

# The Hidden Luna Queen

## Chapter 40

Maeve POV

I **was** alone **again**.

No Xaden. No Maggie. No home to protect me.

As I fell deeper and deeper away into unconsciousness, what remained of my lucidity trembled with remembrance. I could still feel the pain and fatigue from last time. How my legs, from hours and miles of running, stung and buckled with every step I would try to make... the all-consuming hopelessness I felt when I realized that I would never find peace, no matter what I **did**... the bitter and unforgiving cold surrounding my body, suffocating me with no remorse.

But I also remembered what lay at the end of all that suffering. I could still hear it echo in my mind...that sweet, mystical voice that spoke to something deep inside me.

That voice that felt like home after **a** long journey **away**.

Would I have to endure it all again to find it?

Was that the price to pay to hear even a snippet of that voice one more time?

I shut **my** eyes, revoking whatever control I had and ready to accept the fate that awaited me. Whatever needed to happen, would happen. If I needed to

suffer **millions** of more lifetimes to be able to speak to that voice again, I gladly would.

Just let me hear it one more time...

All of a sudden, I found myself floating downwards, carried gently by the faintest breeze until I landed on something soft.... something I had felt once before in a dream. Sunlight basked all around me, seeping into me with its comforting warm rays. And, **as** I opened my eyes, tall, green grass swayed against my body, tickling my skin as my senses overwhelmed with the soft, soothing scent of lavender and wildflowers.

This **is** what I wanted to feel, I mused, taking **a** long, deep breath in...

This was what I believed peace felt like,

“Maeve...”

With a sharp gasp, I pulled myself up, glancing wildly around the empty meadow for any sign that someone had walked into my dream. Sure enough, I was still alone. This could be none **other** than my mysterious disembodied companion.

Gulping, I tried to initiate contact. “I–Is it you...?”

“You came back to me...” the voice murmured. I could feel warmth permeate my heart.

“I waited for you. Where have you been?”

“I **was** never really gone, Maeve...I **have** always been here..”

I pulled myself to my feet, desperate to get as close to the voice as possible.

“Can I see you...?”

\*All in due time....”

Tears prickled at the backs of my eyes. "Please, at least tell me who you are," I begged. "I-I need to know."

"What **you** want, you will find, little lamb...because you are your mother's daughter..."

Those words, **spoken** so simply, so calmly by this unknown voice, made my heart pound. "You...you know my mother?" I asked barely above a whisper, **not** trusting the integrity of my own voice.

"I know more than that, little one..."

"Tell me who she is... and what happened to her," I pleaded.

"All in due time."

The urge to keel over and cry was unbearable. The voice never seemed to give me clear answers, only vague or cryptic riddles. I didn't have the time or patience to solve. "Y-You told me I was ready! Why can't I know everything now?"

I was met with silence this time. Panic swelled inside me, fearing that I had pushed the voice away with my badgering.

It couldn't **leave** yet, not while I still had **so much to ask!**

But then, another voice called out. Bloodcurdling, desperate, and wracked with agonized sobs.

"PLEASE DON'T DO THIS!"

The sheer terror interlaced in those words shook me to my core. That was the sound of someone fighting for their life... someone who was losing that battle. Frantically, I scanned the meadow and beyond the horizon for signs of anyone else, but still, I was the only one stuck in this dream world.

What on earth was happening?!

Why was this voice begging to be spared? And **from what?**!

\*LEAVE US ALONE! WE JUST WANT TO LIVE!"

"No." Another voice growled, low **and** menacing and frighteningly familiar, making me curl into myself out of pure instinct. "None of you deserve to live for what you did."

"PLEASE-!"

And just like that, the voice abruptly cut off. All I could hear now was the gentle breeze whooshing through the air... although that might also have been the blood pounding in my ears. My entire body was wracked with uncontrollable tremors.

That was something I wished I would never hear **again**. Was it an echo or the past? Or **was** it something that had yet to happen?

"What was that?" I asked shakily, hoping that comforting voice would return to me. No matter how much I'd try to clear my mind, I knew those screams of terror would forever haunt me.

"This is the harsh reality of life, Maeve..." it murmured, gentle and soothing once more.

"Why did you make me listen to all that...that pain?"

"Sometimes the truth is not what you want to **hear**... but you cannot ignore it..."

My heart lurched painfully into my throat. A vile, sickening thought forced its way to the forefront of my mind that I had no choice **but** to voice aloud. "W- Was this what happened to my mother...?"

"Love and loss... that is the destiny of all living things..."

Tears sprung to my eyes. It didn't deny nor answer my question, not **that** getting an answer would have helped me calm down at all. I didn't want to believe such a thing could have happened to my mother. She couldn't have been taken away from me before I ever got the chance to meet her.

Just how cruel could the **world** be?

"But you, Maeve..." the voice continued, "you can fix everything..."

I glanced towards the sky hopelessly. "How could I possibly do that?"

"Wake up."

With a sharp inhale of breath, my eyes burst open, throwing myself into a seated position. Looking around, I didn't seem to be in that bizarre dream world anymore. I felt familiar satin sheets wrinkle underneath my touch.

Light snoring to my side caught my attention.

Xaden was still asleep, curled up comfortably mere inches **away** and blissfully unaware of what had just happened.

He—He's here.. I realized. I'm back in our bedroom. It's over.

As if in a trance, I lay back down, facing **away** from Xaden. I didn't want to risk waking him up with my fidgeting.

That voice was everything I remembered **and** more. The unexplainable familiarity of it—both in tune and how it reverberated in my **soul** like a lullaby long forgotten since the days of my childhood—was striking. More mystifying than that, however, was the revelation that I had somehow heard the same voice twice in my dreams, despite never **having** met its owner.

Was that even possible? Was this person even real, or was it my subconscious toying with me for whatever reason?

Perhaps this **was** just a sign that I was finally losing my mind.

“Maeve...” **Xaden’s** sleepy voice suddenly whispered as his warm, firm body leaned into me. I thought I **had** been quiet enough not to disturb him... though I quickly realized it might’ve been part of our bond **as** fated mates. A soft, lingering kiss pressed against my shoulder, calming the frantic pounding of my heart. “Are you alright...”

Reeling from the confusion of what I saw and heard, I found myself at a loss for words.

Still, I managed to compose myself enough to nod a feeble response, hoping that he **could** somehow sense the gesture in the darkness of the large bedroom, but my mind continued to race a mile a minute.

What on earth was I forced to listen to? Who was that voice who begged for their life? And whose was that voice that was behind it all?

I... I didn’t want anything **to** do with it...

“You’re trembling.” he murmured against my skin. His voice sounded a bit more clearly now, as if he was slowly waking up. “Did something happen?”

I bit my lip, contemplating whether or not I should tell him what happened. I needed to figure out what to make of it all. But part of me wondered if he would think I was insane for fretting about things that happened in a dream.

“It’s nothing.” I ultimately said, rubbing my face with a **tired**, shaky hand. “I. I **just** had a weird dream.”

Xaden hummed, the deep sound vibrating **inside** me. “Do you want to talk about it?”

“I’m okay. You can go back to sleep.”

It wasn’t long before light snoring filled the air once more, but one of his arms wrapped tightly around me, holding me **close** to him.

More than anything, I wanted to join him in sleep and rest my mind, but all of a sudden, I felt fluttering in my stomach. They were not from hunger **and** it felt nothing like normal waves of anxiety. I'd felt something like this only once before.

This **was** not a strange reaction from my body.

I planted a hand on top of my growing belly. Those fluttering were my baby.

He was normally very still. I'd thought the last time happened as a reaction to Xaden and I being intimate, but that didn't explain tonight.

Why was he moving? The only common denominator **was** those strange dreams. But how would the baby...

Wait...

Somehow, I was abruptly brought back to that day Xaden and I met with the Omniscient Orenda Gorre. Her ominous words flashed in my mind: that I was more special than I realized...as was my baby. I lacked the faintest idea of what she meant, but I couldn't ignore the fact that these were impossible to be mere coincidences.

What did those dreams and that voice have to do with my baby!