

## Luna Graced | 31: Chapter 31

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ABIGAIL

While her mate took a long, hot shower, Abby fussed around the house, keeping busy.

She hung up her flower crown so it could dry and be kept as a souvenir and wrote out a list of pack members who would get a personal thank-you note for their gifts.

Then she retrieved the things she'd bought for Roman. Her mate had a particular penchant for chocolate, so she'd asked Bell to help her buy a tower of boxes from the artisan chocolate shop in town.

ROMAN

When Roman exited the shower, he shaved and put on cologne, taking special care with his appearance.

He scented the air and found he liked the smells that were mixing. Abby had lit those candles he'd gotten for her, and he also smelled *chocolate*.

It was all he could do to keep himself from running to the kitchen. Naked.

Instead, he pulled on a pair of low-slung black pajama pants and stalked out of the bedroom. Abby was sitting on the couch, reading one of the cards that had been given to her that day, a stack of others in her lap.

"Mate." He rumbled and sniffed the air. "I smell chocolate."

She smiled. "Yes, you do, mate. I have a few gifts for you, and I'd like to give them to you once I'm more presentable. In the meantime, there's a snack for you on the table."

She nodded her head toward a platter piled high with an assortment of prepared meats. Beside it was a cigar and a small bottle of expensive whiskey. There was a stack of gift boxes at the other end of the table.

ABIGAIL

Abby raced to the bedroom and shut the door, then started a bath and took out the new pajamas she'd bought in town. They were black silk, and the top had a neckline that would allow the alpha access to her shoulder.

She dropped a bath bomb in the water and inhaled the light fragrance as she stepped into the tub and sank into the heat. The water amplified sound, so she could hear Roman sniffing around the tower of chocolate, which made her smile.

She took her time with her routine, wanting to make sure her skin was soft. But when she heard him rattling a box, she decided she'd better get out.

She put on a black lace bra and underwear set the alpha hadn't seen yet and slipped into the silk pajamas. With her face bare and her hair in a knot at the top of her head, she felt natural and pretty.

When she came out, Roman was exactly where she thought he'd be, standing in front of the tower of boxes with his nose on the top one.

"Alpha, *really?*"

He grunted and looked up, his eyes flashing in appreciation as he took her in. "How in the world have you been keeping chocolate hidden from me, Luna?"

"It's a secret."

"I could command you to tell me," he grumbled.

"You could, but where would the fun be in that? Plus, you'd lose out on being surprised. You wouldn't take away your mate's fun, would you?"

He grinned and held his hand out to her. "Dirty fighter."

"When necessary." She took his hand and a strong pulse pushed through them. "Please, Alpha, sit. I'd like to give you your gifts now."

She was nervous. He hadn't talked much about Remi and their unborn pup, and she wasn't sure how he'd react to the necklace she'd bought him.

He pulled out the chair to his right, signifying her luna position. She thanked him and waited for him to sit down, then placed a small square box in front of him.

## ROMAN

Roman looked at the box, then at Abby, before pulling off the simple ribbon. He opened the lid to reveal an ornate wolf's-head pin.

He ran his thumb over the smooth, polished surface. The piece was masculine, even with the elaborate design of the wolf's mane.

"It's gorgeous, Abby, I..." He squeezed her hand, at a loss for words. He hadn't expected her to get him anything. "...very much admire it...thank you."

She pushed the tower of boxes he'd been sniffing toward him and cleared her throat. "Open these next." She seemed a little nervous. Didn't she know how much he loved chocolate?

He was thrilled to discover that, indeed, the boxes were filled with all kinds of different chocolates. No surprise there.

He purred so loud the windows shook. "Seems like you found out my secret."

"I may have had some help." She shrugged, a little smile tugging at her lips, and he burst out laughing.

"We have a wonderful pack. I'm very proud of them."

"They're amazing, and I'm proud of them too. I never, ever expected anything like today." She took a deep breath and let it out before sliding the last box toward him.

Ah. *This* was the source of her nervousness. "Tell me."

"I..." She cleared her throat. "I wanted to honor you."

He stared at the long, rectangular box, hesitant to open it. But when it was obvious that he wasn't going to get any more from her, he slipped off the plain ribbon and pulled off the top.

Inside was an ornately carved pendant—a crescent moon the same color as the wolf's-head pin—on a braided leather necklace. He picked it up and angled the pendant toward the light.

There were two tiny gold stars on one side and a single one on the other.

He picked up the wolf's-head pin. The eyes were also gold, matching his own.

He looked at the pendant again, rubbing his thumb over the gold stars, and he suddenly understood. Remi and the pup were on one side, and Abby was on the other.

He closed his eyes and dragged in a deep breath. Letting it out, he opened them again and found green, glowing eyes looking at him intently.

He nodded his head slowly and smiled. Closing his fist around the pendant, he brought it to his lips and kissed it, then moved his clenched fist to his heart, where he held it quietly. His purr was low and steady.

“Thank you, Abby. For not only thinking of them but including them. I will cherish this forever.”

He slipped the necklace over his head, and the moon sat in the middle of his chest. He held his hand against it for a moment.

“You’re welcome.” She smiled, more relaxed now. “I’d like to hear about her one day, when you’re ready.”

“You will. It took me a bit to understand that there’s room for their memory and for you. I never imagined—or even allowed myself to think about—the possibility of having another mate. Ever.

“And now, I can’t see myself without you as my mate.”

He took her hand.

“This has all been very accelerated. We’ve missed out on dating and a courtship, but I don’t regret any of it. Just because we’re mates chosen by the Moon Goddess doesn’t mean I won’t work to earn your affection.”

“I want to earn your affection as well, Roman. It’s important to me that we have faith and honesty. I must trust you, as you must trust me. I want open communication—and no others.”

“No others. I won’t tolerate that, Abigail. You are mine and I am yours.”

She reached a hand out, and when she touched him, the pulse knocked their chairs back. They grinned at each other and started laughing.

“Well!” Abby said, eyes wide. “I guess we just got emotionally closer.”

He chuckled. “I guess so. Are you still up for that drink by the fire pit?”

“Absolutely. Did you see your cigar and whiskey?”

“I did, thank you. I’m saving them for tomorrow night when I’m officially a marked and mated alpha.”

Abby blushed under his gaze, and he drew her close and let his lips brush hers.

“Are you ready, mate?”