

## Luna Graced | 17: Chapter 17

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ABIGAIL

The next morning, Abby dragged herself out of bed and into the bathroom to wash her face. She'd worry about showering later. She didn't want to set off *angry* Alpha again.

She checked her phone. She'd texted her parents before falling asleep last night and was hoping for a reply.

Her heart sank when she saw there were no messages.

She needed to speak to them. Had they known she was a graced luna? And if so, why hadn't they told her?

She went to make some tea, making sure to stay quiet and being especially careful not to hum. She didn't dare open the link, either.

The anxiety was almost paralyzing: Don't do this. Don't do that.

Don't breathe.

Don't *live*.

A knock at the door made her jump.

"Warrior Tory, good morning," she said after opening the door. She could see a group of warriors standing behind him in her front yard. She smiled at them and bowed her head.

"Get your ass moving," Tory said with a cocky grin. "We have training."

"I don't think I should. The alpha is angry with me."

"That's exactly why you should. Plus, I have to save face after yesterday."

Despite the way she was feeling, Abby couldn't help but laugh. And when she did, Tory stepped back and gave her an appraising look.

“Wow, Bell wasn’t kidding. When you laugh, it feels like a ball of sunshine bouncing around inside my body.”

Abby smiled and shook her head. He was such a clown.

She suddenly felt lighter. To hell with dying, this morning she wanted to *live*. “Let me get changed, and I’ll be right back.”

She put on a long-sleeved crop top that fit like a second skin and a pair of tactical pants she stuffed into boots, then put her hair in a high ponytail. She took a moment to study herself in the mirror.

She was a graced luna.

She was dying.

But she wasn’t dead *yet*.

She joined the group outside, and after they did some warm-up stretches, Tory narrowed his eyes on her. “You know where the training ground is?”

“Yes.”

“Okay, then, on the count of thr—”

Someone yelled out “three,” and she took off running, leaving Tory flat-footed.

She glanced over her shoulder. The entire group had taken off after her, but Tory was pulling ahead, legs pumping hard.

She tucked her arms, lowered her head, and increased her speed.

ROMAN

Roman watched Abby crest the hill from the observation deck at the other end of the training grounds, Logan and Rye beside him.

“She’s fast,” Logan said admiringly.

She was more than fast, she was glorious. Beautiful, strong, powerful.

*Dying.*

When Tory began to gain on her when they hit the flat ground, she picked up her pace in a full-powered sprint. Tory did the same.

Using the link, Roman sent out a change to the route. *“Run to the pole at the end of the grounds.”*

Without a second’s hesitation, Abby changed course, her arms moving so fast they were nothing but a blur. Tory was still trailing as she grabbed the telephone pole, spun around, and met him on the opposite side.

She’d beaten Tory by mere seconds, but as the warriors walked it out, trying to catch their breath, Roman could feel how thrilled she was with her performance.

“Forty-two miles per hour,” Rye calculated out loud.

“And Tory?” Logan asked.

“Forty point five.”

Roman nodded and called out, “Impressive, all of you!”

As the group walked toward him, Tory grinned at Abby. “Hey, I thought we talked about this at your house.”

She smirked. “We did. That’s why you lost. You were too busy running your mouth and not listening.”

Tory dramatically clutched his chest and fell backward onto the grass, and Abby threw her head back and let out a musical laugh.

It seemed impossible for anyone to feel pain, fear, or sorrow when Abby laughed, and as Roman felt the warmth of it spread, something began to settle inside him.

The warriors started to horse around like giddy teenagers, and Roman growled at them to stop. “Master warriors,” he said. “Let’s welcome Abigail Canaver to our training session this morning.

“She’s the daughter of the esteemed Warriors Canaver from Pack Oru, so she comes by her speed and skills naturally. She trained as a warrior from age eight, and as a luna from age fourteen to present.”

He spoke with a sense of pride, and he knew the group felt it.

“So let’s show her what it’s like to be a warrior for Pack Luko,” he ordered, and the warriors got to it.

Abby easily fell into a rhythm with the group and was soon outperforming most, if not all, of them. He heard grumbles, but nothing major.

It was good for them to have some competition.

He and Logan watched as Rye instructed the group on their next set of drills. “Her speed is incredible,” Logan observed.

“She’s fast, yes. Being graced seems to enhance all her skills. And I think, given enough space, she could go even faster.”

“Perhaps.” Logan chuckled. “Maybe she should be training *them*.”

Roman studied her form—she moved with athleticism and grace. “I want her to work with the elite group.”

“Alpha,” Logan said after a pause. “My apologies for overstepping, but she’s still so new to the pack. And she’s female. Are you sure—?”

Roman let out a warning growl, but eased off almost immediately. Logan was only doing his job as beta, and he hadn’t been privy to the conversation in the Oracle’s house.

“The Oracle said something yesterday,” he began, “and I had a dream…” He shook his head.

Logan’s expression remained neutral. “Would you like to speak privately later?”

Roman grunted and gave him a curt nod, then jumped down from the observation deck and walked toward Rye.

“I want to see her fight.”

Rye nodded, then ordered the warriors to take five minutes and hydrate. “Abigail! The alpha wants you to spar. Choose a partner.”

“Tory!” she called out immediately.

But the warrior grimaced and backed away. “Uh-uh. I’m not risking my spot on the elite team because she smokes me. Unfair advantage!”

The group busted up in laughter, and Roman growled. “Get your ass in the ring, Tory.”

“Damn it, Abby!” Tory grumbled good-naturedly as he took his shirt off.

“Don’t you want another chance to save face?” She smirked and stripped off her own shirt, leaving her in a sports bra.

The warriors all moved a little closer to watch, and Roman could feel their anticipation and excitement. He kept his own feelings tamped down, refusing to show anyone more than a blank face.

Abby listened to the rules, nodded her agreement, and tightened her ponytail. She and Tory bumped fists then stood straight.

“I won’t go down easy,” Tory warned.

One of the warriors blew a whistle, and within seconds, Tory was on his back with the wind knocked out of him. Abby leaned over with a concerned look.

“Are you okay?”

Tory growled and took the hand she offered him. They bumped fists again and stood up straight.

“I let you have that one.”

But as soon as the whistle sounded, Tory was on his back again. He jumped to his feet, lip curled and muttering to himself.

“You’re talking too much,” Abby growled as they circled each other. You miss what’s important when you don’t listen.”

Roman couldn’t stop staring at her. The glossy shine of her black hair almost hurt his eyes when the sun hit it, and her sports bra revealed not only the crescent moon on her chest but also the curving hint of her full breasts.

She moved like the predator she was, her muscles defined and taut. Every step she took, every jab she threw, was clearly calculated, precise, and deadly. He’d never seen a female move like that.

Tory lunged for her sloppily, and Abby spun to the side before grabbing him by the back of his neck and forcing him down in the dirt.

Elegance, strength, kindness. So far Abby had shown the qualities befitting both a luna and a warrior—and then some. She was unique, and this fight between her and Tory was making this more and more clear.

When she let Tory go, he got up with a scowl and a snarl. She answered him with her own snarl and a pulse of power felt by everyone there.

Smirking, Tory bent his knees, assuming a fighting stance. “So you wanna play, Abby?”

Roman sensed a shift in her, but before he could put his finger on it, she danced closer to Tory with a grin that had turned dark, fierce, and dangerous.

“I thought you’d never ask.”

She crouched on her fingertips and the balls of her feet—the position Roman had seen from her parents—and a snarl ripped from her throat.

Surprised at her stance, Tory backed up, a warning growl slipping out of him. But Abby was in the air and on him before he could finish it.

She grabbed both of his arms and flipped him over her head.

Tory landed on his back—hard—but he leaped up as soon as Abby resumed the crouched position. She was in attack mode, and Roman doubted Tory was prepared for it.

Roman moved toward them, ready to intervene, but the other warriors howled and shouted, some cheering on Tory, others calling out encouragement to Abby. The atmosphere was electric, charged with anticipation.

A snarl left Tory’s throat as he sprang forward, but Abby ran full speed at him and slid under his flying body, grabbed his booted feet, and slammed him face-first into the ground.

Her eyes glowed green as her jaw extended. Abby’s wolf was coming forward, her claws ready to slice into Tory’s human flesh.

Warriors in training sometimes shifted to spar wolf-to-wolf, but never without prior agreement.

Roman shouted out a command for her to stop, but her entire focus was on Tory, who was struggling to get off the ground before she could shred him to pieces in front of them all.