

## Luna Graced | 43: Chapter 43

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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.

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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.