

Light Meets Logic

CHAPTER 2

Luna Silverwind stood in the center of Harmony Court,



her fingers delicately poised, ready to unleash her magic. The surrounding air crackled with anticipation, the crowd holding its breath. She inhaled deeply, feeling the familiar surge of magic building inside her. Then, with one graceful flick of her wrist, ribbons of light spiraled

outward like a shower of stars.

The shimmering lights twisted and danced above the courtyard, forming delicate patterns that shifted and spun. The crowd gasped and murmured in awe, eyes wide, faces bathed in color. Luna moved as if she were part of the magic itself - smooth, confident, unstoppable. The patterns grew wilder, brighter, until she pulled it all inward, the power bending to her will, blazing around her like a brand-new star being born.

Luna lifted her hands like she owned the sky, every move graceful and commanding. A beam of pure light erupted skyward, splitting the clouds and drenching Harmony Court in celestial brilliance. The crowd went wild, their cheers rolling

through the air like thunder. Luna stood there, glowing in her own light. She then allowed herself a small, satisfied smile.

“That was incredible!” someone yelled from the crowd.

“Brighter than the sun itself!” another shouted, their excitement echoing through the courtyard.

Luna soaked up the applause like sunlight on her skin, and honestly, she’d earned every bit. As the crowd drifted away, her friends rushed over, grinning from ear to ear, voices bubbling with excitement as they re-lived every glowing second of her oh-so-effortless brilliance.

“Well done, Miss Silverwind,” Tessa joked, her voice mimicking one of their old teachers perfectly.

Luna laughed and stuck out her tongue. “Thanks. Oh, I was dying to try that spell out!”

“Did you see who was looking at you?” Tessa asked, her voice thick with sarcasm.

“Ugh, yeah. Ethan Grey,” Vera muttered, scrunching her nose like she’d smelled something awful. “He was hanging around the edge of the crowd. I saw him.”

Luna furrowed her brow. “Who?”

Tessa’s eyes went wide. “You don’t know Ethan Grey?”

“Should I?” Luna asked, tilting her head, genuinely confused.

Tessa let out a scoff. “He’s famous, just... not for the reasons you’d expect. His family’s broke, and they’ve never exactly produced top-tier arcanists.”

Seeing Luna’s puzzled expression, Vera sighed, and jumped in to elaborate. “You know - messy black hair, glasses, kind of tall but on the lanky side. He is always lugging around that bag, as if it were full of rocks.”

Luna’s gaze swept over the courtyard, searching to see if he was still there. She thought she remembered him - someone standing just beyond the circle of light, half-hidden by the crowd. For a moment, his stare had pierced straight through her, unsettling in its intensity.

“No Arcanists...” Luna repeated under her breath, still not entirely sure who they were talking about.



“Yes,” Vera continued, leaning in closer. “Some people say he cheated, but come on, I don’t think our teachers are that clueless.”

Something piqued Luna’s curiosity. “How did he get in, then?”

“Who knows?” Tessa said with a shrug. “Maybe he’s got a hidden talent tucked away somewhere. Still, he doesn’t exactly look the part, does he?”

Luna nodded absently as her thoughts wandered. The Academy’s admissions were brutal, favoring those with legacy, raw power, or the right connections. She possessed all three. Descended from a long line of accomplished arcanists, Luna’s own exceptional abilities had only further elevated her family’s already distinguished reputation.

If what her friends were saying was true, then how had someone like him gotten in? The Academy didn’t make mistakes. They didn’t just accidentally admit people. Was he actually that powerful beneath all that awkwardness and unassuming appearance?

“Luna, are you even listening?” Tessa’s voice snapped her out of her thoughts.

“Yes, yes,” Luna said quickly, shaking her head as if to clear it. “I was just thinking.”

“About what?” Vera asked as they made their way toward a nearby bench.

“Just wondering if he’s really as powerful as someone has to be to get into the Academy.”

Tessa gave a confident little hum. “Well, whatever he is, he’s definitely not on your level. You’ve got nothing to worry about.”

Luna smiled at the compliment, appreciating the reassurance - but something about Ethan didn't add up. And if there was one thing she could never ignore, it was a mystery. She had a soft spot for puzzles she wasn't supposed to solve.

The three of them lingered in the courtyard, soaking up the sunlight as their laughter echoed across the marble paths. But just as they were about to head for class, a sudden, brilliant flash caught Luna's eye.

A glowing scroll appeared before Luna, its golden light casting ripples across the courtyard. For a heartbeat, silence hung heavy in the air. Then the crowd turned, every face searching, and a wave of gasps followed.

“Luna, look!” Tessa cried, her green eyes wide with excitement.

“Wait - is that... that’s for the Celestial Convergence project, isn’t it?” Vera breathed, eyes wide as she stared at the glowing scroll.

Luna reached out, her hand steady at first, though a faint tremor betrayed her nerves. The scroll was almost weightless, but its meaning settled on her like a mountain.

“Open it! Quickly!” Tessa urged, practically bouncing as she leaned in, her grip on Luna’s shoulder tightening.

Luna’s heart hammered in her chest as she dug her nail into the golden seal and broke it open. The parchment unfurled

with a soft shimmer between her hands. “It’s the summons for the assignment,” she said, keeping her tone even despite the anxious flutter in her chest. “Tomorrow morning.”

“Wow, that’s amazing!” Tessa said, her eyes lighting up before she let out a small groan. “Ugh, I’m not exactly looking forward to getting mine, though.”

Luna forced a small smile, though her thoughts were spinning with what-ifs - different assignments, unpredictable partners. She liked things to make sense, to stay within her control, and this uncertainty made her uneasy.

In a voice just low enough for Tessa and Vera to hear, she admitted, “I hate not knowing who I’ll be paired with.”

Tessa waved a hand as if brushing away Luna’s worries. “Whoever it is, they’re lucky to work with you. You’re the best.”

“Yeah,” Vera chimed in, nodding enthusiastically. “With your skills, it’ll be a breeze. You’ll probably end up carrying the team anyway.”

Luna felt her shoulders loosen a little at their words. Their confidence in her made her believe it too, at least a little. They were right: she was good at what she did, and people usually liked her. Whoever her partner turned out to be, they’d probably be glad to have her.

She took a steady breath, folded the scroll with care, and tucked it away. “I guess we’ll find out soon enough,” she said with a faint smile.

Luna stifled a yawn as she trudged toward the Hall of Assignments, the soft orange glow of dawn spilling across the Academy's marble walkways. It was far too early for anything this official, but rules were rules. Another yawn slipped out before she pushed open the tall doors and stepped inside. The quiet grandeur of the hall woke her up more than the crisp morning air ever could.

They reserved the Hall of Assignments solely for the Celestial Convergence. Along the walls hung portraits of past students - faces captured in the glow of triumph, each one a silent reminder of excellence and endurance.



As Luna made her way down the corridor, her gaze drifted from one frame to the next - until one stopped her cold. Her mother's portrait. Those same bright blue eyes met hers through the paint, so vivid it felt like looking into a reflection. But her mother's face held something Luna's didn't yet - tension, weariness, and that tiny, unrelenting frown that even victory hadn't erased.

Luna tore her gaze away from the portrait, reminding herself she had little time to linger. Refocusing on her surroundings, she spotted the Heads of the Realm of Light and

the Realm of Knowledge standing side by side, clearly waiting for her.

Professor Eldrin's smile was warm and familiar, the kind that softened even the weightiest of mornings. She'd seen that same smile countless times in his lessons on protective barriers. Though his face was youthful and his tone steady, his eyes carried something older - quiet wisdom, calm assurance. Maybe that was his true magic: making others feel safe just by being near him. It was easy to see why the Luminars trusted him so completely. Luna did too.

Professor Hawke presented a striking contrast. A middle-aged woman impeccably attired in the crisp, formal robes of the scholars, she radiated precision and authority. Known for her exacting standards and stern demeanor, she swept her gaze across the hall with practiced scrutiny, leaving no corner unexamined.

“Luna,” Professor Eldrin greeted her pleasantly. “Good morning.”

“Good morning, Professor Eldrin,” Luna responded, inclining her head respectfully before turning to the other. “Professor Hawke.”

“We've been expecting you,” Professor Hawke said curtly, her gaze assessing Luna.

Luna held her ground, doing her best not to fidget under the scrutiny.

As Luna walked deeper into the echoing hall, her mind drifted between anticipation and unease. A partner from the Realm of Knowledge - masters of logic and the mind. It was a union of light and intellect, promising brilliance... or conflict. They lived by logic, equations, and rules. She trusted instinct, precision, and feeling. The idea thrilled her almost as much as it unsettled her. Even the brightest light, after all, could falter beneath the weight of shadows made by reason.

Professor Eldrin smiled pleasantly. "I'm pleased to see you both arrived on time. We have much to discuss."

Luna nodded out of reflex, but something about his words caught her off guard. Both? She spun, her eyes sweeping the hall. She had noticed no one else when she entered - but now, there he was. A boy stood a few paces away, turned from her, lost entirely in his own thoughts.

As if sensing her attention, the boy turned, and for a heartbeat, everything stopped. His dark hair fell messily across his forehead, framing a face that was both serious and unreadable. Then she saw his eyes: gray, sharp, thoughtful. Recognition struck her like lightning. Ethan Grey.

The boy everyone whispered about. The one from a poor family who'd somehow earned a place at the Academy. Was he really going to be her partner? Maybe this was fate's way of testing her, of making her look beyond assumptions.

Ethan's eyes widened slightly when he saw her, but just as



quickly, he turned away, pretending deep interest in the floor or the nearest wall. The silence that followed stretched unbearably long, thick enough that Luna wished someone would just say something - anything.

The awkward staring wasn't helping anyone. Luna drew in a breath, straightened her back, and marched up to him. "I guess we'll be working together," she said, managing a calm tone - no small feat, given the dozen sarcastic remarks she was suppressing.

"Seems that way," Ethan replied evenly, his tone carefully neutral. He kept his focus forward, though his eyes flicked toward her briefly. "I'm Ethan Grey."

"Luna," she responded with a quick nod, unsure why the air between them felt so heavy.

The silence that followed was painfully long until Professor Eldrin mercifully cleared his throat. "I'm sure you both have a lot of questions," he said with an encouraging smile. "This is an important assignment, and we believe the two of you have the potential to achieve something remarkable."

Luna's curiosity only deepened. What did the Professors see in Ethan? She did not know how the Academy decided on pairings, but she couldn't help wondering why they'd matched him, the quiet mystery, with one of their top students.

She stole another glance at him. His shoulders were tense, his eyes fixed anywhere but her. This partnership was going to be... interesting. Still, she was confident she could make it work. She always did.

Straightening her posture, she flashed him a courteous smile. "Well, Ethan, let's give it our best."

He nodded slightly, still not looking at her. "Yeah," he said softly. "Let's do that."

Their mentors exchanged a brief look of quiet approval, like torchbearers passing the first spark. Then Professor Eldrin spoke, his voice steady and full of purpose. "The tasks we entrust to you," he said, "are not perilous, yet they hold the promise to ripple through society - to change lives in ways that matter."

Luna listened closely, nodding at the right moments, though her gaze occasionally drifted toward Ethan. His expression was unusually focused, almost too focused. He seemed to take this assignment with an intensity that surprised her. She knew what these tasks were really about: students were expected to analyze, propose ideas, and demonstrate understanding - not to solve the world's problems outright.

For her, this was another challenge - another opportunity to perform well and add to her record of achievements. Still, she couldn't ignore the stories of those who came before. Every few years, a student actually cracked their assigned problem, sparking breakthroughs - new spells, new theories, new ways of thinking. When that happened, it became the kind of victory the Academy would whisper about for generations.

Professor Hawke's voice took command of the room - steady, crisp, and precise. "These assignments challenge you and push you to think creatively," she said. "In the past, some projects have led to real innovations - energy-efficient enchantments, new ways to communicate magically, even technological advances."

While the Professors continued their explanation, Luna felt the familiar burden of expectation resurface - the pressure that never truly ever left her. In her mind, her mother's voice echoed like a mantra she could never quite escape: You must be the best. Silverwinds can be nothing less. The words carried the familiar sting of duty, pressing against her ribs like armor that had grown too tight.

Then Professor Eldrin's voice broke through the stillness, smooth and resonant, drawing their focus like the pull of gravity. "And now," he declared, reaching into the folds of his robes, "this will be your task." He drew forth a sealed parchment that shimmered faintly with runic light. Handing it to Luna, he met her eyes with quiet gravity. "You are to investigate the disappearance of the Celestial Sphere."

The air seemed to shift around them - charged, expectant - as though the very name had stirred something ancient awake.



Ethan's eyes went wide, shock flashing across his face. Clearly, he knew something about the Celestial Sphere. Luna felt a twist of embarrassment. She had no idea what it was, or why its disappearance seemed to matter so much.

Professor Hawke caught the shift in Ethan's expression immediately, one eyebrow arching. "Mr. Grey, it seems you're familiar with this."

Ethan hesitated, then gave a slow nod. "We were just reading about it in class yesterday," he said evenly, though there was something behind his eyes - something he wasn't saying.

Luna's annoyance flared for a brief second - how had he known something she didn't? But she quickly pushed it aside, replacing it with curiosity. "What exactly is the Celestial Sphere?" she asked.

Ethan glanced her way, his expression carefully guarded. "It's an ancient artifact," he said evenly. "People say it holds immense power. It disappeared years ago, and no one's ever figured out what really happened to it."

Luna nodded, managing to stay composed even as unease twisted quietly in her chest. She wondered, how does someone find what time itself has hidden?

Before the thought could root too deeply, Professor Eldrin's calm voice pulled her back. Warm, steady—like morning sunlight breaking through mist. "We believe in you both," he said, his gaze resting on them with quiet certainty. "If you are diligent and imaginative, you can find even the lost. What you uncover may change more than you know."

As they exited the hall, Luna turned to Ethan, her mind buzzing with ideas. "So, what do you think our plan should be? We need to get started right away."

Ethan met her gaze briefly, his expression calm but determined. "We start with research," he said. "We need to know everything about the Celestial Sphere before we make a move."

Luna frowned. "Research? That could take forever. Why don't we just start investigating?" The idea of spending hours buried in books made her skin itch. She preferred movement and trusting her instincts, acting, doing - figuring things out on the run.

Ethan's brows knit together. "Jumping in without understanding the context would be reckless," he said evenly. "We need to know what we're dealing with first."

Luna crossed her arms, her tone edged with impatience. "I get the need for research, but sitting still won't get us

anywhere. We could use magic to find leads instead of wasting time reading about the past.”

Ethan’s jaw tensed, his voice measured but firm. “Acting without proper preparation is precisely how errors occur,” he replied.

The tension between them was thick enough to cut. Luna could see the resolve in his eyes, that unshakable determination, but she couldn’t understand how burying themselves in books would lead them anywhere.

“We’re not getting anywhere like this,” she said flatly. “Maybe it’s better if we each take some time to think and meet again another day.”

Ethan paused, clearly wrestling with his irritation before answering. “Very well,” he said at last, voice calm but cool. “We’ll reconvene in one of the common study rooms in three days.”

Without another word, he turned and walked off. Luna let out a sharp breath as she watched him go. No one had ever spoken to her so curtly before, and the indifference in his tone stung more than she’d admit.

Her heels struck the floor in a steady rhythm as she walked away, anger simmering quietly beneath her calm facade. She had expected obstacles, yes, but not defiance. In her mind, her partner was supposed to recognize who she was - a Silverwind, born to lead, destined to excel.

Yet Ethan Grey had completely defied her expectations with that quiet, stubborn determination of his.

A sigh slipped from her lips, the sound heavy with frustration. How could two people who saw the world so differently ever hope to work in harmony? And yet, some instinct whispered that this was only the start of something larger - that their clash was merely the first spark.

Still, the question lingered, pressing at the edge of her thoughts. How were they supposed to work together when they couldn't even agree on where to begin?