

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 26

Maeve POV

“Fated mates?” I repeated, wrinkling my brow. “I thought that was just a myth.”

“That’s because it is,” Xaden muttered from beside me, clearly **not** believing a word the psychic was saying. “It’s just another folktale used to reel in lovesick clients. I knew this was **too** good to be true,” he said as he began to pull himself up. “And you almost had me for a second, you conniving, old-

“Heh, keep talking like that and see if you’ll get anything else out of me!”

“Xaden, please!” I **urged**, reaching for him in an attempt to stop him. “Let’s hear what she has to say”

Disgruntled, he relented **and** sat back down.

Quickly, I turned my attention back to Orenda. “What did you mean by ‘fated mates?’” I pressed, needing to know more.

“I meant what I said: that you are fated mates,” she said as a matter of fact. “You two share a sacred bond, and that’s the only reason you **and** that baby of yours are still around after your man went wild.”

I jolted with surprise, pressing a hand to my bump. No one knew about what happened except for us.

Xaden stiffened beside me. “How did you-?”

“Will you let me finish my damn lines?” she snapped at him, before addressing us both with open arms. “You were chosen by the Moon Goddess herself... for what reason, I cannot say, but the connection She created for you both is stronger than any other force on the planet, even that of a wolf’s heat,” she finished, gazing knowingly at a bewildered Xaden. “**That’s** why you were able to get yourself together, lover boy!”

I peered at him. The conflict in his face was undeniable.

Orenda seemed to sense the change in **him**, as well, and softened the tone of her voice. “You **know** in the depths of your heart that what I’m saying is true. Your feelings for this girl overpowered anything your inner wolf tried to force you to do,”

The subsequent way he gazed at me, full of worry and...and love, made my heart flutter. And in that moment, I knew that both he and I felt the truth of her words deep in our souls. This was why we felt so drawn to each other, despite having only known each other for **less** than three weeks.

However, there was something I couldn’t wrap my mind around.

“But... how?” I asked feebly, suddenly lacking the courage to face him further. “How could she pair an Alpha Prince with... someone like me?”

“Child,” she murmured affectionately. I could hear the pity in her voice. “She does not discriminate between alphas, omegas, or anything else in between. Love is love, and Her purpose is to help us find it with others.”

My unconvinced silence was deafening.

“Here,” she said, reaching her wrinkled hand out to me. “Let me look at you.”

I reluctantly conceded, and she pulled me in closer to gaze deep into my eyes. Once she seemed satisfied, she clapped her hands and a fresh veil of smoke poofed up and dramatically encircled the table. I blinked out of surprise, unsure if that was for **show** or if that was truly part of her ritual.

“I see a man...” Orenda uttered ominously, waving her hands through the smoke as the crystal ball began to glow. “An Alpha, tall and proud... a leader with great aspirations and fears. He wants to control you and keep you within arm’s reach for his selfish gain”

I fidgeted. That could only have been my father.

“And...” she continued, taking me aback. Who else was she seeing? “I see a woman... brave **and** powerful. Your mother.” Oh. My spirits sank

There was only one mother figure in my life. “That must be Victoria” I muttered with a weak smile. “My relationship with her. is complicated”

“No. I see your mother”

She emphasized that word: mother. I froze. How was that possible?

“I don’t know who she is. You can see her?” I stammered, suddenly not caring that Xaden was paying witness to any of **this**. My mind was running a mile a second. “Who, where is she? What happened to her?”

“Those are good questions, but ones I cannot answer. You may be an Alpha’s daughter, but you possess more inside you than you’ve ever known, as does the baby that resides in you. All you have to do, child,” Orenda murmured, “is set it free.

“What!” Xaden leaned in close, enraptured by **every** word she said. “What do you mean by that?”

But the Omniscient Orenda Gorre was done speaking. She would not give us anything more—the rest was up to us. So, we had no choice but to leave with those mysterious, foreboding parting words to ponder over.

Once we were in the car on our way back to the mansion, there was a heavy silence as we were both lost in our wandering minds

Xaden was the first to **speak**. “Fated mates?” he questioned aloud, sounding unsure. “How could that be possible...?”

“Well people usually come to ask about their love lives,” I remarked, feeling just as conflicted. “It might just be one of her tactics.” I couldn’t help but feel downhearted. I had put a lot of faith into this theory.

“I don’t particularly care what she says, one way or the other.” His nonchalance surprised me.

I bit my lip. “You don’t?”

“No,” he said, simple and straightforward, and it was times like this when I wished I had even a sliver of his confidence. “I know what I feel when I’m with you. Fated mates or not, what we share is not just a figment of our imaginations.”

A bitter thought forced its way to the front of my head that I couldn’t help but voice. “But what if we aren’t...?” I asked, my heart twisting painfully. “What if we’re meant to be with other people?”

What if you’re not meant to be with me?

“That’s not even an option for me,” Xaden said firmly, forcing me to look him in the eyes. “You are the only one who has ever triggered my heat and your scent is the only one that drives me wild. Everything in me... everything I am is telling me **that** it’s you and that it’ll only ever be you, regardless if you’re Alpha Burton’s legitimate daughter or not.”

I froze. I had completely forgotten he was there to **hear** that!

“I—I’m not-”

“It does not matter to me,” he said, pulling my face into his hands, caressing me with the most ardent, sincere expression I’d ever seen on him. “Is that what you were so desperate to hide from me?”

Tears welled in my eyes, **both** out of fear and beautiful hope. That seemed to be answer enough for him.

He wrapped his strong arms tightly **around** me, and I melted into his adoring touch. “I’ll say it as many times as you need to hear: I don’t care who you are...if you are of noble birth or not, if you’re legitimate or not, or even if you have three legs instead of one.”

The **visual** made me giggle through my tears, breaking the tension.

“We belong together,” Xaden breathed. “I don’t need the mystic arts to tell me that.”

And I believed him. With all of my heart.

Xaden didn’t turn me away like Father had warned. He wanted me. All of me.

Third Person POV

DESIGITUR **Auguvien** many people were **drawn** to her, namely her mystical talent, her eccentric personality, and her close-to-perfect prophecies, which inspired a lot of talk. But, not one day following that fateful visit, her clients had another exciting reason to stir gossip.

“Did you hear the rumors?”

“About Alpha Prince Xaden? Who **hasn’t?!?**”

A tall, sharply dressed man weaved through the bustling crowds in the capital, carrying a messenger bag filled with important paperwork. As the people excitedly spoke and jabbered amongst themselves, he kept an

inquisitive ear open, not quite engaging them in conversation, but ready to hear what they had to say.

If it involved one of the royals, he was ready for anything.

“But who would have thought? Daring to be seen in public with a mysterious woman? Could she be his Luna?”

“That’s ridiculous. They would have announced something by now if that **were** the case. Obviously, it’s way more likely that **she’s** an escort or some other worker.”

“But, apparently, it’s not the first time they’ve gone out together. I heard they visited one of those upscale boutiques down on Mona Road just a few days ago!”

The man’s eyebrows raised, intrigued. Prince Xaden, gallivanting around the capital with an unknown woman, was undoubtedly information worthy of being passed on to his esteemed higher-up. But this was not enough.

He needed to know more.

“I’m sorry, I couldn’t help but overhear,” he interjected with an apologetic, yet polite and charming smile, redirecting the attention of the gossipers onto him. “Has something happened to Alpha Prince Xaden?”

One of the gossipers let out a short laugh. “You could certainly say that!”

They thoroughly supplied the man with every rumor they had heard thus far about Xaden and the mysterious woman in the capital, and he eagerly drank up every word that left their giddy mouths. Once he was satisfied, he entered a car and made a beeline straight for the Royal Palace, and he didn’t stop until he reached the decorated desk of **his** superior.

“Your Highness, the man bowed, lowering his head to his superior, who sat at his desk, swamped with loads of paperwork. “Prime Beta Carrick, there

you are,” a bored, masculine voice spoke up **as** he scribbled something on a sheet of paper. “Care to share where you’ve been all morning?”

“I apologize, I had to run an errand in the capital.”

“You look rather spirited **for** someone who only ‘ran an errand.’”

“That’s because I engaged in a rather interesting conversation with some passersby”

“Hm. And what could be so interesting from the mouths of commoners?”

Garrick took a breath before revealing the news. “There have, apparently, been quite a bit of speculation surrounding the Third Prince and a mystery girl around the capital.”

The scratch of pen against paper suddenly halted.

“Interesting. Enlighten me, Garrick,” Alpha Prince Henry, firstborn of the royal bloodline, murmured with a raised eyebrow **as** he straightened in his chair. “Just what sort of scandal **has** my precious, reckless little brother gotten himself into?”