

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 62

MAEVE POV

Kaden burst out of the banquet hall doors like a man on a mission, dragging me behind him with Burke following closely behind.

“Wait right here—Xaden **barked** the order to his beta once the three of us were alone in the hallway, pointing his finger firmly at him. “Do not move from this spot or allow anyone to come this way.”

Burke stumbled to a stop, obvious bafflement written all over his face, but he readily obeyed. “As you wish,” he said, standing guard just beyond the doors.

All these harsh movements dizzied me, Why did he bring all of us out here?

His anger was unmistakable, but... maybe it wasn't directed at Nicholas like I'd thought.

Could it have been something I did? Had I done something wrong by allowing Nicholas to sit with me while he was away mingling with other guests? I **was** so careful to not reveal anything about Xaden, his family, or myself, but maybe that was not enough.

Then again, what was so wrong with sparking innocent conversation with someone new?

With my brow scrunched in confusion, I opened my mouth to question Xaden, but he was quick to drag me further down the hallway, stalling any words I might have thought to say.

He ushered me into a **dark**, isolated corner, well out of range and hidden from prying eyes. My back landed with a thud against the wall, startling the air out of my lungs as I gazed up into his furious, glowing eyes. His strong arms caged me on either side of my body, ensuring I could not escape his grasp.

I gulped. “What are **you-**“

Xaden swiftly cut me off by slanting his mouth over mine, halting the rest of the words in my throat and paralyzing me where I stood. I did not know why he was doing this, but I didn’t dare to stop him or break away, out of fear that he would leave.

My heart pounded erratically, but he nipped and pulled at my lips so deliciously. I couldn’t help but respond, kissing him back with **all** the tenderness I felt for him as my arms slowly wrapped around his neck.

A low growl emerged from his throat, resonating throughout my body.

What’s gotten into him?

In the back of my mind, I felt his strong arms wrap around the small of my back, pulling me closer. My mouth parted in surprise, and my momentary lapse of composure allowed him to thrust his tongue inside. Instantly, I was overwhelmed with the strong taste of red wine and charcuterie.

His calloused hands roamed **across** my back, scrunching the delicate **fabric** of my black, silk dress with desperate, needy fingers. This was beginning to venture deeper and deeper into territory that we could not under any circumstance explore.. not while a palace banquet was being held less than one hundred feet away from **us**.

I pulled away from his dominant mouth with a gasp, planting my hands flat against his broad, heaving chest. “W–Wait...”

But my words seemed to fall on deaf ears.

Xaden was completely undeterred, proceeding to pepper hot kisses across my jawline and down my neck, and it was like my mind turned into sludge. I could not think with him **touching** me like this.

Then again was that really such a bad thing.

No, Maeve—I scolded myself—that’s the **lust** talking!

“You’re mine,” he growled between kisses. His sharp teeth grazed softly against my **neck**, making my breath catch in my throat with a stifled moan. My knees buckled, and I likely would have fallen to a heap on the marble floor if it hadn’t been for his tight, warm embrace holding me up securely against the wall.

We can’t do this. I thought vaguely, half listening to myself. Not here... not now.

But damn it—why did he have to feel so good...?

My fingers dug into his **jacket as I** curled into him, unsure whether I should push him away again or pull him closer. “X–Xaden...”

“Mine.” he repeated huskily, his hot breath tickling my sensitive skin. “Every single inch of you.” One of his hands slid down my hip and settled around my thigh, gently squeezing the thick flesh before hoisting my leg up to wrap around the low curve of his hip. “I want to mark you.” he entreated, dragging his teeth a little harder against my neck, “make them see who you belong to.”

I could just barely make out the words through my lust–addled mind. What was he going to do? Mark me?

Somehow, I managed to find the strength to wriggle away ever so slightly, pulling my leg out of his grasp. “D–Don’t mark me,” I stammered out. “Please. I–I want us to wait until the mating ceremony, like we planned.”

He let out a frustrated groan, tightening his hold on me. “I don’t care what people will say. Let them–“

“But I do,” I blurted out, forcing him to stop. “I do **care**, and–and I–I’m scared to subject myself to that level of scrutiny right now.” My body started trembling, and his demeanor softened a bit. “L.. just need more time, please–“

“Alpha Donner!” Burke suddenly exclaimed loudly from down the **hallway**, freezing the two of us in place. “How nice to see you. And you, Luna Margaret–you look as lovely as ever. I hope you two are enjoying the banquet?”

This was his warning to us. People were getting too close.

While the couple answered. I briskly pulled away with a quiet gasp, though Xaden’s **hands** remained firmly locked around me. Flushed red, I gently tried to pry his needy hands off of my body while focusing my attention on the three voices a short distance away from our slightly disheveled forms.

Burke continued to engage in conversation with them, offering directions for where they needed to go, which led them away from us.

I sighed in heavy relief. Thank goodness for him. We were once again in the clear.

“All this waiting is killing me,” Xaden groaned softly, wrapping his arms around me in a tight embrace as he buried his face against my shoulder. I could feel his **pain** deep in my soul. “I want to show the world that you’re mine, Maeve”

I bit my lip. “Is this because of Nicholas?”

He scoffed, lifting his head, and for a second, I worried I might have said the wrong thing. “He has nothing to do with this,” he insisted, a fire burning in his eyes. “But how **am** I supposed to just take it when I hear you being lumped in with other men? When another man dares to **talk** about you like that?”

Gently, I caressed his chest with delicate fingers. “You don’t have anything to worry **about**,” I murmured. “I only have eyes for you, Xaden.”

He hummed in response, only somewhat appeased, **yet** his grip eased around my waist

I let my gaze lower to his mouth, where I caught an unusual shimmer of something that coated the entirety of the soft flesh. It only took me a second to realize what it was, once I noticed the slight **pink** tinge to it

“Your lips_” I pointed out, trying to fight back a smile. “They’re covered with gloss.”

Xaden lifted a hand to his mouth, lightly brushing his fingers over the lip gloss smears I had inadvertently left behind. His beautiful green **eyes** were aglow with something hot and intense that made my insides flutter. “Could you help me?”

This man is going to be the death of me.

I swallowed hard with a slow nod. Slowly, I pulled out the red handkerchief that peeked out from his breast pocket and began to dab it against his **mouth** with a delicate touch. All the while, I felt his eyes bore into me.

His soft lips, slightly swollen from my attentions, were quite a sight to behold. Even with most of the gloss removed, however, it was very obvious that he had been up to something questionable outside of the banquet hall

“You still look like you’ve been busy kissing people,” I muttered, trying to ignore the butterflies in my stomach, seeing him so tousled because of me.

All of a sudden, he leaned forward, planting another kiss on my lips, catching me by surprise, though I was powerless to stop him. It ended **as** quickly **as** it began, with him pulling away, still looking at me with pure heat.

“I **wasn't** kissing just anybody—I was kissing you.”

My lips pursed in a small pout, feigning disapproval “I thought we were past all that.”

“I’m sorry,” he **said**, not sounding apologetic in the slightest. “I just needed one more.”

I failed to hide the bashful grin that spread **across** my face. “You’re lucky you’re cute,” I said as I resumed wiping away at his mouth to keep myself from gazing at him or falling for another of his little tricks. “But no more for now, alright?”

Xaden hummed in begrudging agreement but, true to his word, did not try **again**. After a short beat, he spoke up once more. “You think

“Is that so terrible?”

Without warning, he wrapped his **hand** around **my** forearm, catching me by surprise. While maintaining eye contact, he pressed slow, deliberate kisses to my wrist. “Cure is not quite the word I was hoping to hear,” he murmured, the conflicting heat in his eyes and softness in his voice melted me even further. “But I’ll make an exception for you.”

My heart stuttered in my chest, but the remainder of our clean-up commenced in relative silence. Once his mouth was deemed free of gloss, I wiped my own mouth and neck, while he smoothed out his blazer.

Thus began my **walk** of shame over to Burke, who still stood beside the banquet hall door, patiently waiting for us with a rather bored expression. Kaden, on the other hand, strode over without a care in the world, perhaps even looking a little smug with himself.

This is so embarrassing he probably knows what we were doing.

I wished the earth could just swallow me whole.

“Now then... if you two have finished all of your business, Burke drawled, his gaze swinging pointedly between the two of us, making me blush, “shall we return inside? It sounds like the **Alpha** King is going to speak shortly.”

I braced myself. We could not go back inside without him knowing what was going on “Before we do that “I trailed off with a wince, stopping the prime beta in his tracks, “there’s something you need to know. It involves you.”

Burke’s shoulders suddenly sack with dread. “What happened?” Judging by the look on his face, he must have assumed there to be trouble, which was not entirely wrong.

I smiled nervously. “**You** are now my fiancé.”