

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 25

Maeve POV

“A psychic?” Xaden gawked, less than impressed, **at** the doctor. He gave him a very obvious look-over with a **frown**. “One of the kingdom’s most well-educated doctors, renowned throughout the capital, wants me to.. consult a psychic.”

“I understand how it sounds, Your Highness, but I believe this is the best and only option to get the answers you **seek**.”

The more I mulled over the doctor’s words, the more I thought it was worth a shot. If what Xaden said was true **and that** it really **should have** been impossible to break him out of his heat, then **modern** medicine would not be able to help us.

This was some otherworldly power **at** work, **it** seemed.

I bit my lip, feeling conflicted.

That was not to say I had any firm beliefs for or against psychics, either. I’d heard **many** a story about con artists who are **only** fortune tellers in name, seeking to take advantage of **those** too naive or desperate for answers. And Xaden—after almost taking me against my will and nearly harming our baby in the process—was indeed what I would call desperate.

Could we afford to put our trust in someone like that?

“I refuse to accept that,” Xaden spat, pulling me back into the now-heated **conversation**. “Conduct every test your institute can provide for us! I don’t care how much it costs—I will pay for everything!”

Doctor Russell shook his head. “This is beyond anything science has to offer.”

“Or perhaps you’re just not qualified enough to-

“Xaden!” I interrupted with a gasp, **grabbing** onto his arm, an embarrassed blush settling across my face. “Please...”

Seeing my distress, he took a breath. “Give us a moment,” he mumbled to the doctor.

The moment we were left alone, Xaden focused all his attention on me. His displeasure was written clear as day across his face. Despite his rude attitude, my heart ached for him—he **was** only doing **this** for us.

I gently massaged my thumbs into his arm. “You don’t have to insult every person you’re not pleased with...”

“That’s not even the issue at hand anymore,” he muttered, and I could feel him tremble underneath my touch from pent-up anxiety. “It’s a waste of kingdom resources and money to continue providing for these so-called doctors who would rather send us on a wild **goose chase** than give us proper answers.”

“But what reason would he have to lie?”

“Incompetence, indifference...” Xaden counted off his fingers with a pointed stare, making me frown a bit, “laziness. Shall I go

“Don’t you think he would jump at the chance to help you if he could?” I calmly pointed out, and he went silent. “I mean, he came all this way to examine us, after all. If his hard-earned and expensive education had the

answers we were looking for, I can't believe he would rather steer us toward something as risky as the mystic arts."

The conflict in his face was apparent. He wanted answers but **was** hesitant to blindly **trust** such an unreliable source.

I gulped. "I think we should try..." I whispered. "What do we have to lose?"

For a while, he did nothing but gaze at me. Slowly, I **saw** the tense lines on his face begin to soften and the harsh shadows on his eyes disappeared. He sighed shakily, planting his hand on my belly, which I **covered** with my own, squeezing with as much reassurance **as** I could muster.

"We have everything to lose," he murmured, **as** serious as **I've** ever seen him.

My spirits sank, thinking he was ready to turn the idea down once more, until he spoke up again.

"Let's do it," Xaden said with an air of resignation. "Let's visit the psychic."

"You can't be serious," Xaden barked into the phone, **half** shocked and **half** outraged, prompting me to glance up from a pregnancy book I had tried to read to distract myself. "You're telling me I have to book an appointment three months in advance if I want to meet with the Omniscient Orenda Gorre?"

Curious, I put the book down and focused my attention on him.

He scoffed, pacing around his desk. "Clearly, you must not know who I am. Otherwise, you would not be speaking **so** brazenly."

I couldn't hear the voice on the other line, but whatever they said was not **what** he wanted to hear.

With **an** impatient growl, Xaden slammed the phone down into its receiver. “For the love of-” he cut himself off, **choosing** to instead curse silently once he realized I was still in the room with him.

“So... we have to wait to see the psychic?” I asked, wincing slightly.

He sighed, rubbing an exhausted hand over his **face**. “She won’t make any exceptions, even for royalty. Honestly, how self- important does this woman think she is?” he said with a dramatic roll of his eyes.

I bit my lip. He didn’t see the irony. “You can’t expect everyone to put things on hold for you just because you’re an Alpha Prince.” I said gently. “It’s not fair to everyone else who has troubles of their own.”

“And why should I care about everyone else right now? This is important.”

Frowning. I fidgeted with my fingers. “If I tried to visit her before I met you,” I started, slow and pondering, “I would have needed to wait the three months. maybe even more than that.” I peered up at him **and** saw his anger begin to fall. “You have privilege, Xaden. You must recognize that.”

The following silence was heavy with **guilt**.

“If an appointment will take too long..” he murmured, “let’s try to meet her in person. **Today.**”

My eyes widened in surprise. “Really?”

He nodded. “These sorts of businesses sometimes are easier to visit through same-day visits. Who knows?” he said with a lighthearted tone. “We might just catch her attention while we’re there.”

Without wasting any time, we **got** ourselves ready and hopped into the car for the quick drive to her office.

As soon as we exited the car outside the office of the Omniscient Orenda Corre, we were **met with** a long line of tens, if not hundreds, of antsy clients

camped outside the door, all waiting to see the psychic just as we were. I froze, stunned. This, along with a **three**-month wait for appointments—evidently, the reputation of this woman was greater than anything I had imagined.

“All these people are here to see Orenda Gorre?” I gaped.

“This is absurd,” he muttered, huffing an impatient sigh as he glared at the long line of people in front of us. “I cannot believe they expect us **to** wait.”

My throat ran dry. Suddenly, a thought flashed in my mind that it might actually be best to schedule an appointment...at least then a visit would be guaranteed. But then Xaden grabbed onto my hand.

“Well, we’re here,” he said with an encouraging smile. “We might as well get in line.”

As we began to walk towards the end of the queue, I felt everyone’s eyes settle on us. People bubbled into excited conversation as they recognized Xaden, and then into bewildered murmurs as they glossed over me. I heard every **single** one of them, and it was paralyzing

This was our first—real—public outing together, not including those shopping trips in the privacy of those Mona Road boutiques. I didn’t realize it would involve so many pairs of eyes on us.

All of a sudden, the doors blew open, startling the bustling crowd into silence, and Xaden and I stopped in our tracks. A small, ancient-looking woman, hunched over and draped with thick layers of yellow silk robes, hobbled outside. Her long, braided white hair dangled around her wrinkled face as she wearily eyed the long line of clients.

Suddenly, everyone’s attention was focused on her, as if we never existed.

“It’s her,” someone gasped, awestruck. “It’s Orenda Gorrel”

“I can’t wait to get my fortune read!”

“So many damn people,” the woman grumbled aloud. “Don’t you all have something better to do than bother me with your problems?”

I blinked. This... was the psychic that came so highly recommended?

Orenda turned to face her adoring clientele and opened her mouth. “I hereby decree that you all should scam! I don’t have the patience to hear every single one of you ask for the same damn thing—not today!”

A chorus of affronted gasps, groans, and complaints resounded amongst the crowd. My gaze flickered wildly between the people, the psychic, **and a** very disappointed Xaden. If she was dismissing everybody, then what were we supposed to do? “This is how the great psychic treats her clients?” Xaden questioned distastefully. “Forget this. We should find another way.” Orenda prepared to return inside, completing one last, departing scan of the crowd, until we suddenly locked eyes.

And it was like time stopped for that moment.

Something flashed in those ancient, all-knowing eyes of hers, and I found myself unable to tear mine away. “You there!” she called out, pointing at me. “You, I shall see.”

Holding tightly onto Xaden’s hand, I entered the psychic’s lair, trying to ignore the annoyed **groans** of everyone else. The room was shrouded in darkness, save for some scattered lanterns and candles and a large crystal ball in the middle of the room, and curtains of varying colors dangled from the ceiling.

“Th–Thank you for seeing us, Orenda,” I stammered, unsure how one should greet such a renowned woman. “We’ve had a long, strange few-”

“Tut, tut, tut!” she snapped, waving her hands frantically to shush me, and immediately, I shut my mouth, startled by the abrupt reaction. “Don’t say another word…” she warned, wagging a shaky finger at me before swinging towards a large ornate table central to the room, “and sit down over there.”

Cautiously, we sat down as instructed. With a grunt, she seated herself opposite us and asked us both to hold out one of our hands. We obeyed with heavy reluctance, during which she smothered our hands with ash from a nearby fireplace and proceeded to read over our palms.

Xaden cleared his throat as she worked. “We’re here because we-

“Hush, boy!” she **spat**. “Don’t you think I know why you’re here?”

He looked offended. “How **dare-**

“**You** want to know what’s wrong with you,” she exclaimed, pointing at Xaden, who quickly paled, “and you…” she continued, moving on to me, “you are a mess, child. How **could** someone so small have so many problems?”

I swallowed hard. What did she mean by that?

“There’s only one answer to both of your problems,” Orenda uttered ominously. “You two are fated mates, and that is what will keep you both alive.”