

Luna Graced | 9: Chapter 9

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ROMAN

Roman showered as quickly as he could, then dressed in jeans and a thermal shirt that pulled tight across his chest.

As soon as he opened the bathroom door, he caught the faint scent he'd noticed back at Pack Oru. He still couldn't place it...and then he saw her.

She had her back to him, but she turned around immediately and bowed her head. She was holding a cup of tea.

"Relax, Abby," he said gently.

"Beta Logan is showering in the other bathroom, Alpha. May I get you a cup of coffee or tea?"

"Coffee, please. Black."

His wolf watched intently as she poured him a large cup and brought it to him.

Over a pair of black leggings, she wore a soft sweater the same color as her eyes. It draped off the shoulder, highlighting her scar, and dipped low enough to reveal her rejection mark.

He rumbled his appreciation and then took a sip as he watched her walk back to the other end of the room.

"You don't need to show your mark to anyone."

She halted and took a deep breath, then turned. "I must display my shame, per wolf law."

"Not in my presence, nor in my territory."

He growled as she lowered her eyes to the floor. He wished she would look at him instead.

"You should carry no shame. This was not your fault. That pack is disgraceful and did no service to you or that alpha pup."

“Thank you, Alpha.” She shifted her sweater so it hung off the opposite shoulder, hiding her scar. Then, with swift, graceful movements, she tied her glorious fall of ink-black hair into a messy bun.

She moved without self-consciousness but also without any hint of flirtation. Could she really be unaware of how beautiful she was?

Another low rumble came from his chest before he could stop it, and his wolf sat up and chuffed. They both appreciated the pretty female in front of them—but needed to remember their manners.

A sudden knock startled him out of his reverie, and he growled then sniffed the air. *Food.*

He answered the door and took the bags from the delivery person, and when he turned, Logan came through the door to the other suite, drying his hair with a towel, and Abby was setting the table with dinnerware from the suite’s kitchenette.

He walked over and set the bags down, and Abby pulled out the chair at the head of the table for him, then seated Logan to his right and sat down at the far end, opposite her alpha.

She knew what she was doing, that was clear. She’d been well-trained and would have made a fine luna. A small surge of anger pulsed in his chest at the indignities she’d suffered.

They quickly served themselves from the containers of food, and Roman watched to be sure Abby took some. She needed to refuel herself. Once he was satisfied with her portions, he sat back and dug in.

A few minutes later, Logan looked up from his plate. “Gamma Rye has been alerting other packs of the situation, per your request, Alpha,” he said carefully.

Roman nodded. News would travel far and wide that a graced luna had been not only discovered but rejected by her alpha mate. Better that they hear it from him first.

Some other pack alphas might try to steal her for their own, but none of them would treat her with the respect Roman knew she deserved. If he had to fight to protect her, he would. And he was equipped to do so.

His pack had quietly grown to five thousand strong over the years, and his territory was massive, more than anyone knew.

He was reclusive for a reason.

He was the protector of the shunned, the rejected—most through no fault of their own. And many had paid penance for whatever injustice they'd been shunned for.

His pack was thriving despite the varied and sometimes unfortunate origins of many of its members, and he knew Abby would be welcomed there. More than that, she'd be celebrated. Protected. *Maybe even loved...*

His wolf rumbled, and Roman sat up straighter in his chair, shaking his head to clear away the strange, intrusive thoughts.

He eyed the woman at the end of the table.

It was because of her power, he told himself. Because she was a graced luna. Nothing more than that.

ABIGAIL

Abby sipped her tea and quietly observed the men. After a few small bites, she'd pushed her plate away, but they were eating everything in sight, fueling up their wolves.

Beta Logan nodded in her direction. "Thank you for setting the table, Abigail."

"You're welcome. I'm sorry if I overstepped. Old habits I must overcome."

"We could stand to learn a thing or two from your good manners," her new alpha interjected.

"Thank you. I was trained for many years. I..." She shook her head. "I don't know what I'm supposed to do now."

She closed her eyes, trying to get her emotions under control. She had a headache still, but no more feelings of Carson screaming at her or trying to break through.

"Breathe, Abby."

Her eyes flew open, and Roman was up out of his seat and standing beside her.

She stared into his deep, dark eyes and did as she was told.

ROMAN

Roman could feel his alpha power surging. His wolf needed to get out soon.

"I know you have a lot of questions. And I have someone in Pack Luko who can give you some answers. But first, we're going to stop at the border. We'll get your wolf out and let her run."

Her green eyes met his, and she gave a small nod. "Yes, Alpha."

"I know this is scary, Abby, but I protect my pack." As he said this, he felt his wolf push and his eyes glow. Where is this coming from?

He started to purr, wanting to offer her comfort. He did this on occasion, with a select few, but in this case it was almost involuntary. Both he and his wolf were drawn to this woman in ways he didn't understand.

She kept her gaze on his and he saw her green eyes soften, glaze over. Then her eyes flashed, and she closed them and shook her head.

"I know," he said softly, "and you're welcome. *Relax.*" He purred louder, and he could feel his warriors' tensions ease as they returned to their rooms.

He knew this was a level of power they weren't accustomed to from him. And he could feel Abby calm down even though he wasn't touching her. Her power was there, and his wolf could feel it.

He glanced at Logan, whose mouth was slightly open.

"I can feel her, Alpha."

"My wolf can too. It's her power."

"And yours as well, Roman. You must have noticed the changes. Your alpha power has been radiating constantly, and I keep feeling your wolf trying to surge."

"I have noticed. We need to get home."

"It makes sense now why you want to stop at the border and run."

He looked back at Abby. "I think you should go lie down for a bit," he said to her.

She opened her eyes and sighed, and he knew immediately why she didn't want to move.

"I'll be here."

"Yes, Alpha, thank you." She got up and went into her suite, shutting the door behind her.

He sat down next to Logan. His purr was still low and steady, and he couldn't stop it. He tried to contact his wolf, but his beast wasn't having it.

He was too focused on the power he was feeling from the female.

LOGAN

The alpha rubbed his face wearily, still purring.

"You okay, sir?" Logan asked.

Roman sighed. "Yeah. But I don't understand what's happening."

"Two powerful wolves recognizing each other is my first guess."

It seemed like there was way more going on than that, but Logan didn't think it was his place to say so.

He'd leave that to the Oracle.