

Luna Graced by KristiferAnn Thorne

1: Chapter 1

ABIGAIL

“We’re mates...*mates*, Carson! How could you do this?”

Tears ran down Abby’s face as she looked at the man she loved. Who she’d thought loved *her*.

She could hear her father’s furious growls, so she glanced over at where her parents stood beside Alpha Edward. Both of them looked livid, about to shift. The alpha just looked stunned.

“I’m sorry, Abby, this was a mistake,” Carson mumbled, his voice barely audible in the large space.

She turned back to her mate.

“A *mistake*?”

Her stomach clenched at the memory of them marking each other. “It’s only been weeks since you marked me! And I felt it, Carson—the mate bond—I felt *all* of it after that.”

How could this be happening? She’d imagined having pups with this man, standing beside him through everything life could throw at them.

A mated pair was supposed to be together forever, but she and Carson hadn’t even moved in together yet. He said he wanted to wait until after they exchanged the mate’s pace at the final ceremony...

But he’d been *betraying* her.

She clutched at her chest, and another fierce growl ripped through the meeting room.

“Stand down, Michael!” Alpha Edward said firmly to her father, his fiercest warrior. “I understand you’re not happy with my pup. I’m not either.”

“Where is Luna Hazel?” Abby’s mother asked, standing tall and proud, her eyes flashing from human to wolf.

Her mom was a fierce warrior in her own right, and she wanted to protect her pup.

Alpha Edward sighed. “She’ll be here momentarily, Fiona.”

Abby sniffed the air, and when she picked up the scent of the wolf her mate had been with, savage growls erupted from her throat.

Her parents moved closer to her. She could feel their concern, but her grief and her fury were too great for her to hold her wolf inside for another—

“*Abigail*,” Edward commanded, pushing his alpha power over her. “You will rein your wolf in immediately.”

Her father stood straighter and showed his teeth as the door began to open. And when Luna Hazel entered with Beta Jacob, his mate, and their pup, he went into a fighting stance.

Alpha Edward rumbled his chest in warning. “I will *not* have my beta and top warrior fighting because of their female pups.”

Luna Hazel took her place to the alpha’s left and folded her hands together.

Even through her own distress, Abby could tell Carson’s mom was devastated. Luna Hazel had been training her for seven years, ever since she’d turned fourteen and they all realized she was Carson’s mate.

But Abby knew that as luna—the position she would have taken over when Edward and Hazel retired—Hazel had to stand strong for her family and for her pack. She didn’t even look over at her son.

A son whose *mistake* had brought shame to them all. Abby felt her eyes flash as fury rose in her throat.

Alpha Edward cleared his throat. “Beta Jacob. Tabitha...”

She noticed he didn’t even bother addressing their disgrace of a daughter.

“Thank you for coming.”

The beta and his mate both bowed, showing their necks out of respect to their alpha. So did Taylor, who kept her eyes on the floor.

As well she should. Growling, Abby tore her eyes away from her rival, trying to control her rage.

“Alpha, Luna, Carson...” Beta Jacob bowed again. “Warriors Michael and Fiona. Abigail.” He gave them a curt nod.

Alpha Edward suddenly sniffed the air, his brow furrowing. When his eyes started to glow, everyone in the room lowered their heads.

“Your pup is pregnant,” he announced to Beta Jacob.

Pregnant?

A roar tore from Abby’s throat as she lost control and began to shift, her wolf’s coal-black fur sprouting from her skin. The rage in her veins set her on fire—she needed to kill the threat!

She leaped toward Taylor, claws extended.

ALPHA EDWARD

Edward grabbed Abby by the scruff of the neck, halting her in midair.

Still only half shifted, she writhed and fought in his grip, her dark green eyes glowing and her muzzle extended. Saliva dripped onto the floor as she snapped her jaws.

“Carson!” he roared. “Remove Taylor and your unborn pup. Now!”

His son scooped Taylor up and ran out of the room with her.

Jacob was crouched, ready to spring, and Michael and Fiona had both adopted the same warrior stance. He felt Abby’s body ripple in his grasp.

“Stand down, everyone!” He projected his alpha power across the room, then gently put Abby down.

She curled into a ball on the floor, sobbing, and mournful howls spread across the pack lands as the members of Pack Oru felt her searing grief. His own chest burned, and he could feel Hazel’s pain as well.

“Abby, sweetheart, my deepest apologies. You know I think of you as my own.” His sorrow washed over the room and through the pack.

“My deepest apologies to you as well, Warriors Michael and Fiona.” He bowed his head toward them, a rare sign of the utmost respect. Alphas didn’t bow to others.

“I have the right to challenge your pup,” Michael growled. “He’s gone against the laws of the Moon Goddess and this pack!”

“He is my son, Michael, and he has a pup coming. I can’t sanction this.” Edward turned toward the beta and his mate.

“Jacob, Tabby...I’m sure you can appreciate how devastating this is. I assume that your pup knew that Carson was mated and marked?” He curled his lips back, baring his teeth, and they both bowed their heads.

“Yes, Alpha,” Jacob answered.

“Did you not raise her with pack values?”

His beta looked up, bristling at Edward’s swipe at their parenting. “Perhaps it’s *your son* who should be answering questions. He’s been seeing Taylor for over a year now!

“And he informed both myself and my mate that he was going to reject Abigail when it came time for the mate’s pact ceremony.”

“He *what?*” Edward could feel his anger rocket through the entire pack; older members recoiled, and younger pups started to cry.

“I don’t wish to bring any more harm to Abigail by repeating his words,” Jacob said stiffly, his eyes flashing.

“Alpha Edward,” Fiona cut in. “I’m taking my daughter home. I don’t want her subjected to any more talk about this...*abomination*.”

She didn’t wait for permission, just helped Abby to stand and led her from the room. The sound of distant howls followed them—the pack was mourning the loss of their future luna.

“Speak! Now!” His alpha power caused the remaining adults to bow and whimper.

But Jacob’s voice rasped with anger. “Carson may have been mated to Abigail, but he’s never had any feelings for her. And he’s had feelings for Taylor for many moons.

“He was trying to do what was right by the Moon Goddess, but he knew in his heart he didn’t love Abby the way he does Taylor.”

Edward sat down hard in his chair. *No feelings?* He’d never heard of anything like this before.

“Edward, we must do something,” Hazel finally said, holding his gaze. “Carson must reject her, for her own sanity and his.”

“I don’t care about your filthy pup’s sanity!” Michael roared. “*My pup, ~my~ daughter* has been shredded at the hands of your son! Did *~you~* teach him pack values? Did *~you~* teach him the value of a mate bond?”

“Abby’s loved him since before she knew they were meant to be mates. We all saw it. We knew they were mates before they did!”

Considering the circumstances, Edward let his warrior’s disrespect slide. “I don’t understand it either, my friend.” He shook his head. “But I am sorry, brother.”

Michael fell into a chair. “*My pup*, Edward. The future luna of this pack. She’s dying from heartbreak.”

Edward shook his head. Even if he forced Carson to live with Abby and honor the vows he’d made when he marked her, his son could never undo his betrayal. The shame he’d brought on the pack would never go away.

And then there was the pup. It had alpha blood and would be in line to take over Pack Oru, even if its mother would never be luna. This was a complete mess, and all of it was Carson’s fault.

“My mate is right,” he said hoarsely. “She needs to reject him, and he needs to reject her.”

“It’ll kill her, Edward!” Michael cried. “And her heat is starting!”

Edward sighed wearily. “I’m so sorry, Michael. But having a rejected wolf in heat in the pack will cause all-out war between the unmated males. We have to put her in a cell. Him too. And we’ll have to sedate them both during her heat.”

“She *has* a mate! She shouldn’t have to go through the pain! Has she not suffered enough at the hands of your son?”

He growled at his warrior’s tone. “There’s nothing else to be done.”

“Then—if I’m unable to challenge him—I want him to be fully conscious while locked up.” Michael’s lips curled back in a snarl. “He deserves to feel every second of the pain.”

“Edward!” Hazel gasped. “We can’t do that! He’ll destroy everything and everyone to get to her.”