with wide eyes, "Just like you promised. It was her choice, not yours or mine. You were in a far worse situation there according to her. And I had to take her lead. Knowing Riannon, she can take care of herself. And she will not stay there for a long time, trust me."

Maya bit her lip almost to the point of bleeding and turned away to the window to hide the

tears forming in her eyes again. She had to do something about this stupid liquid secretion. She knew that he was right. Riannon did what she would have done if she could. It did not make her feel better though.

They parked the car in front of what looked like a modern palace. However, Maya wasn't in the mood to admire it. And all Reid wanted was to get her inside of his room as soon as possible. Before he met...

"Reid!" his king's voice sounded behind him and he turned to face his Alpha. Gideon stared at him in disbelief and then slowly shifted his eyes to Maya. He balled his fists, trying to hold back his rage.

He was already angry when he found out from Savvy that Riannon left the pack and the kingdom. But he got calmer knowing that his Beta was with her. And now there he was. With some girl and not his Luna!

bad.

"Where is Riannon?" Gideon growled.

"At her old pack," his Beta replied honestly, not trying to hide the truth, "There has been a situation and she had to stay as a result. And this is..."

"I don't care what new wh*re you picked up and where," the lycan king was on the edge

with his rage.

"She is my MATE!" Reid snarled at him, his protective instincts taking over, "I had to get her out of there!"

It didn't help Gideon calm down at all.

"I am sorry," his friend continued, stepping closer, "It was her decision and in the heat of the moment it seemed like the right one."

The punch was so hard that it broke Reid's nose and knocked him off his feet. He stayed on the ground, covering his face with one hand, trying to stop the blood until regeneration kicked in and knowing that he deserved that. He stayed down out of respect to his king whose

trust he broke today.

"How is leaving my woman behind was the right decision?!" Gideon tried to hold back his fury. If he didn't, he didn't know how this would end for Reid.

"You are her mate!" Maya whispered and for the first time since she got here he looked at her properly, "You are Ria's mate! But... how?"

"The Moon Goddess works in mysterious ways," he grunted, slowly realising that this girl

wasn't just somebody. They already met. He noticed her red cried out eyes and her messy

hair. She did not look like herself but he recognised her now.

She also did not look like Reid's usual type. Which was funny since she was his mate.

"I am Maya," she tried to explain and his whole body tightened at her words, "I am..."

"Her sister," Gideon nodded, letting her know that Riannon told him everything, "You... You are very dear to my mate."

"I know," her lips trembled, "She just... I am the one to blame, not Reid. She came there because of me and she had to stay there. He wouldn't let her go. And Roxy..."

She filled him in quickly on everything that happened. Gideon clenched his fists. It was unbearable. But in the short time that they knew each other, the very first thing that he learned about her was that if she made a decision, she would stick to it no matter what. And also he

"What do we do now?" the girl in front of him asked as she gave a hand to her mate, who was still on the ground. Reid took it with some kind of hope in his eyes and Gideon realised that he already got a hard time with her. Not that it excused him.

However, he did not want to lie to himself either. He would have made the same choice in

0

his place.

"We continue with the plan," the kind said. "The plan?" Maya gasped, "I haven't heard a thing about a plan!"

"Let your mate fill you in then," Gideon spared one glance at Reid and realised that it was too soon. Anger was still boiling in his heart and Mars demanded blood. But it wouldn't be the blood of their Beta that he would offer to his wolf. "I expect you in my office first thing in the morning," the kind muttered and left the Beta couple alone.

He went straight to their room, which still had her scent inside even though the omegas already changed the sheets like they always did.

They were discussing the possibility of her going back to her pack and what she would be doing what she had to. So, he had to stick to those thoughts. Riannon knew what she was doing when she stayed, and he had to trust her with that.

However, he had to listen to her voice. He needed it on a physical level.

So, he picked up his phone and called her, waiting to be connected with his eyes closed by his palm. Being separated from her again felt even worse than before now.

"Ria!" he started speaking the moment the call was answered.

"Excuse me, who is this?" the male voice on the other end of the line seemed confused. He recognised her husband at once.

"This is King Gideon Stormhold," he held himself back from growling, "I need to speak to Riannon. Now."

"Your Majesty," the Alpha sounded apologetic, "I am sorry. This is a bit inconvenient right now. It's too late and she is sleeping. We just reunited after the days of not seeing one another and were too hungry for each other if you know what I mean. She was too exhausted by the time we were done with each other. It would be cruel to wake her up now. She needs her rest. We are trying for a pup, you see.."

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Chapter 44. Ash

Ash let out a heavy sigh and went all the way into the centre of the room, sitting in the exact chair where the mystery guest was sitting just a few seconds ago. He sniffed the air around him and his head snapped in Riannon's direction. She simply nodded confirming his suspicions and then sat back into the opposite armchair.

"So?" she looked at him hopefully. It had to be something important if he decided to put away catching the intruder personally and stayed to talk to her instead.

"Do you remember how my mate died?" he asked, and she clenched her lips, giving him a

nod again.

"How can I forget?" Ria lifted her knees all the way to her chest and hugged them, (This novel will be daily updated at) "Chloe was one of my best friends at school."

"I remember," he smiled, "She used to call you and Maya her sisters." "That's what she was for me," Riannon admitted, "Family."

"After she died," he gulped and looked at her, but meeting her gaze chose to look away and out of the open balcony door, "I was shattered. Broken..."

"I remember that too," his Luna said quietly.

"She was my light," he rested his head on the back of the chair, "My everything. And after her death, nothing mattered anymore. I was in the darkness. The darkness that nobody could understand. Nobody but you."

He looked at her again and she nodded silently. Ash lost his mate a few years after she lost her siblings. She did know very well what he was going through. Although they said that losing a mate was worse than anything. But still, the experience was similar.

She remembered that after giving him some space to grieve, she saw that he was slipping away. And she remembered how she fought to make him stay and live the life he was

supposed to live. As the new Beta of their pack.

Brayden was angry at times because he couldn't personally get any of this and had to commence his Alpha training alone, without his Beta. At some point, he even wanted to choose a different Beta, but Riannon talked him out of this. Luckily, back then her opinion mattered to him. He gave them time to "fix" his friend while he covered for him.

Slowly, day by day, Ash was getting stronger. He was never the cheerful guy they used to know back at school again, but he remained reliable and loyal, which was way more important.

But when a tragedy happened and her and Brayden's parents were killed, Ash suddenly stepped in for the sake of them both. They could trust him in their hard time and he performed

Ria always thought that he found a new purpose in life when Brayden finally became the Alpha and named him his Beta. This was Ash's turning point according to her.

"You brought me back to life, Riannon," Ash told her and this time he pierced her with his hazel eyes, "If not you..."

"Chloe would have wanted that," she shrugged her shoulders, "I know we never were

close friends before that, but..."

"I never wanted to be your friend in the first place," he stopped her before she could finish that sentence, (This novel will be daily updated at) "This is not how I see you, Riannon. You are not my friend."

That hurt her to some extent, but she chose not to show it.

However, when he knelt before her and took her hands, locking his eyes with hers, she opened her mouth in shock.

"You are mean more to me. Even before Chloe, I saw you more than a friend," he said, "When Brayden introduced you to me, I was only sorry that I didn't get to meet you first. No offence, but Bray never saw you for who you were. He cared for your looks, your strength and your skills. But not for the person that you were."

"And when you met Chloe?" she tried to walk away from the uncomfortable subject.

"She was my mate," he sighed, "She filled my heart and soul, made me believe that what I felt for you was just a childhood crush. But she was gone, Riannon. And I knew that she would never come back. I fell into despair after her death, thinking that everything was over and there would be nothing good in my life ever again. This was when you entered my life again. Do you remember how I tried to push you away at first?"

She nodded, not even trying to say anything anymore. This was a new side of Ash she had no idea even existed.

"This was because I felt that by liking you I betray my Chloe," he smiled with sadness in his eyes, "She was gone and although I remembered our bond, you were the one helping me heal. Even my wolf wanted to be close to you for some reason. As if he accepted you."

She furrowed her brows.

"But that's..."

"Impossible," he chuckled dryly, "I know. But this is exactly what happened to me. The more time I spent with you, the more my old feelings were coming back. Chloe was letting go of me and... To be honest, sometimes I think that she blessed us. As if she knew that you were

"Oh, Ash," she didn't know how to get out of this. His confession was a bit too much.

"Ria," he squeezed her palms in his, "Just think about it, okay? I know that you didn't see that coming. I tried to keep my distance when I could, you were happy with Brayden. But..."

She stared at him with her lips parted when the realisation struck her. But they weren't happy anymore. Everything changed and Ash saw a possibility for them to be together. What if that was why he always took Brayden's side in the past? Each time he did this, it was only breaking her marriage further apart.

"He is exploring new things now," Ash went on, "Why can't you? I would never push you into something that you don't like. You became my peace once, now let me be yours. I am ready to do whatever it takes. If you want to keep this façade of marriage and stay the Luna, will be your lover in the shadows. (This novel will be daily updaed at) If you want to leave Brayden and start a new life, I will gladly become your husband. A wife of a Beta is not that bad, right?"

She licked her lips as they became too dry and his eyes lingered on them. Yet he wasn't

done.

"And even if you decide to have a new political marriage and marry some Alpha, I would follow you too. As your guard or whatever. Just let me be with you." She

stared at him and he did not blink or budge. His hands were still holding hers and she knew that she had to be honest with him.

Not fully, of course. But in regards to him and his feelings.

"Ash," Riannon carefully slip her hands out of his grasp, making him sigh from disappointment, "I can't. I just..."

"Brayden doesn't even respect you anymore!" he snapped momentarily and then rubbed his eyes, trying to focus, "He is sha.gging his mate all over the place! It's over between the two of you."

"I know," she confirmed and saw hope in his eyes which she had to destroy, "But it doesn't change anything. Ash, you... remind me of my dead brother. You don't see me as a friend, but this is what I see you as. And for me, you are Chloe's mate. I couldn't do that even after her death. It's never going to work."

"We could try," he stood up and turned away, "Slowly and..."

"No," she said firmly and stood up again, "I respect you enough, to be honest with you. This would never happen. I need you in my life but as a friend, Ash."

"Are you sure that this is all that I am to you?" he asked, his voice dull and lifeless.

"Yes," Riannon did not hesitate, "So, this is the decision that you would have to make. Will you take my side as my friend and support me until the end? Or will you stay with Brayden? Whatever you choose, I will accept. But this is it."

"I am his Beta," he reminded her.

"I know," was all she said. And then, without adding anything else, he left the room abruptly.

Riannon felt so tired as the door closed behind him. But it wasn't the rest that she needed. She wanted at least to hear her mate's voice.

So, she went back to her bedside table where she left her phone prior. Only find out that it

was missing

She started searching all over it hectically. But it was nowhere, and she had a very bad

feeling about this.

Unfortunately, she did not memorize Gideon's number yet, so couldn't call him from the line number. She needed her cell back!

She, however, remembered her own number well. And when she dialled it and heard the phone ringing right behind the wall, she knew who was to blame.

There was no point to waste time as now even Brayden knew she was aware that he was in possession of her phone. (This novel will be daily updaed at)So, when she knocked on his door just a few seconds later, he opened the door wearing nothing but a pair of boxers.

“Riannon?” he gave her his most seductive smile, “What a pleasant surprise!”

“Cut the cr.ap, Brayden!” she hissed at him and pushed him, walking inside, “Why do you have my phone?!”

“One of the maids brought it to me after cleaning the mess in your room,” he was clearly lying, “But I glad that you are here. Why don’t we talk? I feel like...”

“The mess you made!” she decided to remind him, “And why would a maid bring My phone to you?!”

“That’s a question for her and not me,” he shrugged his shoulders, “You can ask her tomorrow. And what makes you so worked up about it? It’s just a phone and it’s nighttime

already.”

“Just give it back!” she rolled her eyes, folding her hands on her chest. going to call? Your lover?!”

“Should I call your lover ?” she snorted and hit him with her knee where it hurt the most, making him groan from the pain. He released her hands and she started looking around.

Nevertheless, he recuperated fast and moved to his desk, opening one of the drawers and showing her the phone.

“I don’t want you to speak to him!” he growled, “Ever!”

And with those words, he crashed the device in his palm