

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 46

Maeve POV

Slowly, my eyes fluttered open. Still bleary with sleep, I tried to blink away the fog that clouded my vision, rubbing gently at my eyes.

I was unaware of anything else in the world.

All that I could think about was what that voice told me. These dreams defied any sort of logic I thought I had known. Three separate times in **a** matter of fewer than two weeks, with no clear pattern, I had been visited by the same mysterious voice in some otherworldly plane, where I honestly couldn't even be sure if these took place in my subconscious anymore, and all I would ever hear were these... warnings.

And now, there was **an** alpha I had to be **wary** of.

Trembling, I let out an anxious breath. **Just** what did that voice expect me to do with that little piece of information?

Soon enough, I was going to marry into a family full of nothing but alphas. I couldn't just avoid every single one of them for the rest of my life, not when some treated me **with** nothing short of kindness and respect.

And what about Xaden?

He was the best of them all—better than any wolf I had ever met. How was I supposed to be careful around someone who went through so much trouble to make me happy on something as simple as a picnic-

Wait.

Our... date.

Suddenly, the memories came rushing back to me. We had been on a date, with as much privacy and discretion as Xaden could have afforded me, and it was everything I had dreamed of. Everything from buying snacks together at **a** small, local grocer to **our** private picnic in the park, to stargazing after the sun had set.

Even the ambush **that** one could barely call a kiss. just thinking about it made my toes curl I could still feel the fervent, yet gentle touch of his mouth on mine. The taste of grapes and strawberries had lingered.. making me yearn to taste more.

The last thing I remembered was laying in his arms, falling asleep to the lull of his **voice**.

But what had happened after that...?

For the first time since waking up, I took a good look at my surroundings. The cool, calming breeze of the evening was long gone, replaced by soft **wisps** of **an** early morning chill that floated through the familiar open window, and the knitted blanket we had cuddled on was all but transformed into the silk sheets we slept in every night.

We were no longer in the park... but in our bedroom.

Glancing down at my body, the green sundress I had worn was nowhere to be seen, but I was not naked either. Instead, I found myself wearing my usual white nightgown.

That came **as a** surprise to me. I had slept through the entire trip back home.

Having experienced the dreams before, I could guess that **that** explained the near level of unconsciousness, but Xaden had no way of knowing that. For all

he knew, I simply succumbed to my exhaustion at the end of a wonderful, eventful day.

But still, he must have been so careful... so incredibly delicate in carrying me home, in changing my clothes that, even in normal sleep, I would not have been jostled awake **from** his movements. He always made me feel like the most precious thing.

I still couldn't fathom why or how.

As I gazed at his sleeping form, however, none of that mattered in the slightest. Not when the mere sight of him made my chest swell with affection and other feelings **that I was** scared to admit out loud.

I **leaned** forward and pressed a soft kiss to his collarbone, savoring the sweet warmth of his soft skin despite the slight chill of

the dark dawn that shrouded the world. It **was** no secret that wolves were a little more resistant to cold weather than other species, but... being as close to him **as I was**—and literally pressed skin-to-skin—I could not help but believe that this... this was purely Xaden.

There was no possible way he was the alpha I was warned about. He was considerate and gentle.. **and** he held my heart in his large, capable hands.

And I think I... L.

I **stalled**, my heart beginning to race. I didn't think I would ever harbor such thoughts of someone in this lifetime, but meeting him was nothing short of a miracle. As I kissed him again in the **hollow** of his neck, slowly letting my hands roam across his broad chest, a low moan emerged from the depths of his throat.

"Maeve...?" he mumbled, still half-asleep.

I let my lips linger over his skin, feeling his heart start to **pound**. "I'm sorry. I **didn't** mean **to wake** you." I whispered, my apology only half sincere as I

felt him shudder beneath my touch. Instantly, I wanted to feel more from him.

A soft moan echoed above me. “How could I possibly sleep with... with you touching me like that?”

“Well, we’re both awake now...” I murmured, “unless you’d rather go back to sleep.”

All of a sudden, Xaden rolled us over so that he was now partially on top of me. For a fleeting moment, I thought he was upset I disrupted his slumber, but the sinful, seductive glow in his tired eyes indicated otherwise.

Something throbbed inside me. Needy and helpless and yearning for him.

He kissed me **again and** again, each one melting into the next, so it felt like one long dance of lips and tongue. “You’re brave to tease a starved alpha,” he growled. **Faintly**, I felt him expertly tug off my underwear from **underneath** my nightgown. “I hope you’re ready to see just how hungry I am after falling asleep on me like that.”

My legs rubbed together, trying to soothe the ache I had for him. “Please...” I begged against his mouth.

Xaden’s kisses trailed down my neck as I reeled from his tender attentions, going further and further down my collarbone, my chest until he had no choice but to throw the **covers** off my writhing body so he could continue. His hand stubble **grazed** my inner thighs. I watched, dazed as his strong arms wrapped underneath my legs.

He put his beautiful mouth on me, kissing me.. down there.

I inhaled sharply. “What–What are you d–doing, X–Xaden?” I panted between moans.

Xaden dragged his tongue, making **me** squirm. “Relax,” he murmured against my tender skin, and I **unconsciously** dug my fingers into his luscious hair. “Just lay back.. and let me do this for **you**.”

I was hardly in a position to complain. I weakly **nodded**, falling back against **the pillow** as he continued his delicious ministrations, pulling every whimper and moan and cry out of me that he could until I came.

Hours later, long after we had our fill of each other, we cleaned up very thoroughly and got ourselves dressed for the banquet.

Despite being a private banquet, it was still being held at the palace with the entire royal family in attendance, so formal attire was of the utmost importance. Xaden, of course, dazzled in everything, even something as simple as an all-black suit with a deep blue handkerchief accent sticking out of his front jacket pocket.

As for me, I opted to wear the blue-gray dress I had picked out at Mona **Road**, feeling as elegant and beautiful as I remembered. Maggie had helped me style my hair into a nice **updo**, while I used some of the beauty tips Charlotte had kindly given me to touch up my face. Xaden’s face lit up with pleasure once he saw me in the dress for the first time, which I couldn’t deny lifted my spirits.

But he was not the only one I had to impress tonight.

As we sat together in the car, steadily approaching the palace with every passing second, it dawned on me just what I had signed up for.

First impressions aside, this was going to be my first time meeting Xaden’s entire family all at once. Not **just** for them to see **the** girl he was going to marry, but to see if I was really cut out for this lifestyle, even with the Luma Queen’s help. This was to see if I was worth all of their time **and** effort.

This was either going to go very well... or not at all.

No pressure.

The day had finally come.

Today was the day of Maeve's first royal dinner. The banquet that rang in her unofficial entrance into the royal household. It was nothing the rest of the Werewolf Kingdom was aware of, nor something that even Maeve's own family had been told about.

Only a select few people—alphas and servants included—knew about the plans for the evening.

That being said, the palace bubbled with many conflicting emotions as they prepared for the evening to commence. Many within the family itself were decidedly eager for the night to come to **a quick** end, although for varying reasons.

Others, however, looked forward to what the night had in store.

For one, there was the revered and kind-hearted Luna Queen, who yearned to see her new daughter-in-law in action. She knew more than anyone, with the exception of Xaden, just how much Maeve had improved over the last few days and how much she feared making a **fool** of herself.

But Leonora had more insight than that.

With every lesson, she saw Maeve's confidence grow and grow, fueled by an inner fire that she seemed to be completely unaware of. But she knew it was only a matter of time before everyone else could see just how powerful it was.

And then there was Isabelle.

As she applied some last minute touches to her makeup, she was practically ready to burst with anticipation. There were not going to be many instances

where the entire royal family would be in attendance, so she needed to take what chances she could.

If she was going to properly humiliate Maeve, everyone needed to be there.

And, oh, how easy that was going to be.

So, what if Maeve was taking up etiquette lessons with the Luna Queen? She was still the useless, spineless servant-girl from Moonstone that Isabelle remembered.

And she had no place in Isabelle's story. That, she would make certain of.