

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 43

Maeve POV

“A... date?” I repeated, stunned, not entirely sure I heard him correctly. However, I could not deny the **somersaults** my heart. and stomach made upon hearing those words, **nor** as I caught that warm glaze in his eyes. “You want to take me out... on a date?”

Was this what he had been planning in the hours he was gone!

I had spent all this time worrying that our relationship—or whatever I could call it—**was** at risk of falling apart. I **had** thought that he finally realized that he did not want to spend the rest of his life with a pregnant girl he hardly knew a thing about, nor had any business getting himself involved with.

I thought he was ready to call everything **off**

And here he was... doing the exact opposite.

“Of course, I do,” Xaden replied with a bemused, anxious smile, cocking his head to the side. “What did you think I was going to say?”

“Y–You were gone for hours... I–I thought you were...” The rest of the words stalled in my throat.

He rubbed the back of his head. “I’m **sorry**,” he winced, sounding genuinely pained. “As soon as I’d **come** up with the idea for a date, I knew I had to get as much work done as possible so we could have uninterrupted, quality time together...and it turned out to be much more than I’d anticipated.”

An embarrassed, dizzied blush spread across my face as I realized, not for the first time, **what** a silly, hasty girl I was. He had a perfectly legitimate reason for being out for so long, and I dared to think **poorly** of him. Honestly, it was not fair to him for me to assume that he would be one to make such abrupt decisions like that, not when he treated me so wonderfully and never gave any indication of turning me away.

No matter what, I could not tell him where my paranoid mind had gone.

Xaden was nothing like my family. He would never do such a thing.

“N–Nothing.” I quickly said, shoving those thoughts away as he strode ever **so** closer to me. “But...where did this idea come from?”

He started to play with my hair, rendering me absolutely still like a statue. “Although you might **have found** it funny **and** harmless, that issue with the spices came **as** a real surprise to me,” he admitted after a brief pause. “It got me thinking what if I had accidentally fed you something that you were allergic to?”

“But you didn’t-”

“I know everything is fine now,” Xaden said, “but my point is that everything else aside, we still don’t really know much about each other. And I want **to**, Maeve...I want to learn and discover everything there is to know about **you**—all your likes, **dislikes**, your favorite foods and what you’d never eat again.. just as I want you to learn about me, too,” he murmured, his voice soft and tender. “I want you to know me in ways no one else does.”

I swallowed hard, full of emotion. I... **had no** idea he felt this way.

A date...

It really should not be such a strange thing for us to do.

We were going to be married, after all... but now that I thought about it, we had skipped a few steps that usually came with any other normal relationship.

From what I gathered, normal couples spent some time getting to know each other first and then decided where to go from there, but Xaden and I, **on** the other hand, had quickly gone from being perfect strangers to expecting a baby after a whirlwind one-night stand to planning our mating ceremony... all in a matter of only a few days.

A date sounded... wonderful, if I was being honest with myself. Far preferred over the nightmare I had designed in my head.

But it wasn't like we could just drop everything and just leave the palace for a day, either.

"What about your duties?" I couldn't help but ask. "And my lessons with your mother?"

"All taken care of," Xaden quickly reassured me. "While I was out, I made sure to clear both of our schedules for tomorrow. I also personally visited my mother to explain everything, and she was more than happy to let you off the hook," **he** said, as if to ease. "Don't worry, we won't get into any trouble for taking **a** day for ourselves, as long as we're **back** for the banquet, that is."

I was floored. That was what he had been doing all this time. Without my knowledge, he took the initiative and made **sure** we could **have this** time together,

A **day** for just the two of us.

Suddenly, any worry in my body vanished, replaced by something light and wonderful, and my heart began to pound for a very different reason. This was going to be not only my first date ever, but it was going to be with Xaden

Before, if I ever fantasized about such a thing, I was never able to pair a face with my date. He **was** always just some unknown figure, full of everything I could ever dream of but was just that: **a** dream.

But not **anymore**.

I was going to spend my day with Xaden—the father of my baby, the alpha who rescued me, the man who swept me off my feet

The one I think I might...

“**Are** we going to do something simple?” I asked, unable to contain my excitement. “Just the two of us? No status or wealth?”

Xaden’s smile fell a bit. “Is that what you want?”

With a shy grin, I nodded. “I’ve never been on a date before,” I revealed reluctantly, choosing not to look at him, but I felt his **eyes** on me the whole time. “But I used to read about these beautiful yet simple romantic gestures that couples would do for their dates, like...like picnics in the park, or long walks on the beach...and I **always** wished I could experience that same sort of magic one **day**.”

And then the quiet of the room suddenly struck me.

“B–But it doesn’t matter what we do,” I amended quickly, thinking I had perhaps ruined any sort of plans he had arranged for us tomorrow.

“Honestly. As long as we get to do it together, I’ll be happy”

Xaden shook his head determinedly. “If that’s what you want, then that’s what we’ll do,” he promised. “Just leave the rest to me.”

I bit my lip, ticklish with hope. “Then... tomorrow?”

The corners of his lips lifted before he gave me **a** gentle kiss, filled with all the promises of our future. “It’s a **date**.”

Good goddess... I groaned inwardly. What does one wear on a date?

The anticipated day **had** come and, in all my excitement to agree to Xaden's proposal for **a** date, I had failed to anticipate a few things that led up to the actual date itself getting oneself ready.

This was all extremely new territory for me, **as** I couldn't even rely on memories of Sarah to help get me through this. As **a** girl who was utterly infatuated with Prince Xaden and had eyes for no one else but him, she refused to ever go on dates with any other wolf... **and** there had been plenty who had visited in the hopes of courting her.

And every time, she would flat-out refuse them.

With a defeated sigh, I resigned myself to my fate. I would have to improvise.

While Xaden readied himself in another room—all to preserve the magical element of surprise—I stayed in our bedroom and summoned Maggie, who was excited to help out in any way she **could**. Together, we were able to find something **that** seemed to fit the casual vibe I wanted for our date decently well.

But there was one obstacle I had yet to overcome. Something that would prove to be my most daunting challenge to date.

Something **I** desperately needed an expert's opinion on.

Maggie helped me pull up **a** number to call. My fingers trembled as I pressed the buttons, second-guessing all of my life decisions. The line rang only for a few moments before the other side finally answered. "Hello?"

My heart pounded. There was no turning back now. "Prin-Charlotte? It's me, Maeve... I hope I didn't catch you at a bad time."

"Of course! I'd recognize your voice anywhere," she chirped sweetly. "What gives me the pleasure of the sudden **call**?"

Was this really alright for me to bother the princess with? It was completely ridiculous in hindsight and most definitely not worth calling someone as busy as Charlotte for, but I had **no** idea **what** I was doing.

I needed professional advice, and she was the only one I thought to go to.

“I-I have a slight problem,” I admitted, “and **it’s** something only you can help me with. Xaden is taking me out for our first date and I need as much advice as you can offer. Please... tell me anything you know about makeup.”