

Luna Graced | 42: Chapter 42

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ABIGAIL

Roman was on his knees instantly, his face level with the edge of the counter.

Abby squirmed, her giggles mixing with low moans, and Roman's hands snaked under her knees and pulled her to the edge.

She could feel the pulsing between them—and see it, since the glow around her flashed brighter with each beat.

Roman nuzzled the inside of her knee and ran his nose up the inside of her thigh. Her soft nightgown bunched up as he slowly moved toward her throbbing center, and she could smell her own arousal, feel the wetness between her thighs.

Her body was ruling her mind. She tilted her pelvis toward Roman's face, loving the feeling of his hot breath against her super-sensitized skin.

She glanced over at the window. The mist had reached the top now, cutting them off from the world outside. The Moon Goddess was making sure nothing would disturb them, protecting her at her most vulnerable time.

ROMAN

Roman pressed his nose against Abby's pubic bone and breathed on the soft cotton covering her.

A low growl rumbled from him as his teeth gripped the top band of her panties, then ripped through the fabric as he tore them off.

He tossed them to the side, not caring where they landed, and stuck his nose against her pubic bone again, inhaling deeply as her soft, dark hair tickled his nose, then gently kissed it.

“Is that better?”

ABIGAIL

Abby sighed. "Much better, thank you."

Another power surge pulsed between them, and Roman shot up from his crouched position with an incredible burst of speed.

Her legs were still spread, so she sat up and closed them, squeezing her thighs together.

He handed her a glass of moonshine, and she sipped on it as she allowed her eyes to travel over her mate's broad, muscular chest as he stood just out of her reach, drinking from his own glass.

A powerful pull flared between them, and she clenched her thighs as she watched his muscles ripple and flex.

She reached for him.

ROMAN

The feeling of being pulled to her caused Roman to jerk, and his glass almost slid from his hand. He stood firm in his spot, pushing back. "Is there something else I can help you with, mate?"

He took a deep breath and forced his alpha power back at her, causing her to throw her head back and laugh.

"That feels so good! I feel like you're touching me everywhere, even though you aren't!"

"Come here," he growled, his erection throbbing. "Now."

His luna slid off the counter, her movements liquid, leaving a glittery silver trail on the floor where the tips of her toes touched. When she reached him, she immediately pressed her face against his chest.

She gasped when he picked her up.

Roman could feel heat, her anticipation, and her desires. The mist outside the windows danced under the covered sun, and all nervousness was gone, replaced with a calm purpose. As he carried her into the bedroom, he felt at peace.

A burst of light filled him as he laid his mate down on the bed. She was glowing brightly.

“You look beautiful, Abigail.”

He moved over her, pressing her into the mattress with his body and claiming her mouth.

ABIGAIL

Abby snaked her arms and legs around Roman’s body, pulling him closer.

She could feel everything coming from him through their shared link. Possessiveness, desire, and love crashed over her as his rough, passionate kiss left them both breathless.

He laced his fingers through hers, and a burst of light came from their hands.

Roman slipped the straps of her nightgown down off her shoulders, and she felt him vibrate as his lips traveled from her jaw to her neck and down to her mark.

She almost came off the bed when he kissed her there. He pushed her nightgown down around her waist, and moments later, they were both naked.

Her fingers ran down his powerful arms as he hovered over her, supporting his weight with them. Her body was on fire. It was becoming unbearable, almost painful, and she threw her head back and bucked her hips under him.

ROMAN

Roman pushed Abby’s legs apart, taking control of her. Heat was coming off her in waves. She was ready for him.

He touched her core gently, and she immediately started panting and spread her legs wider. She reached for him, pulling him to her center. But when he breached her entrance, he met resistance.

She needed time to adjust to his size, to stretch to fit him.

He put his lips to her ear. “Take a deep breath and let it out slowly.”

Then he slid his lips down to his mark, and when she exhaled, he pushed inside of her, breaking her barrier. She inhaled sharply, and he could feel a short, sharp pain through their link before she relaxed around him.

He held her glowing eyes with his and began to move in and out of her, then picked up the pace, his movements fluid, warmth building between them, and as he did, he felt every fiber of his being interweaving with hers.

Roman felt more connected with Abby than he ever thought possible. The graced luna held him, body, mind, and soul.

He gently rested his forehead on hers, and they began to inhale each other's breath, intoxicating one another as a building pressure pulsed between them.

The shared feelings were overwhelming as he thrust faster, deeper inside her. They were becoming one, and yes, life was changing, but he welcomed it, embraced it, ~craved~ it.

ABIGAIL

Abby clung to him as the deep tightening started. Their bodies melted into each other, and the throbbing intensified.

At first she felt like she'd finally reached the peak of the highest mountain, but when Roman's hands gripped hers, it dawned on her. They were standing at the edge of a precipice, and he was getting her ready to jump.

With him.

"I love you, Abigail," he groaned, rocking his hips, spilling himself inside of her.

At his words, a clenching, deep release hit her. She *felt* those words, his love—~all~ his feelings—as he stayed inside her and continued to rock against her.

Silver threaded between them. They were one now.

No beginning and no end, just an infinite loop between their souls. A blissful warmth flooded her body.

Her lips were at his ear, her nails gently gliding across his back, as happiness and love rolled off of her in overwhelming waves. There was no hiding, no holding back as she let him feel everything she was feeling.

He had saved her, her life, and her purpose. There was no other way to thank him other than to give herself completely to him.

“I love you too.”

ROMAN

Roman collapsed on top of Abby, and when their chests touched, he felt a mild burning sensation.

He sat back and looked down. A full moon sat above his half-moon, right in the middle of his chest. And a matching full moon sat above Abby’s crescent.

They exchanged smiles. The Moon Goddess had marked them.

They were whole.

The eclipse kept the sun blocked for hours, but the mist continued to blanket the lands and forests for some time after, allowing them to relax and connect with no disturbances.

The following days and nights were nothing but pure bliss; they were unable to leave each other, and they didn’t want to.

For the moment, the world existed only for them.

But they both knew that couldn’t last.

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ROMAN

The smell came with the wind on the second night after Abby’s heat.

Roman sent a message through the link for the pack leadership and both the elite and master warrior groups to meet him and Abby at the training grounds.

He gestured for Abby to come up beside him, then addressed the crowd. “The time we’ve been preparing for is upon us. I smell it in the wind, as I’m sure most of you do too.”

“I know when I told all of you what the Oracle saw, I shared my hope that the young pup would change his mind about coming after my mate. He hasn’t. But he will *not* have what’s mine...”

He took Abby’s hand, and they exchanged a quiet nod. They were united, and their bond was not going to be broken.

Roman turned back to the warriors and held up her hand.

“*What is OURS!*”

Loud yells erupted, and adrenaline and testosterone ripened the air. Hundreds of glowing eyes watched Roman as he paced.

“I want the pups moved in the next thirty minutes. And everyone who can fortify their homes is to do so immediately. I want it done quietly—no panic—but we must move quickly.

“He will attack at dawn. It’s what he’s been trained to do. Warriors Canaver, please tell us what else to expect.”

Once the mist had set in, neither Abby nor her parents had felt anything from Pack Oru; the link was cut. So as soon as he and Abby returned from the cabin, he’d bitten her parents’ wrists to link them to Pack Luko.

Michael and Fiona came forward and addressed the group, laying out the training Carson had received and sharing that Alpha Edward was suffering from hip issues that he’d been trying to keep secret.

His wolf was slower than he used to be.

Carson, on the other hand, had been rapidly growing in size and strength when they last saw him. He was stealthy, his wolf quiet. But he was arrogant, which was a weakness.

He also rarely finished what he started, letting his warriors pick up the slack.

It was well into the night by the time the pack house was locked down.

At Roman's orders, groups of fighters had been quietly gathering at the border, masking their scent with the wind that blew toward them across the tall grass.

Those with mates and pups spent some quiet time with their families before taking their positions. All were dressed in combat gear, ready to fight, and spears and clubs were distributed to those who had just started training.

Older wolves were positioned inside the day care and pack house.

Roman looked at Abby as she sat on the top of the grassy hill overlooking the border, breathing in the moon.

Threads of gold and silver raced from her fingertips and onto the ground. Every few minutes, a wave of power pulsed out from her and spread through the pack link.

His luna's strength was a warrior cry from their ancestors, a gift to the pack from the Moon Goddess. Roman crouched behind her and gripped her shoulders, and an immense power flooded his body.

They stayed like this until the sun began to rise, when Roman received word that Carson and a large group of warriors had been spotted near the border.

He passed on the warning, feeling an immediate shift in the air as the pack surged with protectiveness.

He linked hands with Abby and pulled her up off the ground. Their glowing eyes met and held.

"I won't let anything happen to you, mate. I love you with every fiber of my being. You're mine."

"I love you too, and I refuse to let anything happen to you. You're my world, my moon...mine."

He kissed her, then wrapped his arms around her and touched his forehead to hers. Their strength flowed, one to another, creating a light show around them as they embraced.

Roman felt like he could rip a house apart with his bare hands.

He kissed the moon pendant that hung around his neck and asked for the Moon Goddess to keep his luna and his pack safe.

CARSON

Carson noticed a light glowing in the distance as he raced at top speed, leading his warriors across the mile-wide border marker.

Just as he'd anticipated, his father was lagging behind, running with a limp. So Carson seized control of the pack with his alpha power and commanded everyone to shift.

The sounds of shredding clothes filled the air.

His rage had been steadily building ever since the mist had receded and he still couldn't feel his mate. He needed Abigail and the power she would bring him. There was no other choice.

He sent out an order to take anyone and everyone out. Pups, old, young, it didn't matter. His father would never approve, but Carson had to take Abigail alive *at all costs*.

The power from a graced luna made an alpha stronger, bigger, more lethal. Carson had caught just a *glimpse* of the powerful light she carried when he'd sliced his mark from her shoulder. And he needed more.

He deserved it. She owed him!

And his father was weak—too weak to stop him, too weak to command an army.

Abigail was *his*, and he was going to take her back.

LOGAN

"They've breached the edge!" Logan cried through the link as he rushed up the hill toward Roman and Abigail.

Rye was right behind him, leading the small group of elite warriors that had been assigned to guard the alpha and the graced luna.

"They'll be here soon!"

Alpha Roman had anchored himself in front of Luna Abigail, menacing growls ripping from his throat as he rapidly fluctuated between wolf and human, and silver and gold light pulsed around them.

Logan understood why the graced luna needed to be close by, why she and the alpha had chosen this spot to stand together.

But he was glad his own mate was at the pack house with Bell, armed with spears dipped in wolfsbane, and not here on the front lines.

Mara would never see any fighting if he had anything to say about it.

ABIGAIL

From her position on the hill, Abby listened to the first line of Pack Luko's elite warriors, led by her parents, hold off the first wave of Pack Oru warriors. Snarls and yelps carried through the trees, mixed with howls.

Nervousness assaulted the pack, and Abby's wolf was on edge, whipping her head back and forth as she caught the scent of blood in the air.

A second line of master warriors, led by Tory, were at the base of the hill, at the edge of the trees. Abby herself was guarded by a small contingent of elite warriors, led by Rye, Logan, and of course, Roman.

She gripped his hand.

ALPHA EDWARD

Edward watched in despair as Michael and Fiona Canaver, who'd been not only his best warriors but his friends, took out several members of their former pack.

How had it come to this?

His son had become so power-hungry, had been taken over by bloodlust, hatred, and greed. But Edward had thought there was time...time to stop this madness, time to redeem the son he loved.

Time to repair the damage he, Edward, has inadvertently set into motion. With his complacency. His pride.

He knew the second Carson spotted Abigail—who was standing at the top of a hill with Alpha Luko inside a golden glow—saw him pick up his speed and push through a group of fighting wolves.

Beta Jacob and a group of warriors ran after him into the trees, and Edward raced after them, pushing through the pain.

ROMAN

When Roman saw Carson burst out of the trees at the base of the hill, breaking through a group of wolves in the process of shifting to human, he roared, feeling his claws and his canines elongate once again.

The only thing stopping him from completely shifting and racing down the hill was Abby's arms around his waist and her cheek against his back keeping him anchored.

He needed to let his warriors do their job. He needed to stay with Abby, combining their power for the sake of the entire pack.

As he rippled back to human, he linked an alert to Tory, who rushed toward Carson in his wolf form. But Tory was intercepted by the small group of warriors that had followed Carson out of the trees.

Their leader was the beta of Abby's old pack—and father of Taylor.

That fucker! His wolf surged back to the surface.

"Tory needs help," he heard Rye growl, then watched as his gamma took off down the hill, shifting in midair.

ALPHA EDWARD

Edward limped out of the trees just in time to see a large wolf racing down the hill toward Carson—with such a single-minded focus, he probably wouldn't even notice a slow, crippled old alpha.

But this old dog wasn't completely out of tricks.

Yes, Carson had betrayed him, betrayed Abigail. But he was still his son.

Gritting his teeth against the pain, Edward leaped into the wolf's path and planted his feet. The wolf barreled straight into him, knocking him down and rolling him over in the dirt.

Edward yelped as agony racked the back half of his body. Then the wolf's jaws closed around his throat.

ROMAN

Roman felt Rye's triumph as he clamped his jaws around the old alpha's neck and shook him until his neck snapped.

"The old alpha is down! The new alpha is coming!" he heard Rye shout through the link as he joined Tory and the naked master warriors in their battle with Carson and his Pack Oru warriors.

Logan shifted into his massive wolf as Abby's parents burst out of the trees, making a beeline for the top of the hill.

Roman took Abby's hand and drew her around to his side as Logan and the Warriors Canaver created a line in front of them.

CARSON

Carson stumbled when he felt his dad die, but he had no time to mourn. As soon as he saw an opportunity, he slipped into the trees, leaving his warriors to clash with the group from Pack Luko.

Racing around to the side of the hill, he watched as the fighting moved closer and closer to the top. And once his men engaged Abigail's last line of defense, he readied himself.

When Alpha Luko threw a wolf to the side, pushing Abigail back and creating just enough distance for him to take advantage, Carson charged out of the trees, straight at her.

But Abigail must have heard him, because she wheeled around and Carson got a good look at the mark on her shoulder.

He roared his rage and leaped, determined to tear that abomination right off her, but a force unlike any he'd ever felt before shot out and hit him in the

chest, causing him to fly several hundred feet and go crashing through the trees.

ABIGAIL

Roman grabbed her—his wolf rippling under the surface, blending his features with those of his beast—and nosed his mark, making sure she was okay.

“I’m okay...I’m okay,” she breathed out. And she meant it; she could feel a power building inside her.

“I will always protect you,” Roman growled. “I love you. You are my light, my dark...my everything.”

She opened her mouth to reply, but he kissed her hard, silencing her words.

“Tell me after I take care of this.” He jerked his head to the side.

Abby looked in the direction where Roman’s burst of alpha power had thrown her former mate. Carson was standing at the edge of the trees, naked and covered in dirt and blood.

“I told you I was coming!” He flashed her a deadly smile before getting into a crouch.

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ABIGAIL

Abby crouched in a warrior stance, head whipping back and forth, as Roman and Carson rushed toward each other, half shifted. The two alphas clashed with a force that rocked the hillside.

Her parents circled her, trying to push her back, away from the brawling alphas on one side and the battling warriors on the other.

But she couldn’t leave Roman, nor would she. She gripped the earth, her power flowing from her fingertips and rippling through the grass toward her mate as he circled Carson.

“You will lose your life, pup!” Roman snarled, the threat laced with the promise of blood and pain.

Carson ignored him, keeping his glowing eyes glued to Abby. “I told you I was coming!” he shouted again, stretching to his full height. “You are *mine*, Abigail!”

She could feel the white-hot rage that filled Roman when he heard Carson lay claim to her—and it filled her too.

She flashed her eyes as her canines grew. “Then come get me!”

Carson launched himself toward her, shifting into his wolf form, but Roman leaped at him with a roar.

Human and wolf clashed in midair. Razor-sharp teeth and claws snapped and slashed.

Roman fully shifted, catching Carson across his hindquarters with his claws, and the smell of blood saturated the air. The sounds coming from them were deep, nasty, and full of hate.

When Carson bit Roman on the back, Abby yelped and dug her fingers deeper into the earth. Her parents were now fighting warriors they’d trained. Bodies of men and wolves were starting to litter the territory.

Blood was heavy in the air. She could taste it, feel it in her veins. Her mate’s wolf wanted blood, and he was going to get it.

Roman charged at Carson, who was coming at him in return, and their jaws locked as they crashed together. Carson kicked Roman, raking his hind claws down his stomach, opening up several deep gashes.

But Abby couldn’t feel any pain coming from her mate, only rage that someone was trying to take her from him.

She’d never felt rage like this before, not even when she found out Carson had lain with someone else, and at the burst of fury that came screaming out of her as she shifted, several Oru wolves fell to the ground.

She flew toward Roman and Carson as they locked jaws again.

Roman’s wolf drew in a burst of power from her, and his strength amplified. He shook Carson’s wolf side to side.

“*We can do this,*” he sent through their link as she raced toward him.

“We *MUST* do this,” she replied, and Roman flung Carson’s wolf into a tree.

When Carson got to his feet, shaking off his daze, Roman’s wolf nudged her and charged. She was right behind him.

She slid under Roman as he launched himself at Carson, who was a second too slow, and clamped onto one of his hind legs with her powerful jaws, pulling him out of the air and onto the ground.

Just like she had done with Tory in their sparring session.

CARSON

As soon as Alpha Luko locked his jaws around his throat, Carson knew the end was coming. But his wolf was *never* going to give up full control. He wanted the graced luna’s power at all costs. ~He~ would never give up.

He continued to thrash until the huge alpha ripped out his throat, and as Carson lay there, the blood draining from his body through the gaping hole, flashes of his pup came to him.

He pushed the link open to his mother.

“Pup... Taylor... Dying...”

HAZEL

The small group of warriors with Hazel and Taylor started pacing, talking in low tones, and the two women exchanged worried looks. Something was wrong.

Hazel felt the family link open, heard her only child. His voice was weak...

Her son was *dying*.

And where was Edward? Why couldn’t she feel him?

She looked around frantically and saw Taylor on her phone, white-faced and clutching her belly.

She could hear Tabby screaming to her that Jacob was dead. That they were all dead.

The link opened, and Hazel dropped to her knees as the news traveled through the pack.

Edward. Dead. Carson. Dead. Along with a wide number of others.

She couldn't breathe.

A burning sensation radiated out from the middle of her chest. She looked down. A half-moon had been branded into her skin.

She was only half now. A luna without a mate—or a pack.

Gradually, she became aware of her surroundings. The warriors who'd stayed behind to guard them were whispering among themselves, giving her and Taylor sidelong glances. Some were already on their way out the door.

She knew the rest would follow. They wouldn't want any part of whatever vengeance Alpha Luko had in store for them.

She would also have to leave, or risk being killed. And so would Taylor. There would be blame laid at her feet for Carson losing his mate, for the pack losing a graced luna.

So much loss...

She wiped her eyes, then stood up and turned to Taylor. "Pack what you can. We need to leave as soon as possible."

She went to the window and looked outside. It was pure chaos, pack members running everywhere. "We're not safe here."

THE ORACLE

The Oracle sat in the rocking chair on her front porch, looking at the moon shine over the pack lands, waiting for the all-clear to come through the pack link.

But she already knew it was over.

There would be a new type of leadership in the wolf nation, one young Carson would have never supported. Truly the Moon Goddess was looking out for her children.

ROMAN

Roman stood at the edge of the trees while Abby slipped a T-shirt and shorts over her naked body. He had done the same, checking that everyone was okay while he reached through the shared link.

Thanks to the Moon Goddess's blessing, Pack Luko had suffered injuries but no losses. At least not yet.

Tory had sustained the most serious injury and was in critical condition. Beta Jacob had sliced open his side. But despite his injury, Tory had still managed to corner Jacob and rip off the beta's front leg.

Jacob had crawled into the trees, then been confirmed dead later when the warriors had done a sweep of the area, looking for their wounded.

As well as their beta and their former and future alphas, Pack Oru had suffered a great number of casualties. A reserve group had been allowed to extract the bodies and carry them back over the border to their camp.

Abby came up beside him and laced her fingers through his. He looked down at her, and she cupped his face with her other hand, her eyes glowing a brilliant green.

"You are my light, my dark, and my everything," she said, repeating the words he'd said to her before the final battle with Carson. "I love you too."

He smiled at her and squeezed her hand, and they stepped out onto the grassy field where they'd run together as wolves for the very first time.

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